



visibility

Autumn 2006

Welcome to our Autumn 2006 Newsletter!

This edition of our newsletter is full of news of service developments and expansions. Visibility continues to go from strength to strength and although we are well established as the local provider of services for visually impaired people in the west of Scotland, we know we still have a great deal of work to do. There are many visually impaired people in the west of Scotland who do not know that help and support is available to them and we would like your help in making them aware of Visibility.

Why not pass your copy of this newsletter on to a friend or neighbour who could benefit from getting in touch with Visibility? Or ask them to call us and we will be delighted to send them their own copy.

Tell us what you think!

We have been producing our newsletters for almost two years and we are interested to hear what you think of it.

We want to know if the information we include is interesting to you. We also would like to know if the newsletter is too long or too short – basically if you have any views on the newsletter, we would really like to hear them!

If you have access to email, you can email your thoughts and ideas to **newsletter@visibility.org.uk** or you can telephone **0141 332 4632** and let us know what you think.

VISIBILITY NEWS

Developments and Expansions

The Community Support Team visited Milngavie this month and held the first of a series of Information and Support evenings. We were delighted with the level of interest shown. Social Work's Anne Harkins was in attendance and Anne provided participants with an informative talk about the registration process and the role of the Sensory Impairment Team within East Dunbartonshire.

The evening was facilitated by Community Support's Paul McArthur, who was on hand to provide information and advice. Paul aims to hold a second session on 29 November and will be happy to provide anyone from East Dunbartonshire with further information on this and future sessions. For further information, please call the team on **0141 572 0746**.

Our popular **Patient Support Service** at Gartnavel continues to thrive and Visibility's Community Support team are now offering a similar service to other hospitals in Glasgow. This new service has begun with the Glasgow Royal Infirmary and Stobhill hospitals who are now referring patients. For more details contact **Celia Traynor** on **0141 211 6753** or **Shelagh Palmer** on **0141 332 4632**.

Visibility's Community Support team have launched a new project working with community optometrists. Seven optometry practices from around Glasgow have enrolled in a pilot project where they refer clients who need additional support, advice and information to Visibility. If we find that this works well then we hope to extend the service to other community optometry practices. If you are interested in more information about this project, please contact **Susie Campbell** or **Shelagh Palmer** at Visibility on **0141 332 4632**.

Expansion of Counselling Service

For the past year, Visibility has been offering a counselling service in North and South Lanarkshire. This service has recently been expanded and is now available to anyone in the west of Scotland who can travel to our venues in Airdrie, Hamilton, Glasgow or Paisley. The counselling service is for anyone with sight loss, their families and friends.

Although the counsellors do not work with under 16's, they are very happy to counsel parents of children with visual impairments. For more information contact the **Community Support Team on 0141 332 4632**.

Do you live in North Lanarkshire?

Visibility's Supporting People Service provides practical support to people in their homes to help them maintain their independence. At present we have some vacancies in North Lanarkshire for people who are eligible.

Our service has now been providing support to adults with a visual impairment for over three years and we have received extremely positive feedback from service users and family on the professionalism of the service. Our success stories include people achieving their specific goals such as gaining full time employment and preparing and cooking a meal. The majority of service users feel that they are building confidence and self esteem to a level where they are more confident about trying something new or going to a new venue.

If you live in North Lanarkshire and wish to find out if you are eligible to receive this service, please contact **Debbie** or **Scott** on **0141 332 4632**.

Volunteering with Visibility

Visibility continues to actively involve volunteers in a variety of roles within the organisation including befriending, one-off type tasks, GO adult and children, annual Sound-Site event, fundraising activities and awareness raising talks.

Recently there has been growing demand and expansion of the Go Project which offers a wide range of social, leisure and recreational activities for children and adults affected by sight loss. In recognition of this we recently ran a recruitment campaign to try and increase the number of volunteers available to offer support within Go.

We were delighted by the response to the campaign which generated 35 enquiries and resulted in 6 new volunteers being recruited. Some of the volunteers have already completed their Visual Impairment Awareness Training and following receipt of references and CRBS Disclosure Checks, we hope to have all the volunteers in post at the earliest possible date.



Visibility volunteers helping out at the annual Sound Site event

GO!

Go! Adult

Go! Adult participants recently visited the Royal Yacht Britannia in Edinburgh. Everyone enjoyed the tour and had a lovely lunch at Baxter's Restaurant.

Some members of Visibility's board of directors attended our October drop in day. They chatted with Go participants about their opinions and views of the Go! Project. A big thank you to everyone who came to meet the Directors, who had an enjoyable time meeting everyone and appreciated all the effort that had been made on their behalf.

- **Forthcoming Events**

The Go! Adult Committee has organised a trip to the Metro in Newcastle for a day's Christmas shopping on Wednesday 15th November. The Metro is Europe's largest shopping and leisure centre and should offer much variety for those looking for a special present or two. Please phone 0141 332 4632 if you are interested in attending.

- **Classes**

The weekly tutored classes started back up again in September. Along with our usual classes such as **yoga** and **keyboard**, we have two new classes. **Learn Spanish** will run on Tuesdays at 2pm to 4pm and due to much demand and popularity a second **Braille** class will run on Wednesdays from 1pm to 2.30pm.

The **book club** will run on the first Monday of each month. It will start on Monday the 6th of November.

The next **Drop in Day** will be Monday 6th of November between midday and 3pm.

The **Christmas Drop in Day** is on 4th December. The Go! Adult committee is inviting all the participants to celebrate the festive period with some live music from the existing classes and refreshments such as mince pies and shortbread.

Go! Teens

The Go! Teens got together in August to enjoy a social night at the Visibility premises. They had great fun listening to music, ordering takeaways and making ice cream sundaes.

Forthcoming Go! Teen's activities are a Halloween party, with buffet, games and music on 28th of October at Visibility premises and a Christmas Shopping Day out on 26th of November.

Go! Youth

The Go! Youth Participants went to a special exhibition on the education of visually impaired pupils in Glasgow from 1936 to 2006, at the Scotland Street School Museum in September.

They also went horse riding at the RDA in Summerston where everyone had a great time.

Forthcoming Go! Youth activities are a Halloween party on Friday 27th of October with music, fun games, prizes and a spooky buffet! We will also be organizing a trip to the Dry Ski Slope in Bearsden on 12th of November.

If you would like to attend any Go classes or activities please telephone 0141 332 4632. Please note that due to the popular demand of many of our Go activities, we have now introduced a booking system. Please call Gavin or Tabassum for further details.

Action for Blind People Information Bus

The Community Support Team will be working with Action for Blind People who hope to visit Scotland in December this year. Action for Blind People staff will be arriving in their information bus which is stocked with various pieces of aids and equipment for visitors to try out. Action's staff have a wealth of knowledge around visual impairment and the aids available, and there will be a team member from Visibility's Community Support Team on the bus to provide information on local services. It is hoped that the bus will visit Glasgow, North Lanarkshire and East Dunbartonshire. If you would like to find out more please contact Visibility.

Scottish Gas Winter Payment

Anyone who is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, Incapacity Benefit, Pension Credit, War Disability Pension, Child Tax Credit, Carers Allowance, Severe Disability Allowance Council Tax and Housing Benefit, Income Support, Income Based Job Seekers Allowance or Working Tax Credits and who purchases fuel from Scottish Gas may be entitled to qualify for the Winter Fuel Payment. The criteria is that, if you purchase electricity only - you may be entitled to a refund of £60 for single fuel (either gas or electricity) or if you purchase Dual Fuel - you may be entitled to £90.

If you successfully obtained this payment in 2006 it would be advisable to re-contact Scottish Gas to ensure that you qualify and are registered for the period of 2007.

For further information call **Scottish Gas** on **0845 6022008**.

Staff News

Congratulations to Sarah Andanda, our Go! Group Worker who has recently become the proud mum of Mariella.

The Community Support Team would also like to introduce Jane Hossack who has recently joined Visibility. Jane will be providing emotional support and information, both from Visibility's Patient Support Service base at Gartnavel Hospital and within the community.

Handy Hints

- Are you one of those people who are always losing your glasses, magnifier or other everyday items? If so, why not try this handy idea for a storage holster on your armchair. Take a double handed oven glove (that's an oven glove that has the two hands connected by a strip of material). Place it over the arm of your armchair, so that one end hangs over the outside of the chair and one end hangs over the inside. Tuck the inside end between the cushion and the arm and the other end will form a handy pocket to keep your glasses etc. If you find that the oven glove slips to the floor, you can weigh the inside end with a small packet of dried rice or lentils (keep them in the packet!).
- For people who use shampoo and separate conditioner put a rubber band on one bottle to identify them.
- When sewing on a button that is the same colour as the garment, put tissue paper between the fabric and the button to show contrast.

If you would like to include your handy hints in the next edition of the newsletter email [**newsletter@visibility.org.uk**](mailto:newsletter@visibility.org.uk)

For more details on any aspect of Visibility please contact 0141 332 4632 or write to Visibility, 2 Queens Crescent, Glasgow G4 9BW

Visibility is the trading name of GWSSB (formerly Glasgow and West of Scotland Society for the Blind). GWSSB is a company, registered in Scotland limited by guarantee with its registered office at 2 Queens Crescent, Glasgow, G4 9BW. Registration Number: SC116522 Scottish Charity Number: SCO 09738