

# Suffolk Sight News



**August  
2020**



**Suffolk Sight**

**Suffolk Sight** is the sight loss charity for Suffolk, created by amalgamating the East Suffolk Association for the Blind and West Suffolk Sight, its purpose is to improve the lives of people who are affected by sight loss, throughout Suffolk.

We offer a wide range of services aimed at providing practical solutions to the everyday challenges that people with sight loss face. To undertake this, we receive no government funding, relying solely on donations, non-statutory grants and legacies to continue our work.

When your sight loss reaches the point that it impacts upon your ability to live your daily life as you would like to, this is the point to contact us – we may be able to help.

The majority of our beneficiaries have some degree of vision that can be supplemented and enhanced with aids and training. Our community workers have years of experience and will work with you, offering ideas and solutions to help improve your confidence, independence and lifestyle.

## **Services**

Being a beneficiary of Suffolk Sight is free and gives you access to all of the following services, beginning with a visit from one of our community workers.

### **Community workers**

A community worker will visit you in your home and discuss your needs and can offer:

- independence training and daily living skills training
- improvements to lighting
- a safety assessment including fire alarms and security
- help with benefits and concessions
- technology advice and training
- aids to reading
- advice on transport and mobility.

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# Welcome!

I hope you will enjoy this, the first newsletter from Suffolk Sight and find the articles both informative and entertaining.

We all find ourselves living in unprecedented times, facing many challenges that the current Covid-19 pandemic has created. I would like to thank the staff and volunteers who continue to support people living with sight loss during these testing times. While adhering to all the government guidelines, they have been creative in the ways in which that support has been provided and have endeavoured to ensure that all our beneficiaries have been contacted to see if there is anything that the charity can do to help.

As convenor of one of the many regional groups that provide social activities to local communities, I find myself both frustrated and sad that we cannot meet with our groups in person, lacking that ability to simply have a catch up, a chat and to share both our joys and concerns, which ironically would be more beneficial at this time. On the other hand, it brings me great cheer to know, having been in touch with the groups, the staff and fellow trustees, that we are blessed with a body of caring people who have ensured that our people are being contacted and being helped where necessary. I hope that you have found this to be the case. If not, then please contact your Community Worker and let them know of your needs, they will be more than willing to help out, or point you in the right direction to get the help you need.

If you don't know who your community worker is, or this might be the first time you've had need of help for some time, simply phone either of the office numbers on the back cover of this newsletter and let us know. You'll find an introduction to the community workers, along with all the rest of the team in the 'Meet the Team' section.

Because the social groups have not been able to get together, this edition contains very little about their activity, but we look forward to the day when we can all start up again and share their news and experiences with you.

Keep well and keep safe.

Geoff Staff

*Chair of Trustees and Haverhill BAPS Co-ordinator*

# Meet the Suffolk Sight Team

I'm **Steph O'Donoghue**, the **Interim Chief Executive** of Suffolk Sight. In my role I work closely with the board of trustees to develop the charity's long-term strategy, budget and business plan and ensure it complies with the law and regulations. I act as an ambassador for the organisation, building relationships with stakeholders, as well as motivating and engaging volunteers, staff, beneficiaries and prospective donors. Prior to the merger I was the Chief Executive of West Suffolk Sight and have worked in the charity sector for thirteen years.



(image shows Steph O'Donoghue)



I'm **Jade Rowlinson**, **Interim Operations Manager**. My role is to support the team here at Suffolk Sight so they are able to deliver our great services. I manage the day-to-day running of our charity and develop our organisational policy and practice to help bring the charity's vision together.

(image shows Jade Rowlinson)

Hi I'm **Lesley Hodgkiss** a **Community Worker** covering the east coastal region from Aldeburgh down to the Ipswich boundary. Prior to the amalgamation I was a community worker with ESAB, a role I took up in 2002 having previously been associated with the charity for a number of years as a volunteer. I'm very much looking forward to working with new colleagues within Suffolk Sight to continue the great work that has gone before.



(image shows Lesley Hodgkiss)



Covering the west of the county, we have four Community Workers: **Arlette, Briony, Sam** and **Francesca**. Our referrals come from the Hospital Eye Clinics, professionals, family members and self-referrals. We prefer to visit you in your home, where we can take the time to talk over your eye condition, how it affects you, and ways to increase your independence. This could be learning reading



techniques, kitchen skills, regaining hobbies, using specialist lighting, magnifiers and equipment. We can also offer help to apply for various benefits, Blue Badge, Disabled Rail-card/Taxi Vouchers, etc.



(images show Arlette, Briony and Sam)

I'm **Jenny Strak**, a **Community Worker** covering Beccles, Halesworth, Southwold, Lowestoft and NR32 and NR33. I've been a Community Support Worker for 14 years and support around 370 Suffolk Sight beneficiaries.

We have social groups in Beccles, Halesworth, Lowestoft and several other groups, including a shooting club. At each social we have entertainment which can include outings, music, a quiz, or talks from other organisations.



(image shows Jenny Strak)



My name is **Ian Hunt**, I have been a **Community Worker** for 5 1/2 years.

The area I cover is the Shotley Peninsula, Felixstowe, Ipswich and Stowmarket. Services provided are telephone support, home visiting, help with daily living aids, and assessment and demonstration of magnifiers.

(image shows Ian Hunt)

## Befriending Co-ordinator

For those of you who don't know me already, my name is **Amanda Eaves** and I am the Befriending Co-ordinator in the west of the county. I live in Stowmarket with my husband, two sons and five dogs!

There is currently a team of 10 wonderful Befriending Volunteers, plus me, delivering the service to 26 of our beneficiaries. The main aim of the Befriending Service is to alleviate social isolation through regular visits or phone calls.

In addition to this, I also run the Suffolk Sight Juniors group. The group is aimed at bringing visually impaired children and their families together for socialising, ongoing support, and lots of fun activities! The group meets at the Redwoods Centre in

Stowmarket on the first Saturday of every month, from 10.30am – 12.30pm. The programme earlier in the year included flower arranging, painting bird boxes and a visit from the Hedgehog Rescue! Sadly, the group has been suspended until such a time as it will be safe for everyone to re-open it again, which will hopefully be in the not too distant future.

In my spare time, I also like to do a bit of fund raising such as store collections, car boot sales, Christmas fairs and selling plants outside the house!

(image shows plants for sale)



## **Volunteer Co-ordinator**

Hello, I'm **Kate** and I'm the Volunteer Co-ordinator for Suffolk Sight, having been in the role with West Suffolk Sight for over five years. My background is in heritage, having worked for the National Trust at Ickworth House where I supervised a large number of volunteer Room and Tour Guides and I'm still passionate about local history. I'm also interested in science, politics and reading as much as I can – fiction and non-fiction!

As well as engaging with current and potential new volunteers I also look after Suffolk Sight's social media channels and we currently have over 800 followers across Facebook and Twitter including some of the big national organisations within our sector.

As a relatively small charity we rely heavily on our team of over 200 volunteers to help us deliver our services. The majority of our dedicated helpers organise and run the social clubs and activities that take place across the county. We are also very fortunate to have a number of office-based volunteers who either come in on a weekly basis, or as and when we need their help, for example with stuffing and sticking envelopes!

Our trustee board is made up entirely of volunteers and we are hugely grateful to them. Also to the trustees of West Suffolk Sight and East Suffolk Association for the Blind who didn't come across to Suffolk Sight, for their enormous contribution especially in recent years, helping us get to where we are today. We are at the exciting point of building on the great services we already offer while dealing with the challenges set by the Covid-19 pandemic. The support from our volunteers is, and will be, vital in the months and years to come – thank you to you all!

## **Volunteering for Suffolk Sight**

**Suffolk Sight relies on the goodwill of a team of volunteers who support us in providing services to our beneficiaries. We are always on the look out for people who can give us any amount of their time to support us at outreach events, with fundraising activities, helping out at the social clubs, providing transport to and from events, befriending a person with sight loss, or working in our offices in Ipswich or Bury St Edmunds. Call Kate on 01284 748800 if you would like to know more.**

## Technical Advisors – West and East

My name is **Mel Maidment** and I am an Assistive Technology Advisor at Suffolk Sight for the west of the county. I have had a background in IT for many years, running my own business providing personal computer tuition. Recently I qualified as a Dolphin Super Nova and Guide Connect certified trainer. As a blind person myself, I use assistive technology on a daily basis both for work and leisure. The technology services we can provide at Suffolk Sight are as follows:

Screen Reader Training including Jaws, Microsoft Narrator and NVDA. Smart Phone Support, Training and Advice for both Android and Apple iOS.

Smartphone and Tablet/iPad Screen Reader training covering Voice Over, Talk Back and Synapptic.

Support for specialist apps such as Microsoft Seeing AI, Sound Scape, Be My Eyes and many more.

Advice on specification when purchasing a new computer, Laptop, Tablet iPad or smartphone.

Support and installation of smart home devices including Alexa, Google Home and Apple Home Pod.

Support and training for specialist software such as Dolphin Guide Connect, Super Nova and Synapptic.

We also have extensive knowledge of digital magnifiers, both portable and stand-alone.

(image shows a Synapptic phone)





My name is **Clare Burman** and I am an Assistive Technology Advisor at Suffolk Sight for the east of the county. I have worked in this capacity for over ten years, first for Ipswich Blind Society and then for East Suffolk Association for the Blind. Based in our Ipswich Tower Street resource centre, I provide advice, demonstrations, and training on all things digital; ranging from audio labellers to screen magnification, to voice activated lighting.

Born with full vision, I have been registered severely sight impaired since 1993 and since that time have marvelled at the progress made in the assistive technology field, and the options that are now available to us. I am passionate about how technology can be used to improve our lives, and about finding solutions to everyday problems.

When I am not geeking out, I can usually be found playing with my guide dog Saffron, strumming my guitar or hamming it up on stage as part of the Unscene Suffolk drama group. I am Supernova, Guide Connect, JAWS, and ZoomText certified.

(image shows Clare Burman)



**Saffron** (Clare's guide dog)

After guiding 'mummy' to the office, my main role is to nap, chew my bone and to look after snuggle bunny. I also offer (by appointment) demonstrations on the best way to cuddle a Labrador.

(image shows Saffron, Clare's guide dog)

## Administration

I'm **Jill Hodgson**, the administrator for Suffolk Sight, based in the Bury St Edmunds office. I've always worked in administration, but never with such a lovely team. It is a pleasure to help our beneficiaries, to chat on the telephone and hear their stories, to arrange for visits and appointments, and to carry out all manner of little jobs that end up making a big difference to a person's quality of life. Whatever you need, I will do my very best to help.



(image shows Jill Hodgson)

## Development and Fundraising Officer

Hello I'm **Kathryn**, I was born with a condition called Marfan Syndrome and have been partially sighted all my life, so I am very familiar with the issues people have dealing with sight loss. I started working with people with sight loss in 2001 as the ESAB Development and Fundraising Officer for Lowestoft, offering help and support to the local independent clubs for the blind in Lowestoft and organising local store and street collections. In 2004 I also took on the roles of Secretary and Treasurer of the Lowestoft Committee organising the monthly socials, Christmas meal and running a local taxi scheme.

Most importantly, we are able to give you the time to help you adjust to your situation, and are always there when you need us.

As well as running our Lowestoft Social, a big part of my work is helping the local clubs, (Lowestoft Live Arts (craft club), Lowestoft Blind Activities Club and Lowestoft Blind Bowls Club), with their various activities or providing material in large print. I am also the treasurer of two of the clubs and the Lowestoft Minibus for the Bind. All this keeps me quite busy!

Since all club activities ceased in March, I have been keeping in touch with our beneficiaries over the telephone. It may be some time before we will be able to meet up at our new Suffolk Sight Social but I look forward the time when I will be able to welcome you back once again. Until then, stay safe. *Kathryn*



## Financial Controller

I'm **Alex Sibun** and I joined Suffolk Sight in May to look after the finances including budgeting and financial reporting. I have held similar roles for a grant making trust and a charity that supported families with young children. It's an interesting time to start a new job and I am really enjoying being involved with Suffolk Sight. Growing up, both of my grandfathers were visually impaired.

We lived abroad a lot of the time, so I didn't appreciate how their lives had changed, although from a child's view it was much more interesting to record messages on a tape recorder and send the tapes by post rather than writing a letter. When we did visit, I can remember being taught to tell the time by describing what was on their plates at meals. Both grandfathers continued with their favourite pastimes; Grandpa Bill was an avid golfer and bridge player (serious trouble if we touched his pack of cards) and Grandpa Mike enjoyed knitting and making fiendish double-sided jigsaws – we still haven't managed to finish one yet.

(image shows Alex Sibun)

## Launch of Suffolk Sight's Telephone Counselling Service

Suffolk Sight are delighted to announce the launch of a pilot scheme for our new free Telephone Counselling

The new service went live in May 2020 and has been trialled with five participants, each receiving eight one-hour long weekly calls from a fully qualified counsellor.

(image shows someone using a telephone)



The Coronavirus pandemic has brought about many changes and challenges to our daily lives, even more so to those living with sight loss. On becoming aware of the

uncertainty and anxiety being faced by many of our beneficiaries and volunteers, the Suffolk Sight team were swift to leap into action and draw up a plan to get the new service up and running as soon as possible.

All the planning was done remotely using video conferencing, emails and telephone calls (of which there were many!).

We were extremely fortunate in being able to recruit the services of professional counsellor, Ruth Hubbard, who has a wealth of experience in counselling people through difficult periods in their lives.

The pilot run has been very successful to date and we have received some really positive feedback from those involved. We are hoping to extend the service out to others who may be struggling as a result of the impact that Coronavirus has had on them, if additional external funding can be secured.

Trisha Wynn, Project Co-ordinator, said: "it is lovely that we have been able to reach out and offer support to our beneficiaries at this very difficult and challenging time. I am delighted with the way the pilot scheme has gone and really hope that we will be able to make this a permanent service in the future, if finances permit"

For more information on the new service, please contact the office on 01284 748800 or email [info@suffolksight.org.uk](mailto:info@suffolksight.org.uk)

It is anticipated that there will be quite a large demand for this new service, so it may not be possible to meet everyone's needs. However, we will do our very best to accommodate as many people as our time and resources will allow.

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## **Suffolk Sight Woodbridge District**

We are missing our socials in Woodbridge District very much. Our meeting in January was a quiz (which included a tasting of jelly beans, and we decided it was very difficult to guess the flavour) and we were entertained by a ukulele band in February who are always good fun. Lesley, our community worker, keeps in touch with everyone and we thank her for her hard work.



One of our Very Important Guests, Bidy Sproxton, celebrated her ninetieth birthday in May. Her friends and neighbours in Bawdsey stood in the street outside her house to sing her Happy Birthday!

We look forward to safer times when we can all meet again.

(image shows our January 2020 quiz)



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## In Memoriam

**Jennefer Hampson**, a trustee of the West Suffolk Voluntary Association for the Blind and latterly West Suffolk Sight since 2004, passed away on 29 May. In that capacity she was asked to form a club for the blind and partially sighted in Haverhill and with her usual determination set about doing just that. With a mixture of gentle persuasion and dogged persistence she encouraged others to volunteer and join her in setting up 'Haverhill BAPS' which she successfully ran until the autumn of 2015. She will be remembered for being a force of nature - with a seemingly unstoppable amount of energy and determination to do all that she and her team could do for the beneficiaries of 'Haverhill BAPS' and the parent charity. She will be sadly missed by all the many friends she has made. Our Chair of Trustees Geoff Staff, and our Volunteer Co-ordinator Kate Yates, attended Jennefer's funeral.

It is also with sadness that we have to advise the death of the ex-ESAB chairman **Norman Thomson** (known to many as 'Storming Norman') who died on the 30 May after a short stay in hospital. Norman, who chaired ESAB for about 15 years – from the mid-nineties to 2009 – made a considerable contribution to the charity and indeed it was under his chairmanship that the first community workers were employed, an initiative that still provides the backbone of the services offered today. He was a larger than life character of firm views and convictions and he will be greatly missed by all those who knew him. COVID-19 restrictions meant representatives from the charity were unable to attend Norman's funeral in person,

although some did manage to share in the tribute to his life via a webcast that the family had kindly arranged. Our condolences and thoughts are with his family at this sad time.

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## **Lessons During Lockdown**

Suffolk Sight's Technology Advisors have been busy throughout lockdown, helping a number of beneficiaries to use assistive technology and apps, (often for the first time), by giving tuition over the telephone. One such member, Mr S, was worried he could no longer see the TV quiz shows he and his wife so enjoyed watching together. Our technical advisor was able to give step-by-step instructions on how to turn on Audio Descriptions on their Sky Box. Mr & Mrs S did this successfully and were very grateful they could continue to enjoy their quizzes.

Working in conjunction with Sensing Change, we were able to successfully secure funding to provide a laptop with Dolphin Guide Connect for Mr L. Mr L can now read his correspondence again, and by using voice dictation can also write letters and emails once more. Many of our beneficiaries have been able to keep in contact with loved ones all across the world, thanks to telephone tuition in how to use Skype, Zoom, Face-Time and the myriad of technology we have come to find so useful during lockdown.

### **Clover 10 Magnifier – Another Success Story**

Just before lockdown started, Mr G was seen in the Bury St Edmunds resource room by one of our Community Workers. His sight loss was causing him problems with reading and this was very frustrating for him. Our Community Worker showed him some electronic magnifiers and Mr G fell in love with the Clover 10 – a portable electronic magnifier with a 10-inch screen which allows you to adjust magnification to the right level for you.



We supported Mr G's application to the Suffolk Community Foundation's Disability Care Fund Grant, for money towards the cost of the Clover 10 and were delighted to hear in May that his application had been successful. He was awarded £695 towards the cost of the machine (£945). Mr G is now the proud owner of a brand new shiny Clover 10 which he uses all the time. He can read the post, look at the paper and so many other detailed tasks that were causing him such frustration before. He reports that his wife is delighted, as he is now "a lot less grumpy"!!!

(image shows a Clover 10)

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## **Thank you to our Befriending Volunteers!**

I would like to extend a very sincere thank you to Suffolk Sight's amazing team of befriending volunteers, who have really gone above and beyond the call of duty to assist and support our beneficiaries throughout the Coronavirus Pandemic.

Many heart-warming stories have emerged, including shopping being delivered and hoisted through a bedroom window on a dressing gown belt, which must have been quite a comical sight!

Extra big thanks to volunteers **Rachel Prendergast** and **Richard Thomas**, who have stepped in to take on calling new referrals to the befriending service at short notice during this difficult time.

A very warm welcome to new Befriending volunteers **Jennie Digby**, who kindly came forward to offer her time during lockdown, **Ian Engalls** (who can usually be found volunteering at our Pakenham Social Group!), and **Lily Marriott** who has just started volunteering with us too. We are delighted to have you all on the befriending team!

**Ann Kasemsant**, who is the volunteer telephone befriender for the east of the county, has also been busily making weekly calls to a number of our beneficiaries. Thank you Ann! Without our volunteers, we simply would not have been able to provide a befriending service to all those who have requested it over the past few months, so we really cannot thank them all enough for their help and support.

*Amanda Eaves*

# Unscene Suffolk's Online Workshop Success during Lockdown

Like so many other organisations during the Covid-19 lockdown, Unscene Suffolk had to suspend its activities back in March. However, recognising the need to support our visually impaired beneficiaries even more in this situation, we decided not to give up. With invaluable support from one of Suffolk Sight's brilliant tech advisers, Clare Burman, we have taken the drama workshops and singing workshops online.

The drama group's production of 'The Mystery of Syleham Manor' has been postponed to next year and this is hugely disappointing. While the idea of remote drama at first seemed a bit odd, we threw ourselves into it and after several weeks our confidence has grown enormously. What started as a few games and improvisations has grown to an abundance of ideas and ever more ambitious undertakings. The group has been creating some amazing characters and has enjoyed storytelling, a murder mystery and a full length improvisation of a courtroom drama!



(image shows beneficiaries of Unscene Suffolk during a digital workshop)

The Unscene Singers have also been very busy during lockdown. With support from a generous donation from Ipswich Rotary Club the group has been enjoying weekly online singing sessions with Emma Bishton. We recently completed our first 'virtual singing' project, created for Make Music Day 2020. Taking Arthur Kent's Bring me Sunshine, once made famous by Morecambe and Wise,



the group reimagined it as Bring Me Moonshine, with brilliant new words from our own Carolyn Allum. The result was fantastic and even got a play on the Jon Wright evening show on Radio Suffolk!

These online drama and singing sessions have really helped Unscene Suffolk group beneficiaries during the Covid-19 lockdown. Apart from allowing us to keep doing what we love, the sessions have kept everyone connected. At a time of increased isolation for our visually impaired beneficiaries, we're delighted that our online activities are proving such a success, and lots of fun!

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## **TV Licensing**

If you are registered blind (Severely Sight Impaired) then you are entitled to a 'blind concession TV Licence' which gives you 50 per cent off the cost of your TV Licence. Unfortunately, you are not entitled to this if you are registered as partially sighted (Sight Impaired). The blind concession TV Licence covers anyone who lives with you, as long as the licence is in your name. If your licence is in someone else's name, then you can change this and then claim the reduction.

You'll need to complete an application form and provide proof of your registration status to claim the blind concession TV Licence. You can fill in the application form online, print the form and then send it with proof of your registration status and payment to:

**Blind Concession Group  
TV Licensing  
Darlington  
DL98 1TL**

To prove you are registered (certified) as severely sight impaired, you must send a copy of one of the following two documents:

- the certificate from your eye specialist (ophthalmologist) that states that you are eligible to be certified as severely sight impaired. This is called a CVI (Certificate of Vision Impairment), or BP1 if you live in Scotland
- a certificate or other document issued by, or on behalf of your local authority that shows you are registered as severely sight impaired with them.

**Please don't send your original documents** as TV Licensing only need to see a copy and there is always the risk that you could lose your original document in the post.

What if you are not registered SSI and so don't automatically qualify for a free television licence? Well, if you, or your partner living at the same address, are over the age of 75 and receive Pension Credit then that person can apply for a free licence.

Pension Credit is a benefit for people who are on a low income and have reached the state retirement age. It is designed to make sure that everyone of qualifying age has a certain amount of income every week.

Many people who are eligible for Pension Credit do not currently claim it – in fact, figures from the Department of Work and Pensions show that 2 in 5 of those entitled to the benefit do not receive it.

Help with your TV licence is just one benefit available to those on Pension Credit. Some of the other advantages include help with housing costs and council tax, entitlement to claim Funeral Payments, automatic qualification for Cold Weather Payment and electricity bill discounts from your supplier via the Warm Home Discount scheme. These are available even if you only receive a small amount of Pension Credit.

You can apply for Pension Credit online or by calling the claim line on 0800 99 1234. This is a freephone number and the line is open Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm. You will need to have your National Insurance number, information about any income, savings, pensions or investments you have, and the details for the account you would like the money paid into. It is important to note that Attendance Allowance, Personal Independence Allowance (PIP) and Disability Living Allowance are not included as 'income' for the purposes of applying for Pension Credit.

Once you have started receiving Pension Credit you will need to apply for your free licence via the TV licencing website or by calling 0300 790 6073. You will need to provide your date of birth, National Insurance number, and proof that you are receiving Pension Credit.

Finally, don't forget that if you live in sheltered or supported accommodation or a care home, you probably don't need to have

your own individual TV licence but can be added to one held by the home (known as an Accommodation for Residential Care licence). There may be a small charge for this.

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## **RNIB Groceries Update: Access to Shopping**

“For people with sight loss who are struggling to get essential groceries, here are a few ways we can help you to get shopping delivered.

Since lockdown began, thousands of blind and partially sighted people have told us that they are concerned about access to food. Shopping in supermarkets or securing online delivery slots is an ongoing and significant challenge. We wanted to update you on the support available and our work with the Government and supermarkets to improve the situation.

You can now call the **RNIB Helpline on 0303 123 9999** or email [helpline@rnib.org.uk](mailto:helpline@rnib.org.uk) if you, or someone you know, has difficulty shopping for essential supplies. Our advisers can provide the latest information and can connect you to sources of local support.

We now have agreements in place that mean that our Helpline advisers may be able to refer people who are eligible to Tesco or Iceland for priority online delivery slots in England. This is particularly for people who are unable to access food and have no local family or friends who can help them shop.”

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## **Home, But Not Alone Helpline**

If you have been using the ‘Home, But Not Alone’ service during the pandemic, you may find the following of interest:

“There will be changes to the support offered by the Home, But Not Alone phonenumber. In line with changes to Government guidance to those who have been shielding, from 5pm on 31 July, the ‘Home, But Not Alone’ phonenumber will no longer provide:

- Free emergency food deliveries
- Medicine deliveries

Shielded residents in Suffolk have been written to by Government and are aware of these changes.

In the short-term, the team at 'Home, But Not Alone' will still be able to offer help and advice to those most vulnerable in our communities and signpost to neighbourhood or countywide support. As the Government continue to lift restrictions, especially for those who are shielding, and the levels of COVID-19 continue to fall, we are reviewing the level of support on offer in Suffolk. This may mean that further changes may be announced to the support offered by 'Home, But Not Alone' in the future. However, these services are designed to be reintroduced and stood up once again if there is a significant local outbreak. We will keep you updated on further changes.

Thank you for your support of the 'Home, But Not Alone' service. We are incredibly proud of the fact we have been able to work together to help thousands of people during the most acute challenges of lockdown. This help has been made possible by the hundreds of community and neighbourhood groups in Suffolk and a significant number of volunteers."

*Chrissie Geeson*

Chair of the Collaborative Communities COVID-19 Board

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## **Suffolk Sight Fundraising**

We are reliant upon the good will of our volunteers, the donations and legacies given by supporters, beneficiaries and members of the public and grants from charitable funds, foundations and trusts to help us to carry on providing practical solutions to the everyday and new challenges that people with sight loss face.

During this difficult time we have continued to receive wide support throughout the community and are very grateful to all those who have made and continue to make donations to our work which have contributed in some way to meeting our costs of providing our service (approximately £305,000 each year) throughout Suffolk.

Our regular donors have contributed £1,750 since 1st April and we have received £3,500 in donations. We would also like to thank all those who have made donations in memory of loved ones.

Our community workers valuable work and essential equipment is being supported by grants of £5,550 received from the following charitable trusts and foundations.



Mrs LD Rope 3rd Charitable Settlement  
Sir Frederick Ham Charitable Trust  
The Annie Tranmer Charitable Trust  
The Lynn Foundation  
The Oak Trust  
The Scarfe Charitable Trust  
The Yorkshire Building Society Charitable Foundation

In July we were pleased to hear that Suffolk Community Foundation through the Suffolk Coronavirus Community Fund has granted us £5,000 in particular to support our new telephone counselling service.



**SUFFOLK**  
Community  
Foundation

We would like to record our thanks to all those organisations who, during lockdown, have waived fees, given us discounts, and not charged rent. This includes East, West and Suffolk Councils for their grant support now totalling £12,700:

- Suffolk County Council £1,000 through Activities Unlimited to support Suffolk Sight's activities for visually impaired children
- West Suffolk Council £10,000 Covid-19 grant
- East Suffolk Council £1,700 to cover travel and volunteer expenses to support East Suffolk residents

The National Lottery Community Fund has just confirmed its support of Suffolk Sight awarding us a grant of £100,000 from the Coronavirus Community Support Fund. We would like to thank the government for making this possible.

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## **And finally, from one of our Club leaders:**

"I have been ringing and now meeting up (outside) with members and helpers of the Club, they all appear to be coping well but are missing the outings and seeing friends made at the Club.

I have thoroughly enjoyed having long conversations with them and actually getting to know them better as there is never time at a club meeting." A message and feeling that rings true for all associated with all the clubs throughout Suffolk.

*Continued from inside front cover*

## **Resource Centres**

From our offices in either Ipswich or Bury St Edmunds, our community workers will help you choose from a wide range of equipment, from talking watches to reading aids, to discover what meets your needs best.

Please phone either 01473 611011 (Ipswich office) or 01284 748800 (Bury St Edmunds office) to make an appointment so as to ensure that a community worker is available for you.

## **Low Vision Therapy**

We work closely with you to agree your needs and provide any training to maximise the benefits of using magnifiers and lighting. Home visits are available, simply contact your community worker to arrange.

## **Regional club meetings**

As a beneficiary, you can join any of our associated clubs. Regular meetings are held in towns and villages across Suffolk. Your community worker will provide you with details of the club that is nearest to where you live.

## **Befriending**

Our registered befrienders are carefully matched with you to make regular phone calls or visits to offer friendship and support.

## **Sight Loss Awareness Training**

We can provide training to families, schools, care homes, community groups and local businesses.



# Planning Application Update



**The planning application for a Development Consent Order to build a new nuclear power station to the north of Sizewell B is now available to read online and in hard copy. You can register your views with the Planning Inspectorate until 30 September. To find out more:**

- You can visit a virtual exhibition linked to our website, where there is also a link to an interactive website on the Environmental Statement: **[www.sizewellc.co.uk](http://www.sizewellc.co.uk)**. You can also view our latest newsletter, including large print, easy read and audio alternatives
- For the full application visit: **[www.sizewellcdco.co.uk](http://www.sizewellcdco.co.uk)** – to register your interest with PINS: **<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk>**
- Hard copies are available to view at the Sizewell C Information Office. Call **0800 197 6102\*** to book an appointment or to order a USB. Hard copies are also available to view at Leiston Town Council.
- If you have difficulties getting out, please call us and we will deliver a laptop or iPad. We will collect it five days later. We can also provide you with a hard copy of the newsletter, or one of its alternative versions, if requested.

 **FREEPHONE 0800 197 6102\***

 **@edfesizewellc**

 **[www.sizewellc.co.uk](http://www.sizewellc.co.uk)**

 **[info@sizewellc.co.uk](mailto:info@sizewellc.co.uk)**

 **Sizewell C Information Office, 48-50 High Street, Leiston IP16 4EW\*\***

\*Calls to 0800 numbers are free from UK landlines.

Call costs from mobile and international numbers may vary.

\*\*By appointment between 10am and 4pm Monday to Friday.

**[www.suffolksight.org.uk](http://www.suffolksight.org.uk)**

**Suffolk Sight** is the sight loss charity for Suffolk, created by amalgamating the East Suffolk Association for the Blind and West Suffolk Sight, its purpose is to improve the lives of people who are affected by sight loss, throughout Suffolk.

**Disability Resource Centre  
4 Bunting Road,  
Bury St Edmunds, IP32 7BX  
Tel: 01284 748800**

**19 Tower Street,  
Ipswich, IP1 3BE  
Tel: 01473 611011**

**email: [info@suffolksight.org.uk](mailto:info@suffolksight.org.uk)**

**Suffolk Sight is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation  
Charity Number 1183608**



**Suffolk Sight**