



# visibility

Spring 2006

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## **Welcome to our Spring 2006 Newsletter!**

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2006! In this edition you will find news of our work to raise awareness of the issues that people affected by visual impairment face every day. You can also read about Visibility's response to the Eye Care Review that is very much a live issue for everyone involved in visual impairment. Our new welfare rights worker is working hard in Lanarkshire to assist people over the age of 60 – read the information on page 3 for further information.

Within this newsletter you will find a great deal of information on how you can help raise funds for Visibility. Visibility is one of the charities people can choose to raise funds for when taking part in the Great Scottish Walk on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June. The longest walk is 12 miles, however for people not so energetic there is a 6-mile option and a 'Golden Mile' option. In addition, there are 'Wee Walks' throughout Scotland for primary school-aged children. Mums, Dads, Grannies and Granddads can come along and enjoy a day out. All Wee Walkers receive a medal, certificate and goody bag! The Glasgow Wee Walk is on 23<sup>rd</sup> April. For further details please contact Fiona Sandford on 0141 332 4632.

We are also looking for volunteers to place Visibility collection cans. Each can collects approximately £25 and if we can place 100, then this amounts to £2,500 every few months. This income could for example, fund many of our activities for young people or help elderly people receive the benefits which can make their lives so much better. If you think you know a shop, café, sports centre where you can place our can and collect it every two months or so, please contact the office on 0141 332 4632.

**As always we welcome your comments and views on this newsletter or any aspect of Visibility. Please contact Fiona Sandford, Chief Executive on 0141 332 4632 or email [fiona@visibility.org.uk](mailto:fiona@visibility.org.uk).**

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## SERVICE NEWS

### Raising Awareness of Visual Impairment

With almost 21,000 people in the west of Scotland registered as blind or partially sighted we know that many more people could benefit from our services. We therefore intend to increase awareness of visual impairment across the community as a whole.

#### South Lanarkshire Council

Visibility was asked by South Lanarkshire Council to provide a number of visual impairment awareness sessions for its staff over the forthcoming months up until June 2006. The training to date has been provided to librarians, social workers, nursery nurses, teachers and building planners. The sessions form part of a day-long training course on disability awareness and are open to any council employees.

Visibility wants to increase our visual impairment awareness training to organisation's and companies across the west of Scotland.

**If you know any organisation or company who would be interested to find out more about the training we provide please contact Andrea Vanlandschoot on 0141 332 4632.**

### Volunteer Speakers

To help us raise awareness of Visibility across the community we are looking to recruit volunteer speakers. If you are over 18 years of age, reliable, good at communicating with people and public speaking then this could be the right voluntary job for you. Visibility will help you every step of the way with training and the provision of talk materials. Visibility is committed to reaching out to more visually impaired people and we couldn't do this without help from volunteers.

**For more information on becoming a volunteer speaker please contact Visibility on 0141 332 4632.**

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## **Visibility's Welfare Rights Service now available in North and South Lanarkshire**

A reminder to our readers that people over the age of 60 who are residents of North and South Lanarkshire and directly affected by sight loss, can now make use of our welfare rights service. Visibility's service offers support and assistance when claiming welfare benefits. The Welfare Rights Officer can visit people at home or make appointments to visit our office.

**Our Welfare Rights team can be contacted on 0141 572 0748.**

## **FUNDRAISING NEWS**

As a charity, Visibility could not continue our work without the generosity of people who fundraise for us or give donations, often in recognition of the support they have received from our services. Our valuable work depends just as much upon the generosity of people who help us plan for the future by leaving us a legacy in their will.

Visibility has seen some growth in income levels, however, as funding for charities becomes more competitive we have to work hard to sustain and increase our income so we can continue to develop our essential projects and services.

During 2006 we hope to see an increase in people giving regularly to our work. We are grateful to all donors who have chosen to Gift Aid their donation to us. A charity can reclaim tax on any donations made by individuals, whether large or small, regular or one-off. If you pay tax you may be aware that Gift Aid is a scheme by which a charity can reclaim the tax on a gift at no extra cost to the donor.

We would love to see even more people undertake fundraising events for Visibility. On the middle pages is a calendar of events that you, your friends, family members and colleagues may wish to become involved with.

Please feel free to remove the calendar and place on your notice board, whether at home or work.



## **FUNDRAISING EVENTS CALENDAR 2006**

**Please help us raise vital funds so that Visibility can assist children and adults affected by serious sight loss. We need your help!**

### **Anytime - Parachute jumps**

Parachuting is a once in a lifetime experience. Visibility is looking for adventurous people to make an exhilarating sponsored parachute jump on our behalf.

### **Sunday 21 May - Glasgow Women's 10k Glasgow**

Open to all female applicants aged 15 years or above on the day of the race, this is a 10 Kilometre road race through Glasgow, finishing at Bellahouston Park.

### **Sunday 18 June - Great Scottish Walk Edinburgh**

A new event for Visibility and great for people of all ages and abilities. Anyone can enter either the 6 or 12 mile walk as an individual or part of a team. There is also the Golden Mile aimed at people from all walks of life – young, elderly, disabled, or those who feel that they are unable to manage the full six or twelve mile walk. All participants are presented with a special medal and certificate.

### **Sunday 3 September - The Great Scottish Run (Half Marathon and 10k) Glasgow**

Open to all participants aged between 17 years and above on the day of the race for the half marathon and 15 years or above on the day of the race for the 10 Kilometre road race through Glasgow.

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## **Sunday 3 September - Junior Great Scottish Run Glasgow**

Open to applicants aged between 9 and 17 years old; this is a 3 Kilometre race through Glasgow Green.

## **Sunday 10 September - Finnieston Crane Abseil**

Following the success of last year's abseil we are delighted to offer this unique opportunity again to take part in an exhilarating abseil whilst at the same time raising valuable funds for Visibility.

## **November 2006 - Ten Pin Bowling Company Challenge Event**

An event with a difference! The emphasis is for teams to have fun as well as compete for the Visibility Challenge Shield. Sighted participants wear a blindfold or visual impairment simulation spectacles while playing.

## **Overseas Challenges**

Overseas challenges are rising in popularity each year. Trips such as cycling in Vietnam or trekking in Peru reward participants with the trip of a lifetime and raise important funds for Visibility.

## **Why not organise your own event with our support?**

You might like to organise an event or raise funds for Visibility in other ways. This could include organising a collection or a quiz in your local pub.

Visibility resources and lots of encouragement are available for all our fundraising events.

**For information on any of the events or how you can get involved please contact Fiona Sandford on 0141 332 4632 or email: [fiona@visibility.org.uk](mailto:fiona@visibility.org.uk)**

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## Visibility Ten Pin Bowling Charity Challenge goes from strength to strength

In November 2005 Visibility's sell out Corporate Ten Pin Bowling event took place at AMF Finnieston. In a closely fought competition Mazars Scotland came out tops, beating teams from Thomas Tunnocks, KPMG, TC Young, Gerrard Ltd, Opfer Logan Architects, Harper MacLeod and a team from our own Go! Bowlers.

The event raised £1,400 for Visibility and teams are already signing up for next years event.

**We are already signing up companies for our 2006 event. If you would like to be involved in this fun evening please contact Fiona Sandford at [fiona@visibility.org.uk](mailto:fiona@visibility.org.uk)**



The winning team from Mazar Scotland with the Visibility Shield and gold medals.

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## **Visibility responds to Scottish Executive Review of Eye Care Services in Scotland – Interim Report**

Visibility was recently invited to comment on the Scottish Executives interim report on Eye Care Services. Although we will also comment on the final report, our readers may be interested to learn a few of the key issues we have made comment on at this stage.

Firstly, we congratulated the Scottish Executive for the production of the report and the commitment which has clearly been demonstrated at ministerial level to improving services available to people affected by visual impairment. However, we felt that in general, the report was insufficient in its present form and required further information on all aspects of a patient's journey.

We said that we hoped the final report would contain detailed service standards as they are critical to successful service delivery and must be well thought out.

We also commented on the recommendations with regard to certification and registration. When drawing up recommendations, we strongly suggested there might be a negative impact on service users that may arise from dismantling the present system.

**If anyone is interested in receiving a copy of the interim report and a full copy of Visibility's response, please contact either Fiona Sandford or Valerie Breck on 0141 332 4632.**

### **Gabor Kovats**

Describing himself as a blind Hungarian, working for the General Register Office for Scotland, Gabor is trying to find out how blind and partially sighted people would like to receive their 2011 Census. If you would like to assist Gabor by completing the questionnaire he has devised, please contact him at the General Register Office for Scotland, Ladywell House, Ladywell Road, Edinburgh, EH12 7TF. Telephone **0131 314 4283**

Email: **[gabor.kovats@gro-scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:gabor.kovats@gro-scotland.gsi.gov.uk)**

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## Visibility Newsletter

We produce a regular newsletter that we are happy to send to you. The newsletter is available in braille or audio format. We are also happy to email the newsletter to you which helps us reduce our postage costs. If you would like us to send it to you in any of these formats please contact Claire Williams on **0141 332 4632** or email **claire@visibility.org.uk**

## Visibility Website

Please visit our website at **www.visibility.co.uk** and encourage your friends, family and colleagues to visit it also.

## Guide Dogs Research

Guide Dogs for the Blind are conducting research on the needs of blind and partially sighted people in the UK, with a view to understanding the needs of blind and partially sighted people and the services to address these needs. They plan to carry out a series of interviews in March and April 2006 and are asking for your support in carrying out this survey. Guide Dogs hope that information from the survey will enable them to bring to the attention of the relevant authorities the support services required by blind people, as well as potential barriers to people's full access to services and opportunities in society.

If you would like to participate in this survey please call Guide Dogs freephone number **0800 028 4348** and leave your details. The research agency may then call you as part of the survey, but will ensure your contact details and responses are kept confidential at all times.

**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