



Bury Society For Blind and
Partially Sighted People

Bi-Monthly V.I. Link – Issue 36

May 2023

Introduction

As we enter the summer season, we cannot ignore that times are tough for many. There are new challenges for us all now with the impact of the Cost of Living. Here at BBS, we are feeling the pressure too but, at the end of the day, our priority is you – the client. Not only are you living with the day to day challenges but are also dealing with sight loss. You are an inspiration to us all. Only yesterday I received an email from a relative of a client who thanked us for our help and said that our support was marvellous. It's only marvellous if it meets YOUR needs. Please do let us know what you are struggling with, where you see support is essential and, let's not forget about fun! Can we be instrumental in making you smile?

Last month, I had the delightful task of taking two clients to a group who meet at Philips Park. The group were busy making plant hangers. Our clients, with the right support, joined in, drilling and sawing with the rest of the group. In fact, if I'm honest, I was a little disappointed that more help wasn't required as I had been looking forward to a bit of drilling myself! The sun was shining, we were outdoors in a cobbled courtyard in a beautiful woodland park – I felt very lucky, and the clients were having a great time – pushing the boundaries of what you can do living with sight loss. On the subject of open spaces, I met up with a wonderful lady, Emma, from Green Spaces recently to discuss funding for a refresh of our 'garden area' as the raised beds are in need of repair. Emma mentioned the possibility of a young designer from the RHS assisting us with the layout. This designer has been involved in the wonderful RHS Bridgewater Gardens! We were looking to organise a trip to these very gardens as our 'Annual Outing' this year. This could also be a 'scouting exercise'. Would you like to be involved in a 'garden focus group' and help plan, with this RHS designer, our 'Future Garden'?

As you will see later in this edition, we are currently reviewing our Five-year Business Plan and your input is an essential part of that plan. We want to ensure that we are there for you every step of the way, now and in the future, providing the service and support that enables you to have a full and active life.

Jill Logan – CEO

Update on Services and Support

Our first 'Tech Forum' – (provisionally given the title 'I Techs'!), will be happening on Friday 2 June at 10-11.30am. All clients who have been busy reviewing a variety of alternative USB players will be coming along to give their feedback and to decide which is the winner. The session is open to anyone who would like to know more about the USB players, or would like to share their highs and lows with tech equipment, be it mobile phones, tablets, podcast access, Google Lens or the echo dot to name just a few! Over the coming months, we will be inviting a range of non-technical people who have experimented with new technology to come along and share their 'golden nuggets'. The session will be very informal, welcoming everyone to share their stories. If you are feeling a little overwhelmed with your new tech, this is the session for you. Come along, have a chat, and pick up some hints and tips from others.

Eye Talk Support Programme: Gill Currie will be resuming her Eye Talk session on Tuesday 23rd May 1.30pm-3.00pm. The course lasts three weeks and covers a range of subjects that directly impact on newly diagnosed clients and their families, including practical demonstration of equipment, benefits and allowances available, travel advice and emotional support. Transport can be provided if required, to attend these sessions. Please contact Gill if you wish to be included.

Family Support Group: This group will commence on Wednesday 7th June, 1.30pm-2.30pm, and then the first Wednesday of every month thereafter. The session is aimed at members, their partners and/or friends who have acquired additional health issues themselves. Representatives from other agencies will come along each month to share information and support in their area of expertise and to understand from members how they can adapt their services for sight loss. We are waiting for confirmation for our guest in June but are hoping to focus on Dementia in June. In July we have booked SpeakEasy who work with people with stroke related speech issues, and in August, a member from the Living Well will be attending, looking at balance exercise and support. In the pipeline is Bury Hospice, The Stroke Team, Calico (Supported Housing) to name just a few. Please do come along and join, and help raise awareness of sight loss within these organisations as well as obtaining information and support yourself.

If you are interested in becoming a Dementia Friend, there are two sessions coming up very soon. These free interactive sessions aim to help understand how dementia affects a person and what you can do to make a difference.

Ramsbottom Library, Carr Street – Thursday 18th May, 1pm-2pm.

Prestwich Library, Longfield Centre, Friday 19th May 1pm-2pm.

You can book your free ticket by visiting or ringing Ramsbottom Library on 0161 253 5352 or Prestwich Library on 0161 253 7214.

Expectations Exceeded Workshop: Thursday 19th May 4pm-5pm. Online. We are delighted to launch our ‘Virtual Forum’ for young and working age clients with this initial workshop. This is in association with Blind In Business and Manchester Sensory Support. Learn from, and speak with, blind and visually impaired young people working in modern and successful careers. Gain an insight into their education, finding work, the technology they use and what support they have received. Our own trustee, James Sweeney, will be part of the Q & A panel talking about his own experiences. To enrol on the session, sign up with Event Brite: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/expectations-exceeded-workshop-tickets-619088609697> or call us if you need any assistance to book and we can help. All are welcome to join this workshop, including volunteers, family members and fellow professionals.

Healthy Living Group: Thursday 19th May 10.30am-12.00pm: Thursday is obviously the day! On the 19th we welcome back paramedic, Janice Cheetham. Janice is back by popular demand as her first visit proved so interesting, and valuable! Janice will be covering some basic First Aid advice as well as explaining the purpose of the defibrillation kits, strategically placed in public areas throughout Bury. This session, as with all the Healthy Living group sessions, is open to all, so do come along and pick up some valuable hints and tips. We would strongly recommend that Group Facilitators, or a representative from the groups, come along and take advantage of this great session.

Glaucoma Group: Fourth Wednesday of every month, 1.30pm. At their May and June meetings, the Glaucoma Group are welcoming our own Early Intervention Team who will be explaining the home assessment process and then demonstrating some handy daily living skills. In July they are hoping to welcome back Shelley Caulfield from the Live Well Team who had everyone involved in some simple chair-based exercises at her last visit. Always a popular

visitor, Shelley no doubt will be motivating all with her enthusiasm and knowledge to keep you fit and well.

Article taken from April 2023 RNIB New Product Guide.

For this edition we're featuring the new 'Verbalise'. Maybe you don't have the internet so you can't access Alexa or use an echo device. Don't worry, have you considered the Verbalise disc shaped talking clock that can record and playback up to 10 daily reminders?

This small black clock has a large white button on top, which speaks the time in a clear English voice when pressed once (and date if pressed again). Controls for set-up, alarms, volume, voice selection (male/female) and recording reminders are on the base of the clock. There is also a small digital clock in the base to assist with alarm setting, although the clock has full voice support for set-up and alarm instruction.

To record a reminder, simply press and hold the Record button until it beeps, speak into the microphone (on the base of the clock) and release the button when you have finished recording. The clock will play the recording back to you. If you wish to re-record, press and hold the record button again. Once you have confirmed your recording you can toggle between voice and beep to add it to an alarm. This clock also features four-level volume control, a nine-minute snooze function and the compact design sits flat and secure, so it cannot easily be knocked over. Because it is radio-controlled, which means it receives a signal from a radio transmitter, the time and date will set and regularly update automatically, including when the clocks change.

You can set your clock to receive either the UK, Germany, US or Japan time signals which means it will automatically update when you visit these countries. If you are outside these countries you are also able to set up the time and date feature manually. For people who are registered blind or partially sighted you can order direct and pay no VAT. Cost £38.00. Order online at shop.rnib.org.uk or call the RNIB Helpline on 0303 123 9999. Alternatively, BBS are happy to place the order for you for a 10% admin. charge.

Looking Ahead: In April, the Board of Trustees and Staff had a workshop to look at issues impacting on Bury Blind Society and future support. As we emerge from the pandemic, it is essential that all stakeholders have a say in the future of the Charity. Consequently, at the last Volunteers and Client Forum,

all who attended were asked for their views on the future and what they perceived to be the future requirements. Michelle Chadwick, a longstanding member of the Society, attended the forum and gave the following resume of the session.

'The Board of Trustees and staff are looking to re-evaluate the services it provides to its members. They would like members, volunteers and friends of the Society to complete a questionnaire so that they can best understand what is important to you.

On Wednesday, the 10th of May those members and volunteers who attended the morning drop-in completed the questionnaire in small groups, which was really good to bounce ideas off each other. We answered four questions and these were as follows:

1. What makes you proud/best thing about BBS?
2. What does the future hold?
3. What do we want BBS to look like in the future?
4. Write the top 3 things you feel BBS should focus on. Please prioritise, i.e. immediately (short), medium (couple of years/next year), long (future).

It was a great opportunity to really think about what we felt should be the priorities going forward. To ensure all views are taken into consideration, the staff will be arranging for all stakeholders to be contacted by phone, email or text to ask for your thoughts and suggestions to assist in the planning for the future of Bury Blind Society so please do have your say. Michelle.

Wednesday Wisdom Sessions:

For our May 'Wednesday Wisdom' session, we decided to swap the planned session, and Glynis took a group of clients and relatives to review the new crossings outside the Centre. Diane Webb has kindly provided a short review of the experience.

'I was part of a group with a rehab officer who all tried to use the newly refurbished crossings outside the premises of Bury Blind Society. I was surprised and disappointed to note that not all crossing controls had the tactile spinning cone underneath to denote when it was safe to cross. I was also unnerved to find I was not the only participant who inadvertently wandered into the cycle lane out of the safe pedestrian zone as I didn't find anything to denote the divide between the two areas. As I do have a lot of experience of using difficult junctions in other parts of the town, I am

confident, with considerable rehab training, I could learn this set of crossings if I needed. However, the problem is for anyone, myself included, who would come to use this junction on a casual or occasional need, we wouldn't stand a chance. I hope this helps you both with updating our readers and for funding for rehab training for anybody, who would need to use this junction.' Diane.

Sadly, it would appear the experience wasn't great. However, that's what we're here for and we are now in the process of obtaining funding to provide one to one guidance and route training for clients, and to feedback on some 'quick fixes' that may make it easier for us all.

Future Wednesday Wisdom sessions will be:

June: Small items, Big Difference: Demonstrating equipment to make daily living easier and safer.

July: Sighted Guiding session – useful for volunteers, relatives and fellow professionals.

August: Podcast session.

Local Elections: In edition 35 we reported that the local elections were taking place on Thursday 4th May. We were delighted to hear such a positive response from our braille readers as we, on behalf of Bury Council, provided the braille version of the voting papers. This is a service we can provide for any organisation and it makes such a difference to people living with sight loss who read braille. Contact us via our website, email or telephone for further information.

Spotlight On: BIG in Mental Health

Who We Are: BIG, also known as Bury Involvement Group, is a local charity for people aged 18 and over, who are experiencing mental health conditions. No referral is required, you can just turn up at our groups. BIG is run by volunteers with lived experience of mental health conditions. Although based in Bury, people from any area can attend BIG. We are a strong independent voice in mental health. BIG's vision is for a future where those in our community who experience mental distress are treated with compassion, empathy and respect, and receive the right support at the right time.

BIG hold a selection of sessions to meet all needs. Mondays, 6.30pm-8.30pm, Escape Room in Castle Leisure Centre their 'Stronger Together Group'. The group is a safe space for people to come together to share their experiences

and listen and learn from others in a non-judgemental environment. Tuesdays is the Recovery Group, meeting at 6.30pm-8.30pm at Bury United Reform Church, Parsons Lane, Bury. This is a discussion group covering various mental health topics and related subjects. On Wednesday there is a Calm In Crisis Group meeting 1.00pm-3.00pm at Church Lane Community Centre, Church Lane, Prestwich. Finally, there is a Drop In Group meeting on Fridays 1.00pm-3.00pm at Bury United reform Church, Parsons Lane. All groups are for people aged 18 and over who have mental health conditions. £1 contribution to attend.

Bury Blind Society were also featured 'In the Spotlight' in the Bury Integrated Care Partnership's recent newsletter. As well as explaining our services, the article was highlighting the Digital Inclusion Pilot Project we have undertaken with Henshaw's. This is the one to one digital support clinic held fortnightly on a Friday at the Centre with Chris from Henshaw's. This project was a great opportunity to enhance the digital assessment undertaken by our Early Intervention Team by providing additional, personalised tech support for individuals. If you are interested in a referral, please contact the Centre.

Funding & Volunteering News

Thank you to Tesco, and to all who supported us with the Tesco Blue Token campaign. We were delighted to learn we had come second receiving an amazing £1,000 donation! This money will contribute to developing new activities in the community and in the Centre.

We are grateful to Radcliffe Rotary for providing a donation, allowing us to subsidise the 8 spaces we have booked at the 'Driving Experience' Day with Speed of Sight. The event will take place at The Three Sisters Race Track in Wigan on Tuesday 11 July. If you are registered partially sighted or severely sight impaired and interested in attending, further details will be released at our forthcoming dinner with Mike Newman. Mike, the Fastest Blind Racing Driver, will be telling us all about his fascinating journey and achievements with cars, speedboats and even planes! Seven times world record holder Mike will also be talking about the Driving Experience with his charity Speed of Sight. Book your place for the two-course dinner and talk via the link below, our website or by simply ringing the Society on 0161 763 7014. The meal will take place on Tuesday 6 June, 6.30pm start. Tickets are £18 for VI's and £20 for guests.

<https://buryblindsociety.sumupstore.com/product/an-evening-with-mike-newman-fastest-blind-racing-driver>

Not only did we have an enjoyable evening, but we were the beneficiaries, along with Bury Hospice, at Woodcocks Solicitors Annual Fundraising Quiz Night. I am pleased to say we didn't disgrace ourselves and came a respectable third and are looking forward to hearing how much was raised! Our thanks to Woodcocks for their support.

Our Ten Pin Bowling Tournament at the end of March proved a great success. In total there were nine teams, made up of BIG in Mental Health, Healthwatch, Bury Grammar, Bury Croquet Club, Diabetic Eye Screening, Radcliffe Rotary, 'The Independents', and our two teams, The Bury King Pins and The BBS 'A Team'. A great evening was had by all. So many people approached us saying it gave them a new perspective on the challenges faced by people living with sight loss after wearing the Simulation Specs whilst bowling. The overall winning team was the Bury Croquet Club and the top scoring individual was our own Jim Currie. Well done to everyone involved. The Bowling group will be resuming at the end of this month. If you wish to join in, please contact the office. They meet at Hollywood Bowl, The Vue, Bury at 10.30am on a Tuesday morning. Also, by popular demand, there is a further competition planned for later in the year – watch this space!

Watch out for our forthcoming Race Night, provisionally booked for the end of August – it promises to be a fun night for all ages!

Summer Fundraising:

We are busy preparing for a full summer of fundraising activities. If you are able to help out as a volunteer do get in touch. Or, just come along and support us, it would be great to see you!

- Friday 19th May: 8pm-11pm: Open Mic Night at The Swan, Tottington Road. A great evening of entertainment.
- Sunday 21st May, 12-5pm: Prestwich Clough Day, St Mary's Flower Park, Bury New Road. Prestwich.
- Sunday 28th May, Ramsbottom Rotary Duck Race, Bridge Street Gardens, Ramsbottom. Duck Race tickets on sale from the Centre, £2.00 per duck – all proceeds go to Bury Blind Society for tickets we sell. First Duck Race 12pm.

- Wednesday 14th June, 10am-3pm: Father's Day Stall at The Millgate Shopping Centre.
- Sunday 25th June, 10am-7pm: Prestwich Carnival, St Mary's Park, St Mary's Road, Prestwich.
- Sunday 2nd July, 10am-7pm: Tottington Big Day Out, Crompton Meadows, Beryl Avenue, Tottington.

Other ways to support and help us continue our support and activities:

A big thank you to all who have donated to us during this period and a quick reminder of the various ways you can support us:

- **Text via your phone.** Just use your phone and Text to: **70450**, with the message **BURY** to donate £5. You will also receive details to make a regular donation if you wish.
- **Facebook:** We have a 'Donate' button on our Facebook page.
- **Regular donation:** direct into our Bank. For more details, contact Jill at the Society. jill.logan@buryblindsociety.org or 0161 763 7014
- **100 Club:** Our Monthly Prize Draw. Just £1.00 for a number and you can 'purchase' as many as you like! 50% of the money raised is distributed in prizes and the other half contributes directly to BBS. Application packs available from the office. Winning numbers since our last VI Bulletin:
April: 247, 438, 56.
May: 187, 364, 339.
First Prize £118.80; Second Prize £59.40; Third Prize £19.80.
- **Wills:** We are pleased to announce we are now working with Bequeathed who are able to offer a free will service to our members and supporters. For further details, please contact us. As always, we are so grateful to the relatives who think of us when they have lost a loved one and ask for donations for the Society. Without your support we would not be able to provide such a wide range of support. Thank you.

What difference will your donation make?

£5: Would provide transport for a sight impaired member to attend an activity.

£10: Would fund a piece of specialist kitchen equipment for our daily living skills sessions.

£25: Would provide afternoon tea for a group of socially isolated visually impaired members.

£50: Would allow us to train a new volunteer in sighted guiding, first aid and visual awareness.

Celebrating Life:

Our thoughts are with all the relatives of friends and members of the Society we have lost during this period. We were particularly saddened to hear of the passing of Mike Davis, Chair of Bury Lions. Mike was instrumental in putting together the wonderful Walking Treasure Hunt we had last year, celebrating the history of Bury and our Centenary Year. Having attended his funeral at Bury Parish Church, it was clear to see why he had been so knowledgeable on the history of Bury, having spent most of his life here and given his time to many worthwhile causes. He will be greatly missed by many. Our thoughts are with Val, his wife and his family.

Upcoming Events: Here's just a few events happening in Bury over the next couple of months that may be of interest.

Speed of Sight: We know we have already mentioned this but it's worth highlighting again! Tuesday 6 June, 6.30pm at The Masonic Hall, Bury. Registered blind, Mike Newman from charity Speed of Sight will be telling us all about his fascinating journey and achievements with cars, speedboats and even planes! A lovely two course meal is included with the evening. Tickets now on sale, £18.00 for Vi's and £20.00 for guests. Can be purchased via our website or from the Centre.

Wednesday 7th June, 10am-3pm: The Elizabethan Suite, Knowsley Street, Bury. Bury Older Peoples Network Event. Aimed at people aged 50 plus, carers and community groups. The event will include information stalls and activities from local community groups, charities and support services. Roundtable conversations on GP access, transport and community activities. Lunch and refreshments provided. For more information and to register your place please contact admin@buryvcfa.org.uk or ring 0161 518 5550.

Citizens Advice Bury & Bolton have now moved into a new Bury office. They are now based on the 1st Floor, 5-10 Market Place, Bury BL9 0LD.

Friday is Food Club Day at the Manna House, 1.15pm-3pm. Bury Christian Fellowship run a Community Food Club to support people with their weekly grocery bills. Membership costs just £5.00 for a year (this can be paid in instalments). Members can visit the food club every week and for a fee of £3.00

per visit will receive goods to a value of £10-£15. (please bring your own bag to carry your groceries).

Themed Lunches: The fourth Friday of every month, Carole and Mags prepare a wonderful three course meal for just £10.00 pp. Friday 26th May has an Italian theme– ready for the Spring Bank Holiday! Booking and payment required beforehand. Refunds only available if cancelled up to two days beforehand unless exceptional circumstances, to avoid food wastage.

Thursday 15th June: Over the past six months we have benefitted from two students from Bury Grammar, Nadeem and Liam, volunteering on a Wednesday afternoon. Together with one of their tutors, Mr Hone, they are arranging a rather special afternoon. It will consist of refreshments and speaker, telling the remarkable story of Bury born Captain William Appleby, who was blinded by an exploding shell in the First World War. He became one of the first patients treated at the famous St Dunstan's Hospital. Despite his injuries he led a full life after the war, including being a founder member and organiser for the Royal British Legion. Further details will be available nearer the time. If you are interested in attending please contact the office.

'Take Five Quiz'

Answers to edition 35.

1. Who discovered penicillin? **Alexander Fleming.**
2. Which country won the very first FIFA World Cup in 1930? **Uruguay.**
3. In what year was the first-ever Wimbledon Championship held? **1877**
4. Which bone are babies born without? **Knee cap.**
5. Which of the Seven Wonders is located in Egypt? **The Pyramids of Giza.**

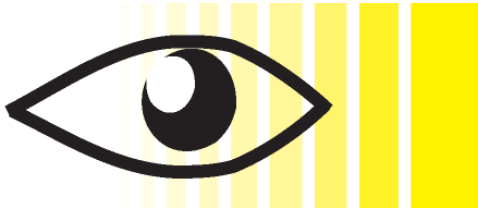
This edition's questions: (with a little hidden bonus!)

1. Which planet is the hottest in the solar system?
2. What is the name of the world's longest river?
3. What is your body's largest organ?
4. In what year was the first-ever Wimbledon Championship held?
5. What animals are pearls found in?

We hope you stay safe and well. Enjoy the Summer Sunshine!

Jill and all the Team at Bury Society for Blind & Partially Sighted People.

Bury Society for Blind and Partially Sighted People



An Evening with Mike Newman



Fastest Blind Racing Driver

**Tuesday 6th June
for 6.30pm start
at Masonic Hall**

Mike Newman from charity Speed of Sight will be telling us all about his fascinating journey and achievements with cars, speedboats and even planes! He will also be talking about the Driving Experience for Blind & Partially Sighted People.

Tickets: £18 for VI's and £20 for guests.

Includes two course meal. Tickets available, call 0161 763 7014 or visit: buryblindsociety.sumupstore.com and click on An Evening with Mike Newman.



Bury Society For Blind and
Partially Sighted People

Regular Centre Activities:

Monday:

Morning: Drop In 10.00am-12pm: You are welcome to drop in any time for a cuppa. Volunteer Margaret will provide a warm welcome as your 'Meet & Greet' Host.

Music Buddies Fun Afternoon: 1.30pm-2.30pm: Held every Monday apart from the Fourth of the month.

Second Monday 10am-2.30pm - Foot Practitioner Monthly Clinic: Have your feet pampered and support the Society at the same time. Dougie Warrington kindly donates £7.50 for every appointment he has. Appointments booked via the Centre.

Third Monday: meeting at 1pm: Monthly Walk group – weather permitting. Please let the office know if you need a sighted guide.

Fourth Monday of the Month: 1.30pm-3.00pm – Musical Social Afternoon. £3.00 includes entertainment and refreshments. To book please contact the Centre.

Tuesdays: The Centre is available for external room bookings. Specialist courses such as Eye Talk are held on this day.

Wednesday:

Mornings: 10.00am-12pm. Light refreshments always available at our Wednesday Drop in Sessions and a warm welcome with Sid, Carole and Gary.

First Wednesday: Wednesday Wisdom. **Second Wednesday, June,** Volunteer Forum, **July,** User Forum.

LVA Clinic: 9.30am onwards. Weekly except Fourth Wednesday. Referral through BBS or ring direct on 0161 762 1692.

Second Wednesday, 2.00pm-3.30pm: Our Monthly Makes group meet in the large area of the lounge producing a wide selection of items. Ring for further details and to book on.

Third Wednesday, 1.30pm-3.00pm: Macular Degeneration Support group.

Fourth Wednesday, 10am-3pm Katy's Pamper Sessions. 25th May, 22nd June, 27th July. Book via the office.

1.30pm-3.00pm, Glaucoma Support Group – dates as above.

Thursday:

10.30am-12.00pm: Healthy Living Group – this weekly group, led by Jixie, covers a wide range of subjects and on the third Thursday of every month invites a guest speaker. For further details please contact the office. Booking is helpful for refreshments but all are welcome.

Afternoon 1.30pm-3.00pm: featuring, First Thursday: Bingo with Mags, Second Thursday Gary's Quiz, subsequent Thursdays, Tea and chat & table top sale. For details, contact the office.

Fridays:

Weekly: The main lounge area is taken over with our 'Lunch Brunch'. Carole and Mags provide either a cooked meal or light snack each week. 11.30am-2.00pm. Places must be booked and paid for in advance. For menu details and to book, (no later than Thursday morning) call the office on 0161 763 7014.

Fortnightly: Henshaws/BBS Digital Clinic from 10.00am: Referral via BBS.

Please note: The Centre will be closed on Bank Holiday Monday 29th May.