

MySight York - Volunteering Extra (Summer 2021)

As Volunteer Manager one of the main highlights of my job is having contact with our team of wonderful volunteers. The last year has been challenging for everyone. I would like to thank all of you who have taken on new roles during the pandemic, we could not have continued to offer such valuable services to our members without you. I am very proud of the new volunteers who joined MySight during the pandemic, starting a new role during a crisis couldn't have been easy.

I would also like to say thank you to those of you who for whatever reason have not been able to volunteer this last year and have been patiently waiting for face-to-face volunteering to resume. I know it is hard to give up something or not to be able to do something that you enjoy. Hopefully we will all be back to doing what we enjoy soon. Thank you!

Catherine Bamford, Volunteer Manager

Resuming Services

The team are working hard to resume face-to-face activities, community activities and home visits. We realise not all volunteers or clients are ready to resume these activities and we will be contacting all volunteers and members who previously accessed these services to establish the need and work out the best way to resume them. Please bear with us whilst we do this.

Work is also underway to get other volunteering roles back and we will be in touch as soon as possible. In the meantime if you have any questions about your volunteer role

then please get in touch with your supervisor.

Volunteer Spotlight

'Hi I'm Melissa Crowland. I've been volunteering for MySight York's Keeping In Touch project since March last year and really enjoy it.

Initially I decided I wanted to volunteer throughout the pandemic because I believed that there would be an increase in people becoming isolated, and I thought that my skills which I've developed through my Social Work training and from previously volunteering for York Samaritans would help me be able to connect with people at a time where

they were being cut off from the world as they knew it.

I have really enjoyed getting to know all of my clients, they're all so different and full of knowledge, each phone call I learn something new!

I also work as a Mental Health Crisis Recovery Worker and for The University of York's Social Work Department but in my spare time I enjoy: cooking, baking, reading, creative writing and of course making connections with people.

I have been totally blind for the past 9 years, and have learned that with the right support there is nothing you can't do, it just means that sometimes you have to think of how to do something in a different way! I really love cooking and trying out new recipes, as cooking is a multi-sensory experience not having sight doesn't matter at all as there are so many different sounds and smells.

During lockdown I qualified as a Reiki Practitioner and, although my best clients are my dogs, I'm looking forward to developing this further as I'm really invested in helping people feel more positive about themselves.

Being a MySight York Volunteer has been fantastic as it has been a way of staying connected without having to leave the house, and I can say that it's brought so much joy to both

my clients and myself. Now, more than ever, it is important for us to talk about what's going on inside our heads so that it doesn't become a problem. We live in an increasingly negative environment at the moment but we are stronger together; talking definitely makes a difference.

I have loved connecting with the people I've met through the Keeping In Touch project, and hope I continue talking to them for many years to come.

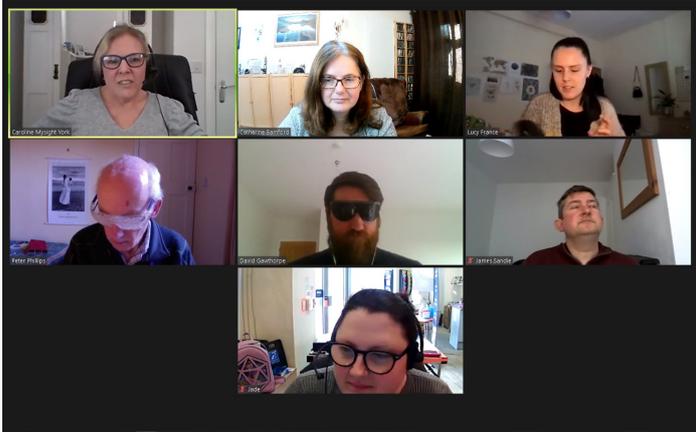


Melissa enjoying a trip to London before the pandemic

Volunteer Training

We held our very first Zoom New Volunteer Training in March. The training was split over 2 sessions to avoid Zoom overload. We had a lovely talk from a member Glynis and Jade gave a talk about some of the equipment available to help people

with sight loss. The volunteers even carried out everyday tasks whilst wearing sim specs. We will be holding a practical session on sighted guiding as soon as possible.



Volunteers at the 1st Zoom New Volunteer Training session.

Volunteer Socials

At the moment our volunteer socials will continue to be held via telephone and zoom. If you attend one of the telephone socials you will receive a call which you just answer. Zoom socials can also be joined via a phone without using video. You just dial a local rate number and you will be charged by your phone provider. Please let us know if you would like to attend. The dates of are:

Tuesday 20th July

2-3pm via Zoom

Thursday 22nd July

2-3pm via telephone

Wednesday 8th September

2-3pm via Zoom

Thursday 9th September

2-3pm via telephone

General Volunteer Enquiries, Home Visiting Service & Keeping in Touch

Catherine Bamford, Volunteer Manager, 01904 731122
volunteermanager@mysightyork.org
(Tuesday to Friday)

Fundraising

Mike Hickman, Income Generation Manager, 01904 731126
Mike.hickman@mysightyork.org
(Mon, Tues and Fri)

Keeping In Touch / Activities

Caroline Robertson, Training and Engagement Manager
01904 731124
Caroline.robertson@mysightyork.org
(All day Tues-Thurs)

Community Activities

Christian Waite, Activities and Volunteer Coordinator
01904 731127
Christian.waite@mysightyork.org
(Mon to Thurs)

Home Connections

Deb Wheller, Sight Loss Advisor
01904 731125
Deb.wheller@mysightyork.org
(Mon to Fri)

Main Office

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MySight York

live well with sight loss