



Bury Society For Blind and
Partially Sighted People

Bi-Monthly V.I. Link – Issue 32

September 2022



The Centre will be closed on Monday 19th September.

Following the sad news of the passing of the Queen, our thoughts and condolences go out to all the members of the Royal family at this time. The loss of the Queen has certainly impacted on everyone, not just in this Country but overseas too. One of the staff was saying that a friend was in a restaurant abroad when the announcement was made. A local resident came over with a drink for them and expressed their sorrow at the news. A life of such dignity and service to the Country, and the only monarch that many of us have ever known. The Queen was just 'always there'.

Many of us have personal stories of how our lives have been touched by the Queen, whether it was a brief glimpse when lining the streets of Bury during a Royal visit, or as one of our volunteers mentioned to me, when the Queen visited his workplace. Perhaps it's just remembering the wonderful Jubilee street parties and celebrations. I have a fantastic memory of when Jane Deakin (former Volunteer Co-ordinator) and myself had the honour to represent Bury Blind Society when we were awarded the Queens Award for Voluntary Service in 2014. We both received an invitation to the Queens Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. It did, of course, rain! The heavens opened just as the Queen and Prince Philip appeared for the National Anthem. Thank goodness the rain soon

stopped and we were able to enjoy the afternoon. I remember Jane and I both remarking that the Queen was wearing Bury Blind Society yellow....I don't think she was aware of that but we believed it! She took time to circulate and talk to many of the amazing people who were there – over 8,000 attend the Garden Parties! It didn't feel like that many as, believe me, the back garden of Buckingham Palace is huge! I also recall, we were allowed to walk around the gardens and who should we bump into but Alan Titchmarsh – but the Queen was definitely the star of the show for us.

Jill Logan – CEO

Picture below, images from the Garden Party. First photo: The Queen, with umbrella, dressed in yellow coat with matching hat, black handbag, smiling, looking up at the sky.



Left photo - Buckingham Palace garden with large group of people formally dressed. Right photo -Smiling, Jill Logan on the left in black and white dress, formal short black jacket and fascinator, Jane Deakin on the right, dressed in long, multi patterned purple and white dress, white jacket and fascinator, railings of Buckingham Palace in the background.

Update on Services and Support.

Digital Clinic: We are delighted to announce that, within our commissioned service we are developing our offer of digital support. These clinics/workshops are still in discussion but will provide further support following an assessment of need by the Early Intervention Team. We are looking to hold, as a minimum, a monthly 'Digital Clinic' at the Centre, along the lines of our joint venture with the Community Eye Service. This is in partnership with Henshaw's and further details will be announced in the next few weeks.

Joint Community Eye Service/BBS Clinics: The next joint clinic with the Low Vision Aid service is on Wednesday 21 September. All appointments are now taken. Feedback has been really positive about these joint sessions, with many commenting how convenient it is to go through everything in one place and one 'sitting'. We are now looking at various funding opportunities to enable us to continue.

Eye Talk course: The next session will be in October. If you are interested in booking on this course please contact Gill Currie at the office. Eye Talk is a three-module course that runs on a Tuesday and includes areas such as the initial impact of sight loss, eye conditions, daily living skills and updates on travel and benefit support. We would strongly recommend this course to anyone who is newly diagnosed or who has experienced a change in circumstances as it is an excellent 'refresher'. We welcome family members and carers too.

Benefit, Legal and Form Filling Support.: Did you know we have a wonderful group of volunteers who can help you when applying for sight loss related benefits? This can range from Attendance Allowance, Pip claims or even help with completing Travel Pass renewal and Blue Badge Application. Monday afternoons in the Centre are the regular sessions,

and home visits can be made if essential. This service is not a funded service and so we do respectfully request a set donation depending on level of support. Please contact the office for further details on how to book an appointment.

Regular Centre Activities:

Monday morning, Wednesday, and Thursday - The Centre is now fully operational and, apart from Monday afternoons, Tuesdays and Fridays, you are welcome to just drop in anytime for a cuppa between 10.00am and 4.00pm. There will always be a volunteer to 'Meet and Greet' you during these periods. Other times, the Centre is open for booked sessions.

Musical Fun Afternoon: 1.30pm-2.30pm: Fancy having a go at the ukulele or maybe just tapping a tambourine? Join Sid and Mags for these fun sessions. Held every Monday apart from the Fourth of the month.

Fourth Monday of the Month: 1.30pm-3.00pm – Musical Social Afternoon. 26th September, 24th October. £3.00 includes entertainment and refreshments. Each month we welcome an outside entertainer. To book please contact the Centre.

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

Wednesday mornings: As the cooler months approach, we are providing a 'light snack' drop in every Wednesday morning. On the second Wednesday of the Month: 10.30am-12.00pm, our User Forum and Volunteers Forums are held, alternate months. Your views matter! Do come along. October 12th is the User Forum and November 9th is the Volunteers Forum. All welcome. We also use Wednesday mornings to invite speakers in. Updates are on our website and in the weekly Eye Chat. If you would like to receive an email copy of Eye Chat, please let us know and we can add you to our database. Alternatively, if you are unable to access the internet and are a client, why not request a weekly phone call and have it read to you or receive in large print?

Second Wednesday, 2.00pm-3.30pm: October 12th, November 9th. Our Monthly makes group meet in the large area of the lounge producing a wide selection of items. This month we welcomed the RSPB and The Woodies showing us how to construct 'Swift Bird Boxes'! To book on future sessions, ring the office.

Third Wednesday, 1.30pm-3.00pm: 21st September, 19th October. Macular Degeneration Group.

Fourth Wednesday, 1.30pm-3.00pm – 28th September, 26th October. Glaucoma Support Group.

Thursday 10.30am-12.00pm: Healthy Living Group – this group, led by Jixie, covers a wide range of subjects and on the third Thursday of every month invites a guest speaker. Unfortunately, the speaker due to attend the September session, Dr Amy Leedale demonstrating and talking about birdsong, was ill so this is being re-arranged -hopefully for October. For further details please contact the office. Booking is helpful for refreshments but all are welcome.

Thursday afternoon 1.30pm-3.00pm: Over 60's Group. Currently a 'tea and chat' group but they're always thinking of new activities. Last week they held a secret auction so why not come along? For details, contact the office.

Friday 10am-2pm - Foot Practitioner Monthly Clinic: 14th October, 11th November. Have your feet pampered and support the Society at the same time. Dougie Warrington kindly donates £7.50 for every appointment he has. Appointments booked via the Centre.

Fridays: 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. For menu details and to book, (no later than Thursday morning) call the office on 0161 763 7014.

Fourth Friday of the Month: During our Centenary Year we have been celebrating food through the decades. Last month we all had great fun with the '70's. This month, September 23rd, it's the 80's and then October 28th it's the naughty 90's!! Tickets at just £8.00 for a full cooked meal. Again, book via the office. Word on the street is, due to popular

demand, we'll be continuing these themed lunches even when the centenary celebrations are finished!

With growing concerns regarding energy bills, why not come along to the Centre on a Wednesday or Friday when there is hot food available, heating and lighting. Whilst we as a Charity are concerned about the rising costs, whether we have 2 people or 20 people in the Centre, we still have to provide heat and light so do take advantage and save on your energy bills.

Energy Crisis

On the subject of fuel bills we have put together a few hints and tips you might not have thought of to help keep those bills down.

Things to avoid:

- Avoid using a tumble dryer on a regular basis
- Don't fill your kettle up to the top every time you make a drink
- Avoid leaving your electric immersion heater on for a long time
- Don't leave electrical items on standby unnecessarily and where possible turn plugs off at the wall
- Avoid leaving lights on in rooms you are not using, especially when using the more old-fashioned type bulbs

Things to do:

- Keep your curtains shut at night to help keep the heat in
- Have a short shower instead of a bath
- Have heating on low in rooms not in use and allow air circulation to prevent condensation
- Typically, a microwave uses less electricity than an electric oven
- Ensure your home is insulated such as the loft, draught excluders and windows correctly fitted
- When buying new appliances check the energy rating to help save money over the lifetime of the appliance. An 'A' rated appliance is the most energy efficient

Each energy supplier has a 'Priority Service Register'. This may be suitable for you if you have any medical requirements, are elderly, or have a disability. You can have a password for your energy supplier. Or

you may require specific communication needs or would like large print or extra help in understanding your bills. Contact your energy supplier for more details

We are also happy to discuss other areas of benefits you may be entitled to as a registered blind or partially sighted person. Call our office on 0161 763 7014 and ask for a member of our Eye Finance Team. Age UK Bury can also offer advice for any older person who may be struggling with increased energy charges and can be contacted on 0161 763 9030 for help and advice.

Review and Looking Forward:

The Salle Angelo Fencing Club. A huge thank you to David, the fencing tutor for his patience and for bringing this wonderful class to our attention. Nadeem Rana and Daniel Clarke, with transport provided by volunteer driver, Eric Coldrick started these sessions back in July. What a fabulous experience. David is keen to develop this group which is a mix of sighted and visually impaired and Danny and Nadeem were the 'guinea pigs'! Very happy guinea pigs I hasten to add as I witnessed for myself when I went to see them in action. Eric had been 'volunteered' to be their referee and both guys looked extremely professional in their full fencing gear. A raised boundary line provided an anchor point to ensure both stayed in the correct area. Daniel and Nadeem said they really enjoyed attending the classes, and Eric commented on how much they had improved as the weeks had progressed. Currently we do not have funds to continue supporting this pilot but are working hard, with other organisations to see if we can use this experience as evidence for funding future sessions. In the meantime, again, we would like to thank the Salle Angela Fencing Club and tutor Dave for giving us this opportunity. We'll be back!

Sid's Cycle Challenge. What a brilliant achievement. You may recall that in August Sid took up the challenge of cycling 100 miles on his static bike over a period of four days. His aim was to raise £1500... he raised over £2,600 and there are still amounts coming in! We can't thank Sid enough for this incredible effort and his support of the Society. Part of this money is going to be used for Sid's other pet project, Podcasting! We shall be purchasing equipment that is accessible, allowing everyone to have a go! Watch for updates on our website and in Eye Chat!

Abseil Day -11 September. Thanks to one of our trustees, Cath Harrop who came up with the idea, and then the support of her husband Joe of Highpoint Mountain Guides kindly donating his time, equipment and expertise to enable us to provide this experience for 18 people in total! Some just wanted to do the abseil, and others decided to get some sponsors too – all in all, as of today we have raised over £1600 which is just fantastic. Two of our own recently registered blind clients, Nadeem Rana and John Evans took the plunge and were amazing! Well done to everyone but particularly Nadeem and John. Both Cath and I did the abseil too so I know what they experienced and am in awe of them! Incidentally there was another familiar name there on the day too – Jack Hodgkinson! Yes, our old work colleague and friend Jack decided to take the plunge too! So well done to him too! And, of course, thank you to everyone who has supported us. With the ‘Energy Crisis’ looming everything helps. However, we have decided to put some of the funds raised to one side to contribute to further activities like this.... discussion on Sunday included Archery, kayaking, and driving.....! Further news to follow!

Sports September: Maybe abseiling, fencing or cycling isn’t your cup of tea, but we’re really keen to find out the main issues that stop you doing an activity or sport that otherwise you would have a go at. We have put together the top 8 issues that have been highlighted by a small focus group We would really appreciate your feedback. There are a number of alternative ways to record your responses. They will be available via a link on our Website from 20th September, if you attend a group, the Group Leader will be asking your group, or week commencing 26th September we will be making a quick phone call for your opinion. Please do let us know what you think as we are using this information to work with the Sight Loss Council, Bury Castle Leisure and other organisations to address areas of concern if possible.

On a scale of 1-5, (1 being No, and 5 Yes definitely) please rate the following 8 areas in relation to your involvement in forms of exercise/sport?

1. Sight Loss
2. Transport
3. Cost

4. Other health issues.
 5. not interested
 6. location
 7. lack of confidence
 8. age
- Other - please state:

Upcoming Events.

Continuing our Sports theme, this coming Sunday 18th September is the Bury 10K. A supporter of the Society, Peter, who we meet at the annual Walk 4 Sight event has registered for the Bury 10K. He popped into the Society and said he would be happy to run for the Charity. If you would like to support Peter, go to our website sum-up link to donate. Thank you and good luck Peter!

Monthly Walks: On the third Monday of the month we would normally have our short walk with Michael and crew. In September this would be the 19th which is the day of the Queen's Funeral. Therefore, please contact the office for alternative date. The walk will go ahead on 17th October as normal.

If you are feeling confident, there are a number of other walking groups in the borough. Some of our volunteers who have had sighted guiding training either attend or are willing to accompany a client if you are looking for a buddy. Give us a call for further information. If you are a volunteer who would be interested in training, again, give us a call to discuss.

Theatre: Palace Theatre, Dream Girls, audio described performance. Wednesday 21st September. Are you interested in going to the theatre? We have a number of clients who are looking to set up an informal 'Theatre buddies' group – both sighted and VI. If you are interested, please ring the office and leave your contact details for Diane Webb.

Tuesday 28th September 1.00pm-4.00pm. Volunteer Fair. The Oasis Centre, Whitefield Methodist Church, 1 Elms Street, Whitefield, M45 8GQ. Would you like to help promote volunteering for Bury Blind Society? Our volunteer numbers have dropped considerably during Covid and we don't want to put too much pressure on our current valued

volunteers! Let's see if we can recruit some new drivers, 'Activity Buddies', Audio and Podcast supporters to name just a few. If you feel you can be a Volunteer Ambassador for the Society, give me a call or pop in to have a chat. Jill Logan 0161 763 7014.

Saturday 1 October: Walk for Treasure! This year, to celebrate our Centenary, together with Bury Lions, we are having a walking treasure hunt around Bury Town Centre. The clues will focus on the history of both our organisations and Bury itself. Just £5.00 per entrant unless you are 5-16, then it's £2.50 and if you're smaller than that, there's no fee at all. We suggest groups of no more than 4 (6 at a pinch!), but you can do it as an individual – less disagreements! There will be a staggered start from 10am -11am from the Centre. The treasure hunt should take approximately 2 hours and will finish back at the Centre where there will be food and drink available whilst you wait. It is important we log your start and finish time as well as getting the clues correct. A prize for the winner! Tickets will be available to purchase via our website or in person, from 20th September.

Low Vision Product Clinic – Wednesday 12 October. Appointment only, at Bury Bind Society. Times available between 10am-2pm. Come along and explore the latest products for blind and partially sighted people. Call 0800 145 6115 or email sarak@optelec.co.uk to book an appointment and discuss further.

Notice of AGM and Open Day Exhibition: Thursday 13 October. World Sight Day seemed an appropriate day to have our Annual General Meeting – an early start at 8.00am-9.00am, to which all are welcome. We are then moving on to the Millgate Shopping Centre, outside T J Hughes. From 11am we will be promoting an exhibition of displays and activities reflecting the work of the Society, it's groups and history as we celebrate our 100-year anniversary with the residents of Bury.

Sunday 20th November: 10.30am-3.00pm. We're back! Now that the Ramsbottom Civic Hall has re-opened we are once again holding our annual Craft and Gift Fair. Do promote this to friends and family. There will be a selection of our own craft and gift stalls, Christmas cards, Christmas gift wrapping resources, home baking (appeal here for bakers

please!) and outside crafters too, along with the traditional café and entertainment. There might even be a visit from a certain Christmas gentleman!

Saturday 26th November: Our friends at St John's Free Church of England, Kirklees Street, Tottington are holding their Christmas Market 10.00am-4.00pm so if you've not managed to pick up all your gifts at our Fair then do come along as we have a stall here too!

Saturday 26th November – 7.30pm-11.30pm: Holcombe Brook Tennis Club. It's time to celebrate! We have finally managed to book a venue for our 'Centenary Party'! Open to everyone, clients, volunteers, friends and family. Come and celebrate our 100-year birthday party. The evening will have music, dancing, our traditional raffle, some entertainment -familiar names from our 100 Voices Musical Evening and a buffet -what more can we ask for.... YOU!! Subsidised tickets are £8.00 for everyone and will go on sale from 1st October via our website or order/pick up from the Centre. It would be lovely to see you there.

Dates for your Diary.

- Wednesday 30th November 10.30am- 12pm. & 6pm-7pm. Gift wrapping Workshop: includes light festive refreshments.
- Gift wrapping in the Centre from Monday 5th December. Millgate Shopping Centre 14th -24th December. – Volunteers wanted!
- Christmas Afternoon – Thursday 8th December – Masonic Hall with festive refreshments and musical entertainment.
- Christmas lunches at the Centre will be on 9th and 16th of December.
- Don't forget to order your large print calendars and diaries! Stock due in at the centre in October.
- Appeal for good quality, pre-loved soft toys. We will make sure they go to a good home!

Funding News:

Asda, Bury, Green Tokens. This finishes at the end of September, so please do keep voting! You can vote for by accessing Asda Green Token Giving website.

As Christmas approaches remember you can support the Society by purchasing those gifts through Amazon Smile. You can also donate by texting 70450 with the message BURY to donate £5, Facebook donate button or as a regular donation direct to BBS in person or on our website.

100 Club Prize Draw. Just £1.00 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 available from the office. Winners for August and September are:

August: First Prize, no. 127 - £117.00; Second Prize no.65 - £58.50; Third Prize no.382 - £19.50

September: First Prize, no. 422 - £118.80; Second Prize no. 124 - £59.40; Third Prize no. 74 - £19.80.

Sun Flowers: How tall was the winning Sunflower? A whopping 80 inches! Well done to Jean and gang from Incredible Edible Brandlesholme, and to everyone else who sent in their wonderful photos. It was lovely to see them all. A £10.00 voucher is heading your way and thank you to everyone who bought a sun flower.

Special Thoughts:

Our condolences to any of our members or their families who have lost loved ones during this period. We would like thank members' families for remembering us when requesting donations for the Society. These donations enable us to continue providing support for future members.

We started this newsletter with the sad news of the Queen, and we are finishing with the loss of someone who has become a dear friend to many of us, Walter Dunn.

I have known Walter personally for over 23 years and he has been a valued volunteer and friend to many at Bury Blind Society since 2005. In his early days with the Society, he was involved with the committee, and then later he was a regular volunteer driver and always an attendee of our Quiz Nights. Walter seemed to know everyone. He was involved with The Castle Knights, well known at The Mosses Community Centre and who could forget that he was a regular at 'H's Café'! His dulcet tones invariably were heard before he was seen, with that classic phrase 'Just say Yes'. One of life's characters who made the world a brighter place

and who's presence will be sorely missed. Thank you, Walter, for being you.



Walter's funeral is due to take place at 9.30am on Friday 16th September, at Radcliffe Crematorium and afterwards at the Walmersley Conservative Club.

'Take Five Quiz'. – in Memory of Walter

Answers to edition 31.

1. What country has the highest life expectancy – **Hong Kong.**
2. What is a group of pandas know as? **Actually, there are three possible answers here – an embarrassment, a bamboo or a cupboard.**
3. How many bones do we have in an ear? **Three**
4. What country has won the most World Cups? **Brazil**
5. Which planet has the most moons? **Saturn**

This month's questions:

1. What colour is found on 75% of the world's flags?
2. Who wrote 'The Catcher in The Rye'?
3. Which Italian city is Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet set?
4. What was the name of The Beatles' first album?
5. When was the first Star Wars film release?

Take care everyone. **Jill and all the team at Bury Blind Society.**