

MARCH 2016 NEWSLETTER

Charity No. 1075447
Company No. 3740647



Supporting blind and partially sighted people

A team of 4SIGHT members are taking part in a **40 MILE SPONSORED TANDEM RIDE**



Through

MID SUSSEX

On

SUNDAY 15TH MAY 2016

Please help by sponsoring a blind or partially sighted rider, either through our BT MyDonate Page

<https://mydonate.bt.com/events/4sighttandem2016>

or by ringing Anne on **01444 456 026**

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CEO's Message

I'm happy to report that the last 12 months has been a year of successful performance, high standards and continuing development at 4SIGHT. We have supported 5000 people with visual impairments, including over 1600 4SIGHT members; our hospital based Sight Care Advisors have helped over 550 people, our Outreach Workers have delivered over 495 Low Vision Assessments and our 38 Social Clubs have provided over 1000 hours of real human contact and friendship.

Members have benefitted from a range of low vision aids, specialist information, advice and guidance, as well as receiving help through home visits, telephone befriending, newsletters, the audio-library and much more.

However, we know that next year, in the face of further cuts in public health budgets, it will be even tougher for our amazing staff and volunteer team to maintain these very high standards. But, with your continued support and participation, I am sure that this wonderful and vibrant 4SIGHT community that we are all a part of, will pull together and become even stronger next year.

So, please do get more involved in 4SIGHT if you can by supporting our events - such as the forthcoming Sponsored Tandem Ride on 15th May and the Live Music and Family Day in Chichester on 22nd May - and by continuing to let us know how we can best help you? That after all, is what we are here to do.

Best wishes and thanks for your continued support.

Nik Demetriades, CEO

SOUND 4 SIGHT

Presents..

A Live Music Family Day

At Priory Park
Chichester



Acts Revealed Soon!!
Sponsorship Opportunities Available

Sunday 22 May
2016

11.00 - 17.00



FREE ENTRY



4sightevent16@gmail.com | www.Sound4Sight.com

Update from Bognor 4SIGHT Centre

Arun Area 4SIGHT Fundraising Committee

As we move into 2016, it is time for us all to set new objectives, goals and challenges, and one of my personal objectives for 2016 is to raise awareness of 4SIGHT within the Arun District.

I am looking to bring together a group of enthusiastic, determined, innovative individuals who wish to work alongside me in order to help aid 4SIGHT develop our resources within the area. If you are looking for a new project this year and enjoy being part of a team working towards collective objectives, then please get in touch.

If you wish to be involved, please give me a call on **01243 838 002** and we can begin to bounce ideas off each other!

Dan Batchelor, Outreach Worker

Bognor Regis St George's Day Coffee Morning

We will be hosting our first Bognor Regis coffee morning of 2016 here at the 4SIGHT Bradbury Centre, Bognor Regis on **Saturday 23rd April** between the hours of **10am and 1pm**.

Please come along and join us for our St George's Day celebration; as always both Beau and I will be on hand to answer any queries you may have relating to sight loss and the support available.

I do sincerely hope that as many of you as possible can attend and hopefully we can emulate the success of previous coffee mornings we have held here.

If you have any questions, or require directions to our Bognor Regis Bradbury Centre, then please give us a call on **01243 838 002**.

Dan Batchelor/Beau Prince, Outreach Workers

Update from Midhurst 4SIGHT Centre

Easter has come and gone and April is upon us already. Where has the time gone as it only seemed like last week I was writing the update for the February newsletter? The word 'April' is believed to come from the Latin 'aperire' meaning 'to open'. April is, after all, the month when buds begin to open and things start to grow again.

I'm sure that many of you will agree that this sentiment can remind us of ourselves at times. The dreary chilly and damp winter months can make us a little dormant, motivation just doesn't exist and all we really want to do is to close up and hibernate! It's amazing what a bit of sunshine, blue sky and bird song can do to us. Suddenly we just want to open up with that burst of energy and find we are enthused to get on and do all those things that have been on our 'to do' list for ages.

So, April brings a renewed freshness and with it some exciting things to look forward to in our Midhurst 4SIGHT Centre.

Spring Coffee Morning

Yes it's time for another one! These coffee mornings seem to be thoroughly enjoyed here in Midhurst and I wonder if it has anything to do with the delicious cakes that some of you as members like to make? So, a date for your diary is **Thursday 5th May from 11am to 1pm** here at Midhurst 4SIGHT Centre. There will be a tombola/ raffle and refreshments, as well as information and advice relating to sight loss. Everyone is welcome and you never know, we may be lucky and have more cakes made!

A big thank you must go to David for his lovely fruit cake he made for the veterans coffee morning and to Velia for the very moreish chocolate marble cake she made. It was also Velia's Easter duckling cake that helped us raise funds when it went into the Easter cake raffle earlier in March.

Midhurst Area Committee

Our members in and around Midhurst are really enjoying being able to get together for a social chat over a cup of tea in the centre; forming new friendships and exchanging shared experiences. Some of you have started talking about ways to promote 4SIGHT more within the wider community and are coming up with ideas to help raise funds for the charity. These informal chats have quickly moved on and we are now at the point of starting up a Midhurst Area Committee. We already have some very successful ones in the county such as the Mid Sussex and Adur Area Committees.

These groups are member led and made up of visually impaired members and sighted volunteers. All have a Chairperson who may also be a 4SIGHT Trustee and in our case, it's Anna who is taking the lead. The purpose of these committees is to be the voice of our members, help strengthen the activities and services we deliver, assist with local community fundraising initiatives and assist with the promotion of the charity.

We have six people interested so far in forming our committee; three members and three volunteers. If you would like to join this active group then please let me know, or come and join us at our first informal meeting on **Thursday 7th April at 11am.**

Outings for Members

Some of our members have suggested how nice it would be to have the opportunity to go on a few outings. Suggestions made so far include a tour of Chichester Cathedral, a trip on Chichester Canal and a trip to Fishbourne Roman Palace. All of these are accessible to people with sight loss and have experienced guides on hand who offer tours and talks to people living with a disability.

It's ideas like these that the new Midhurst Area Committee can find out about and plan for our members. So if you are interested then please get in touch and if we get enough people then I can make enquiries about hiring the Midhurst Yellow Bus to take us out.

Macular Group

I met up with the Macular Society Regional Manager for the south east in early March and as a result of my newsletter article we have had positive enquiries from at least ten people who are living with AMD in and around the Midhurst/Petworth area who are interested in having a macular support group here in Midhurst. In view of this interest, we have set a date for our first MD group meeting and this will be on **28th April at 11am.**

Please get in touch with me on **01730 812 338** or via email at **midhurst@4sight.org.uk** if I can be of any help to you. Until next time, I hope that you enjoy the springtime.

Bev Tinson, Development & Outreach Officer

Hello from the Bognor Charity Shop

I hope you didn't eat as much chocolate over Easter as we did here in the shop - our Easter tombola was a great success – but too much was eaten!! A huge thank you to my volunteers for all the chocolate they donated.

Spring is in the air – I hope! Well it is for us here as we have our new bright bold signage up on our windows and annual spring cleaning & decluttering is well underway. Please remember us if you too have a clear out.

The signage has improved footfall of customers - also the bus route changes have helped, as the High Street is partly closed for road works and the buses now pass the shop, with a temporary bus stop nearby. If you get confused come into the shop and we can guide you to the bus stops.

Please be aware that there are lots of parking restrictions in place all round so please be careful – even disabled spaces are affected – so take care and don't get a ticket!!

Volunteering at Bognor Charity Shop

Our volunteer team is growing in size & age range, however there is always space. So if you have a few hours spare come on down! We are still looking for volunteers to:

- Help serve customers, sort & prepare stock, do steaming, etc.
- Someone who has a large car or van for 3 hours a week to collect larger items locally – petrol paid.
- Car boot season is upon us – if you like doing them, how about doing one for 4SIGHT, we will provide the stock & pitch fee!

Here are the views of 2 new shop volunteers who both started this year and found our 4SIGHT charity shop through help from Outset Youth Action.

“Hi, I’m Shona, aged 18 - I needed to get experience so that it can help me get a job. Also I had a lot of spare time that I felt I needed to fill. I felt very welcome from the minute I started. I enjoy sorting out the donations and serving customers. The only thing I don’t like is the sun shining onto the till which makes it difficult to read!!”

“I’m Declan, aged 17 - I made the decision to volunteer to gain retail experience and thus learn something new. I’m glad I chose 4SIGHT as I really like the people I work with and I like meeting and greeting customers. At first it was difficult to take everything in but after a few weeks it was fine!”

This month’s request is to ask you all to spread the word about our Bognor charity shop, reminding people we are here and that we have a fantastic range of donated goods to sell.

My perfect customer? – one that brings in donations and leaves with a bag of stuff that they bought, WIN WIN!

Until next time.

Sarah, Shop Manager

Street Collections 2016

Adur Street Collection on Saturday 11th June, from 9am to 4pm, covering Shoreham, Southwick, Lancing and Sompting. If you can help, please call Shoreham 4SIGHT Centre on **01273 454 343**.

Burgess Hill Street Collection on Saturday 4th June.

East Grinstead Street Collection on Saturday 2nd July.

Haywards Heath Street Collection on Saturday 6th August.

If you can help at any of the street collections taking place in Mid Sussex, then please contact Jane Aston on **01444 870 462**.

4SIGHT Mid Sussex Area Spring Lunch

4SIGHT members and volunteers in the Mid Sussex area are invited to the Annual Spring Lunch. This is taking place on Thursday 21st April in Sheldrake Room, on the first floor, at the Martlets Hall, Burgess Hill, RH15 9NN.

Arrival is at 12noon for lunch at 12.30pm. The cost for a 2-course lunch is £7.50, including a glass of wine and tea/coffee. There will also be entertainment by the Octane Barbershop Quartet.

For more details, or to book your place, please call Jane Aston on **01444 870 462**.

Item for Sale

17" Eclipse Desk Top Magnifier, little used and in vgc, £350 ono. Please contact Francis on 01730 810 501.

Please contact the seller direct. The above item is for sale from a 4SIGHT member. 4SIGHT accepts no responsibility for items sold.

Reg Bennett - Chevalier de Legion d'Honneur

Reg has recently been awarded the Legion d'Honneur by the French Government for his service during the D-Day Landings.

Reg is a valued member of 4SIGHT's Kitchen Klub, travelling to each session on the bus from Littlehampton. He began losing his sight about 5 years ago, but he has not let that stop him.

Leaving school in 1939 at fourteen he signed on as an apprentice electrician and his work took him all over England and Wales. He has always enjoyed work with wood and there are many examples of his work in his home.

He volunteered for the Navy at the age of 17 in 1942, having already been turned down by the Army and RAF because he was too young. He had a short course in electrics and then joined his first ship in Liverpool, they sailed the same day for the Arctic. His job on board was to keep all the electrics on board in full working order and drop depth charges when in action.

There couldn't have been a more desperate assignment, especially for a young man who had never been to sea before. Other than saying conditions were rather grim, Reg passes over this.

His ship, The Valleta, took part in some of the Atlantic convoys before being assigned a protection role during the D-Day landings. The Valleta patrolled along the coast at Arromanches where the Mulberry Harbour was built and all the supplies for the troops were landed.

Later they sailed along the coast to give support to the Army as they fought for the liberation of France. They were shelled and damaged and had to return to England for repairs but were back at the French coast within 24 hours.

After the war he became a journeyman electrician, and travelled across England working on various contracts, both large and small.

It seemed to me when I spoke to him that he could turn his hand to anything. In fact later he fulfilled a dream by building his own house!! He said that with the help of a bricklayer friend, they put up the outside walls, the roof and the weight bearing internal walls during their two week holiday!!

Reg met his wife one New Year's Eve and they were very happily married for 60 years. Like Reg she did an amazing amount of craft work, many pieces of which are on display in Reg's home. They have two sons and a daughter.

When Reg retired he and his wife moved to Littlehampton and for ten years he was a volunteer, running the Littlehampton Blind Society. He organised entertainment, outings & regular meetings, and provided a much needed lift to everyone who attended.

Reg is a member of Blind Veterans UK (formerly St Dunstan's), which last year celebrated its 100th Anniversary. Reg was invited to a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace and was able to attend with his daughter. There was also a service at Westminster Abbey and again it was by invitation only and again Reg was able to go. He also attended an Art and Craft week with Blind Veterans UK and still managed to make two beautiful wooden boxes.

Reg has macular degeneration in both eyes and his sight is poor, but as I said before that does not stop him. His home, which he looks after himself, is immaculate. He also visits two friends who are disabled on a regular basis. We are very proud that Reg is a member of our Kitchen Klub.

Reg's story was told to Shirley Buck, leader of 4SIGHT's Kitchen Klub. You can see a picture of Reg on the back of this newsletter.

Just 'Going For It!'

You may remember last year that Wendy, one of the visually impaired members of the 4SIGHT Mid Sussex Ramblers, climbed to the top of Old Man Coniston (2,631 feet or 803 metres) with the aid of her nephew and his wife. Well she has now had another two adventures, this time in Austria.

On Boxing Day a large party of 19, including Wendy, arrived in Mayrhofen in the Austrian Tyrol for a family holiday. The age group was mixed and included both immediate and extended family members. Wendy put herself in the senior age group but did that stop her? Did it heck!

She watched people paragliding and wistfully commented that "she'd like to have a go at that". The following day Wendy, accompanied by her brother-in-law, boarded a bus and took two ski lifts to the booking point. She booked her paraglide and after an hour's wait was rigged out with a harness and hard hat (worn on top of her woolly one for warmth) and together with her pilot they launched themselves out over the mountains.

She was nearly overcome with emotion at the sheer beauty, peace, sense of freedom and breath-taking views as they glided down from some 1,500 feet for about 40 minutes before landing safely on the ground. Wendy had found that up in the clear, pure mountain air she could actually see further than on the ground, and was elated with her experience.

Not content with one adventure she decided that she would like to climb down into a glacier. The glacier entrance was high up in the mountain and so access was firstly by a series of cable cars. The group of two dozen holidaymakers (three British and the rest German) met their guide and then slithered down the ski slope to

the opening. With the three Brits going first they descended into the glacier by a series of rope ladders. At the bottom they found water and were invited to climb into a rubber dinghy for a short ride through the glacier. Then it was the dreaded climb back up the rope ladders to the mountain side and a return slip and slide up to the cable car. I asked Wendy her impression of her glacial adventure and she had to admit it had been both challenging and daunting with a combined fear of being in a confined space and climbing down into the unknown.

Is there any stopping Wendy? I somehow doubt it. She has dived in the Galapagos (where she wore a prescription facemask) and at The Great Barrier Reef, and has also climbed the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Perhaps by some sort of explanation I should tell you that Wendy is a retired police officer and during her career never took the easy option, working in the murder, vice and drug squads. So despite being a grandmother I expect Wendy will just go on "going for it" as she puts it. I do hope so, I'll keep you posted on her next adventure as I'm sure there will be one.

You can see a picture of Wendy and her pilot paragliding in the Austrian Tyrol on the back page of this newsletter.

Curry Night in Aid of 4SIGHT

Shapla, traditional Indian and Bangladeshi restaurant, in association with the Burgess Hill District Lions Club, are holding a Curry Night in aid of 4SIGHT. This is taking place on Thursday 7th April at 7.30pm and is at 226, London Road, Burgess Hill, RH15 9QR.

Tickets are £20 each for a three-course meal, not including drinks.

Space is limited to 44 places; to purchase your ticket please contact Tony Parris on **01444 243 003**.

Diary Dates

Thurs 7th April, Curry Night in aid of 4SIGHT at Shapla restaurant, in Burgess Hill. Please call Tony Parris on **01444 243 003**.

Tues 12th April, Bognor Regis 4SIGHT Centre, Tactile Paving Training sessions, 10.30am or 2pm. To book, please call **01243 828 555**.

Wed 13th April, Shoreham 4SIGHT Centre, Tactile Paving Training sessions, 10.30am or 2pm. To book, please call **01273 454 343**.

Thurs 14th April, Midhurst 4SIGHT Centre, Tactile Paving Training sessions, 10.30am or 2pm. To book, please call **01730 812 338**.

Sun 17th April and Sun 22nd May, 2 - 4.30pm, Tea Dances at the Woodlands Centre in Rustington, BN16 3HB. For tickets or more details, please call 4SIGHT on **01243 828 555**.

Tues 19th April, 10am - 2pm, Supplier Information Day. Enhanced Vision, Dolphin and Calibre will be at Shoreham 4SIGHT Centre.

Sat 23rd April, Bognor Regis Coffee Morning at 4SIGHT Bradbury Centre, 10am - 1pm, everyone is welcome.

Thurs 5th May, Spring Coffee Morning at Midhurst 4SIGHT Centre, 11am - 1pm, everyone is welcome.

Sun 15th May, 40 mile Sponsored Tandem Ride, through Mid Sussex. See poster on front page for more details.

This newsletter is available in large print, email, CD, Braille or USB. If you wish to change format, then please let us know. The copy date for the next edition is **15th April 2016** for any inclusions.

Due to space and resources, some articles may have been edited accordingly. Information contained in this newsletter was correct to the best of our knowledge at the time of printing.

4SIGHT Contact Details

BOGNOR REGIS 4SIGHT CENTRE & CHARITY HQ

4SIGHT Bradbury Centre
36 Victoria Drive, Bognor Regis,
West Sussex, PO21 2TE
Main Tel: **01243 828 555**
Fax: 01243 838 003
Email: **enquiries@4sight.org.uk**

SHOREHAM 4SIGHT CENTRE

The Shoreham Centre, 2 Pond Road,
Shoreham-by-Sea,
West Sussex, BN43 5WU
Main Tel: **01273 454 343**
Email: **shoreham@4sight.org.uk**

MIDHURST 4SIGHT CENTRE

North Street, Midhurst
West Sussex, GU29 9DW
Main Tel: **01730 812 338**
Email: **midhurst@4sight.org.uk**

SIGHT CARE ADVISOR SERVICE

4SIGHT - Worthing Hospital Eye Clinic
Direct Number: **01903 285 281**
4SIGHT - St Richard's Hospital Eye Clinic
Tel: **01243 788 122 ext. 3515**

4SIGHT BOGNOR REGIS SHOP

11 York Road, Bognor Regis,
West Sussex, PO21 1LW
Tel: **01243 861 776**

4SIGHT PHOTO DIARY



Wendy and her pilot
paragliding in the
Austrian Tyrol.



Reg Bennett, one of the
Kitchen Klub members.



Two of our Bognor Charity
Shop Volunteers, Celia and
Carole, outside the shop
displaying our new signage.

Members of the
Shoreham Macular
Society Support
Group.

