

MySight York - Volunteering Extra

Spring 2024

Welcome from Catherine

You may remember in the last newsletter Carol mentioned that she was due to retire. Carol has now left and I am now responsible for the overall management of volunteers with supervisors continuing to provide the day-to-day supervision of volunteers within their area. All contact details are on the back page. If you want to discuss any aspect of your volunteering please get in touch. **Catherine Bamford, Befriending Service Manager**

A Message from Scott

“As the Chief Executive of MySight York, I am constantly humbled by the unwavering dedication and support of you, our incredible volunteers. Your commitment to our mission of supporting people living with sight loss has been nothing short of remarkable, and I am immensely grateful for each and every one of you.

In a world where time is often our most precious commodity, the fact that you choose to invest yours in supporting our organisation, speaks volumes.

As we continue to navigate through these uncertain times, I want to take a moment to reassure you that MySight York will weather this ‘cost of living storm’. Despite the challenges we may face, our commitment to our community remains steadfast. And due to your ongoing support, we are able to find new and innovative ways to fulfil our objectives.

Your willingness to take on selfless tasks, to learn, and to grow alongside us is a testament to the strength of our community. Together, we are truly making a huge difference in the lives of blind and partially sighted people here in York, and beyond.

So as we look to the future, I am filled with optimism and excitement for all that we can achieve together. Your passion and generosity inspire all of us here at MySight York, each and every day.

With my sincerest thanks, Scott.

Volunteer Social

In January we held our Volunteer Christmas not Christmas Party. The quiz brought out the competitive side in everyone attending, in particular our Chief Executive Scott who always seems to be on the winning team. There was lots of laughter, chatter, food and everyone went home with a prize. Thank you to everyone that came. It was great to see volunteers having so much fun. 1

Sighted Guiding

The saying 'use it or lose it' is used frequently and it is very relevant to the skill of sighted guiding. We are holding a Sighted Guiding session on Thursday 21st March from 1.30pm to 3pm for anyone wanting to refresh their sighted guiding skills. Booking is essential so if you would like to attend then please contact Catherine.



2 volunteers receiving sighted guiding training

Befriending Update

In the last quarter alone our befrienders have made over 170 calls or visits and have given up over 180 hours of their time to either visit or call their clients. These numbers

are amazing as is the benefit and difference they make to their clients. One lady who when she was referred to the home visiting service last year wanted to gain the confidence to be able to walk to the post box at the end of the road with a volunteer, something they achieved on their 4th visit. Truly amazing. If you are interested in becoming a befriender please contact Catherine.

Do you like swimming, tandem biking or getting out on a weekend?

We always have a waiting list for the home visiting service and at the moment we have 3 particular clients who would like a volunteer for something not as straight forward as having a chat. We have 2 clients, who as well as having sight loss use a wheelchair. One of them would like to go swimming and the other tandem biking. We also have a young client who would like to go out on a weekend. If you would like to help then please get in touch with Catherine.

Plea for tombola items

If you have items you wish to donate towards MySight York's tombola stalls, please contact Louise

Volunteer Spotlight 'Fleur Lees'

My name is Fleur and I am a volunteer at MySight York. I currently aid with VI tennis at York University. In addition to this, I also assist the team with fundraising at several events and I am always available for other activities.

Supporting MySight York with these are of great importance to me as I find them incredibly rewarding. I have a passion for helping those who are visually impaired as my husband lives with a visual impairment and therefore this has provided me with the knowledge on how to sufficiently assist and support those who are visually impaired.

My hobbies outside of MySight York consist of walking, swimming, bowling and sewing. I often walk in the countryside with my husband as we are both passionate about the outdoors.

I assist my husband with bowling as this is an activity we have become particularly fond of. Sewing is also incredibly important to me as I have done this for many years and I find it really enjoyable. Living in York has also provided me with the ability to meet many wonderful people and has enabled me to explore what great things the local community has to offer.



Fleur smiling for her ID badge photo

A Thank You from Louise

Thank you to all of our volunteers for your hard work! From 1 to 1 tech, to befriending, to fundraising, to activities, your time and support is greatly appreciated. It's a pleasure to work with you all.

Stalls Update

As we head into spring, MySight York are getting booked in for a variety of stalls. The York Hospital stalls last year were a success and MySight York have been invited back again this year. I've arranged volunteer support for both hospital dates so far, but please do let me know if you are interested in helping with future hospital stalls or any of the other stalls below.

- **Saturday 16th March, 10am to 3pm** - Knitting stall at Marjorie Waite Court's Spring Fair (Clifton, York, YO30 6DX)
- **Wednesday 20th March, 9am to 12noon.** Small tombola at Strensall Spearehead Community Café (Spearehead Hall St Mary's Church, Strensall, YO32 5XU)
- **Thursday 11th April, 9am to 12noon.** Stall at St James the Deacon Church's Community Café (Woodthorpe, YO24 2SE)

Activities

In February members of our weekly Chair Exercise group celebrated with a delicious Victoria sponge cake. The

reason for this celebration was that one of the volunteers of this group, Brenda, has officially volunteered at Chair Exercise for over two years! Congratulations and thank you to Brenda on this volunteering milestone. Without our wonderful volunteers we wouldn't be able to run activity groups.



A camera shy Brenda cutting the cake for our members.

Anniversaries

Over the last few months we have had several volunteers who have celebrated a 5 year anniversary. A massive thank you to:

- Ryan Lysaght 5 years
- Fiona Samuel 10 years
- Sheila Gallagher 15 years
- Janet Hazlewood 20 years

Office Closure Dates

- **27th and 28th March** E&I centre closed for stocktaking . Office will remain open for activities, counselling, telephone enquiries.
- **29th March, 1st and 2nd April** for Easter

Contacts

Volunteering and Befriending Catherine Bamford

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Member 2024

MySight York
live well with sight loss