

East Sussex Association of Blind and Partially Sighted People

Spring 2016

Newsletter

Welcome to our new look Newsletter! Lots of news, advice and information for all our members and supporters

Letter from the Chief Executive

Hello and welcome to our new look Newsletter. Many of our members have remarked that our old style bulletins were starting to look a bit tired and they would welcome more positive and interesting news about ESAB. So here it is! In this issue you'll find a roundup of our social groups on pages 12 & 13, some interesting hints and tips on eating and eye health on page 9 as well as a diary of the Friends events this year on page 3, details of where our outreach vehicle is going to be on page 14 and how you or your friends and family can make a difference by volunteering for ESAB on page 6.

Some good news about our Head Office, it looks like we're going to be able to stay in Hailsham. We were also really relieved that we didn't suffer in the recent adult social care cuts from the council.

I hope you all enjoy our new look newsletter.

Do you follow us on Twitter?

@eastsussexblind or @CEOESAB

Please like us on Facebook

Facebook.com/eastsussexblind

The Friends of ESAB plan another year of exciting and high profile events for 2016

The Friends have just completed another successful year and are planning a number of exciting events for 2016. The first is a French Pop-up Café in St Augustine's Church Hall in Bexhill on Saturday, 9th April where you will have a 5 course lunch with wine and tea or coffee for £12.50 a head.

We then have our annual Black Tie Dinner with an Auction of Promises which is on the 28th April at Sussex Community College where we have a lovely 5 Course Dinner. The tickets are £35 and if you wish to attend please contact me (details below) we have some very exciting things to auction.

Our next event is a Golf Day at Willingdon Golf Club and if you would like to get a team of 4 together the price is £50 to include all fees and lunch on Friday, 3rd June.

Other events we are hoping to organise include another of our very successful race nights and an Open Garden, details to be announced at a later date.

The 500 Club is very popular but I still need to get the last 100 Members to make it up to the true “500 Club”. It is only £12 a year to have a lucky number (you can have as many as you like!!!) and the draw takes place EVERY month with, at the moment , the first prize around £80, Second around £46 and Third Prize around £32.

For any further information on any of the above please contact me

Shirley Price on 01323 833942

**ESAB enters this year’s Brighton Fringe Festival
Art Insight comes to the Garden Café in St Ann’s
Well Gardens from the 7th to the 31st May**

ESAB have teamed up with the Garden café in St Ann’s Well Gardens in Hove to bring you Art Insight.

Experience artworks created by both sighted and visually impaired artists. Try your hand at sound tennis, explore our sensory trail and find out what it’s really like to live with sightloss.

The event runs from the 7th to the 31st May in the café, the sensory garden and around the park.

Some of the ESAB social groups have made specific pieces exclusively for the exhibition. Touch our Seven Sisters picture created by the vitalEYES group, be amused by the Brighton VIP’s Papier Mache people or

enjoy the tree poetry around the sensory garden. Some of Brighton and Sussex's top artists have donated works that will be for sale in the café. Serena Sussex, Richard Denne, Christine Walker, Tina Wray and Rosemary Carter are all local artists who are happy to help us.

Stories and poems have been written by Steve Saunders, Carol Borowski, Jane Trott and members of our social groups.

For further information please get in touch with Sue at Head Office on 01323 832252

Your Annual Membership is due in April vital funds that help ESAB do its work

Why is it important?

ESAB is reliant on membership fees to provide support for all our members throughout East Sussex.

At less than £1.00 per month your £10.00 goes towards funding for our core overheads and is vital to maintain the high standard of services we are able to provide.

We all appreciate that costs for power, telephones, travel etc. have all seen significant increases in the past few years but our membership fees have remained the same.

Gift Aid

If you are a UK tax payer, (Income Tax/Capital Gains Tax) please sign the declaration on your membership

form. This allows ESAB to claim Gift Aid on your membership fees.

What do I get for my membership?

Regular newsletters: features on new equipment, activities, and training courses.

Training: to help you feel more confident around your home and to develop an understanding of your eye condition.

Access to Aids & Equipment: to help maintain your independence.

Mobility & Orientation: to help you regain your independence at home and in your local area.

Access to our Social Groups: A meeting once a month in your local area for activities

Helpline: We provide advice and support; if we can't help we will know someone who can.

Thank you for your continued support. Your membership form is on a separate sheet with this newsletter and we have included a pre-paid envelope to make it easier for you to return it to us.

Volunteering for ESAB can make a huge difference to our member's lives

Being an ESAB volunteer brings so many rewards. Our social group and head office volunteers in whatever

capacity have made new friends and are very much part of the team, and together with our Home Visiting volunteers, all continue to play a crucial part in our being able to help blind and partially sighted people combat isolation and loneliness.

Some of the ways in which Home Visitors can provide friendship and support include:-

Reading and writing correspondence

Going out for short walks together

Getting out to the local shops

Or simply having a chat and a cup of tea

Our Home Visiting network continues to grow.

In addition to Brighton and Hove, volunteers are now working as far afield as Hailsham to Ticehurst, and Newick to Heathfield.

We continue to source volunteers through joint working with other charity partners

We now have a waiting list of members looking for volunteers in Brighton, and from Seaford to Crowborough, and Alfriston to Rye

A recent testimonial from a home visiting volunteer in Uckfield reads “We spent a lovely two hours together this week and we got on very well. It’s just what we both wanted and we have become very good friends already”.

We also have a page dedicated to Volunteering on our website, so potential new volunteers now have the option to enquire via the website, by phone, by email, or in person for more information or to request an application form.

Finally we say a big thank you to Peter Martin. After many years' service as a volunteer for SocialEyes and VitalEyes in Brighton and Hove, Peter has decided to hang up his car keys and take a well-earned rest. We wish him well for the future.

If you, or anyone you know, has a few hours to spare that you could give to us please contact Ian at Head Office on 01323 832252

More members enjoying our training courses than ever before 295 people trained last year alone

2016 training courses available from ESAB

What's available to you

Magnification

Mobility and communication

Kitchen Confidence

IT Networking

Computer bytes

Vision Awareness

ESAB offers a wide range of useful and informative

training courses designed specifically to give our members confidence and advice to live independent and fulfilled lives. Whether its tablet computers you want to know more about or you would like to learn more skills in the kitchen. You might have lost some confidence with your mobility and need some advice on how to get around more easily.

Vision Awareness training is specifically designed to aid members of the public who work with, or come into contact with someone with sightloss. Guiding, understanding eye conditions, health and safety as well as safeguarding are all covered.

Our courses are all free, we just ask for a donation towards your travel costs

Full course information is available from Claire or Fiona at Head Office

01323 832252

info@eastsussexblind.org

A feast for your eyes

The role nutrition plays in maintaining good eye health
A poor diet can put your sight at risk. Yet, awareness of the link between diet and good eye health is low – a recent survey found 60% of people living in the UK had no idea that what they eat can affect the health of their eyes.

Vitamins, minerals and carotenoids found in many fruits, vegetables and other wholesome foods can help protect your sight and keep your eyes healthy.

Here are just some of the foods that are rich in eye-friendly nutrients...

Cold water fish like cod, sardines and tuna are excellent sources of DHA, and Omega-3 fatty acids.

These provide structural support to cell membranes and may be beneficial for dry eyes, and the maintenance of general eye health.

Green leafy vegetables such as spinach or kale are rich in carotenoids, especially lutein and zeaxanthin.

Lutein and zeaxanthin may help prevent age-related eye diseases such as macular degeneration and cataracts.

These carotenoids may also reduce discomfort from glare and enhance visual contrast.

Whole grains and avocados are rich in zinc and Vitamin B. Deficiency in complex B Vitamins may increase your risk of cataracts and retinopathy.

Papaya is a good source of beta carotene which can help to prevent 'free radical' damage inside the eye.

Garlic, onions, shallots and capers are rich in sulphur, which is necessary for the production of glutathione, an important antioxidant required to help maintain healthy sight.

Soy contains essential fatty acids, phytoestrogens,

Vitamin E and natural anti-inflammatory agents. Vitamin E is important for the maintenance of good eye health.

It might surprise you how much ESAB has to offer

Specifically for East Sussex

Low Vision Support Worker

Full time worker providing at home support and visiting 695 members per year

Mobility and orientation training. Confidence building and practical help. 150 members per year.

Certificates of visual impairment, we handle 250 of these a year.

Aids and Equipment service. 1400 interactions per year.

Skills and strategies for daily living courses, 295 members trained per year

IT skills courses, smart phones and tablets.

In Brighton

Full time Co-ordinator

Aids and Equipment Centre in

Volunteer visiting scheme with 50 volunteers

Six social groups

Central services from ESAB

16 Social Groups.

Volunteer Co-ordinator

Outreach Vehicle (OV)

ESAB telephone helpline
RNIB Big Skills training
Volunteer visiting scheme
Advocacy help for members
Lobbying local and central government
Working with local planners
Three times a year membership Newsletter
Drop in (by appointment) for Aids and Equipment
Library service
Friends of ESAB
Annual well-being call to all members
ESAB Theatre Group
Bowls club
City Synergy and Sound Tennis Sussex

Here at ESAB we are constantly being asked to help promote services and offers to our members, here are a selection that you might find useful

Seeing Ear is a new, free online library service available to anyone who cannot use printed books.

Visit www.seeingear.org

If you live in a rural area you might be eligible for a computer from the Arthur Rank Centre. They have refurbished computers from £130. For more information contact John Bennett on 02476 853066 or email johnb@arthurrankcentre.org

The RNIB Newsagent catalogue is now available. It

outlines all the talking Newspapers and Magazines from them. Call 0845 6016936 to get your copy.

thesussexbus.com can provide you with a helping hand card. Visit their website to get one

Moorfields Eye Hospital would like more people to consider becoming eye donors. If you feel you would like to leave your eyes as a donation then join the organ donor register and tell your family and friends

www.organdonation.nhs.uk

www.cartogold.co.uk/eastsussextransport/map.htm

is an interactive map that works well on iZoom and gives information on all the bus services in Brighton, Eastbourne and Hastings.

UCanDoIT is an award-winning charity that provides free one-to-one training in people's homes. They are a pan disability organisation that teaches computer and internet skills (including assistive technology) to people with disabilities Visit www.ucandoit.org.uk

The Association of Carers provide a volunteer service to carers at home assisting with IT issues and training.

They can be contacted on 01424 722309

National Rail are running a Disabled Person's Railcard offer. The annual fee is £20 (£54 for 3 years) and you save a third on off-peak fares throughout the UK

Call 0345 605 0525

www.mycateracts.co.uk is an interactive website that

provides details on waiting times for cataract operations across the whole country.

STEPS can help you live an independent life if you are over 65 or over 18 with a long term physical health condition. Problems with housing, mortgage arrears, homeless or if you just need guidance to live life to the full. Contact 01323 436414

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Social Groups

ESAB Social Groups get busy in 2016

Our social groups around the county are busier than ever before this year with events planned including everything from chair based exercises to indoor bowls, and Morris dancing to Bluebell line train rides.

Our chairman Roger Thomas has also been doing the rounds from Seaford to Lewes to Peacehaven, entertaining everyone with his stories and tales of people he has met during his time as a broadcaster with Pebble Mill Studios, from everyone from Idi Amin to Sir Terry Wogan

In Brighton and Hove, they are busy preparing for the forthcoming ESAB/RNIB art project joint venture in May
VitalEyes are making a super-sized tactile collage based on a picture of the seven sisters

The Deaf Blind group are making a mosaic picture with old necklaces, buttons and beads

SocialEyes are making a paper-mache mannequin – sounds interesting!

SPA are pleased to report that chair Jan Masterman is back on her feet after having had such a tough time of it of late and hardly missing a meeting. Special thanks also go the volunteers and especially Nova Dean who Gavin says has been 'keeping everybody facing in the right direction'. Just talking of Gavin for a second, he is the proud father of daughter Nicola Jane who's just attained an MSc with Distinction from City University London.

In Uckfield, Cyril Caddick, a veteran of Blind Veterans UK was invited to a tea party with Buckingham Palace with wife Margaret where he met Sophie Countess of Wessex

Over in Rye, Jim Thompson, not content with walking the 195 miles for ESAB from the Irish Sea to the North Sea in just 12 days, reports he has just completed another 'Winters Trail'. This time, a 6 day, 90 mile Hadrian's Wall walk for the RVS, battling a strong head wind and driving rain along the way.

In Bexhill Edith Dobson celebrated her 100th Birthday by revealing the secret to long life – Crisp Sandwiches! At the recent meeting, where they were positively bursting at the seams, Edith, 100 on 30th January, looked the picture of health. Meanwhile over in Bodle Street, you may not always look forward to your next birthday, but they had every reason to at the Tuesday Club recently, where they have just celebrated their 33rd Birthday in style at their Birthday Bash with good wine, excellent food, a birthday cake, a singalong, and dancing. A secret source said ‘we all had a smile on our face and a jolly good night’s sleep afterwards!

The Outreach Vehicle

The Outreach Vehicle (OV) has been specifically designed to help ESAB raise awareness of sight loss and to make ourselves more accessible across the whole East Sussex area. The OV has anti-glare windows, lowered suspension for single-step entry, a ramp and a spacious interior which is colour contrasted. Inside you’ll find our Aids and Equipment display and a small seating area.

Last year ESAB met over 400 people through the OV visiting community centres, fun days and care homes. Below, and to the right, are the dates for our upcoming visits. The two pictures on the lower left are of the Outreach Vehicle: the picture below shows it with its

awning out and banners up.

Dates & Venues

Thurs 28th April

East Dean Village Hall, 10am - 1pm

Fri 6th - Sun 22nd May

Brighton Fringe Art InSight

The Garden Café, St Ann's Well Gardens, Hove, BN3
1PL

Thurs 2nd June - Seaford Social Group

Sun 5th June

Uckfield Lions' Fun Day, 12-4pm

Luxford Field, Uckfield, TN22 1AR

Mon 20th June

Herstmonceux Health Centre coffee morning (10am -
12pm)

Weds 6th July - City Synergy

Social Group Diary

As a member of ESAB you are welcome to attend your local social group. They provide talks, afternoon teas, trips out and a host of enjoyable social activities. Here are their meeting times:

- Battle and Burwash 2nd Friday of the month
- Bexhill 1st Friday

- Crowborough 3rd Friday
- Herstmonceux 3rd Wednesday
- VitalEYES (Brighton and Hove) 1st Friday
- Lewes 2nd Monday
- Newhaven (on hold at present)
- Polegate 4th Tuesday
- SocialEYES (Brighton and Hove) 3rd Friday
- Rye & Winchelsea 1st Tuesday
- Seaford 1st Thursday
- Saltdean & Peacehaven 4th Monday
- Tuesday Club 2nd Tuesday (In the evening)
- Uckfield 1st Wednesday
- Brighton VIP's 4th Thursday

Don't forget the Theatre Group either, this visits Saturday Matinees at Devonshire Park Theatre in Eastbourne with Audio Description.

ESAB bowls group meets on a regular basis, please contact HQ for further details.

For further information on any of the social groups please contact HQ.

East Sussex Association of Blind and Partially Sighted People

Prospects House, 7-9 George Street, Hailsham, BN27

1AD

Telephone 01323 832252 - Fax 01323 833054

Email: info@eastsussexblind.org

Website: www.eastsussexblind.org

Charity Registration number 209535

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