



Bury Society For Blind and  
Partially Sighted People

# Quarterly V.I. Link – Issue 44

## January-March 2025

### **Introduction**

What a wonderful start to 2025! At the end of last year, we submitted a bid to Reaching Communities – The National Lottery, for a project based on the feedback we had obtained from yourselves back in 2023. It was entitled 'Future Vision' and encompassed development of support for employment, engagement, raising awareness and mental well-being. I am delighted to say the bid was successful, providing 5-year funding for this project. This will provide stability and development opportunities for the Society, enabling us to expand our current provision to address these additional needs. It is envisaged the project will start in the new Financial Year i.e. April 2025 and we look forward to updating you on what it will mean for you.

Over the Christmas period we had the main Lounge and Reception area decorated and new flooring fitted. We are holding a Celebration buffet and Drop In on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> January 11.00am-2.30pm open to all to come along and have a look around. If you can't make it, you are welcome to drop in any time to have a look as we are keen to hear your feedback and obtain your views on replacement chairs.

I hope you enjoy this edition and I look forward to updating you in April!

**Jill Logan – CEO.**

### **Services and Support:**

#### **Bee Network -TfGM event – Stockport – Gill Currie**

Since our visit from Greater Manchester Mayor, Andy Burnham, we have been included in the engagement and consultation group. In November we were invited to attend a session at Stockport Bus Station, organised by TfGM with other visual impairment groups, such as Henshaws, RNIB and the GM Sight Loss Council. It was good to see BBS being included with the larger organisations.

Jill Logan, Di Webb and myself (Gill Currie) were asked to give our feedback on the 3<sup>rd</sup> tranche of the bus fleet for the Bee Network.

We were impressed with the style of the interior, which the design team had taken on board the ideas and suggestions from the various vi groups.

- There is now more room for guide dogs or bags/luggage underneath the front seats
- There are priority areas at the front of the bus for wheelchairs and buggies
- Priority seating does have a designated area at the start of the seating and the seat backs are tactile
- Each bus on the 3<sup>rd</sup> tranche will be the same design and layout
- The colour scheme for the Bee Network is Yellow
- Once all the new buses are out on the road in all areas, they should be audio / talking and should have a display showing each bus stop
- All the seats in each bus will have a usb port, for charging mobiles etc

Unfortunately, in the Bury area, these buses will not be available to us until September this year. You may see the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> tranche of the buses in Bury, which have not been adjusted yet. We will have to be patient and wait until later this year. The south side of Manchester will be the first to see the new buses on the roads.

After the session on the buses, we were invited to have a walk around the Stockport bus station, with the design team who will be involved in the redesign of Bury Bus Station. We all gave our positive and negative feedback and the team welcomed our suggestions. A planning meeting regarding Bury is to take place in January and we have been invited to attend this for further updates and input.

By keeping us in the loop we will also be able to advise everyone of upcoming changes, hopefully in plenty of time prior to the work starting. Watch this space!

### **Beating the January Blues: Practical Strategies to Brighten Icy Winters by Ananché Jeffrey**

**Embrace Fresh Air and Sunshine:** When the sun does make an appearance during the UK winter, it's a good idea to step outside and enjoy its warmth—it's a natural mood booster. If glare is an issue, remember to pop on your sunglasses to protect your eyes and stay comfortable.

On the many grey days, fresh air is still a great pick-me-up. A short stroll or simply opening a window to breathe in the crisp air can help you feel more refreshed and uplifted.

## **Stay Active Indoors and Out**

Movement is another mood booster, so why not make it fun? Put on your favourite music and dance like you're headlining a show—no one's judging! If you're not into performing, embrace something more practical, like light stretching, chair exercises, or even tidying up with a bit of flair (dusting counts if you add a little spin).

Staying active doesn't have to feel like a chore. Movement releases feel-good hormones, keeps your body engaged, and gives you a sense of accomplishment. Whether it's playful or practical, the key is to keep moving in ways that feel good for you.

## **Stick to a Routine**

Establishing a daily routine can provide structure and comfort during the colder months. As John C. Maxwell said, "The secret of your success is found in your daily routine." Start with simple habits: enjoy a warm drink at the same time each morning or set aside a few minutes to plan your day.

Incorporate activities you look forward to, like calling a friend, listening to a favourite podcast, or trying a new recipe. A predictable rhythm helps you stay grounded and gives your day purpose, even if it's just ticking off one or two tasks from your list. And remember, routines aren't meant to be strict—don't worry if you're not 100% successful every day. It's about consistency, not perfection!

## **Practice Mindfulness and Gratitude**

Mindfulness is a powerful way to manage stress and focus on the present. It doesn't need to be complicated—take five minutes to sit quietly and focus on your breathing, notice the warmth of your cup of tea as you hold it, or listen closely to the sounds around you, like a favourite song or even the hum of a heater.

Gratitude can also boost your mood. Each day, think of one thing you're thankful for and take a moment to savour it—whether it's a kind word from a friend, the comfort of a warm blanket, or the simple pleasure of a favourite snack. As Norman Vincent Peale said, "Change your thoughts and you change your world." Even saying it aloud to yourself can help create a ripple of positivity.

## **Set Realistic Goals for Your New Year Resolutions**

Have you created any New Year Resolutions? For many, the start of the year feels like the perfect time to focus on self-improvement. However, it's easy to

feel overwhelmed when those resolutions become too ambitious or unrealistic. The key is to make them achievable and uplifting.

Here are a few tips to make sure your resolutions focus on self-growth, not self-criticism:

- Start small: Break large goals into smaller, manageable steps. For example, instead of deciding to completely change your exercise routine, start by committing to ten minutes of movement each day.
- Be flexible: Life doesn't always go to plan, and that's okay. If something doesn't work out, adapt your goal instead of giving up entirely.
- Celebrate progress: Every small step counts. Whether it's tidying one drawer or preparing one healthy meal, acknowledge your progress and let it motivate you to keep going.
- Choose what brings joy: Set goals that genuinely excite or inspire you rather than ones that feel like a chore. Your resolutions should add positivity to your life, not stress.

Resolutions are a tool for personal growth—not a way to punish yourself for past mistakes. Focus on progress, not perfection, and let your goals uplift you throughout the year.

### **Stay Connected**

Winter can feel isolating, but staying connected with others is a powerful way to boost your mood. Regular social interactions—no matter how small—help combat feelings of loneliness and remind you that you're not alone.

Call a friend or family member for a chat, join a local or virtual group with shared interests, or even reach out to someone you haven't spoken to in a while. If you're feeling creative, try organizing something fun, like a "tea and talk" session or a casual quiz over the phone.

And remember, Bury Blind Society is always here for you. Whether you're looking for support or just a friendly conversation, we're happy to help you stay connected!

### **Sight Guide and Visual Awareness sessions:**

Bi-monthly, we hold a brief session for fellow professionals, friends and family to introduce or refresh on Visual Awareness and sight guiding principles. If you feel you or a member of your family would benefit from attending one of these interactive sessions, please do get in touch and book a free place. The next sessions will be on Wednesday 5 March, Wednesday 7 May, Wednesday 2 July 10.30am-12.00pm.

We are also keen to promote awareness throughout the community. If you know a community group, school or work environment that would like us to give a talk or demonstration of sight guiding – do get in touch with the office for further details. 0161 763 7014.

### **Diary of a Glaucoma patient:**

An abridged extract from Glaucoma's magazine "Insight" -Summer 2022.

Submitted by Bernard Dunphy, Leader of our Glaucoma Support Group.

This is a selection of extracts from Roddy Simpson's diary between September 2003- March 2022. Roddy gives us an insight into his thoughts and feelings as he journeys through his glaucoma. He is a freelance editorial photographer and lecturer on the history of photography.

Primary open-angle glaucoma is a progressive optic neuropathy which can lead to irreversible blindness if untreated.

*30 SEPTEMBER 2003*

I went to the optician to have my eyes tested. I thought it was going to be a straightforward but I was in for a surprise. The optometrist explained that I may have glaucoma in my left eye. It was a shock and totally unexpected. I needed another test and referral to the eye hospital.

*30 OCTOBER 2003.*

I received notification of my appointment, on 9<sup>th</sup> December, which is a long time away. I'm very concerned as everything I do depends on good vision and losing my sight is frightening. I find it preoccupying me but I must not allow myself to be discouraged. I must be more positive.

*9 DECEMBER 2003*

My wife drove me to the hospital. I had various tests before seeing the consultant. The nerve at the back of my left eye showed signs of glaucoma, but the pressure in the eye was low. The consultant decided to treat it as glaucoma with drops and have another look in a few months. As a precaution he sent me for a CT scan to check on the neural pathways, as a non-urgent appointment. The good news is that my right eye is perfectly healthy.

*10 FEBRUARY 2004*

My consultant confirmed the situation at this appointment. The drops have lowered the pressure in my left eye which was normal, but may have been too high for me. It should stabilise and prevent any deterioration in my field of vision field. The CT scan has not revealed any problem with the neural pathways. The consultant concluded that I have glaucoma and asked whether it runs in the family. He told me I would need to inform vehicle licencing and my car insurer because of the loss of field vision. The enormity began to sink in with this news.

*7 NOVEMBER 2007*

I had my eyes tested at the opticians. My prescription has changed and I ordered a new set of frames. The optician told me something touching. She compared my glaucoma diagnosis with Beethoven and his deafness. He lived for music and I live for photography.

*8 FEBRUARY 2008*

The results of my tests are alarming. My left eye has significantly deteriorated, although I have not been aware of it. The consultant is concerned and is sending me for an MRI scan. She wants to be sure that nothing is growing and putting pressure on the nerve. It wasn't what I was expecting and I felt a stunned.

*11 JULY 2008*

The consultant is running out of options as the MRI scan was clear. She wants me to spend a day in clinic doing phasing, which is taking eye pressures every hour.

*7 AUGUST 2008*

Today I have phasing where my eye pressures are taken every hour from 8.30 to 4.30. It wasn't as big a drag as I expected.

*6 OCTOBER 2009*

It was the usual routine of: - field tests, pressures and meeting the consultant. My left eye continues to gradually deteriorate and she doesn't know why. I have another appointment in 6 months' time. I think I need a second opinion.

*28 JANUARY 2010*

I went for a second opinion. They ran lots of test and the consultant confirmed that the digital images of the optical nerve showed glaucoma in both eyes. He confirmed that I was on optimal drops and would not recommend any change, but there is surgery available if things get worse. I pray that it doesn't start to affect my right eye, that would have serious implications.

*25 JULY 2013*

My usual consultant is concerned about the deterioration in my left eye and want to undertake surgery (trabeculectomy) to regulate the pressure. I was stunned about the deterioration of my eyesight. Not a comforting prospect.

*15 SEPTEMBER 2013*

Received the letter which gave the basic information about my trabeculectomy. I am not looking forward to it, but I have no other option.

*8 OCTOBER 2013*

The day of the surgery. Arrived at 7.30 and things happened quickly. The consultant told me what would happen. I walked to the theatre and had a local anaesthetic, which worked quickly and I had a drip. The operation took

1.30 hours. I was wheeled back into the ward. I felt discomfort in my eye but no real pain. It was what had been described to me as grittiness.

*9 OCTOBER 2013*

I was discharged after 1pm. I was given a series of drops which have to be given in a certain order over the next few weeks. I couldn't see so I asked my wife to do them.

*13 OCTOBER 2013*

I have been bathing my eye and my wife has been administering the drops. Lack of activity is getting me down but I have to be patient and stay positive. My eye seems to be improving. If I sit still for a while the blur clears significantly.

*17 OCTOBER 2013*

The consultant seemed satisfied with the operation. I could see more with my left eye in the tests than expected.

*14 NOVEMBER 2013*

My appointment wasn't great, there is scar tissue and the consultant wants to remove it by needling. The pressure is 17 and removing the scar tissue will reduce it. I was upset that it was being prolonged.

*18 NOVEMBER 2013*

The consultant put various drops in my eye and did the needling, which was uncomfortable. The hardest part was staying still.

*21 NOVEMBER 2013*

The consultant checked my pressure and told me the surgery had worked, which was good news.

*20 FEBRUARY 2014*

My consultant was pleased with my field tests and pressures. She suggested a trabeculectomy in my right eye. I was surprised as my right eye is stable and no loss of vision. I will not consider surgery on my right eye unless there is a deterioration in the field of vision.

*20 FEBRUARY 2015*

Went for my eye check-up. I hadn't noticed any changes and was confident. It was straight forward and everything was stable. Long may it continue.

*7 SEPTEMBER 2017*

My test seemed straight forward and the consultant confirmed everything was stable. However, I have the start of cataracts in both eyes but surgery isn't recommended, just yet, and they are not bothering me.

*11 NOVEMBER 2021*

I felt unusually relaxed about my appointment. However, I didn't feel I did too well in my eye and field tests. I saw a different consultant who was concerned

about the pressure in my left eye and the loss of field vision in my right. It could be a “one off” and wants my usual consultant to see me in 5 months. It was a real downer as I have been used to coming away with everything stable. However, I did reflect that I am 73 and still a lot better than many others.

*10 MARCH 2022*

The consultant is happy that everything is stable with the pressures. There’s no sign of field loss in my right eye. So, the readings on my previous visit were indeed a “one off”. It’s a huge relief.

### **Partners in our Centre:**

We work with many other organisations and professionals throughout Great Manchester. In addition, a number of external services are based in our Centre providing ease of access. These include:

The Community Eye Service hold their Low Vision Clinic at the Centre every Wednesday. Appointment is by referral only. If you would like a referral, please contact a member of staff at the Centre.

Digital One to One Support: Working with Henshaws, we can refer you to a one to one tech session providing individual support to help you with such items as your mobile phone, tablet or laptop. The clinics are held every fortnight on a Friday. If you would like to be referred, please contact the office for a member to complete a referral.

Phoenix Foot Clinic: treatment of foot issues such as corns, calluses etc plus nail cutting by qualified Foot Practitioner, Dougie Warrington. Now at the Centre **every Tuesday between 9.30am-2.30pm**. Appointments can be booked at the office.

Citizens Advice Bury & Bolton Community Surgery: Join Alan Fitzpatrick, Neighbourhood Engagement Officer from CAB **on the First Monday of every month** between 9am and 12pm for advice and support on issues such as disputes, housing, or dealing with debt. This surgery is open for all including friends and family. Rather than on line or via the phone, why not take the opportunity to book a face to face appointment

If you require benefit support for AA or PIP, or help in completing forms such as your Blue Badge or Bus Pass, then do contact our Eye Finance team at BBS.



## **Collaboration Updates:**

**Local MP Visits:** On Friday January 10<sup>th</sup> we welcomed James Frith, MP for Bury North to our newly refurbished Centre. He stayed and chatted for about an hour with clients and volunteers, listening to their issues and comments. Afterwards he sent a letter which included the following:

‘It was great to meet many of you last week (including Umber the dog!) and to see your refurbished building. I was touched by the perseverance and resilience of your members, who took time to share their personal stories with me. It was great to learn how your society does invaluable work in supporting individuals and families in Bury, working alongside Bury Council and running workshops’....’I wish your volunteers and members all the best for the future’.

**Greater Manchester VI Consortium:** Prior to Covid, the Society was part of a consortium of local sight loss charities throughout GM. In 2024 an Eye Care Support Pathway was developed in partnership with RNIB, health and social care professionals, people with lived experience of eye care services and sight loss, the third sector and professional bodies across the eye care sector. RNIB launched the document stating ‘the proposed eye care support pathway aims to highlight people’s needs at four key stages in their eye care journey:

- Having an initial appointment
- Having a diagnosis confirmed
- Support after a diagnosis
- Living well with my condition.

Post Covid, our Consortium has met for a ‘refresh’. Covering Greater Manchester, there are now just three sight loss charities providing support i.e. Henshaws, ourselves and Walthew House in Stockport. We have come together, using the Eye Care Support Pathway as a template to look at the patient’s journey in GM and then address where, by working together and with other partners, we can aim to ensure all people living with sight loss in GM receive the same high standard of care throughout.

## **Continuing to Inspire – Jim Currie.**

Following on from Jim Currie’s story in the last quarterly V.I. Link, knowing that this amazing couple would not be relaxing, we asked Gill and Jim to update us on any further stories from the Tennis World. Here is an update: Gill takes up the story....

We were invited to Wimbledon to watch a vi tournament which took place indoors at the Members Club within the Wimbledon grounds. It was a small tournament, where players were selected from the first two tournaments of 2024, which Jim did qualify, but unfortunately had to decline due to his diagnosis.

Before this tournament I put a suggestion forward, with the backing of other vi players, for a trophy in his honour and after speaking to the LTA representatives, this idea was put into action. It was agreed with Jim's choice, that this trophy would be called "the Currie Cup" and would be awarded to the best player in his category (B2) with the most points for the whole of the year. It was also agreed that this would be presented at the last vi National tournament which takes place in November each year. This trophy would carry on in his honour for many years to come.

The last tournament was held in Nottingham in November and the one thing we prayed for was that Jim would still be fit enough to travel to present the trophy to the winner. Well, I am glad to let you all know that he was fit to travel, and he did present the trophy and a shield to the winner. It was a very emotional weekend and was good to catch up with all the players from all over the country.

Since Jim's diagnosis we are still managing to get out and about, travelling all over the country, whilst resting in between, and we are still making memories. We both would like to thank everyone for your kind messages and support which is very much appreciated. Gill & Jim Currie

### **Danni's Column**

In this edition, Dannie Brace, addresses the thorny issue of work/life balance with her usual honesty and humour.

#### **Work/Life balance: Is there such a thing?**

I believe this could be said no matter who you are or whatever your line of work is: can there be a balance? I am currently struggling with this. As a working mum with 2 children ensuring we have family time and they each have focussed time with me is tough. Then we add into the mix that I am a secondary teacher which comes with its own difficulties. Finally, we stir in severely sight impaired and family time, 'me time' just goes out the window.

I, like many others, have been through many a therapy session. These have helped address some of the negative impact school, society and other aspects

have had on my life. Then, when I was grappling and scratching at the surface I threw caution to the wind and booked a life coaching session. A way to move forward rather than always looking at the past. The reason I am telling you about this is because it was in these sessions I really worked out what my values were and the type of person I am and want to continue to be. It is this process that helps me readdress when things go awry.

Currently, I recognise, to help me refocus on my family life I will need to address and smooth things at work, in particular the approaches and adjustments I have in place and ensure they are the best ones for me. The fact that I am so tired at the end of the day is one of my biggest hurdles. I am usually visually tired by 11am, visually exhausted by 1.30pm and too tired for much at all when I get home from work. I simply crash.

I have electronic magnifiers in work, text to speech, adjustable lighting, and various colourful glasses that help with my photophobia. Lots of adjustments to support my role. My first question to myself is “am I making the most out of all of these?” The answer is NO. I could use my text to speech more often than I do, not squint into the computer screen and dictate things more often. This is where I will start and I am likely to see the benefits quite quickly. I know this as I have addressed this before but fallen back into bad habits to do things in ways that are quicker, but in the long run they slow me down. I am in this for the long haul, not the short term so working on these approaches will benefit me. This will hopefully have some impact on clawing back family time. I may still be tired, but saving some of that valuable vision should help enhance its quality. It is definitely quality over quantity and I plan to start small and build it in throughout my week.

One hurdle at a time, a marathon not a sprint!

### **Gadget Share, Explore, & More**

Are you scared of your device? Or maybe would like it to do something, but you don't know how to set it up to do it? You might have been given a new 'thingy' for Christmas, and would like to find out a bit about how it works and what it can do?

Please join us for our fun gadget exploration session in BBS Lounge.

The proposed dates are:

- Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2:00pm until 3:00pm
- Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February 10:00am until 11:00pm

Please sign up at reception

## **Braille Fun Sessions: (Di Webb)**

4th January was World Braille Day, a global occasion honouring the remarkable legacy of Braille on the lives of visually impaired people. This year's celebration was particularly special as it marked 200 years since the invention of braille by the visionary Louis Braille, who created this tactile code at just 15 years old. Braille opens doors to education, employment, communication and independence for millions of people around the world. Some people consider Braille can be replaced by technology, but not everybody is comfortable with tech and, in my opinion, there are some areas where Braille can provide a great way to still be included, for example, Sudoku, scrabble, crosswords and playing cards; and I still label everything in my kitchen and bathroom cabinet with braille labels. All of this can be achieved by you as well. You don't have to be an expert – we can show you the fun side of braille. If you would like to learn, why not join our 'Braille Buddies' session? We are looking to meet at the Centre on the third Thursday of every month, the first session being 20<sup>th</sup> February 10.30am. Just come along, have a brew and find out more. We would also welcome anyone who does read braille to help the 'newbies! If you are interested, please contact Ananché at the office.

**BBS Cricket Club:** Following the successful pilot prior to Christmas, we have booked a further 6 weeks at PA Cricket Indoor Centre. There plenty of space for new recruits so if you love cricket, don't let your sight loss prevent you from playing – come and join us. We meet on Thursdays from 1.30pm-2.30pm at PA Cricket Indoor Centre, Unit 4, Britannia Mill, Cobden St, Bury BL9 6AW. Sessions are subsidised at £2per person. If you need support to attend, please give Will, our Sight Loss Support intern, a call on 0161 763 7014.

**BBS 10 Pin Bowling Group:** If cricket is not your passion, why not join our 10 Pin Bowling group? They meet at 11am at Hollywood Bowling. Session are subsidised and are just £2.00 per game. If you would like to come along, book via the office so we can ensure there are enough sighted volunteers to support.

**BBS Book Club:** third Saturday of the month, 11am-12.30pm at the Centre. Contact Ananché, Development Worker, in the Centre for further information.

**Glaucoma Group: 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the Month: 26<sup>th</sup> February, 1.30pm-2.30pm.** We are delighted to welcome Kat from Guide Dogs to the Centre. This session is open to all. Kat will be giving some of the background on how these wonderful animals are trained and what the 'guide-dog etiquette' is.

This talk will be of particular interest to volunteers and other clients, providing guidance on how to greet guide dogs correctly along with other fascinating facts.

### **Social Events & Activities Coming Up:**

**BBS On Tour: Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> February 7.30pm-10.30pm.** The Met, Box Theatre. Don't miss the return of our evening of Musical Entertainment – bound to chase any winter blues away! Friends (including Geoff Kenyon, Michael Johnson and the Ukybobs, volunteers, staff and clients are all coming together to provide a wonderful evening – all for just £12 per person (includes booking fee from the Met). Tickets are available directly from The Met. Please do promote this event as all performers are volunteering their time to support the Charity.

### **Theatre Group:**

A group of like-minded people attending local theatre events.

If you are interested in any of the following events, please let us know by WhatsApp or phone by the advertised deadlines. These events book very quickly!

**Pados (Prestwich Amateur Drama and Operatic Society):**

Excellent youth performing Grease – March: WED 19<sup>th</sup> THU 20<sup>th</sup> Fri 21<sup>st</sup> Sat 22<sup>nd</sup>, all starting 7:30pm, plus a matinee on Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> at 2:30 pm. £18. Booking deadline 12 noon Friday 7 February, stating your name, number of tickets and which performance.

**The Met Theatre:**

The Jerseys – May THU 8<sup>th</sup> and FRI 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:30PM. £29 standard and £27 concessionary. Booking deadline 12 noon Friday 14 February stating which performance.

Desperado (Eagles tribute) - SAT 17 MAY 8:00 PM. £22. Booking deadline 12 noon Friday 21<sup>st</sup> February.

**Ramsbottom Friday Nite Bite:** Friday 7 March: BBS On Tour are back again with a selection of our own musicians performing at the Civic Hal between 6.30pm-8.30pm.

**Quiz Night – Friday 14<sup>th</sup> March. 7.00pm for 7.30pm start.** We welcome back Gary, Michael and Tommy for their unique quiz using audio and visual clues to test your grey matter! Suitable for all. Tickets £10.00 includes supper of pie &

peas (vegetarian option available). Masonic Hall, Bury. Tickets available from 10 February via website or the Centre.

### **Fundraising and Event News:**

In January we held our Planning Meeting for Fundraising events – there was plenty of amazing ideas and activities which are now being planned during 2025. We also took the opportunity to reflect on the events held in the run up to Christmas. In 2024 we paused our Craft and Gift Fair and trialled an alternative, having stalls at other Craft Fairs, promoting our own hand-crafted, home produced items by clients and volunteers. The result was very pleasing and raised just under £500 which was the net amount raised after all costs had been deducted at our Craft & Gift Fair the previous year. Feedback from clients was they had enjoyed preparing and making items and were pleased they had played a part in raising funds for the Society. We are therefore continuing with this plan and looking to increase the number of venues for our stalls. If you know of any fairs, groups or venues for our stall, please contact us! Thanks.

**Christmas Gift Wrapping:** After an initial slow start, we raised over £2,000 from our annual gift wrapping which we were blown away with in this current climate. Our wrapping elves did an amazing job but we all agreed, we need to recruit some new helpers to complement the team!

**Christmas Raffle and calendars:** Thank you to all who supported our annual raffle which raised just under £700. All winners were contacted after the draw and collected their prizes. We must also thank Your Local Bury for donating all the proceeds from the sale of their calendars to Bury Blind Society. So far, we have raised £300 from our sales. We still have a few of these A5 calendars remaining for just £2.00 if anyone is still looking for a calendar.

**User Forum:** We held our forum on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> January and one area highlighted was providing the opportunity of inviting other organisations to the Centre either to discuss an issue being experienced, e.g. The Licencing office in relation to Taxis, or for information, e.g. The Carers Hub, Police etc. It was suggested that a Thursday morning, once a month, would be a good slot to invite visitors in. There was also a view that we ensure groups report back if they have approached BBS for client views. The Thursday session could be utilised for this purpose. Implement for a trial period, second Thursday morning sessions from February.

## Donations:

Our sincere thanks to Tottington and Bury West Rotary who contributed to the Centre refurbishment, Ramsbottom Rotary and Greenmount United Reform Church for sponsoring our BBS On Tour Evening at The Met on 8<sup>th</sup> February and Radcliffe and Ramsbottom Rotarians for supporting 5 places in September for the Blind Drive Experience. A special thanks and congratulations to Brenda and Elwyn Ribchester for requesting donations to BBS on the occasion of their 65<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary!

All your donations make a difference.

£5.00: pays for a USB stick, enabling a person with sight loss to listen to this newsletter in audio format.

£10.00: pays for a Talking Clock Key Ring.

£20.00: contributes towards the cost of our monthly overheads of £1700 per month for heating, lighting, water etc. enabling us to keep the Centre open for weekly and monthly activities.

Whether your donation is general or in memory of a loved ones, it is valued, and we thank you for your support.

### 100 Club, Monthly Prize Draw

Just £1 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 are available from the office. Winning numbers since our last VI Bulletin:

**Nov:** First prize: No.130; Second prize: No.003; Third prize: No.438.

**Dec:** First prize: No.109; Second prize: No. 442; Third prize: No.234.

**Jan:** First prize: No. 291; Second prize: No.475; Third prize: No 425.

Current pay out: First prize: £120.90; Second prize: £60.45; Third prize: £20.15.

### 'Take Five Quiz'

Here's the answers for the last quarter's quiz:

1. What is the biggest selling single of all time? **White Christmas by Bing Crosby**
2. What is the national animal of Scotland? **Unicorn**
3. What is Cherophobia the fear of? **Being Happy**

4. Which company is the world's largest toy distributor? **McDonald's**
5. What colour is the Snowman's scarf and hat in the Children's picture book 'The Snowman'? **Green**

This edition's quiz questions:

1. Where did the Franks settle after defeating the Romans?
2. How long did the Middle Ages last?
3. Which religion dominated the Middle Ages?
4. Which bone are babies born without?
5. Which popular soft drink was originally created as a medicine in the 19th century?

If you have any articles, your story or information you would like to be included in future editions of our VI Bulletin, then do let us know!

Thanks, and enjoy!

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





Bury Society For Blind and  
Partially Sighted People

Registered Charity No. 1102525

## **Regular Centre Activities:**

### **Monday:**

**First Monday of the Month: CAB General advice clinic. 9.00am-12.00pm.** Ring the office to book a specific appointment or drop in.

### **Mornings:**

**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.

**10.00am-12pm: Weekly Monday Events Group (MEGs):** A friendly weekly workshop supporting upcoming events.

### **Afternoons:**

**Music Buddies Fun Afternoon: 1.15pm-2.30pm:** Held every Monday apart from the Fourth of the month.

**Fourth Monday of the Month: 1.15pm-2.45pm – Musical Social Afternoon.** £3.00 includes entertainment and refreshments. To book please contact the Centre.

### **Tuesday:**

**Weekly: Phoenix Foot Care Appointments available: 9.30am-3.00pm**

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

11.00am: 10 Pin Bowling at Hollywood Bowling. £2.00 pp. Book in advance via the office.

1.30pm Walking Group join the Community Walk at The Burrs.

### **Wednesday:**

**LVA Clinic: 9.30am onwards.** Weekly except Fourth Wednesday. Referral through BBS or ring direct to the community booking service on 0300 323 3316.

**Mornings: 10.00am-12.00pm Drop In:** Light refreshments always available at our Wednesday Drop in Sessions and a warm welcome as always from Carole and crew.

**First Wednesday:** Alternate months: Wednesday Sight Guiding Session. March and May.

**Second Wednesday:** 12 March, 14 May – User Forum. 12 February, 9 April – Volunteers Coffee Morning. All welcome.

**Third Wednesday:** starting 19th February 10.00am-11.00am Gadget Share & Explore sessions.

**Afternoons:**

- **First Wednesday, 1.30pm-3.00pm:** New Macular Degeneration Support Group.
- **Second Wednesday,** starting 12<sup>th</sup> February: 2.00pm-3.00pm: Gadget Share & Explore sessions.
- **Third Wednesday, 1.30pm-3.00pm:** Macular Degeneration Support group.
- **Fourth Wednesday, 1.30pm-2.30pm,** Glaucoma Support Group.

**Thursday:**

Morning sessions 10.30am-12.00pm

Week 1: Craft workshop

Week 2: Community Engagement session: Speakers/organisations.

Week 3: Fun with Braille session

Week 4: TBC

**Afternoons: 1.00pm-2.30pm:**

Week 1: Craft workshop

Week 2: Gary's Quiz

Week 3: Bridie's Bingo

Week 4: TBC

**Weekly, 1:30pm to 2:30pm:** BBS Cricket Club meet at the PA Cricket Club: If you need a lift from the Blind Society office, please let Will know in advance. Sessions are £2.00 per person.

**Friday:**

**Fortnightly:** Henshaw's/BBS Digital Clinic from 10.00am: Referral via BBS.

**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

**Saturday:**

**Third Saturday:** 10.30am-12.00pm: BBS Bees Book Club – monthly sessions are filled with lively discussions and shared passions for reading. The chosen book is available in audio format for the group to review and enjoy.