

# Newsletter

## Summer 2026

Your Local  
Sight Loss Charity



**SCAN & LISTEN**

A QR code that, when scanned, likely leads to the charity's website or a specific resource. The QR code is white and set against a dark blue background.

Millbrooke House, 137 Carisbrooke Road,  
Newport, Isle of Wight PO30 1DD

Charity number 1149415  
Company Number 06240404



# Chair Report



With the warmer weather now here, we can once again enjoy outdoor activities in the garden at Millbrooke House. The improvements and new planting made this year have created a lovely space for everyone to enjoy, especially during special occasions.



Our programme of weekly and monthly activities remains varied and interesting. If there is something new you would like to see included, please let us know and we will do our best to arrange it.

The annual holiday at Warners continues to be a highlight of the year and is always greatly enjoyed. I would like to thank the staff there for their support, and also Susan and Caron for helping make it such a wonderful break for our members.

Our 'Hello Everyone' QR Code is proving to be a valuable aid, and it is excellent news that it will soon be used in GP surgeries. Our aim is to help make everyday life more accessible and inclusive.

We also thank Wightlink for the travel aids they are introducing following discussions with us, and all companies willing to listen and act on our suggestions.

My sincere thanks go to all the staff at Sight for Wight (Visual Impairment) and Wight Sense (Hearing Loss). Their knowledge, kindness and dedication provide invaluable support, so please do phone or visit Millbrooke House where you will always receive a warm welcome.

Finally, heartfelt thanks to our loyal volunteers. We simply could not manage without your generosity, time and continued support.

My thanks to everyone.

*Sue* Chair of Trustees



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# CEO Update



Hello Everyone and welcome to our Summer Newsletter! One of the key areas of focus for us right now is improving access to information across the Isle of Wight. We have started rolling out our “Hello Everyone” QR Code initiative again, across a number of GP surgeries, which is a great step forward to give people with sight loss the confidence to move through everyday spaces independently by turning the written word into clear, human audio.



One of the many highlights this quarter was our members’ holiday at Warners. It was fantastic as always. I had the chance to spend some time with many of you while you were there and enjoyed some great conversations and ideas around more adventurous activities. These conversations are so important. They help us understand what matters most to you and shape how we move forward. We are already looking at how we can build on some of those ideas and bring more of those experiences into what we offer.



We have also taken the next step in our journey towards Disability Confident Level 2. For us, this is not just about recognition, it is about continuing to champion inclusion, creating opportunities, and making sure that people with disabilities feel supported, valued, and confident in all aspects of life.

Collaboration continues to be a big focus for us. We are opening ourselves up to more collaborative projects with community groups, businesses, and other charities across the island. Through our awareness sessions, accessibility training, and engagement work, we are helping to build a more inclusive Isle of Wight.



# CEO Update



Looking ahead, we are placing a strong emphasis on empowering young people and individuals with disabilities. This includes building confidence, developing skills, and creating meaningful work experience opportunities. We know there is a real gap when people leave education and move into employment, particularly around accessible technology and support, and we are committed to playing our part in addressing that.

I am also really pleased to welcome Paul to the team as our new Finance Officer. Many of you will already know him, and it is great to have his experience and support as we continue to strengthen the organisation and plan for the future.



I want to take this opportunity to thank you all. The support, the conversations, the ideas, and the energy you bring make a real difference. If you have friends, family, or colleagues who might be interested in getting involved, whether through volunteering or simply learning more about what we do, please encourage them to reach out. The work we do is meaningful, it builds confidence, and it genuinely brings people together and, importantly, it is something special to be part of.

There is a lot to look forward to this year, and I am excited about what we can continue to achieve together.





# Member Activities



## 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. Cost is £6.00. Limited transport is available.



**Tuesday:** Yoga at Millbrooke House between 1.45pm and 2.45pm; come along and try gentle yoga. Just £4.00 which includes refreshments. Starting 2nd June.



**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.



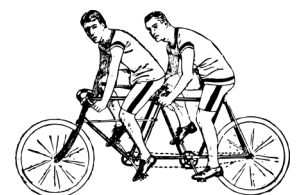
**Thursday:** Mix and Mingle at Millbrooke House between 10.30am and 2.00pm. Planned activities include crafts, quizzes and entertainment. The cost is £4.00 plus £3.50 for transport if required.



**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.



**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. The cost is £3.00.





# Member Activities



## 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.



**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.

**Second Friday of the Month:** Walk and Talk; a short walk is normally between one and half and two miles. The cost is £2.00 plus £3.50 for transport. The group enjoys coffee and cake and is a lovely social activity.

**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.



**Eye on Social** is our afternoon group held on the third 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. Next Eye on Socials: 17th June - Aviation Museum, Sandown Airport. 15th July - Mottistone Manor Gardens.

**For more information and to reserve your place, please call Susan on 522205.**



# Volunteers' Update



National Volunteers Week is an opportunity to thank all our wonderful volunteers who do so much for us throughout the year. This year we are inviting all of the volunteers to Millbrooke House to say THANK YOU and hopefully the sun will shine and an enjoyable afternoon will be had by all.



I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all our new volunteers; we hope you enjoy your time with us in whatever role you take on and perhaps learn some new skills too. I also hope you will be able to join us on the 5th June and meet fellow volunteers.



Our diary is looking very busy over the next few months and I will keep you updated on events, activities and trips as they occur. It really is wonderful that we have so many volunteers who go above and beyond to help us in so many ways; I would not enjoy my job if I didn't have fantastic volunteers who are always so willing to help me. Thank you each and every one of you; I hope you pop along on Friday 5th June between 3pm and 5pm to Millbrooke House so that we can thank you personally!

**Susan** Volunteers & Members Manager



Sight for Wight is planning a very special event; a Christmas in July Fair, here at Millbrooke House between 1pm and 4pm.

There will be festive music, Christmas decorations, tombola, raffle and everything Christmas for you to come along and enjoy, including a visit from Father Christmas!

If you have any good quality items for the following stalls, please drop off or call the office: Christmas Decs, Raffle, Tombola, Books, Bric a Brac, Plants, Jigsaws.





# Key Information & Statistics On Sight Loss In The UK



More than two million people are living with sight loss in the UK. This level of sight loss is severe enough to have a significant impact on their daily lives. On top of this, there are also many people with an eye condition who are at risk of developing sight loss in the future.

The more than two million people living with sight loss include:

- People who are registered as sight impaired or severely sight impaired
- People whose vision is better than the levels that qualify for registration
- People who are awaiting or undergoing treatment or surgery that may improve their sight
- People whose sight loss could be improved by wearing correctly prescribed glasses or contact lenses

There are more than one million blind and partially sighted people living with a long-term, irreversible eye health condition. Of the two million people living with sight loss in the UK, more than one million are blind and partially sighted people living with sight loss caused by a long-term eye health condition that cannot be reversed, such as age related macular degeneration, glaucoma, and diabetic eye disease. Around 320,000 people are registered as Sight Impaired or Severely Sight Impaired.

This subgroup of the two million has received a Certification of Vision Impairment (CVI). Eligibility is complex, but typically requires someone to be unable to read the top letter on an eye chart.

Every day 250 people start to lose their sight in the UK.

This is equivalent to one person every six minutes. This statistic includes sight loss as a result of age related macular degeneration, glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy, and some of the other causes of permanent and irreversible sight loss in the UK. Many more people will start to live with sight loss as a result of uncorrected refractive error and cataract.

The number of people in the UK with sight loss is set to increase significantly. It is predicted that by 2050 the number of people with sight loss in the UK will double to over four million.

One in five people will live with sight loss in their lifetime.

In addition, many more people will experience sight loss as a result of eye injury, cataract or refractive error.

The majority of people with sight loss are older. Age is a significant risk factor related to eye health and sight loss. Nearly 80 per cent are 65 years or older.

Around 60 per cent of people living with sight loss are women.

Younger people from certain ethnic minority groups are at greater risk of some of the leading causes of sight loss.

But, overall, people from ethnic minority backgrounds are not more likely to have sight loss compared to white people. This is because risk of sight loss is so closely linked to age, and ethnic minority groups in the UK have a younger average age.





## **Wight Sense (Sensory Service)**

Hearing Café is for those with hearing loss, their family and friends.

On the second Monday of each month 10.30am – 12.00pm.

We will be visiting the Donkey Sanctuary on July 13th.

There is no meeting in August.

On September 14th we will be at The Range in Cowes.

## **Following a Meeting with Wightlink**

If anyone needs extra help at all, there is a Helping Hand card available to order online. This is a discreet way of asking for assistance. QR codes are available giving information.

Low income scheme through the IWCC for those who are on benefits on the website.

Anyone who needs a companion to travel is entitled to one via the booking system. This is free, and no evidence is needed.

There is now a calm and quiet room available for those who need it. Priority seating is in red vinyl. Familiarisation trips are available on request.

If you have trouble booking online there is now a journey-assisted travel line. This is free. There is a WhatsApp Accessible Travel group. The staff will be learning basic BSL.

Mats on the FastCat will be changed for contrast to make more visible.



# Meet Baily



Hello, my name is Baily, and I am currently on work placement at Sight for Wight as part of my course at the Isle of Wight College. I hope this marks the beginning of a longer journey, allowing me to continue contributing to the organisation.

I didn't grow up on the Island, having spent my early years on the south coast and attending the Royal Hospital School in Ipswich before eventually relocating here. Moving around has given me a broad perspective and varied experiences.



My main interest is technology. I enjoy working with code, problem-solving, and developing apps or games. I've already created several applications which, although not all still active, have been valuable learning experiences. My most significant project so far is an encryption app using custom methods and secure file handling, which remains unbroken.

I try to live by the idea of always aiming higher, regardless of where you start. One of my long-term ambitions is to work for a major space agency, contributing to the design and development of space technology.

During my time at Sight for Wight, I hope to continue supporting the Charity, particularly in digital and technological areas. I'm keen to help develop tools that improve accessibility for visually impaired people, ensuring they are not left behind as technology evolves.

Thank you for welcoming me; I'm very grateful for the opportunity and excited for what lies ahead.

*Baily*



# Focus on Carol



I was born in Ashford, Kent in 1953.

When I was three years old my family moved to St Paul's Cray which is a suburb of Orpington within the London Borough of Bromley, Greater London. I have one brother and one half brother.

I went to Midfield School for Infants and then moved to middle school followed by Walsingham School for Girls when I was 13.

When it was time to leave school, I finished on the Friday and went straight into the world of work the following Monday working at TESCO. I started off doing the basics but worked my way up to Staff Instructor and Supervisor and worked there for approximately ten years.

After TESCO I worked at various supermarkets in my local area. I also worked in a couple of pubs and also Woolworths!

In October 1991 I moved to the Island where I met my husband in Freshwater; we married in December. I have lived in Freshwater ever since as it's a lovely part of the Island and I don't plan to leave.

Since living on the Island I worked at the Farringford, Freshwater and spent 11 years working at Norton Grange, starting as a chalet maid and working my way up into the dining room and silver service. I left Norton Grange in 1997 and worked at The Gouldings until 2007 and then worked for the Coop until 2012 when my eyesight started to deteriorate in 2013. I now have glaucoma, cataracts and dry eye condition.



# Focus on Carol

I became aware of Sight for Wight thanks to Action on Hearing who kindly signposted me and I have been a member for about six years now. I regularly come along to the coffee mornings on a Wednesday and Mix and Mingle on a Thursday. I also listen to the Audio Books.

Having worked at Norton Grange I have now attended two holidays there, organised by Sight for Wight and we all have so much fun, especially the dancing in the evening!

My interests include music, rock and roll and Elvis Presley.

I used to enjoy ten pin bowling and roller-skating back in the day. I also used to knit and crochet but can't do this now due to my eye condition.



I am a people person and really enjoy socialising and would recommend coming along to Sight for Wight and taking part in all their activities as it's given me a new lease of life.





# Brighton Marathon with Be My Eyes



A blind runner completed a marathon using smart glasses that allowed remote volunteers to guide him in real time.



Clarke Reynolds, from Havant in Hampshire, used the Be My Eyes app to connect with sighted helpers who kept him on course throughout the Brighton Marathon on Sunday 12th April.

Mr Reynolds, who previously completed the London Marathon with a guide runner said, he would have stopped at 15km without the support of volunteers. He also said, the race was one of the best experiences of his life, adding: "This is for all the visually impaired people out there, to push the boundaries of what society tells us we can and cannot do."

Mr Reynolds, from Havant, is also known as "Mr. Dot" - an alter-ego he employs when he travels around the country teaching braille through art in schools.





# Fundraising



Our fundraising team has been very busy over the last few months and we cannot thank everyone enough who have contributed their time to make all our events successful.

Our Easter Knitting Campaign, once again, proved successful with over £1100.00 raised and we thank all our loyal supporters for selling them in the normal outlets, the knitters and people who kindly donated eggs, it really is amazing. The Easter Square Raffle held within Millbrooke House raised £165.00; thank you to ASDA for donating the 1st prize.

Our grateful thanks go to IOW Community Club Indoor Bowls Club who recently raised £1519.00 from their charity weekend tournament; the members came in and presented a cheque during our Coffee and Chat morning.



We are so grateful for kind hearted members of our community thinking of our charity when arranging their events.

Looking ahead, we have our Christmas in July event on July 4th, (see page 9) and our wonderful volunteer, Lin, is opening her gardens up on July 25th for a Cream Tea afternoon for Sight for Wight.

## Open Gardens and Cream Tea Afternoon

13 Oxford Street, Northwood, Cowes PO31 8PT

2pm – 4pm





# 100 Club



**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 Alex, Glyn and Gwyneth. Congratulations!

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.

## Short Story Writing Competition 2026

I am delighted to inform you our short story writing competition is back and will be launched late June/early July. This year's theme is 'Love, Hope, Courage'.

I can confirm that Richard Cadell and Chesney Hawkes have kindly agreed to read for us again and we have newcomers, Stuart McGinley (Nation Easy Radio South), Paul Topping (Isle of Wight Radio) and Alex Polizzi from The Hotel Inspector.

I hope that you will consider entering this year!



*Chris*

Reception Manager



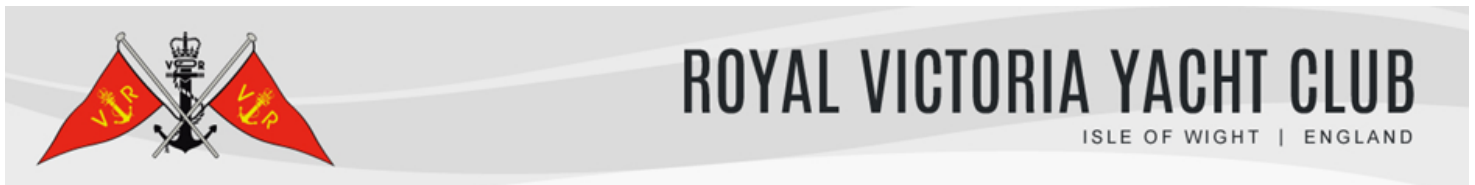
# Talking News



Our Talking News was first produced in 1975 on 90-minute audio cassettes; the service began with 102 copies and grew to a peak of 480 by 1996. In 2010, we moved to USB memory sticks, improving both sound quality and production speed. Today, we produce just under 100 USB editions, alongside online access via Alexa, website, and Facebook, giving members more choice in how they listen. The service relies on the dedication of around 35 volunteers each month, including pickers, readers, recorders, and copiers. Their commitment ensures this valued service continues to reach those who depend on it and it remains completely **free of charge**. The USB sticks are sent out on a Friday afternoon and, subject to the post, arrive the next day.



**If you'd like more information or would like to receive our Talking News then please contact Sam on 522205.**



**Saturday 18th July 11.00am – 4.30pm**

**COME AND JOIN US FOR A DAY ON THE WATER!**

This is a fantastic event with a variety of boats to choose from: Ribs, Wet Wheels, Yachts etc.

They also provide lunch, tea and cake and live music.

If you would like to book a space please call the office.

Numbers are limited and, if oversubscribed, a ballot will take place.



Once again, Sight for Wight had a wonderful time at Norton Grange, Yarmouth. We enjoyed 3 days and 2 nights having such fun and plenty of laughter trying new activities, making new friendships as well as dancing the night away!

Once again, our thanks go to the wonderful staff at Norton Grange who looked after us so well. We hope to book again for next year so watch this space!



# Dress for Less

## Dress Agency



OPENING HOURS:  
Tuesday to Saturday, 10am until 4pm

Visit us in store - 57 Pyle Street, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 1UL

### Sell with Dress for Less

- Book an appointment to bring in up to 6 items.
- We'll check them, agree a price, and display them for 6 weeks.
- When sold, you receive 50% of the sale value.
- The other 50% supports Dress for Less and Sight for Wight.



*For those who love fashion and enjoy the traditional values of personal and helpful service, this is a great way of supporting Sight for Wight.*

Email: [retail@iwsb.org.uk](mailto:retail@iwsb.org.uk) Telephone: 01983 523197

## Wet Wheels

Once again, we have the opportunity to have a trip on Wet Wheels, a specially adapted craft giving people of all abilities the chance to experience the sea. The date is July 23rd from Cowes Corinthian Yacht Club, West Cowes at 10am; the cost is £10 per person. The trip is around 1 hour 45 minutes.

If oversubscribed, a ballot will take place, although an extra date has been requested.



## Spirit of Scott Bader Catamaran

We have the opportunity to experience a trip on a catamaran from East Cowes Marina. They are offering half day and full day trips at a cost of £15 or £30 for the day. If you would like to have a trip please call the office and we can give you dates that are on offer.

Members who have experienced both of these trips in previous years have thoroughly enjoyed it so why not try something different.



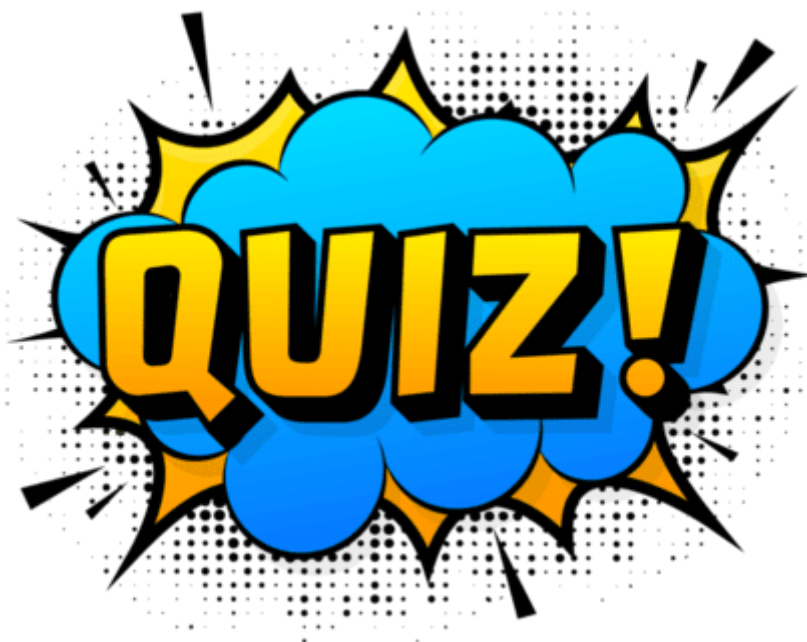


# Terry's Ten Teasers



## QUESTIONS:

- 1 Who sang the song "Looking out my back door"?
- 2 How many whiskers does a cat usually have?
- 3 On which lake are the Niagara Falls?
- 4 Who owns them?
- 5 What is the last prime number before 100?
- 6 Approximately how many hours daylight does the Island have in mid-Summer?
- 7 In what year was Island Roads given responsibility for maintaining the Island's roadways?
- 8 How many witches did MacBeth meet?
- 9 April 15th was the 114th anniversary of what famous shipping tragedy?
- 10 London is sometimes referred to as France's sixth largest city; true or false?





# Terry's Ten Teasers Answers



- 1 Creedence Clearwater Revival.
- 2 About 24 (4 rows of 3 on each cheek).
- 3 Lake Ontario.
- 4 There are three Niagara Falls; America owns Bridal Veil & American Falls, and Canada owns Horseshoe Falls.
- 5 97.
- 6 About sixteen and a half hours (sixteen is fine for a point).
- 7 2013 (April 1st as it happens; I'm saying nothing!!).
- 8 Three witches.
- 9 The sinking of The Titanic (the "unsinkable" ship...).
- 10 It is true; so many French people live in London that, since 2012, they have had their own MP in the French parliament.

**SIGHT FOR WIGHT** (01983) 522205 [enquiries@iwsb.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@iwsb.org.uk)  
[sightforwight.org.uk](http://sightforwight.org.uk)

**WIGHT SENSE** (01983) 240222 [info@wightsense.org.uk](mailto:info@wightsense.org.uk)  
[wightsense.org.uk](http://wightsense.org.uk)

Opening Hours: Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm

**DRESS FOR LESS** (01983) 523197 [retail@iwsb.org.uk](mailto:retail@iwsb.org.uk)  
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**NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE IN THE FOLLOWING FORMATS:**  
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