



Newsletter

Summer 2025

Your Local
Sight Loss Charity

Meta AI Glasses

Spotlight on Miriam

Short Story Writing Competition

Meet Volunteer Madeline

Terry's Ten Teasers!

Three Little Words

Blue Badges

Dress for Less

Plus much more

**SCAN &
LISTEN**



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Newport, Isle of Wight PO30 1DD

Charity number 1149415
Company Number 06240404



Chair Report



Hello and welcome to our Summer 2025 Newsletter.

As you would expect, we have a fantastic amount of information, articles and news included within these pages.

The staff always provide us with such interesting updates and we are all very grateful for their dedication and always being there to help. We are also so lucky to have such a wonderful group of volunteers; thank you, we couldn't manage without you!



We have such a tremendous range of activities, plus a new writing group and a new member's question section. The Glide update and the Meta AI glasses describe how technological advances can help in our daily life, as will the 'what3words' app.

This is Lisa's, our CEO, last newsletter as she is retiring at the end of July. During the past five years, she has worked so hard for the Charity, making sure we are financially viable and being proactive and innovative in raising our profile on the Island, so successfully that we won the prestigious Community Award from the Chamber of Commerce this year.

Lisa has been so generous with her own time, a lot has been accomplished by her own volunteering. The Charity has been so lucky to have her incredible skills, dedication and energy. It has been such a privilege for me to work with her; my sincere and grateful thanks Lisa.

I would like to warmly welcome Danny, who will be our next CEO and look forward to a successful future, building on all that has been achieved.



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CEO Update



Well, this is it, my last newsletter as CEO of our beloved Charity. I wanted to look back to 2018 when I started as the part time Finance Officer. By March 2019 I cut our overhead expenditure by 50% by renegotiating every contract we had and, by November that same year, we were in a position to go right back to grass roots and look closely at what we did, how we did it and who we did it for. Our 2020 strategy was born. This took the form of mapping all local and national service provision, surveying every member and holding strategy days asking you what we did well, what you wanted from us and how we could improve.



Six years later, membership has risen from 324 to 803; average weekly interactions have risen from 259 to 396 and average monthly volunteer hours have risen from 249 to 567.

Our social media presence has risen from nothing to over 5,000 interactions per month. In addition, we now offer rehabilitation to over 300 individuals each year including Mobility Training for 25 people on average each month. But all these statistics aside, we are here thriving and supporting people every single day to live safe, confident and independent lives. Thank you to each and every person who I have met and worked with over the last seven years, I will miss the Charity so much and wish you every success for the future. Everyone lead your best most fulfilling lives. Thank you for the most rewarding role of my career.

All that remains is to welcome Danny and enjoy our Charity.



Lisa CEO



Member Activities



PLEASE NOTE NO ACTIVITIES DURING AUGUST

Weekly

By Appointment: We have Sam on hand to give one-to-one help with accessibility features on your computer, laptop, tablet or phone. **It is essential you pre-book, so please call ahead.**



Monday: Swimming at Medina Leisure Centre, Newport (term-time only) between 1.15pm and 2.00pm.



Tuesday: Yoga at Millbrooke House between 1.45pm and 2.45pm; come along and try gentle yoga. Just £4.00 which includes refreshments. **Call the office to book a space.**



Wednesday: Coffee and Chat at Millbrooke House between 10.00am and 11.30am. All are welcome to join us for Coffee and Cake. The cost is £2.00 and the group is open to everyone. We have regular visitors to this group; for example, the ECLO, the Macular Society and many others.



Thursday: Mix and Mingle at Millbrooke House between 10.30am and 2.00pm. Planned activities include crafts, quizzes and entertainment. The cost is £4.00 plus £3.50 for transport if required. The group has a waiting list, so please call to put your name down.



Fortnightly Tennis is held at Ryde Mead Tennis Club on a Monday between 9.30am and 10.30am. Volunteers of the Club are on hand to assist. This is weather dependant.



Monthly Groups

First Tuesday of the Month: Godshill Coffee Morning 10.30am - 12.00pm held at The Old Smithy Coffee Shop, Godshill. Volunteers, Yvonne and Linda, will be on hand to chat every month.



First Thursday of the Month: Audio Book Group held at Lord Louis Library, Newport, between 2.00pm and 3.00pm; this group is free to attend. You will receive a digital copy, USB stick, or CD and the group will discuss the book at the following meeting.

Second Friday of the Month: Walk and Talk group, as an alternative to Striders, involves a walk of around two miles. The cost is £2.00 plus £3.50 transport. For more details, please call Susan. As with all walks, we offer one-to-one help.



Last Friday of the Month: Striders is for members who enjoy walking.

The walk is normally between four and six miles, depending on the route and location. The cost is £4.00 plus £3.50 for transport. The group always enjoys lunch in a local pub and is a great social event.

Last Sunday of the Month: Golf at Westridge Golf Centre, Ryde. Members enjoy 45 minutes with a professional instructor available to help the complete novice, to those playing regularly. It is usually the last Sunday of the month but always call the office to confirm.



Tandem Bike sessions are now held on a regular basis. Our pilots and members have been enjoying trips out, mainly along the cycle track. If you would like to have a go and you haven't let the office know, please call and put your name on the list. This is a fantastic opportunity for anyone who enjoys riding a bike and fresh air.



Eye on Social is our afternoon group held on the second Wednesday of the month. This group is open to everyone; members, volunteers and friends and is a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon, always finishing with tea and cake. Our September Eye on Social is on September 10th at Quarr Abbey, meeting at 1.30pm.

Please call Susan to reserve your place on 522205.

IOW Artists Calendar 2026

Every year, Isle of Wight Artists' Calendar support a local charity and this year they have kindly agreed that we will be their chosen charity.

Calendars are available to buy from Sight for Wight at £12.00 each with some amazing pictures by very talented local artists. Not only are we their chosen charity but Sight for Wight will receive £5.00 for every calendar sold.

If you are interested in buying a calendar then please contact Susan on 522205.

These would make a wonderful Christmas present but we have limited stock so please order early to ensure you don't miss out.





Three Little Words

(Member Question)



A Powerful Tool for Navigation

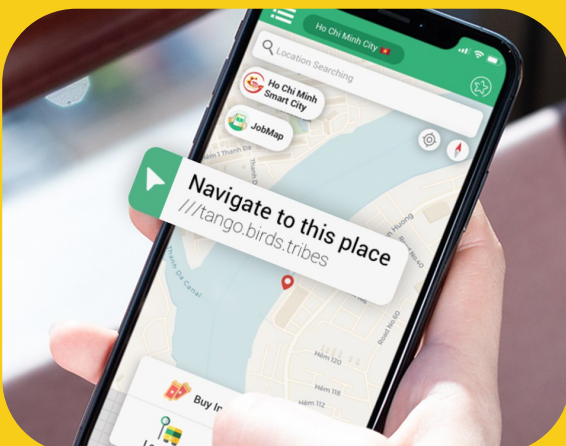
For us, navigating the world independently can be challenging. That's where what3words - a simple yet powerful tool comes in.

It divides the entire globe into 3m x 3m squares and assigns each one a unique combination of three words, like 'apple.banana.chair.' These three words give you a location, more accurate than a street address, down to within three meters.

Using what3words is easy. You can access it through a smartphone app or website, both of which are screen reader friendly. Just type or speak the three words into the app and it will guide you to that exact spot using GPS. This is especially helpful in places without clear addresses, like parks which may be used for arrival points for tandem biking for example.



Further, if there are multiple doors to a building, the person you are meeting can send you the three-word address for the exact door they are at. You can then use the app to get walking directions straight to it. It's also useful for taxis, deliveries, or emergencies; just share your three words and help can find you quickly.



But you can also use the same three words for other navigation apps such as Google Maps, Apple Maps and Citymapper. Sam is always here to help with individual queries anyone has.

Lisa CEO

Looking Back

I would like to start this article with the fabulous news that Sight for Wight won the Community Award at the Isle of Wight Chamber of Commerce Business Awards this year. A huge congratulations to the other shortlisted finalists, including Mountbatten and Isle of Wight Youth Trust. The awards evening was a wonderful celebration of what our Charity has and will continue to achieve.

I spent time looking back through all the meeting notes, newsletter and press articles over the last seven years since I started as CEO back in 2020 and have summarised what I found in this article. It started with “Trustees, thank you for offering the role of this historic Charity; however, I fear with no obvious way of receiving income for the foreseeable future, we may not have enough reserves to get through COVID, however long the effects of which may last.”

GOVERNANCE

- New Accounts report
- Committee Structure
- Independent Clerk
- Merged Memorandum and Articles of Association
- What does success look like with resultant KPI
- Identify our social impact
- Chair & Skills review of board
- 54 policies written
- Formal Trustee Induction

ASSETS

- Purchased shop
- Bought Blue Car
- Identified our social impact
- New drive



Looking Back

STAFF

- 3 Apprenticeships
- Reporting directly to Board
- New ergonomic monitors
- Free eye drops + eye tests
- New contracts, handbook and BrightHR with TOIL
- Wellbeing pack including free counselling

VOLUNTEERS

- 142 wonderful people
- Over £100,000 time donated
- Quarterly updates
- Booklet of all roles
- Handbook and induction
- Key speaker at LIZ EARLE Island Volunteering Day

MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

- **Still running:** Swimming, Golf, Striders, Coffee Morning, Mix & Mingle, Audio Library & Talking News
- **New:** Yoga, Holidays, Eye on Social, Beyond Sight, Sailing, Days out, Book Club, Drop in Low Vision, Accessible IT, Walk & Talk & Tandem Bikes
- **One off:** Horse Riding, Tennis, Bowling, Climbing, Canoeing, Sports Taster Day & Knitting Club
- Over 2,000 attendees in 2025



Looking Back

LOBBY INFLUENCE

- Free Wight Fibre Directory Enquiries
- Changed Tesco Fire Pit packaging for those with Age related Macular Degeneration
- Helped shape Ophthalmology First - a new pathway
- 3 times “model” Charity for Raising Voices in Research
- NHS 111 service speaker at National Conference
- BERYL Scooters, doubled parking fine & reduced speed
- Hampshire and IW Police Visual Impairment Protocol
- Setting up and participated in Inclusive Island Employment
- IW Council “How to make all consultations accessible”
- Presented at two Visionary National Conferences
- Interviewed for contribution for stopping rail office closures
- Key speaker at NHS New GP Portsmouth conference
- How to consult with everyone - project leader



EVENTS

- 100th Newport Carnival 1st Prize
- Murder Mystery Event
- Queen's Jubilee
- King's Coronation
- Annual Mulled Wine and Mince Pies

WELCOME ALL QR CODES

- Every Isle of Wight and Hampshire Police Station
- IW Council libraries and Buildings
- 31 Gift to Nature Sites
- Two Ferry operators
- Cowes Parish Council
- Sandown Town Council

WIDER ISLAND COMMUNITY

- Education Program "Be Wise Protect your Eyes"
- Begun our first Social Media
- Targeted Press releases - 15 in last six months
- Bookmarks, Beer Mats and Keyrings encouraging contact
- New logo for Sight for Wight, Wight Sense and Dress for Less (through Schools' competition)
- Branded vehicles
- "Hootie" out and about (made from recycled gasses)



Our Hat and Sunglasses Competition Winners 2024



RECYCLING

- Thousands of garments through Dress for Less - sold
- Stamps and Coins - sold
- Printer Ink cartridges - sold
- 62kg Batteries - sold
- CD's and DVD's - sold
- 46,000 pairs of Glasses - sold / recycled
- Thousand of Bees - rehomed
- Second hand specialist equipment - sold

FINANCES

- 50% overhead reduction in first nine months
- Free Charity and Shop Council Rates
- Wight Fibre free Charity internet and phones lines
- £45,000 of equipment from SGN for fire safety
- Stand at IW Festival
- 100 Club members doubled
- R-eyed-the Wight
- Commission on Island wide Tech Visionaid sales
- Tesco Freshwater Books

DRESS FOR LESS

- Donated £40,000 to Sight for Wight
- School competition to design new logo
- Full set of new policies, board governance and why do we exist strategy written
- Visit from Channel 5
- Fashion Event raising £2,000





Looking Back



SFW MEMBERS

- 2020 Strategy - Members First
- Befriending with PALS GENIE
- Alexa Skill with Talking News
- Living Well With Sight Loss
- Braille software
- Member led newsletter
- Feedback and Chat
- 12 organisations trained staff
- Equipment room trials / sales
- 1-2-1 Member Support Officer
- Secure GDPR data on CRM
- **Member D “My befriender changed everything”**

WS CLIENTS

- Exceeded every KPI set
- Created Sense Loss ID card
- Two years contract extension
- 300 adverts at Island venues
- Training VRS Apprentice
- 300 Files digitalised
- Monthly Deaf Café created
- Loan Equipment doubled
- 2025 Freedom of Information showed 1/6 of the 154 Rehab contracts meeting all targets
- **Our commissioner, “The best Sensory Service the Island has ever seen”**

So where are we now? Reserves have increased by 10%, we outright purchased our own shop, our membership has more than doubled to 803 and we offer rehabilitation to everyone.

I started my career with a Upper II.i degree in Accounting and Computer. In 1992 I was the first registered blind woman in the UK to qualify as a Chartered Accountant. In 1999 I purchased the Farringford in Freshwater, selling it having trebled turnover in 2007 when, as a cofounder, set up Ciick4Internet, the first UK wireless broadband provider. Selling to Wight Fibre in 2015, I took time with my children then 2018 started as Finance Officer moving to CEO in 2020. I can honestly say these last seven years have been the most rewarding and engaging years of my life. THANK YOU! *Lisa*



Certificate Of Visual Impairment



The Certificate of Visual Impairment (CVI) formally BD8 certifies someone as sight impaired (previously referred to as partially sighted) or as severely sight impaired (previously referred to as blind).

With your permission it is shared with Wight Sense via the Isle of Wight Council so that we can then contact you and offer our services. The registration will then be added to the Island's Register of Sight Loss.

Prior to 2017, you could also be registered as living with Failing Sight, and whilst you can no longer be officially registered with this, it does not mean we cannot offer you support. At Wight Sense we understand that the sooner support is offered; for example, when you have some useable residual vision, the more effective that support can be.

Please remember registration is voluntary but the basis behind registration is to enable people to access support to help them retain or regain independence.

What level of Sight Loss is certifiable?

Whilst there are clear guidelines detailed below, the Consultant who certifies you can be more flexible to take account of real life situations; for example, your vision might be better in some light conditions than others. The consultant will use their professional judgement to set the certificate level based on how your vision loss impairs your day-to-day activities and ability to function.

The tests they will undertake are based on your actual vision using the standard Snellen chart. Please remember though, the consultant can then use their judgement, taking account of how your vision effects your daily life.

Isle of Wight Sensory Service

Severely Sight Impaired

Name

Lisa Hollyhead


ID Number

557 / SSI

Registered

08 / 04 / 1988

Funded by the Isle of Wight Council





CVI

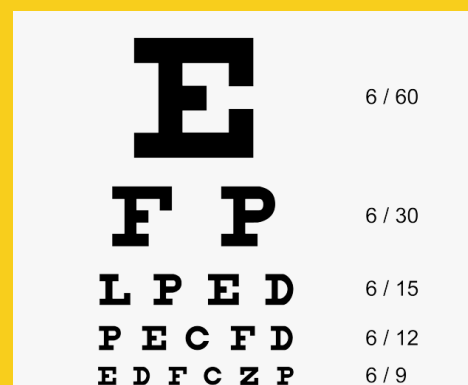
(Member Question)



Severely Sight Impaired - People can be classified into three groups:

Group 1: Cannot read any of the standard chart.

Group 2: Can read the top letter but have contraction of their visual field.



Group 3: Can read more than the top line but with a clinically significant contracted field of vision which is functionally impairing the person.

Sight Impaired - People can be classified into three groups

Group 1: Can read the top line with a full field of vision.

Group 2: Can read top two lines with moderate contraction of the field; e.g. patchy loss.

Group 3: Can read top three lines or even more and have a marked field of vision loss; e.g. only vision in half of the eye.

Advantages of Registration - With certified proof you more easily access:

- Referral to Vision Rehabilitation Services, which include Mobility and Orientation Training, Daily Living Skills and Equipment.
- Benefits; e.g. Personal Independence Payment (PIP), Attendance Allowance (AA), Disability Living Allowance (DLA).
- Travel discounts - Free and discounted public transport.
- TV licence discount - 50%.
- Tax allowances £3,070 extra tax free personal allowance.
- Blue Badge application is automatic.
- Access to work applications are simpler.
- Blind symbol on your Access Card.

Refused access? Be CLEAR on your rights

As a guide dog owner, you may occasionally be refused access to a restaurant, shop, taxi, or other service. These access refusals can be difficult and distressing. Confusion and ignorance of the law may be the cause and a simple explanation is often all that's needed. However, in some cases, further action may need to be taken.

Your guide dog enables you to get out and about safely and with greater confidence. The law protects your right to access most services with your guide dog. In exceptional circumstances where you can't be accompanied by your guide dog, reasonable adjustments should be made to ensure you can access the service.

For help and advice or to let us know about an access refusal, call:

Guide Line on 0800 7811444 or email:

Information@guidedogs.org.uk

Guide Dogs created a simple way to remember what to do if you're refused access to a venue or service. Just think CLEAR:

C = Calm

Access refusals are understandably deeply distressing. The best way to resolve the issue is to stay calm, state your rights and speak clearly.



L = Law

Explain the law: The Equality Act 2010 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in Northern Ireland require service providers to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that people with disabilities can access services and are not disadvantaged because of their disability. This means that it's against the law to refuse access to a disabled person accompanied by an assistance dog except in the most exceptional circumstances.



E = Evidence

Collect evidence and make sure you understand the reason given for the refusal. Try to record the date, time and exactly what was said, rather than an interpretation. Use your phone or other device, if available, to take notes or record a voice memo.

A = Access

Show your Guide Dogs access card or your Assistance Dogs UK ID book. Alongside your dog's harness, this is further proof that your dog is a fully trained guide dog.

R = Report

Report what has happened to Guide Dogs. We can provide emotional and practical support to help challenge access refusals and educate service providers. Not everyone will want to take action, but even by simply sharing your experiences you will help us build a picture of where and how frequently refusals occur, which is vital information for our campaign's work.



Guide Dog Access Card



Access Card (Not to be confused with the Nimbus Access Card)

Your Access Card is embossed in Braille with the words “Access Card” on the front and the top righthand corner has been cut off to assist with orientation.

The card includes the following text:

Front - By law, working guide dogs have the right to enter taxis, shops, restaurants, and other places open to the public.

Back - For more information visit:

www.guidedogs.org.uk

www.equalityhumanrights.com

www.equalityni.org



Accessible Format

In the UK, people who are blind or visually impaired have legal rights to accessible information, especially in healthcare, public services and digital environments. These rights are supported by a combination of legislation, standards and new reforms coming into effect in 2025. Here's a summary of your key rights.

Accessible Health and Social Care Information - Under the Accessible Information Standard (AIS):

- NHS and Adult Social Care providers must provide information in formats you can access, such as large print, braille, audio, or email. They must record your communication needs, flag them on your records and meet them in all future interactions. If they fail to do so, you have the right to complain and request compliance.



Accessible Format (continued)



In 2025, the UK government is working to make the AIS mandatory across all NHS England services, improving consistency and enforcement.

Digital Accessibility Laws (2025 Update)

From 2025, new UK accessibility laws will:

- Extend digital accessibility requirements to private businesses, not just public sector bodies.
- Require compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.2 standards, ensuring websites and apps are usable by people with visual impairments.
- Mandate accessibility statements and feedback mechanisms on websites.
- Introduce fines and legal consequences for non-compliance.

This means you should be able to access essential services, shopping, education and more online - without barriers.

Your Broader Legal Rights



These rights are supported by:

- The Equality Act 2010, which protects against discrimination and requires reasonable adjustments.
- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which the UK has ratified, affirming your right to access information and communication on an equal basis.

If you ever need help, please let us know and we will assist as much as we can.

What is WCAG 2.0?

- **WCAG 2.0** is a stable, referenceable technical standard. It has 12 guidelines that are organized under 4 principles: *perceivable*, *operable*, *understandable*, and *robust*.
- For each guideline, there are testable *success criteria*, which are at three levels: A, AA, and AAA.
- WCAG is primarily intended for:
 - Web content developers (page authors, site designers, etc.)
 - Web authoring tool developers
 - Web accessibility evaluation tool developers
 - Others who want or need a standard for web accessibility

www.CTDInstitute.org

Blue Badges

(Member Question)

You automatically qualify for a blue parking badge allowing you specific additional parking options if you:

- Are registered blind (severely sight impaired).
- Receive the higher rate of the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA).
- Receive Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and:
 - Scored 8 points or more in the 'moving around' activity of the mobility component.
 - Or scored 10 points specifically for descriptor E under the 'planning and following journeys' activity (i.e. unable to undertake any journey due to overwhelming psychological distress).
- Receive a War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement.

If you don't meet these automatic criteria, you may still be eligible under discretionary rules, but you'll need to provide supporting evidence and undergo an assessment. Caron can help with this.

As a Blue Badge holder, you can park for free and without time limits in many on-street parking spaces, including disabled bays and pay and display areas. You may also park on single or double yellow lines for up to three hours, provided there are no loading restrictions. However, always check local signs or ask someone to help you confirm the rules in that area.



The badge must be placed on the dashboard with the hologram side facing up and the parking clock should be set if you're using time-limited spaces.

Blue Badges

(Member Question)

The badge is for your use only. It must not be used by others unless you are in the vehicle or being picked up or dropped off. Always ensure the driver is aware of these rules to avoid penalties.

For help applying or renewing your badge, give Caron a call in the office and she can help with everything.

If you travel outside the UK, as we are no longer part of the EU, your badge validity will vary with each country. For example, there is no agreement in place at all with France whereas they are generally accepted in Spain with the addition of an extra printed piece of paper.



There is a full booklet on guidance for the use of the Blue Badge which can be accessed by scanning this QR code.



A final word of warning, photocopies of badges are never accepted so if you lose your badge then please apply for a new one (£10) and wait for it to arrive. This can easily take two to three weeks which is also worth bearing in mind when you need to renew.

Lisa CEO

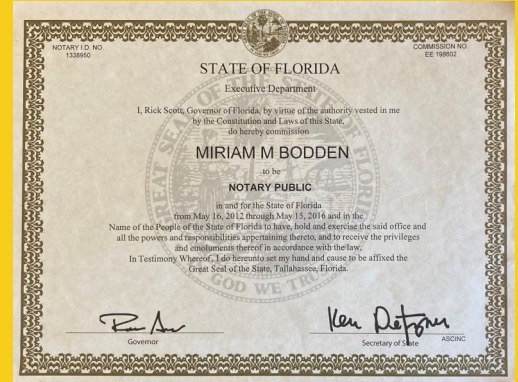
I was born Miriam Miller Moore on 7th May 1940 in Norwalk, Connecticut, USA. The family consisted of mum, dad, three girls and two boys. I was the second oldest. I graduated in the class of 58 at Norwalk High School and studied general business, book keeping and Spanish.

I married at 19 years old and had three beautiful boys; all born at the same hospital that I was born in. Sadly, two of my boys passed away leaving me heartbroken.



My parents moved to Florida and I followed; that's where I began my career in Property Management. I attended a Junior College and took an accountancy course and property management.

My husband and I got divorced and I began my journey. I met a man from Grand Cayman Islands and relocated to the British West Indies. I worked for a while at a local airline in the Accountancy Department and this is where I got the urge to travel. I've been to thirty different countries and speak three languages. After the airline job I began work in property management meeting people from all over the world. My husband and I opened a lovely beachfront restaurant which was very popular.



My son, after graduating, came to live in Cayman where he became a police detective, later starting his own security company. He got married and I became a grandma for a fifth time. I left Cayman to look after my mother in Florida and resumed my property management career and retired at 62 years old.

Spotlight on Miriam

When I found out I had Macular Degeneration, I felt bad as my mother had it and I never realised how much her sight had gone. It was very sad for me. I took over my mother's everyday tasks until she sadly passed away at 94 years old.

I had medical problems in the States and just before I moved to the UK I was diagnosed with Macular Degeneration as my Granddaughter had taken me to an Eye Doctor and I found out my right eye had deteriorated quite rapidly. I also had a stroke resulting in a coma where I spent a week in hospital and then put in a rehabilitation home during covid which was very distressing as I wasn't able to have any visitors.

Approximately three years ago my Granddaughter came from the UK and brought me to the UK to live. I have my own place in the garden and my granddaughter keeps an eye on me. I can do basic cooking, so, I still have some independence. I love being in the garden and used to enjoy horse riding and I'm looking into doing this again. I also enjoy going out to dinner.

I found out about Sight for Wight thanks to my neighbour; this was not long after I arrived in the UK and within months I was a member and I absolutely love going there as there is so much to do and Mix and Mingle is the highlight of my week. It's also nice to socialise with people who also have a sight impairment; we have such fun together and I love it.





Wightcare

(Member Question)



Wightcare is an emergency response service provided by the Isle of Wight Council, designed to help residents live independently and safely in their own homes. Here's how it works:

Wightcare provides a range of 24/7 support services including:

- Emergency lifelines: Personal alarms that can be worn as pendants or wristbands. When pressed, they connect the user to a trained operator.
- Mobile response team: The only service on the Island with responders who can visit your home if needed.
- Assistive technology: Devices that detect falls, inactivity, smoke, gas, or other emergencies.
- 24-hour call answering: For emergencies or reassurance.
- Carers Emergency Alert Card: Ensures backup care if a carer is suddenly unavailable.

Who do they support:

- Older adults.
- People with disabilities or long-term health conditions.
- Anyone feeling vulnerable, isolated, or recovering from illness.



How It Works

A demonstration and assessment can be arranged and the equipment is installed by the team. In an emergency, pressing the lifeline button connects the user to a 24/7 call centre and a mobile responder is dispatched to assist when needed.

Contact - Phone: 01983 821105 to discuss the packages and options available.

Julie, one of our members, contacted us as she was having difficulties gaining entrance into the new accessible toilets using their Radar key in various locations across the Island. They had also been advised by local cafes that quite a few people had said they could not use their Radar key.



We contacted the relevant town councils to get clarity as to why they were unable to access them. One of the councils advised they have now added a yellow label next to the Radar key opening to make it more apparent.



However, this will not benefit all those with a sight loss. The issue being that the keyhole is not on the door of the WC but is, instead, on the area where non Radar key users need to make a payment; this can be several feet away from the actual entrance. This has been causing great confusion as there are keyholes on the actual door; however, these are for maintenance personnel only.



Julie kindly took these photos showing where the keyholes are located; this may vary from one location to another.

Official Radar keys are available from our office at a cost of £5.00 each.

If you any have any issues please let me know.

Caron Member Support

Meet Volunteer Madeline

I was born in Newport in 1944 and have lived on the Isle of Wight all my life, despite travelling far and wide. Does that make me a true "caulkhead"? (not cork head, although probably that as well!) My father was born in Wellow, but my mother came as a baby from Nottingham when my grandfather's job transferred to Parkhurst Prison, so I call myself a "half caulkhead"!

My childhood was lively. I grew up in a busy household; seven of us in a three-bedroom semi, including my mum, sister, grandmother and two aunts. Post-war times were tough, but we had what mattered; love and happiness. I was always active; skipping, running, handstands, marbles in the gutter; there were barely any cars around!

I went to primary school in the same road, where I discovered a love for sport. At age seven, Mum (raising us on her own by then) got me a second-hand bike and we'd often cycle to Gurnard beach. I became a strong swimmer and runner early on.

After passing the eleven-plus, I attended Sandown Grammar School, where sport continued to play a huge role, netball, athletics, and more. Some old friends called me a



"grammar grub," but I made many new ones too.

I left school at 16 with eight O-levels and always wanted to work in an office. My first jobs were at Island Oils and then County Hall in the Education Department.



Meet Volunteer Madeline

I married young and when my children were born in 1963 and 1966, I still managed some work from home. Later, I worked at, what was then, Whitecroft Psychiatric Hospital in admin roles, eventually supporting people with learning disabilities in community homes through a company called Isle Care. When we were all made redundant, I took it as a sign to change paths.

I shifted to hands-on homecare work, first with Social Services, then independently. I'd always loved helping people; this work felt right.

Sport remained central to my life. I played squash, tennis and netball at county level, competed in triathlons and distance runs and joined WWRR while training for the London Marathon, where I also met Chris A. Through sport, I also raised money for charities, including a Cross-Solent swim from Hurst Castle to Colwell Bay, where I was once baptised and remains a special place, marking a shift towards a life shaped by Christian values and a calling to support others.



That calling led me to help start a bereavement group in Brighstone and other community initiatives. In 2013, Chris A introduced me to the Talking News. I'd always loved reading, at school and church, so this felt natural. It's been another way to connect and give back, along with the Mix and Mingle group.

I felt honoured to be invited to read with a County Press reporter for the 50th anniversary of Talking News. Thank you for letting me share part of my journey; it's been a full and meaningful one.



Madeline Volunteer



Glide - An Update



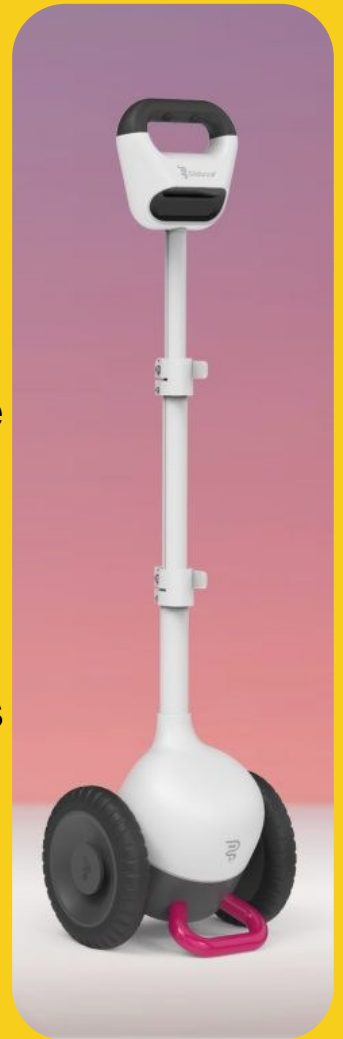
Gliding Towards “Freestyle Navigation”

The first major milestone on Glide’s journey is to ensure that Glide can indeed serve as a viable primary mobility aid; this will provide a third independent mobility, alongside the cane or the guide dog.

To achieve this we are focusing on “Freestyle Navigation”. Distinct from Directed Navigation, where Glide is guiding you point to point on a route, in Freestyle Navigation Mode you are in charge of the route and use Glide to maintain a safe line of travel, initiate turns and locate and approach common line of sight targets in indoor and outdoor spaces such as pavements, parks, stores, airports, transportation hubs and more. Once we master Freestyle Navigation, the sky is the limit for how we can refine and expand Glide’s capabilities over time.

For many months now, Glide has done a fantastic job of keeping me safe in crowded spaces with people and obstacles. Its baseline obstacle avoidance is feeling solid. Yet without being trained to maintain a line, I would often find myself losing orientation and unintentionally veering off.

Two weeks ago, we updated the software to integrate line maintenance and clear turn initiation through handle buttons and body position and it made an unreal difference. I was able to navigate a convention centre in Boston, walk a large hardware store and shop at a supermarket - all with a team member in tail, but walking for hours without a sighted guide. I have also walked down the pavement along the main stretch of shops near my home with confidence, literally gliding.





Glide - An Update



1. We have deployed our new path planner, which enables Glide to maintain a more purposeful line on pathways that have clear boundaries, such as aisles in a store or hallways in an office. When an object is in the way, Glide will autonomously avoid the object and then return to the original line. There is still plenty of refining to be done here, but it's looking very promising.



2. Glide's drop-off detection has been activated and is in early testing and tuning, enabling it to recognise and avoid curbs on pavements, similar to how Glide avoids obstacles.

3. We have integrated the buttons in the handle and are exploring different approaches for steering to initiate a turn. The model we are experimenting with is that left and right button presses initiate 90 degree turns and a press on the middle button lets you direct Glide in the direction you want to go. We will be seeking your feedback on these approaches as we move into Beta testing.

We are now focusing on refining Glide's understanding and handling of different spaces. For example, at present Glide predominantly responds to physical things like walls, people and furniture. We have collected a lot of street data and will soon be updating Glide's AI models to detect walkable paths in a variety of spaces like parks and road crossings where the delineation of the path is more visual than physical. Furthermore, we are working on several additional core capabilities that will complete Freestyle Navigation, in particular target detection and overhead obstacle avoidance.

Thanks again for being part of this incredible journey!

Amos & the Glidance Team.

My name is Kay Tasker, aged 71, and was diagnosed with a malignant tumour two years ago, resulting in the permanent loss of sight in my right eye. This year, I moved to the Island after spending ten years enjoying it as a holiday destination. With a background in adult education, I taught at colleges and on Return to Learn courses aimed at reintroducing adults to learning. Following changes in government funding, I retired early and served as a Magistrate for ten years, a role I found both challenging and rewarding.



I have always had a passion for teaching English, particularly Creative Writing, which I taught as part of outreach programmes. These sessions helped adults discover the joy of writing, often for the first time and created a positive, supportive atmosphere as students built their skills.

Recently, I have revived my own interest in writing and now meet weekly with a small, enthusiastic group at the Wessex Centre. The group shares work confidentially and has built a friendly, engaging environment. Their writing topics range from childhood memories and fictional characters to historical figures and even whimsical subjects like garden gnomes.

I now hope to form a new writing group at Millbrooke House, meeting Tuesdays at 11.00am starting 2nd September 2025. The group will focus on imaginative writing for fun, in a relaxed and welcoming setting. Flexibility and support will be key and everyone is warmly invited to join. Please let the office know on 522205 if you would like to join.

Kay



Volunteer Update



We welcome our new volunteers to this latest newsletter and thank you for choosing our charity to volunteer for; we really appreciate your time and support.



Wow, what an amazing few months we have had and I must thank all our wonderful volunteers who have given their time, support and help across many activities and events we have held! Our activities range from Tandem Biking to Walk and Talk, from Talking News to our monthly Book Group. All you wonderful Volunteers donating perhaps just one hour a month, certainly makes such a huge difference to our Members and the services and activities we provide, so THANK YOU!



We now take a break for August and recharge our batteries ready for the recommencement of groups in September. We have lots of planning to do and tidying of Millbrooke House plus the many rotas that help with the running of the groups. Thank you each and everyone of you, our wonderful Volunteers; I know I say it many times but without you we would NOT be able to hold all the diary filled events we do. Enjoy the rest of the summer and I hope it is a restful time for you all.

Susan Volunteers & Members Manager



Short Story Writing Competition



I am delighted to announce this year's short story writing competition's theme is, SUPERHERO. I thought this would give our budding authors, particularly the under 18's, a chance to really let their imaginations run wild!

This is the 16th year of the competition and Sight for Wight's 160th birthday so the competition launched on the 16th June to tie in with these dates!

Our five celebrity readers this year are Richard Cadell, who has kindly supported us for a fifth year, Chesney Hawkes who is back for a third year, Easy Radio's Kate Weston, back for her second year and newcomers, Nation Radio's, Andy Jackson and comedian Darren Walsh.

Entry forms are available from Sight for Wight's base, Millbrooke House, Waterstones and Dress for Less, Newport.

Closing date for entries is Friday 31st October and our Award Ceremony will be on Friday 12th December where there will be entertainment from Huxley Magician and Hannah the Vintage Songbird. Spiderman will also be on hand for photo opportunities and help present some of the awards, along with the High Sheriff, Jacqueline Gazzard and Gioia Minghella-Giddens.

I am optimistic this will be a very good year for entries so our mystery judges will have quite a task reading through all the stories and filtering them down to first, second and third.

Good Luck!

Chris Centre Manager



Short Story Writing Competition

2025



Superhero

Write about a superhero for a chance to have your story recorded by a celebrity & published!

Other great prizes to be won!

ENTRY FEE (per story)

ADULTS £8.00 (1500 - 2000 words)

12 - 17's (up to 750 words) 8 - 11's (up to 500 words)

Under 8's (up to 250 words)

Under 18's suggested donation £2.00

ENTRY FORMS AVAILABLE FROM

Waterstones | Sight for Wight | Dress for Less

admin@iwsb.org.uk | sightforwight.org.uk

CLOSING DATE FRIDAY 31st OCTOBER 2025

AWARD CEREMONY ON FRIDAY 12TH DECEMBER 2025

RIVERSIDE CENTRE, NEWPORT @ 7pm

Musician



Comedian

Entertainer



**CHESNEY
HAWKES**



**ANDY
JACKSON**



**KATE
WESTON**



**DARREN
WALSH**



**RICHARD
CADELL**

Sight for Wight is the working name for Isle of Wight Society for the Blind

Registered Charity Number 1149415

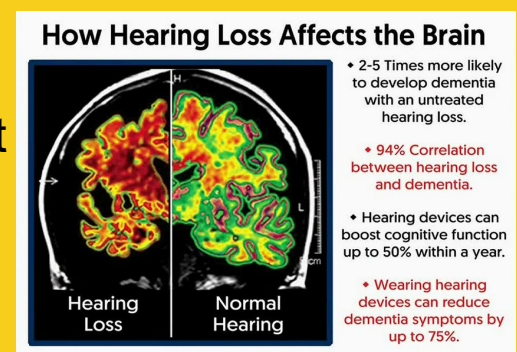
Company limited by guarantee 6240404

In this article, I thought I would look into the suspected link between dementia and hearing loss and any research that is being done in this area.



I came across some research that is currently being funded by The Alzheimer's Society and RNID (Royal National Institute for Deaf People) that is exploring the understanding of the link between hearing loss and dementia. It is believed that there is a link between these two conditions although there, as yet, is no definitive proof. What is known though is that people with hearing loss are more at risk of developing dementia but what is not known is why. This research aims to identify whether or not deafness and dementia have similar, if not, the same “disease causing mechanisms” which impact and change the cognitive ability. The researchers intend to use specifically bred mice called 3×Tg-AD mice. They will assess any changes in the brain of these mice as they age and hopefully determine whether there is a susceptibility for people with hearing loss to develop dementia.

The research is ongoing and the benefits could include the discovery of any shared molecular processes between dementia and hearing loss. It might also show a cause-and-effect relationship between the two conditions and give some understanding of how the treatment of hearing loss might, potentially, lessen the impact of dementia.



Understanding the link between hearing loss and dementia - <https://rnid.org.uk/hearing-research/preventing-hearing-loss/understanding-the-link-between-hearing-loss-and-dementia/> - last updated January 2025.

Paula Hearing Officer



Deaf Blind Support Officer



Do you have a hearing loss? If so, why not Join Caron and I at a different café each month.

For the last 16 months we have run a get-together for anyone with a hearing loss on the second Monday of each month. We have coffee/tea and cake or a bacon roll. We have a good old natter and are building new friendships. Spouses and friends are also welcome to come along with you; we have a few couples who are already attending regularly.



We try to book somewhere that is close to a bus stop as we don't offer transport. The only month we don't meet is August so the next one will be on Monday September 8th and that will be at Churchills Café at Northwood Military Museum.

Every quarter we also incorporate our feedback meeting where attendees are able to give feedback on the Sensory Service and also ideas of what you would like it to offer.



Dates for upcoming meetings are:

Monday September 8th	Churchills Café and Feedback
Monday October 13th	Newport TBC
Monday November 10th	Busy Bees
Monday December 8th	Christmas Dinner

Please contact Millbrooke House if you would like to come along to the café on 240222 to find out where we will be.

Look forward to seeing you there.

Karen Deaf Blind Assessor



Apprentice VRS



As we progress through our five main causes of sight loss we are now exploring Hemianopia.



What is Hemianopia? Hemianopia is a condition where a field of vision is lost through damage to the brain which can affect the Visual system. This can be caused by either a Stroke or a brain tumour; depending on where the damage has happened to the brain will determine where the Vision is affected.

Difficulties a person can face - Hemianopia can cause all sorts of difficulties, with not just their vision but also a person's mobility and their mental health, a person may become frustrated quickly, feel stupid, embarrassed or isolated, they may not want to go out in public just in case they have an accident or feel this could be too overwhelming.



A person who is experiencing hemianopia, may find it difficult to gain coordination, they could become exhausted more quickly than before. Their words may get jumbled and seem clumsy, they could have difficulty processing or retaining information. They may need extra support to get dressed, find things more difficult to do like tying their shoelaces, fastening buttons or seeing dials on a cooker.

The person may experience night blindness or even 'seeing things.' At nighttime this is known as Charles Bonnet Syndrome (Hallucinations). It is important to inform the client that this is not a mental health issue. It is where the brain cannot see an image properly, it is replacing it. Our brains are very clever; for example, you may be able to read this text:

7N73LL1G3NC3 15 7H3 4B1L17Y 70 4D4P7 70 CH4NG3

(Quote Steven Hawkin)



Apprentice VRS



Your brain may be able to swap the numbers for letters, this is a way to show you how the brain can replace something it cannot see.

Treatment and Aids Available - There is no cure available but there are aids and rehabilitation to help a person manage and adapt to the change.

Aids available are physical objects such as Canes and training, Talking clocks, Liquid level indicators, Dycem, Mobility training, Independent Living skills.

There are also Technology aids such as Adapted phones for example: Real Sam, Blind Shell, Apps: Seeing AI, Be My Eyes, Lazarillo, Envision AI.

Support

www.strokeassembly.org.uk

Stroke Helpline: 0303 3033 100

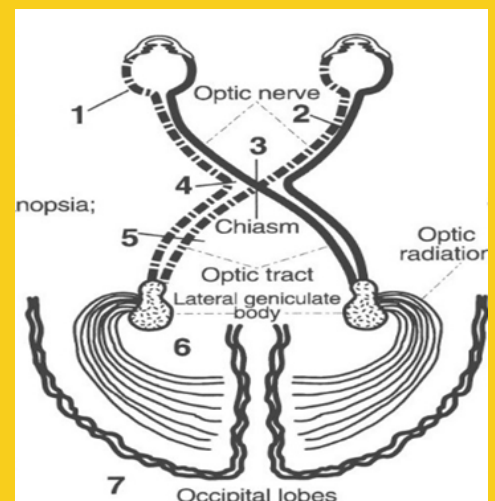
Did you know.....

The left side of your brain controls the left side of your eyes and the right side of your brain controls the right side of your eyes.

This Diagram shows how the brain and eyes work together with the Eyes at the top of the picture.

(Anne L. Corn and Jane. N. Erin, 2010)

If you know anyone who has had a stroke or a brain tumour and may need our support managing their vision changes, please contact our Wight Sense team on 01983 240222.





Meta AI Glasses



Ray-Ban Meta Smart Glasses are designed for general users, not specifically for blind individuals and are not meant to replace orientation or mobility aids. Always use proper navigation techniques and tools when wearing the glasses.

With the Meta AI open on your phone, activate the glasses by saying, “Hey Meta.” The glasses will engage entirely through voice, answering your questions. Use natural language, be specific and experiment with different commands. Look and Tell me are the most important.



This article is written for the CURRENT (v16.0) UK version which is being rolled out and FYI new Oakley glasses are the same software, just more designed for sports use.

Using your phone’s internet connection, the glasses can describe surroundings, identify objects, read documents and answer general questions. Saying, “Hey Meta, look” prompts the glasses to take a picture and describe what’s ahead. You can follow up with “tell me more” or ask for detailed descriptions. It can read handwriting, digital displays and signs, noting lighting is important.

For reading, commands like “read this,” “summarise,” or “translate” can help interpret printed materials. Ask specific questions about documents, such as dates, names, phone numbers or, for example, “Hey Meta, when is the next train to London” when looking at a train departures board.

You can set reminders by saying “remind me to...” with a time and task. Meta can remind you about appointments, medication and more. Reminders must be deleted or edited using the app. To take photos or videos, say “take a photo” or “record a video.”

Use voice commands to send messages and make calls through Messenger or WhatsApp. The glasses integrates with a given list of apps; e.g. Spotify, Apple Music, Audible, Facebook, Instagram, you must enable them first. Use commands like “play Wham Rap by Wham” and pause, next, volume up/down to control media.



Although not reliable for navigation, Meta can assist with spatial awareness. It can help locate landmarks, identify objects, or describe what’s nearby. Commands like “where is the door” or “what’s in front of me” are helpful, but users should still rely on canes or mobility aids. Be My Eyes works with the glasses too.

Meta can identify colours, clothing, food, and medication (but not dosage) and did identify my cat, Kitty when I introduced her.

Meta also responds to general queries like weather updates, trivia, recipes, nearby restaurants, or contact details services and you can ask it to translate text, or even request Meta to write a poem about what you're seeing.

Overall, anything you can hear on your phone like Google Maps you can hear through the glasses. The Glasses provide hands-free, voice-activated assistance for identifying, reading, capturing and interacting with your environment. Features will continue to improve with updates, so regular exploration of commands is encouraged. V16.0 is now being rolled out which includes the feature, ‘tell me more’ and a move towards live AI rather than taking a single picture, then interrogating it.

My best advice, just talk to it naturally, ask questions and see what works. We do have a trial pair at the Charity please call for details and set up a trial with them.

Did you know we have our own 100 Club? This is our own lottery but restricted to 100 members. Each month entrants pay £2.00 for a number with 40% prize money distributed as a single prize and the remaining 60% going directly to support our services.



This quarter's winners are Denise, Madeline and Viv. We'd also like to welcome our new members Ruth, Jane and Den. If you would like to join the Sight for Wight 100 Club, it is just £2.00 a month; you can pay annually or by Standing Order each month.

As a charity, Sight for Wight relies entirely on donations from our supporters and the time and expertise our volunteers kindly donate to us. We are always looking at new ways to raise both awareness and funds. If you would like to help, please never hesitate to contact Susan at the office on 522205 with your ideas.



We were lucky enough to get a stall at the Isle of Wight Festival and raised just over £1,250. It was an extremely warm weekend but our volunteers all thoroughly enjoyed our Human Fruit Machine, made with the help of staff,

Susan, Jasmine, Chris, Sam and Volunteer Matt.

A huge thank you to Sarah who made a Sight for Wight Fox (pictured with Volunteer Lin) which certainly helped to draw in the gameplayers!



This quarter we also held and hosted:

- Bucket Collection Freshwater TESCO
- Bucket Collection Newport ASDA
- Easter Square Raffle
- Pudding & Quiz (Millbrooke House) by Pete and Sue Young
- Chillerton Coffee Morning
- VE Day 80th Anniversary Street Party
- Been beneficiary of the Waverley Raffle
- Sold books and CD's through Ziffit
- Provided and served refreshments for four days at Open Studio Cowes and Gurnard
- Stall at Bembridge Street Fair
- Music Quiz at Newclose Cricket Ground organised by Tracy and Pete
- Ruth has done awareness talks at Plessey, Wootton Creek WI, Newport WI and Newchurch Interest Group whilst Lisa spoke to Shanklin Towns Women's Guild

Books for Sale

We are delighted to inform you that TESCO, Freshwater has kindly allowed us to have a permanent bookstall with them so if you browse our books and see something you like then please leave a donation in our Sight for Wight collection receptacle.

A huge thank you to TESCO for supporting us.





IT Information for Members



I am delighted to say that our IT support, along with some new pieces of technology have been very popular with our members.

The IT drop-in sessions that run on a Monday are becoming more popular every month. These sessions offer members help with their mobile phone or laptop and we can suggest ways of making them more accessible.



We can now offer a demo of a piece of software called JAWS. This software is designed to run on any Windows computer and has a wide range of tools to make everything more accessible. It has a very useful voiceover function, along with many options for navigating around the screen.



We also have a pair of Meta Smart Glasses available for members to try. These Smart Glasses are a huge step forward in helping the visually impaired and boast several fantastic features.

On the front of the glasses are two tiny cameras that can scan the environment in front of you and give detailed information via the tiny speakers built into the arms next to the user's ears.

The glasses can do things such as reading cooking instructions, tell you when the next bus is, what is going on right in front of you and even translate languages.

If you would like a demo of JAWS or the Meta Smart Glasses then please give the office a call and ask to speak to myself or Caron.



Could you spare some time to help?

At Dress for Less, our lovely shop, we rely on our wonderful ladies who volunteer and help us keep everything running smoothly.

There are a variety of roles available within the shop that contribute to helping our customers and promoting Sight for Wight. We will show you how things are done and you can then choose what you would like to be involved in. You can volunteer the hours that suit you and we will support you every step of the way. Whilst previous retail experience is a bonus, it is not in any way essential.



I am hoping that someone can help me with a new and exciting role. To boost sales we now sell items on eBay and I am looking for someone to help me with this?



Volunteering at our shop provides a wonderful opportunity to make new friends with like-minded ladies. We regularly meet for coffee, lunches and other social events where great friendships are formed. This is a wonderful opportunity for you to support Sight for Wight.

If you would like to find out more about volunteering with us, just pop into the shop or call me, Debbie, on 01983 523197 or email: retail@iwsb.org.uk

Debbie Dress for Less

Education Update

Since the last Education Update we have been to Greenmount Primary to their Year 5 and 6 classes and we've been to Newport CE Primary to their Year 5 and 6 classes.



Before the Summer Holidays, we are going to Wootton Primary to their Year 5 class and to Greenmount Primary, again, this time to their Year 3 and 4 classes.

We've had some Volunteer interest in helping at the schools, which is great! So if anyone else is interested in helping, I can invite them to come along to a school visit to see how the Education Programme works in the classes.

A big thank you, as always, to the Volunteers for their time and support in coming along to the schools with me; without your input and time, this programme wouldn't be available to the schools across the Island so I very much appreciate their involvement.



As it is coming up to the Summer Holidays, I've looked to see how many Schools and Children we have delivered the Programme to since January and we've visited:

9 schools and taught 630 children!

So thank you to every school who has allowed us to visit and help spread the importance of keeping your eyes healthy to reduce the risk of sight loss.

Terry's Ten Teasers

I don't know if you'll think this is good news (or the other sort!), but... I'm back, with another quick quiz for this issue of Sight for Wight's wonderful magazine! To ease us all back in gently, I've kept it short this time, with just ten questions. Maybe more next time; let's see how it goes...

SEASONAL

- 1 Why do white clothes feel cooler to wear in hot weather than darker coloured ones do?
- 2 Is 21st June the first day of Summer or mid-summer's day?
- 3 Approximately how many hours of daylight do we get on the Island on the longest day of the year?
- 4 (A different season!) Which bird will "tuck his head under his wing" in the poem "The north wind doth blow, and we shall have snow"?
- 5 What's the highest temperature ever recorded on the Island (to the nearest 2 degrees either way)?

POT LUCK

- 6 Can you think of a proverb which means exactly the opposite of "Many hands make light work"?
- 7 Thinking of the numbers between 10 and 100, how many times does the number 2 occur?
- 8 How long (approximately) is the Isle of Wight Coastal Path?
- 9 There is a five-letter word which means "join together", but if you rearrange the letters it means exactly the opposite ~ what is it?
- 10 Who had more number one hit singles in the UK, Elvis Presley or The Beatles?



Terry's Ten Teasers Answers



- 1 Because they reflect more light and heat, keeping it away from the body.
- 2 It can apparently be called either (though goodness knows where the logic is!)
- 3 Around eighteen or nineteen hours, with darkness between shortly after ten at night until just before four o'clock in the morning.
- 4 The robin.
- 5 36.7c/98.1f in Northwood in July 2022; (35 to 38 fine for a point. If you knew the year as well, give yourself an extra point!)
- 6 "Too many cooks spoil the broth".
- 7 18 times (12, all the twenties, then 32, 42 and so on...)
- 8 70 miles/ 110 kilometres (10 either way is fine for a point); not all of it is on the coast, and it's not all paths, some of it being along roads.
- 9 Unite/untie.
- 10 Elvis; he had twenty-one, and The Beatles had eighteen.

SIGHT FOR WIGHT (01983) 522205 enquiries@iwsb.org.uk
sightforwight.org.uk

WIGHT SENSE (01983) 240222 info@wightsense.org.uk
wightsense.org.uk

Opening Hours: Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm

DRESS FOR LESS (01983) 523197 retail@iwsb.org.uk
57 Pyle Street, Newport, IOW PO30 1UL

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