

**DECEMBER
2016
NEWSLETTER**

**Charity No. 1075447
Company No. 3740647**



Supporting blind and partially sighted people

**CHRISTMAS
CAROL CONCERT**



**Performed by the
Seaford College
Chapel Choir**

Tickets £5
are available on
the day or can be
purchased in
advance. Includes
tea/coffee and
a mince pie!

MONDAY 5TH DECEMBER 2016

St Mary de Haura Church, Church St.

Shoreham-by-Sea, BN43 5DQ.

1PM TO 2PM

In Aid of

**For Tickets Call:
01273 454 343**



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CEO's Message

In the run up to Christmas and the New Year, I'm very pleased to be able to report to you that this year's 4SIGHT AGM, held on 28th October at Clair Hall in Haywards Heath, was a very busy, enjoyable and vibrant event attended by almost 100 people.

We were very fortunate to have the support of Optelec, Enhanced Vision & VisionAid displaying an excellent range of low vision equipment, plus

stands from the Macular Society, Guide Dogs UK, Calibre, the RNIB, Blind Veterans UK, The Andean Medical Mission and Action for Blind People & Action for Deafness. It was also great to see other local voluntary sector organisations there too, as well as the ROVI team and 2 Eye Care Liaison Officers from the Princess Royal & Sussex Eye Hospitals – all of whom contributed to a very successful event.

The Trustees and I, along with Sheen Stickland our Independent Examiners, were able to report that 4SIGHT had enjoyed another successful year, finishing with a financial surplus, as we did last year.

It was my pleasure again to announce the 'Volunteer of the Year' Award winners who this year are David Beer, who collects and counts our static boxes across the county, and Anne Tomlinson from the Mid Sussex Area, who's been the driving force behind the Tandem Ride for the last few years, as well as joint leader of 4SIGHT's Mid Sussex Ramblers Group. We are very grateful to both Anne and David for their invaluable contributions to 4SIGHT.

At the AGM, I was able to report back on the recent Membership & Stakeholder Survey and a more detailed synopsis of that will appear in the next Newsletter.

In the afternoon, it was encouraging that so many members stayed behind to listen to and participate in our Debate on the 'Future of Eye Health Services in Sussex', which was very ably chaired by Phil Revis, one of our Trustees and Mid Sussex Area Committee Chairman. We were delighted to welcome 4 guest speakers who were Masoud Tiemory MB ChB FRCOphth, Chief Ophthalmologist at Worthing & St Richard's Eye Clinics, Sarah Canning Bcs (Hons) MSc McOptom Dip TP (IP), Chair of the Surrey & Sussex Eye Health Committee, Lauren Williams from the England Vision Strategy and Alison Oliver, the CEO of Visionary.

The debate lasted an hour and drew lots of questions from the floor, and though not conclusive on our topic it was insightful and informative and we will be sending a report to Nus Ghani MP, who chairs the All Party Parliamentary Group on Eye Health and Visual Impairment, who has asked to know more about our work and the debate, which is very positive indeed.

Lastly, I'd like to wish you all well and hope that you have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Nik Demetriades, CEO



Some of the members at the 4SIGHT AGM, taking a vote.



Guest speakers at the AGM debate; Lauren Williams, Sarah Canning and Masoud Tiemory.

News from Midhurst

Charity Race Night

What a superb evening of fun, food and lucky winners we had on 20th October when we held our charity horse race evening in The Greyhound, Midhurst. We were fortunate to have help on the night from some of the local Rotarians; generous prizes were donated by local businesses for our auction as well as corporate sponsorship for some of the races. With help from you our members, volunteers and everyone who supported the event, we raised a surplus of £695 for the charity so thanks to you all. You can see some photos of the evening on our website.

Afternoon Parlour Games

Now the winter afternoons are drawing in, why not come along to a fun afternoon of parlour games once a month including dominoes, cards, draughts, chess, scrabble or Beetle? We have a selection of these good old fashioned games in the Midhurst centre and they are in either large print or a tactile version. The first session will be on Thursday 16th February 2017, from 11am until 1pm. Everyone is welcome, so why not bring a sandwich with you and we may even be able to rustle up some soup!

Christmas Lunch

Using some funding recently received from The Rotary Club of Midhurst & Petworth, we are able to offer a subsidised Christmas Lunch to our members living in those towns and the surrounding villages. The lunch will be held on Friday 16th December in The Grange, Bepton Road, Midhurst and will be a two course traditional meal with the vegetarian option of a nut roast followed by either mince pies or Christmas pudding. There will be a complimentary drink on arrival, and chocolates and crackers will be provided. The cost of the meal to you as a member will be £10 each and I have reserved 25 places, so get in touch now if you wish to come along.

Christmas Cake Raffle

Thanks to the many talents of Velia, including her cake making and decorating skills, we have a beautiful Christmas cake being raffled in the centre that she had kindly made for us. A picture of the cake is on display in the Centre. Tickets are £1 and will be drawn during the week commencing 19th December.

4SIGHT Publicity

In the last couple of weeks Velia has also been busy promoting our low vision services and charity shop throughout Midhurst, Petworth and the surrounding villages. She has done this by sending a general article to all the local parish magazine and newsletter editors asking if they would kindly include the information about us in one of their editions. To monitor how successful this has been, I would like to ask if you would kindly save an edition of any newsletter or magazine for us if you do see us mentioned in any of them that you may get.

Donations

Please remember that we are happy to receive any unwanted clothes, shoes, books, CDs and DVDs in the shop if you no longer want them. Just drop them in during opening hours.

and finally.....

It just remains for me to say that I wish you all a very **Happy Christmas and Prosperous, Healthy New Year** and hope to see you all soon.

Bev, Outreach Worker
Tel. Midhurst 01730 812 338

'May you have the gladness of Christmas which is hope;
The spirit of Christmas which is peace;
The heart of Christmas which is love.'" ***Ada V. Hendricks***

Shoreham Update

Thanks to all that attended the Fish & Chips Quiz on Saturday 22nd October, it was a fantastic evening, and I would like to thank everyone involved in making it such a success. Special thanks to Ellen Davis, and Sandra & Rod Williams for organising the evening. With the addition of match funding via Amy Bunn from Lloyds banking Group, I am pleased to announce that we have raised a whopping £1003! Many thanks again, and looking forward to the next one!

Shoreham Technology Group

A new Tech Group is starting in Shoreham on the third Wednesday each month, from 10.30am to 12.30pm, beginning Wednesday 18th January. This will be a social forum with the focus being on how to make technology more accessible.

Kirstie Thomas, Outreach Worker

Bognor Regis Update

The Co-op Local Community Fund

We have been selected to receive funding from the Co-op Local Community Fund. It means that when you purchase goods from the Co-op, we will get a contribution towards the support we give to those living with sight loss in West Sussex. We need your help! The more support we get, the more funding we could receive. So if you're a Co-op Member log in to your Co-op Membership account and choose us. If you're not a member, please join and support us!

Desktop Video Magnifiers (CCTVs) available

We currently have a selection of donated desktop video magnifiers available for sale/loan at our Bradbury Centre in Bognor Regis. Screen sizes vary from 17" monitors up to 24". If you interested, then please give Dan or Beau a call on **01243 838 002**.

We would also like to thank Mr Bullivant for kindly donating his late mother's Optelec Clearview CCTV to 4SIGHT, along with various other visual aids including a big button phone.

Bognor Charity Shop Update

Happy Christmas to one and all from us here at the Bognor Shop. I can't believe I'm saying that again already - where's 2016 gone?!! It has definitely been a rollercoaster of a year - ups & downs with highs and lows. Below are some of them:-

- 2016 saw lots of BIG birthday celebrations - we had mine 50, Carolyn 60, Doreen 70 and our June was 90!!
- We welcomed new volunteers - Buzz, Sue, Mark, Annie, John, Lorraine, Natalie, Arabella & Kaneo. As well as saying farewell to others that moved on - we couldn't have done it without you all. (We are always looking for new volunteers so if you're able to help, please call Nicki on **01243 861 776** for a chat.)
- The year has seen its sadness too with illnesses, sickness and death - our hearts go out to everyone who has been affected.
- But we have had wonderful news too - weddings, anniversaries, grandchildren have been born & romances have started!!
- We even came second twice in the 4SIGHT quiz nights - the shop team "The 4SIGHT Saga" may now be renamed "Always the Bridesmaid"!! Great night out with food included
- Doreen crocheted some fantastic poppies for the Poppy Appeal and raised £60 for us to give to them - well done - she is now looking at knitting & crocheting slipper socks for the shop to sell next year - so watch this space.
- Our Elaine continued to arrange tombola events throughout the year - there will be another one leading up to Christmas - plus a raffle to win a hamper full of Christmas food & fun.

We look forward to making new plans & memories in 2017 and we hope you do too. Please don't forget us if you have any unwanted Christmas gifts or items that are replaced with new ones. Have a magical Christmas and wonderful New Year - may all your dreams come true. Until next time - take care and remember to talk to a neighbour who may be alone & lonely this Christmas.

Sarah Brooks, Bognor Shop Manager & Gang

Sight Problems and Dementia

One of our 4SIGHT volunteers, Barbara Westmore, who has a background in biology, has written an article for our newsletter about dementia and sight loss. Barbara has highlighted some rare conditions, but it is important to note that the vast majority of sight loss is due to diseases of the eye itself, such as macular degeneration, glaucoma and diabetic eye disease, and not the brain as is the case with dementia related sight loss.

“Did you know that sight problems can be caused by dementia? Rarer forms of dementia account for only around 5% of all cases in the UK and some of these rare forms cause sight problems. One of these rare forms affecting the back of the brain is Posterior Cortical Atrophy (PCA). It is a degenerative condition, which is also known as Benson’s Syndrome. The cause of PCA in most cases is Alzheimer’s disease, involving loss and dysfunction of brain cells.

To begin with, people with PCA have a relatively well-preserved memory but experience vision problems. They may have difficulty recognising objects in pictures or find it hard to recognise faces. They may also have a problem reading or calculating bills, as these tasks are controlled by the back part of the brain. This is where the initial damage in PCA occurs.

The first symptoms of PCA tend to occur around the age of 55-65 years. The signs may be subtle so it could be some time before a formal diagnosis is made, after several scans. As the disease progresses, the damage in the brain spreads causing memory loss and confusion; more typical symptoms of Alzheimer’s disease and some people find that medications for Alzheimer’s are beneficial.

As well as functional vision difficulties, PCA affects spatial awareness and often impacts on speech. Driving may also be affected. Paul was diagnosed at 53; he left his desk in the office and sometimes couldn’t find the door when he returned. He also started running across roads because he couldn’t tell if the traffic was

moving or stationary. His GP referred him to a neurologist for tests, one of which was to draw a clock. He was unable to draw the circle and wrote all the numbers on one side.

Unlike Alzheimer's, people with PCA maintain an acute awareness of what they can and can't do, which leads to frustration and emotional strain.

A small proportion of people with frontotemporal dementia also develop Progressive Supranuclear Palsy (PSP). The specific parts of the brain that are damaged include the regions that control eye movements. Other symptoms may include a tremor or frequent falls due to being unsteady when walking. Damage that occurs in PSP is caused by abnormal deposits of a protein called tau.

People over 60 years of age mainly develop this rare type of dementia. They may experience double vision and paralysis of eye movements. Other symptoms include difficulty walking, speaking or swallowing. Although there is no cure for PSP there are medications available to help control some symptoms.

Whether we develop dementia or not depends on our age, lifestyle, genes and the environment in which we live. You can't prevent dementia beginning, but by not smoking, exercising and eating a good, balanced diet, you can help lower risk factors for both dementia and heart disease.

Below is a list of useful organisations and contact details:-

- **Alzheimer's Disease**
Tel. 0300 111 5555; Website: Alzheimersresearchuk.org
- **PCA Support Group**
Tel. 07592 540 555; Email: jill.walton@ucl.ac.uk
- **PSP Association**
Tel. 01327 322 410; Website: www.pspeur.org

Barbara Westmore, 4SIGHT club volunteer

Pedal Power Strikes Again

The second 4SIGHT Sponsored tandem ride took place on 15th May. Perfect cycling weather and an awful lot of enthusiastic riders and an equally enthusiastic support team helped to make the day a success. 3 members of 4SIGHT, Jackie Page, Kirstie Thomas and Becky Costick plus our Chief Executive, Nik Demetriades along with 17 other riders 5 of whom were blind or visually impaired and from as far afield as Reading, North London and Kent took part to raise money for 4SIGHT.

There were 9 tandems, 2 triplets (tandem with an extra seat), a support vehicle and trailer on the road that day. One of the triplets was ridden by 3 members of American Express staff from their Brighton branch and the other was ridden by Haywards Heath Town Mayor, Nik and Mark Silver (the pilot - front rider). The rear seat riders (stokers) on the tandems were all blind or visually impaired.

After a few tweaks to the bikes and a group photo, the riders left The Thatched Inn in Hassocks and headed towards Lindfield for their first stop. However, the "American Express Team" (as they came to be known) had bike problems from the start and was delayed by about 20 minutes while someone went to the local Halfords and bought a vital part. Further along the road Kirstie and Ryan's tandem had a puncture. Help was given by Dan, one of the other pilots and after a slight technical hitch with a new bicycle pump (the vital connector was missing!) and an emergency phone call for a backup pump, they were on their way again. Not the best of starts for them but the rest of the team enjoyed a prolonged comfort break at The Red Lion - where is the justice in that?

The Cowdray Arms provided a welcome lunch break after a long uphill struggle to Turners Hill. From there it was on to The Eight Bells in Bolney for the last comfort break after a fairly long and easy downhill ride. The support vehicle gave the riders a good 5 minute start and it took quite a few miles before it caught the riders up, such was the speed of the bikes! After that it was the home straight and back to The Thatched Inn.

The stewards, who had been presented with cowbells, rang them enthusiastically at the riders, made sure all was well and generally cheered the riders on. I'm not sure what passing motorists thought but we did have some very bemused drivers going in the opposite direction. Fortunately our first aiders weren't called upon to administer to any of the riders and nobody got lost.

And the bottom line is that all the effort and training was worthwhile as the group raised a fantastic £2600 for 4SIGHT. Well done and thank you to all those who took part.

200 Club

The winning number for **October was 109 and November was 152**. Why not join the 200 Club and help raise money for 4SIGHT? By paying just £20 for the year you will be given a unique number, from 1 to 200. This is entered into our monthly prize draw, where you have the chance to win £100. There are lots of numbers still available; to join please call us on **01243 828 555**.

Milk Bottle Tops, Used Stamps & Foreign Coins

Thank you for your support in the past collecting milk bottle tops for 4SIGHT, however we are no longer able to accept these items. But we are still happy to receive any used stamps and foreign coins that you no longer require. Over the past year you have made over £200 for 4SIGHT by donating your used stamps to us.

Online Christmas Shopping with Easyfundraising

Are you or your family doing Christmas shopping online? Did you know that every time you buy a gift, you could also raise money for 4SIGHT? Over 2,700 well known retailers will donate a percentage of what you spend to 4SIGHT, to say thank you for shopping with them. All you need to do is register at www.easyfundraising.org.uk and select 4SIGHT - West Sussex Association for the Blind as your good cause. Spread the word to your friends this Christmas.

My Cruise Story

At the age of 70 I went on my first cruise - I never wanted to go before, I thought it would be hell on water!! However, with an "offer too good to refuse" my friend and I sailed on the Queen Victoria at the end of November 2008, just as the ship was to celebrate her first year at sea. We boarded the ship at Civita Vecchia, the port for Rome, and were due to sail at 10pm. The wind was gale force and despite the size of the ship and the work of the tugs, Victoria was unable to leave the dock and had to wait until the winds subsided. It was a taster of what was to come!!

Several days later we left Dubrovnik in a storm, sailing for Malta. Gale force winds and high seas; even Victoria was beginning to roll!! We could hear banging and crashing, tables overturning, a TV crashed from the wall. We heard later that a lot of damage was done in the kitchens and shops on-board. At the height of the storm, the Victoria shuddered and listed to one side, staying there for several minutes. The Captain's voice came over the speaker. "We are experiencing extreme weather conditions, but the ship is well found. You should use caution moving around the ship". It wasn't exactly reassuring!! We found out later, that during the height of the storm, the wind had changed direction suddenly and a huge wave had hit the side of the ship and had caused it to list over 8 degrees. It was several hours before the storm abated.

By the time we turned right at Gibraltar we had recovered ourselves but there was more ahead. The Captain announced there would be severe weather conditions for the next 12 hours. The ship groaned and swayed alarmingly with 20ft high waves, spray whipping off their tops. I went to a lecture in the bow of the ship; there the effect was worse - booming, banging, clanging and shuddering. At one point I thought we had hit something, and so did the speaker, as he stopped in mid-sentence. Thoughts of the Titanic came to mind!! But all was well and as we sailed into the Bay of Biscay, the wind and seas moderated.

However, there was just one more hitch. Sitting with my friend in the library, which was near the waterline, everything stopped. There was absolute silence and it was several minutes before low lights came on and the voice of the Captain said they had a slight problem on the Bridge, but it wouldn't be long before all power was restored. It was about half an hour before we got under way again.

My first cruise and I thought it would be hell on water. In fact I found it rather exciting and just loved the Victoria.

P.S. And I wasn't sea sick!!!

Shirley Buck, leader of 4SIGHT Kitchen Klub

Vision Hotels

RNIB recently announced that Action for Blind People have stopped running the three Vision Hotels, but that they are doing everything they can to ensure the hotels stay open under new management.

For further information you will need to visit the RNIB website at www.rnib.org.uk or phone them on 0303 123 9999.

Carol's Christmas Day Lunch Party in Horsham

On Sunday 25th December, from 12 noon until 3.30pm, at Lavinia House, Duke's Square, Denne Road, Horsham (behind Drill Hall).

An enjoyable and friendly occasion for everyone who may be on their own. The cost is £15, to include drinks, two course lunch, a Christmas gift and entertainment.

To book a place contact Age UK Horsham District, Lavinia House, Duke's Square, Horsham, RH12 1GZ. Tel. **01403 751 327**.

If you want to volunteer, please call Carol on 01403 218 670.

Triathlon

For some years now the Mid Sussex Triathlon Club have wanted to have a disability event in their annual triathlon club competition. The competition involves other clubs and up to 250 competitors, who come along with family and friends, and would be a wonderful opportunity to raise awareness of 4SIGHT.

They have approached 4SIGHT to see if we would like to take part in their annual triathlon competition. The idea is that for each of the different areas 4SIGHT covers to put forward a visually impaired team of 2/3 people working on a "tag" basis or a person to enter the competition at entry level. The event takes place on 11th June 2017 at the Triangle Leisure Centre in Burgess Hill. The disciplines involved are 500 metre swim, 24 kilometre cycle (tandem in our case) and 5 kilometre run with each member of a team undertaking one/two elements depending on how many people in a team.

This event could raise money through team sponsorship and be quite an achievement for those involved. There may be other fund-raising opportunities from this event and these are currently being discussed with the Triathlon Club.

If you would like to take part in this event, then please contact Anne Tomlinson, either by emailing **anne6bramber@gmail** or ringing her on **01444 456 026**.

Warm homes discount

The 15 largest energy suppliers in the UK are offering a £140 discount to customers on low incomes and certain means tested benefits. The Warm Home Discount scheme is limited and suppliers will close their application process once they have reached their government set targets. More info can be found at <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/land-waste-and-housing/energy-saving> or by phoning your energy supplier.

To be eligible for this discount you must apply by 31st December.

Diary Dates

Mon 5th December, 1-2pm, Carol Concert by Seaford College Chapel Choir, at St Mary de Haura Church, Shoreham-by-Sea, BN43 2SG. For tickets, please call Shoreham 4SIGHT Centre **01273 454 343**.

Wed 21st December, from 2.30pm, 4SIGHT Supporters Christmas Service, at the Methodist Church Hall, Brunswick Road, Shoreham-by-Sea, BN43 5WB. Join us for carols, reading & thanks and of course tea and cake! For more info, please call Kirstie on **01273 454 343**.

Wed 18th January, 10.30am-12.30pm, new Shoreham Tech Group, meeting at Shoreham 4SIGHT Centre, 2 Pond Road, Shoreham-by-Sea, BN43 5WU. For more details, please call **01273 454 343**.

Thurs 19th January, 10.30am-2.30pm, Bognor Regis Macular Group meeting at 4SIGHT Bradbury Centre, 36 Victoria Drive, Bognor Regis, PO21 2TE. For more details, please call **01243 828 555**.

Sun 22nd January, 19th February and 19th March, 2-4.30pm, Tea Dances at the Woodlands Centre in Rustington, BN16 3HB.

Opening Hours over Christmas & New Year

Bognor Regis and Shoreham 4SIGHT Centres will close at 2pm on Thurs 22nd December and re-open at 10am on Tues 3rd January.

Midhurst 4SIGHT Centre & Charity Shop will close at 1pm on Thurs 22nd December and re-open on Tues 3rd January.

Bognor Regis 4SIGHT Charity Shop will close at 4pm on Sat 24th December & re-open on Wed 28th December; it will then close at 4.30pm on Fri 30th December & re-open on Tues 3rd January.

If you wish to receive the newsletter in a different format, please let us know. The copy date for the next edition is **13th January 2017**.

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 9DJ
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**