

Vision Northumberland

InSight - Autumn 2023



Dear friends,

Well wasn't that a quick summer, I hope you all managed to get some sunshine between the rain showers.

Our fantastic team of staff and volunteers have been working hard over the summer to provide services; going above and beyond.

Feedback on our services is always welcome, so please feel free to speak to me or a member of staff if you have any ideas on new or different ways we can support you. Also, keep an eye out for a new project starting in Autumn, which could help you during the winter months.....watch this space.

Best Wishes, Julie (Chief Officer)

Don't let your sight loss stop you

Our Activity Coordinator, Jo has been busy adding new activities, all suitable for those with a visual impairment, to our programme.

- Mon - **Chess and games club** at Reiver House 12.30 - 2.00.
- Wed am - **Golf** at Burgham 10.30 - 11.30 (Mon sessions tbc)
- Wed pm - **'Sight in Motion' photography club**, based in Blyth but sessions throughout the region. 2.00 - 4.00. Monthly guest speakers and a September trip to Alnwick Gardens.
- Thurs am - **Walking Groups** alternating between Blyth and Newbiggin. Ponteland and Prudhoe walks coming soon.
- Thurs am - **VI Football** at Craik Park, Morpeth.
- Thurs pm - **Archery**. Waiting list for introductory course, one-to-one coaching.
- **Stand Up Paddle Boarding** taster course coming in September.

Introducing our NEW Sensory Wellbeing Service

Sensory issues like a visual impairment or hearing loss are more common than you think and can affect every aspect of daily life.

As part of Vision Northumberland's mission to support you with all aspects of your lives affected by sensory loss, we have expanded our services. Our NEW Sensory Wellbeing Service will be able to help you in lots of different ways.

As well as help with your visual or hearing impairment, Vision Northumberland can also offer advice and practical solutions to problems surrounding housing, fuel poverty, employment, transport, confidence, technology, mental health, and general wellbeing.

So if you have an issue associated with your sensory impairment, we will do our best to help you to overcome it.

Our next outreach session will be at:

Hirst Welfare, Ashington NE63 9HF

on **Wednesday 20th September, at 9.30am - 11.00am**

Everyone welcome. No booking needed. Equipment will be available for demonstrations and trying.

**TOP
TEC
TIP**

Did you know iPhones and iPads have features to help people with hearing and visual impairments make using them easier?

Click the setting icon  then scroll down to accessibility  where you can explore options available such as VoiceOver, zoom, spoken content, hearing aids pairing and subtitles.

Future activities - ideas needed

Are there things you thought you couldn't do with a visual or hearing impairment? Would you like to try new things but didn't think it was possible? Then get in touch, Jo would love to hear your ideas on our next activity.

Whether you want to swim or bake, go to judo or gym classes, our Activity Coordinator wants to make taking part in your favourite activities achievable.



Charity Flying High

We are delighted that The British Balloon Museum and Library has been awarded Lottery funding to redesign their website and create the UK's first online balloon museum! 2 of our long time supporters, Richard and Jennifer are heavily involved with the charity and we couldn't be prouder of their achievement.

Visit the website, www.britishballoonmuseum.org.uk or email Jennifer at pr@bbml.org.uk for more information.



Introducing Jack



“Hi, I have recently become the North East Engagement Manager for the Thomas Pocklington Trust, a sight loss charity that supports volunteers to fight for better accessibility and understanding of what it is to be visually impaired.

We are looking for motivated volunteers to help improve transport, street layout/furniture/signs etc and access to leisure and would be delighted to have more support.

If this is something that interests you, please get in touch either by email: Jack.moffat@pocklington-trust.org.uk or call 07773216814.”

Volunteering Spotlight



Our team of incredible volunteers are at the centre of the work we do. Their dedication, passion and generosity helps drive our services.

One of the services our volunteers quite literally drive is our door-to-door Volunteer Transport service!!

The service supports our clients to remain independent by taking them to social groups, our Chatter Box Café, appointments or to visit loved ones in hospital and care homes. This is particularly important in rural areas where transport links are poor.

Our Volunteer Transport Service is so popular our amazing volunteers carried out a staggering 552 journeys between 1st May and 31st July 2023. The difference many of these journeys make to our clients lives is immeasurable and we are eternally grateful to our team of drivers for making this possible. A huge thank you to our current drivers;

John M, Dan, Malcolm, Suzie, Doreen, Adrian, Euan, Keith, John C, Peter, David, Anne, Adam and Philip.

If you are interested in becoming one of our drivers, please call Rachael on 01670 514316.

Volunteer at our Chatter Box Cafe!

Do you have a friendly, welcoming manner? Do you enjoy meeting new people? Are you interested in combatting isolation?



Why not join our team of volunteers on Tuesdays or Thursdays to provide free refreshments and chat to visitors

Despite the recent reduction in energy prices, bills are still so high that many of us continue to struggle with the cost of heating our homes. It is estimated that 6.6 million of us are now in fuel poverty, spending over 10% of our income on fuel.

Vision Northumberland are very grateful to The Energy Advice Team from Citizens Advice Northumberland for popping into our Café last week to provide advice to our clients.

The Energy Advice Team offer FREE and confidential, face-to-face and telephone support on all aspects of what can seem an increasingly complicated world.

The Energy Advice Team can help you with issues you may have:

- Problems with energy suppliers - billing, consumption, arrears
- Smart Meter advice - dispelling myths and misconceptions
- Home safety - support fitting carbon monoxide monitors
- Provide Fuel Vouchers to eligible pre-payment customers when your funds run low

If you are concerned about any of these issues, please do not hesitate to call The Energy Advice Team directly on 01670 993 749

Northumberland Rural Employment Hubs

Would you or someone in your family like help searching for and applying for jobs, training or apprenticeship opportunities?

Come along to the Morpeth Hub for free help and friendly support. Every Wednesday 9.30am – 2.30pm at Reiver House, NE61 1TD.

For more details please contact: **Tracey Hinton on 07876 346359 or email: traceyhinton@ca-north.org.uk**

Your Donations

Vision Northumberland works hard to get funding to provide the services and support that we do. If you can help us with a donation large or small, we would be so grateful. Donations enable us to continue the great work that our staff and volunteers deliver to people with a sensory impairment living in Northumberland.

You could also leave us a gift in your Will, no matter the size. We recommend seeking professional advice when drawing up your Will.

Low Vision Products Demonstration Day 10am to 1pm - Tuesday 3rd October 2023



Would you like support with your Sight or Technology? Optelec will be holding a products demonstration day at Reiver House.

Come along and explore the latest products and technologies for blind and partially sighted people. Someone from Optelec will be on hand to answer questions and allow you to try a variety of different electronic magnifiers, portables, desktops, reading machines and much more.

Call 0800 145 6115 or email sarahk@optelec.co.uk for more info.

Contact Us



Telephone: **01670 514 316**



Email: info@visionnorthumberland.org.uk



Website: www.vision-northumberland.org



Address: Reiver House, Staithes Lane, Morpeth, NE61 1TD