Devon in Sight
Your local sight loss charity

100 YEARS
1925 - 2025

In Vision

The magazine of Devon in Sight

Winter 2024 Issue 41



Our Centenary Appeal

Could you help us support more people with sight loss in Devon?

Winter 2024 - Issue 41

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Editors
Grahame Flynn
Tessa Barrett
Jennie Benham

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Devon in Sight is a Member of **the Helpline Partnership**

Sight Loss Helpline 01392 876 666

The Helpline is open between 10am and 2pm Monday to Friday

Chief Executive Officer's

Welcome



Welcome to the Winter Edition of In Vision Magazine.

On behalf of everyone here at Devon in Sight we would like to wish you a very Happy Christmas and New Year!

At our Annual General Meeting in September, I was able to share with the audience the hugely impressive impact that we have achieved with our small team of staff and volunteers.

As well as our core 'client work', we have also held many community events, provided a Sensory Garden at the Devon County Show, hosted the Devon Sight Loss Conference and campaigned on many issues, **all for the benefit of our community of people living with little or no sight.**

As another year draws to a close I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff, trustees and volunteers at Devon in Sight for their hard work and dedication.

Some of you may receive a telephone call in the next few weeks from one of our Trustees. Steve, Paul and Marilyn will be helping us conduct our randomised biennial **Customer Satisfaction Survey.** This helps us to ensure that the services we provide remain relevant and of high quality.

2025, marks our Centenary. I would urge you all to try and do something to support your local sight loss charity.

Onwards and upwards!

Grahame Flynn
Chief Executive Officer

Remembering David Gailey

"David lived with severe sight loss, but he wasn't defined by it"



◀ Photo Credit: Devon in Sight

▲ David Gailey taking part in a photo shoot circa 2015

Devon in Sight's Chief Executive Officer Grahame Flynn remembers David Gailey a long term client and active member of our Devon Sight Loss Forum who passed away peacefully on 17th August 2024.

It was a huge honour to be invited to speak at David's Celebration of Life Service at East Devon Crematorium on Monday 9th September by his daughter Claire. I have been asked to share my eulogy with our readers.

"When I joined Devon in Sight as Chief Executive Officer in 2013, I started a programme of modernisation, professionalising our services.

David Gailey, a longstanding client was the first to compliment me. He understood the challenges of running a small charity with limited funding. He had an ability to see the larger picture.

David lived with severe sight loss, but he wasn't defined by it. He was keen to share his lived experience for the benefit of others. He was a great ambassador for Guide Dogs and us at Devon in Sight.

David was very proud of the fact that he was invited to join our Devon Sight Loss Forum, giving voice to people with lived experience of sight loss and campaigning for change for the betterment of others.

He supported us in our campaign for large print appointment letters from the Eye Unit at Exeter Hospital! We won!

He supported us when we campaigned against the Government's ridiculous plans to close Railway Station Ticket Offices. We won!

When we started a programme of Disability Awareness Training for Public and Community Bus Drivers, he would personally challenge bus drivers to see if they had engaged with our training. David was always quick to thank me. I always thanked him.

During the COVID-19 pandemic we set up some new telephone-based services which continue to this day. David was a regular caller and contributor to our weekly Chit-Chat Calls. He could be blunt, but positive. There was no place for a client who was 'feeling sorry for themselves'.

David epitomised the 1936 song, ‘Pick yourself up, dust yourself down…and start all over again’.

However, David was not perfect. We were always telling him off for his swearing. He would occasionally start to tell a naughty joke or a limerick. As moderators we had to quickly step in to move the conversation on! Some of our callers were ladies of a certain age!

David was an intensely private man, but it was a landmark moment when he shared his prostate cancer diagnosis with the rest of the callers. His openness saw the group take on a new dynamic.

We used his poor experiences to challenge the hospital, particularly around accessible information for blind patients receiving cancer treatment.

David’s experiences inspired me to write an article about Prostate Cancer in our quarterly magazine. Upon receiving the audio version, David was immediately on the phone, quite emotional. He thanked me for raising awareness of Prostate Cancer. I thanked him.

Things couldn’t get worse, could they? In October last year David rang to say that Tarka, his faithfully Guide Dog was to be retired due to arthritis. The loss of Tarka, his companion and friend was devastating, and we noticed a huge decline in David’s health & wellbeing. His swearing got worse! But we understood why.

David’s recent hospitalisation highlighted the need for more work to be undertaken with hospital staff around sight loss awareness and end of life care. We are meeting with senior hospital managers to see what can be done to make the patient experience better for blind and partially sighted patients staying on hospital wards.

David’s poor experiences are already a catalyst for change.

The team at Devon in Sight provide support for visually impaired people, but there are some, like David, who support and nourish us as charity workers. He made it worth it!



That was what made him stand out. That was what made him a favourite.

Our last Chit-Chat Call without David was a sombre affair. One caller summed it up when he said, “The loss of David leaves a void”.

Addressing David’s coffin I said, “David. Thank you for everything that you did for the sight loss community in Devon. Your Devon in Sight Family will miss our ‘Cheeky Chappie!’

On a lighter note. On this, your final journey, I have a piece of advice for you. You can take it or leave it. But there may be consequences.

David, whatever you do, when you meet Saint Peter at the Pearly Gates of Heaven. Please don’t swear!

Rest in Peace old friend.”

As a tribute to David we dedicated the Second Devon Sight Loss Conference to his memory and that of our former Trustee Ray Doughty who died last December.

David Gailey
1944 - 2024

Hospital Bed Notice

I am living with little or no sight!

My name is...

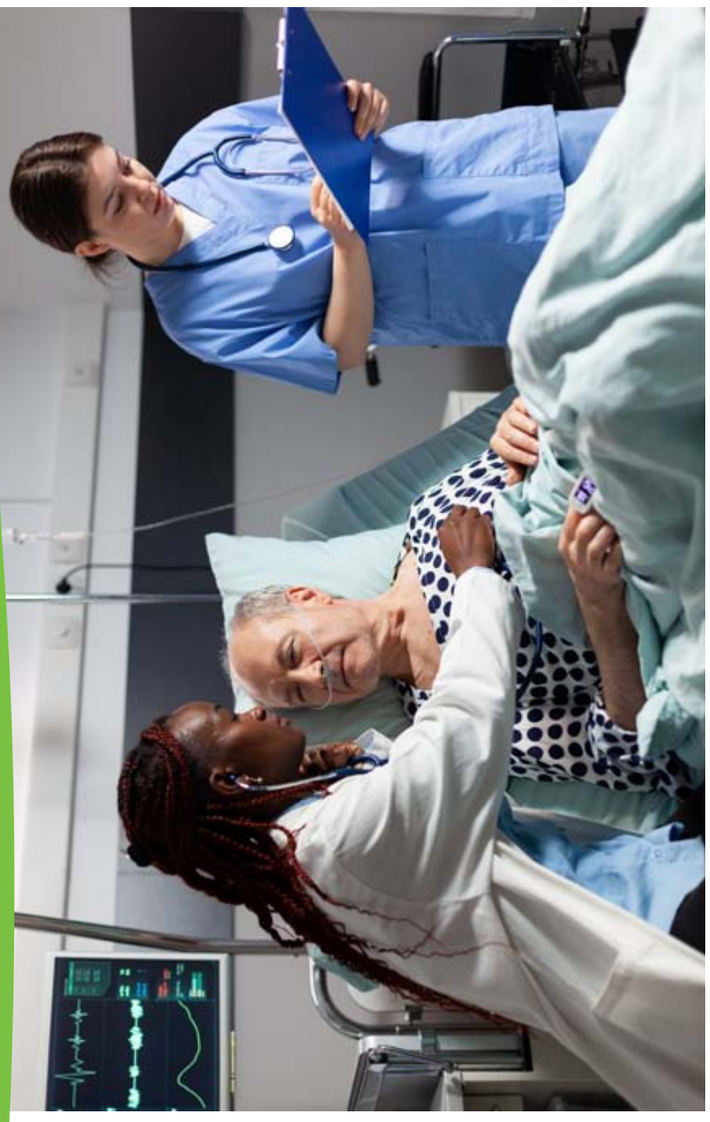
- Please introduce yourself when you speak to me.
- If you are treating me, please tell me what you are going to be doing, before you do it.
- If you are leaving food on my table, please describe what is on my plate, (think of it as a clock face).
- If you are leaving, please say goodbye as I can't see you go!

Thank you for your kindness.

Devon in Sight
Your local sight loss charity

www.devonninsight.org.uk

Your Cut-Out Hospital Bed Notice



▲ Photo Credit: iStock (Dragos Condrea)

We are working with the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital to make ward staff aware of the simple things that they can do to make life easier and safer for patients on hospital wards who are living with a visual impairment.

When our late friend David Gailey was in hospital we prepared a simple notice for his bed to alert people to the fact that he couldn't see them. We have decided to make the notice available to you all.

Please cut the page opposite out of the magazine and place it on your hospital bag.

Don't forget to insert your name.

NHS
Royal Devon
University Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust

Conference Updates

'Helping You Navigate Your Sight Loss Journey'



◀ Photo Credit: Grahame Flynn (Devon in Sight)

Devon Sight Loss Conference

Devon in Sight hosted the Devon Sight Loss Conference at the Mercure Exeter Rougemont Hotel, Exeter on Tuesday 10th September 2024. The theme was, "Helping You Navigate Your Sight Loss Journey'.

Our guest speakers included winner of the BBC TV series, 'Race Across the World', Tricia Sail, Mr Sebastian Stanga from the Retina Clinic London, and Victoria Borrow, Senior Associate from Stephens Scown Solicitors.

Our 99th Annual General Meeting was well attended with presentations by our Chair Dr Adrian Jacobs and our CEO Grahame Flynn. Our friends from Devon's Sensory Teams and The Retina Clinic London provided Consultation Rooms to meet with potential and existing clients.

Sight and Sound Technology provided seminars showcasing the latest navigation technology and large array of equipment in our Living Well with Sight Loss Exhibition. Over twenty organisations provided exhibition stands.

The event would not have been possible without the kind sponsorship of Sight & Sound Technology, The Retina Clinic London and Stephens Scown Solicitors.

Our Centenary Conference will be taking place on Thursday 18th September 2025.

Visionary Conference 2024

The Visionary Annual Conference is a key highlight of the year for the sight loss sector and the 2024 event did not disappoint.

This flagship event brought together an impressive assembly of over 230 industry professionals, representing over 110 organisations from across the Visionary network.

Grahame Flynn said, "The two-day gathering in September showcased the strength of our community, drawing attendance from local member organisations, national partners, industry-leading exhibitors and corporate sponsors.

We found the event to be buzzing and the positive energy reaffirmed the conference's status as an essential platform for knowledge sharing and relationship building across the sector.

Meeting other charity leaders and funders was hugely inspirational. It was good to represent the South West of England at this national event."

NaviLens at Saltram House



◀ Photo Credit: Grahame Flynn (Devon in Sight)

▲ One of the Devon in Sight Groups at Saltram House

On 29 August 2024 representatives from Devon in Sight visited Saltram House and Gardens in Plymouth, to help evaluate the new NaviLens mobile telephone App. The ITV Westcountry News Team were present to cover the visit.

The Free NaviLens app promotes greater independence and freedom, enabling blind and partially sighted visitors to navigate spaces with minimal or no assistance.

Funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, The National Trust have been trialling the use of the App at Saltram House to improve access to heritage and nature for people who are blind and partially sighted. It may be rolled out nationally.

National Trust



The app uses colourful QR-Style codes that users can detect on their phones from up to 20 metres away. Users just point their phones in the general direction, and the NaviLens app picks up the codes in the vicinity.

Each code has information loaded into it, which is spoken out loud on the user's phone offering directions and warnings, and in this context, providing navigational and interpretative content relative to Saltram's historic garden setting.

More of these colourful QR-style codes are popping up on food labels, at public buildings and even on the television.

You can simply download the app from your Apple or Android store. There are two versions available: NaviLens and NaviLensGo. You can use either app, as both contain the same information, However NaviLensGo is more suitable for people with residual sight and the standard NaviLens app is better for people without or very limited sight.

Devon in Sight's Sight Loss Adviser, Louise Millington arranged the day and we would like to thank the following people who took part in the trail; Mandy Darling, Mark Harper, Fiona Hess, George and Carol Jones, Geoff Mann, Christine McKay, Alvis and Tony Merrel-Spiers, Nikki Palmer, Sue Watson and Pepsi the Guide Dog!

We are delighted to have played a small part in the evaluation for NaviLens and the National Trust. We'll keep you informed of future developments based on the constructive feedback we gave to the project.

Vision Zone South West Review

Making Devon a Sight Loss Friendly County!



◀ Photo Credit: Jennie Benham (Devon in Sight)

▲ Tessa Barrett and Grahame Flynn at Vision Zone South West

On Wednesday 30th October 2024 Grahame Flynn and Tessa Barrett attended the first Vision Zone South West Event specifically aimed at professionals, children, students and parents.

The event took place at The Woolwell Centre, Plymouth and was hosted by our friends at the Devon based children and young person's charity Moorvision and supported by the Powell Family Foundation and equipment supplier Optelec.

Vision impairment is one of the least common disabilities of childhood and it can be hard for these children and their families to meet others in the same position. Moorvision runs activities, residential trips, parent/carer training and other support sessions.

Moorvision's activities include the child with vision impairment along with the whole family. They especially recognise the importance of including siblings in their work.

The event was very well attended and exhibitors included Devon in Sight, RNIB, Guide Dogs, The Royal National College for the Blind, Positive Eye, Thomas Pocklington Trust, Usher Kids UK, In Focus, Angel Eyes NI, Plymouth Council, Empowering Blind Children and Young Adults, Improving Lives Plymouth, New College Worcester , Victa and many more.

Grahame Flynn said, "Whilst Devon in Sight has traditionally provided services for older people with acquired sight loss mainly due to older age, we are pleased to be making more links with younger people's service providers.

A key are of growth for our charity is for younger people transitioning in to adult services and those people looking to enter employment. We were delighted to meet with the parents of children and young people who are naturally very concerned to know that their loved ones will continue to receive support as they get older."

We would like to extend our gratitude to Laura Hughes and the team at Moorvision for their invitation to join the day.

For more information about **Moorvision's Services** please call:

Moorvision 07581 566690

Website: www.moorvision.org **Email:** info@moorvision.org

Sight Loss Employment Hub Launched

Launching an innovative employment programme in partnership with Thomas Pocklington Trust



◀ Photo Credit: Grahame Flynn (Devon in Sight)

▲ Maria Moorhouse at the Devon Sight Loss Conference 2024

We were delighted to announce at the Devon Sight Loss Conference in September that Devon in Sight has partnered with Thomas Pocklington Trust (TPT) to provide an innovative new employment programme.

'Works for Me' is a new service dedicated to supporting people who are blind and partially sighted in their pursuit of paid employment or for those seeking a change of career. TPT have a team of employment experts keen to offer one-to-one support across Devon. They provide advice and support that is personalised to suit everyone's unique style. The programme can support you with job search tips, advice on completing applications forms, writing covering letters and CV's and provide valuable interviews tips.

They can also give you a mock interview (preparing you for the real thing), connect you with Career Coaches dedicated to providing coaching and mentoring at no cost to you. There is also emotional health and wellbeing support. Furthermore, they can assess your IT skills and provide advice on identifying the best Assistive Technology programmes to get you back into work and support you find training in your area. Participants will be kept informed by email, about available opportunities, internships, webinars, and anything else that is relevant to your employment, education or voluntary pursuits.

Thomas Pocklington Trust's Local Employment Coordinator is Maria Moorhouse. Prior to joining TPT, Maria worked as a PA in Human Resources at Experian and also in Local Government, the NHS and other private sector industries in the City of London. Maria has lived with sight loss since the age of five, having been diagnosed with advanced Glaucoma and had various eye operations over the years. Following her move from Essex in February 2023, Maria now lives in North Devon with her husband and two Westie dogs – Daisy and Drammy,

Maria says, "I enjoy my role at Thomas Pocklington Trust in supporting visually impaired clients with their job search as I understand at first-hand how challenging their journey is."

Maria will be joining us for a Telephone Speaker Event on Tuesday 11 February 2025 to tell us more about this new service (See page 27).

For information about the **Sight Loss Employment Hub** ring:

Sight Loss Helpline 01392 876 666

The Helpline is open between 10am and 2pm Monday to Friday

Personal Alarms

These potentially lifesaving devices can offer peace of mind to you, and your family and friends

Personal alarms allow people to call for assistance if they have an accident or a fall at home. They are simple to use and can help older and less able people to feel safer, and to remain independent for longer. These potentially lifesaving devices can also offer peace of mind to family and friends.

Types of Personal Alarms

There are a wide variety of personal alarms available with slightly different ways of keeping you safe. Some are connected to 24/7 emergency response centres while others simply let out a loud noise to alert people nearby.

Basic Alarms

Basic alarms work by sounding a loud noise when a button is pressed on the device - it alerts people within hearing distance that you need assistance. This could be a relative, carer or even a neighbour. Although the system is basic, it can help you move around your home independently knowing that someone will be on hand if you need it.

You can buy a basic personal alarm that releases a loud noise to let people know you are in distress for around £10.

Pendant Alarms

Pendant alarms connect you with an Emergency Response Centre should you need help or assistance.

By simply pressing a button on the pendant, watch or device, an alert is sent to an Emergency Response Centre via the base unit in your home.

The centre provides 24-hour monitoring and will respond to anything from falls and accidents to rogue callers. When you contact staff, they'll decide if you need the Emergency Services or if they need to call one of your chosen, trusted contacts.

The monthly fee depends on the type of service, for example, if you need a larger alert range you can expect to pay more. Some pendant alarms let you speak directly through the device while others require you to use the base unit.

Pendant Alarms require a setup fee ranging from £45 - £100 and monthly fees start at around £20.

Fall Detectors

The chance of suffering a fall increases with age, as does the potential for more serious injuries. A fall alarm gives you reassurance that if you do have a tumble, help will be available as quickly as possible.

A fall alarm is very similar to a pendant alarm, the key difference being that it works automatically.

It uses an in-built motion sensor to detect any unexpected fall or downward motion and then sends an alert to a call centre or a loved one. Some models allow you to talk directly to the call centre via a two-way speaker either on a device or base unit.

Fall Detectors come with a 24-hour monitoring service and require a setup fee ranging from £45 - £100 with monthly fees starting at around £25.

GPS Tracking

GPS tracking alarms mean the location of elderly or vulnerable individuals can be pinpointed whenever they are away from home.

Whereas some pendant alarms are limited in their range, GPS tracking alarms have no location restrictions so can be used anywhere.

Most GPS trackers also come with a panic or SOS button so users can get help from a 24-hour monitoring team who will alert family members or emergency services. Some GPS trackers allow for users to talk to staff members at a contact centre.

The GPS tracking alarm require a setup fee ranging from £70 - £100 with monthly fees starting at around £30.

Purchasing a Personal Alarm

When looking for a personal alarm it is worth shopping around to find the service that works best for you - and at a price you're comfortable with.

Scam Alert

Which (the UK's consumer champion) have reported that scam calls for personal alarms are increasing. Do not purchase a Personal Alarm if you receive an unsolicited telephone call.

Cold callers may already know your name, age and even details of your medical history. One tactic they use is to claim you're eligible for a free alarm. They then ask you for card details to cover the ongoing subscription costs or a one-off installation fee.

Please ensure that you purchase your Personal Alarm from a **Which Trusted Trader** or a recommendation from a friend or by contacting the company **direct yourself.**

Which Trusted Traders as at 1st November 2024

Age UK

Website: www.ageuk.org.uk/products/mobility-and-independence-at-home/personal-alarms/
Telephone: 0800 011 3846

Careline 365

Telephone: 0808 304 5088
Website: www.careline.co.uk

Help Alert

Telephone: 01273 055 049
Website: https://helpalert24.co.uk/

Life Connect 24

Telephone: 0800 030 8999
Website: https://www.lifeconnect24.co.uk/

SureSafe

Telephone: 0800 189 1670
Website: https://personalalarms.org

Source: Which

Website: https://www.which.co.uk/reviews/assistive-technology/article/how-to-buy-the-best-personal-alarm-aiDEp0U1Tdr2

For information about **Personal Alarms** please call:

Sight Loss Helpline 01392 876 666

The Helpline is open between 10am and 2pm Monday to Friday

Living Well with Sight Loss Events 2025

Tesco customers support us again!



▲ Photo Credit: Grahame Flynn (Devon in Sight)

▲ Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service at a previous event

We are delighted to announce our Living Well with Sight Loss Schedule for 2025.

During 2024 we held hugely successful Living Well with Sight Loss Events in Torbay, Tavistock, Westward Ho! and Plymouth. We also held an extensive exhibition as part of the Devon Sight Loss Conference in Exeter.

We run our community events in partnership with Sight and Sound Technology, the UK's leading provider of equipment, software and services for people who are blind and partially sighted. These events have expanded over the years to include our partners in Health & Social Care, the Third Sector and Community Groups.

Living Well with Sight Loss Event Schedule 2025

East Devon Event - Thursday 6 March 2025
The Beehive Centre, Honiton

West Devon Event - Thursday 10 April 2025
The Ockment Centre, Okehampton

Mid Devon Event - Thursday 8 May 2025
The Cullompton Community Centre, Cullompton

Teignbridge Event - Thursday 5 June 2025
The Courtenay Centre, Newton Abbot

Exeter Event - Thursday 18 September 2025
Devon Sight Loss Conference
Mercure Exeter Rougemont Hotel, Exeter

Our Living Well with Sight Loss Events this year are supported by the **Tesco Stronger Starts Scheme.** These grants support thousands of local community projects and good causes across the UK.

Registered clients of Devon in Sight will automatically receive an invitation to the event in their area in the spring.

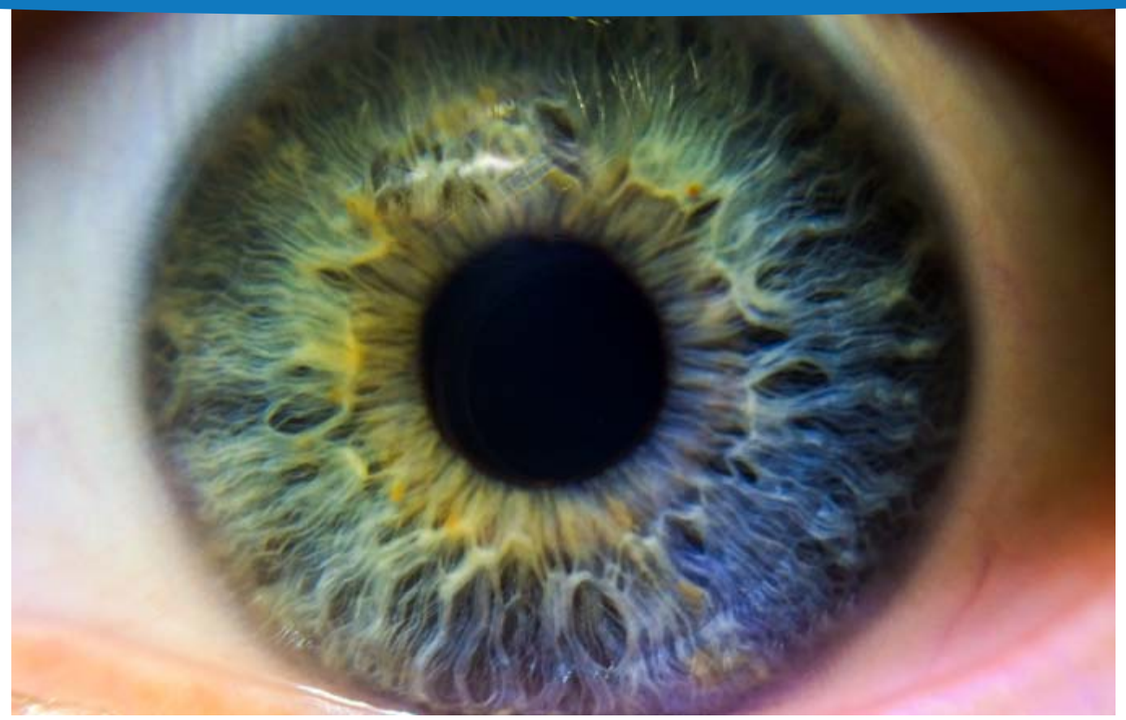
To **Register your interest in attending** these events please ring:

Sight Loss Helpline 01392 876 666

The Helpline is open between 10am and 2pm Monday to Friday

Understanding Glaucoma

Glaucoma UK provides advice and support to individuals with Glaucoma



◀ Photo Credit: iStock (Mark_Kuiken)

For our October Telephone Sight Loss Speaker Event we were pleased to be joined by Conchita Landa-Font, Training and Engagement Officer, Glaucoma UK.

Glaucoma is a group of eye disorders in which abnormally increased pressure of the fluid of the eye damages the optic nerve, resulting in visual impairment.

Conchita gave us a comprehensive overview of Glaucoma and Glaucoma UK services.

Glaucoma UK provides advice and support to individuals with Glaucoma.

Glaucoma UK Services include:

Support Groups
They have some well-established groups across the regions.

Digital Support Groups
Anyone with a computer can join their online digital support group sessions via Zoom (these will need to be registered for in advance). They are also broadcast live on Facebook, YouTube and LinkedIn – you just need to follow them on the individual platform. There is one each month, and all the details can be found on their website.

Leaflets & information on a variety of topics, these can be downloaded from the website or ordered as a hard copy with free postage.

Buddy Scheme
This can reassure someone who is nervous. They can put people who are due to have a procedure in touch with a Surgery Buddy. This is someone who has already had a similar operation.

Health Unlocked
A social network that allows users the chance to connect with others going through the same things as them. Users can get advice, support or simply chat with people who understand their perspective and can also offer some new insight by anonymously giving their own.

For information about Glaucoma UK please ring:

Glaucoma UK on 01233 64 81 70

Visit: www.glaucoma.uk

Health & Wellbeing Feature

Speaker Seminars

Devon in Sight's Telephone-based Sight Loss Seminars are an opportunity for you to hear from our partners across Health and Social Care, the Third Sector and others in the comfort of your own home.

Sight Loss Speaker Seminars take place every second Tuesday of the month at 10.30am on Freephone **0808 169 79 30.** Calls from your home telephone or mobile are FREE.

The full archive of Sight Loss Speaker Events can be accessed through our website at www.devoninsight.org.uk (under Events) or by using the QR code opposite on you smart phone.

SCAN ME

Tuesday 10 December 2024

'Assistive Technology Update'

We have a unique partnership arrangement with Sight and Sound Technology the UK's leading provider of equipment, software and services for people who are blind and partially sighted.

Our Guest Speaker is **Stefanie Davies, Head of Sales and Marketing** from our **Assistive Technology Partner, Sight & Sound Technology.**

Visit: www.sightandsound.co.uk

Tuesday 14 January 2025

'Introducing The Macular Society'

The Macular Society is a national charity supporting people living with central vision loss. They have peer support groups across Devon. The groups aim to combat loneliness and social isolation.

Our Guest Speaker is **Jo Fishwick, Regional Manager, Macular Society.**



▲ Jo Fishwick

Tuesday 11 February 2025

'Works for Me' is a new service dedicated to supporting people who are blind and partially sighted in their pursuit of paid employment or for those seeking a change of career.

Our Guest Speaker is **Maria Moorhouse Thomas Pocklington Trust's Local Employment Coordinator.**



▲ Maria Moorhouse

To access **Telephone Sight Loss Speaker Seminars** ring:

Tel: 0808 169 79 30

Calls from your home telephone or mobile are FREE

Bake for Sight 2024



◀ Photo Credit: Jennie Benham (Devon in Sight)

▲ (L-R) Grahame and Mandy with Pat and Sue from the WI

When Mandy Darling gave a talk to the **Kenn and Kennford Women's Institute** earlier in the year, little did we know that it was going to be the catalyst to a magnificent chain of events.

On Wednesday 18th September Mandy organised a business community engagement event at Splatford Barton Business Park where Devon in Sight has its head office.

Members of Kenn and Kennford WI provided a vast selection of cakes for our 'Bake for Sight Event'. It was a very welcome opportunity for the charity to engage with our neighbours at Splatford Barton.



A number of local business people took the opportunity to meet with the staff team to talk about our services.

We were even able to 'press gang' people into joining our Centenary Jump for Sight Event in 2025.

We were delighted that Pat and Sue from the WI were able to join us. The cake sale raised **£170.**

To our surprise they also gave a cash donation of **£160** following their annual Croquet Event and Potato Weigh.

We would like to thank the members of Kenn and Kennford Women's Institute for their support.

We are hoping that they will host a Summer Cream Tea Event for us as part of our Centenary Celebrations next year.



<u>Our Christmas Opening Hours</u>

Helpline Closes
2pm Friday 20th December 2024

Helpline Opens
10am Thursday 2nd January 2025

Delia's Walk for Sight



◀ Photo Credit: Delia Johnson

▲ Delia Kennedy with her beloved Teddy Bear 'TTT'

During November charity fundraiser Delia Kennedy will be walking 100 miles for Devon in Sight. Delia regularly walks for charity and this will be her last 100 mile challenge for 2024.

Delia explained her inspiration to undertake a physical challenge for Devon in Sight.

"My name is Delia Kennedy and having reached my 80th year, my Teddy Bear and I would really like to 'celebrate' this milestone and walk 100 miles locally to support Devon in Sight.

Let me introduce you to my little companion who rides in the pouch on my backpack. He is a very well-travelled little bear particularly in Scotland and around Devon.

I had read the book 'Cold Hands, Warm Heart' by Tess Burrows the adventurer, author, and motivational speaker and was so amazed by her story of courage and adventurous determination that I contacted her.

I wondered if she would take my little companion on the back of her bike from London to Glasgow to attend COP 26 summit in November 2021. I was delighted when she said she would take him and indeed it was she who named him TTT - Team Together Ted! Hence, I feel very honoured to have him as a little companion on my various fundraising travels.

On Friday 1st November, Delia started her challenge by getting her first ten miles under her belt. She said, "Although it is now November, it is unseasonably mild and rather grey but it is good for walking. Glorious colours are now displayed as the trees slowly convert from so many different shades of green, to an equally spectacular variety of gold, red, rustic and all shades in between like an artists' palette. We love shuffling through the fallen leaves and walking through a shower of leafy confetti! A wonderful transformation from summer energy to autumn's slowing down towards winters rest time.

Thank you so much for donating and helping to keep our important charities going."

If you would like to support Delia's Walk for Sight please give the office a call or make a donation through her Just Giving page.

Thanks Delia, keep up the good work!

SCAN ME

Supporting us

Friends of Devon in Sight

Become a Friend of Devon in Sight and help transform lives!



▲ Photo Credit: iStock (FatCamera)

Devon in Sight has been supporting people living with sight loss since 1925.

It may surprise you to know that we are not part of a national charity like the RNIB or Guide Dogs, and we do not receive any statutory funding. We are independent and fundraise ourselves to make all our services free for you.

Our Regular Giving Scheme **'Friends of Devon in Sight'** is the best way that you can support your local sight loss charity. You can give as little or as much as you would like with a monthly direct debit.

By becoming a **Friend of Devon in Sight**, you join a community committed to enhancing the quality of life for local people living with sight loss in Devon.

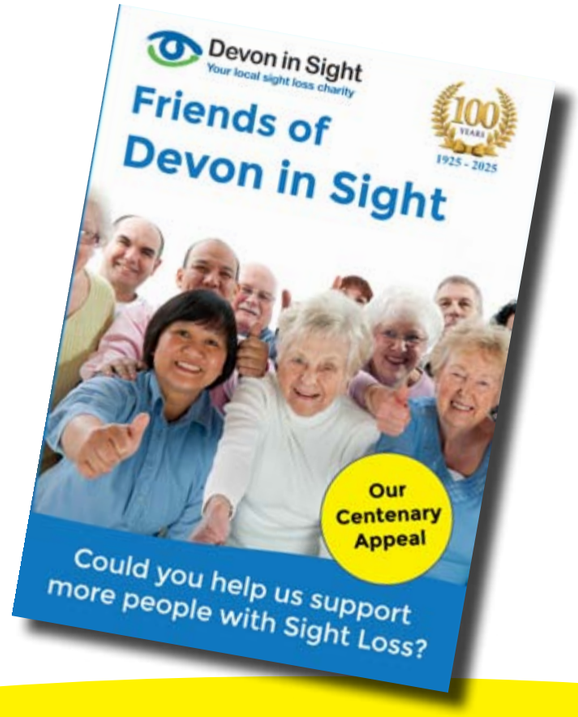
Your support enables us to provide essential services such information, advice and guidance whilst promoting health and wellbeing, and practical help to individuals and their families to promote Independent Living.

We also seek to influence change through our work with Health & Social Care, and other service providers to positively impact on those living with sight loss and ultimately realise our vision to **make Devon a sight loss friendly county.**

Centenary Appeal

As we enter our centenary year why don't you join us in making a tangible difference and help empower people with visual impairments to live fuller, more independent lives.

Our new Friends of Devon in Sight brochure is available now!



To order your **Friends of Devon in Sight brochure** please call:

Sight Loss Helpline 01392 876 666

The Helpline is open between 10am and 2pm Monday to Friday

Supporting us

The Importance of Making a Will



◀ Photo Credit: Grahame Flynn (Devon in Sight)

▲ Solicitor Victoria Burrow

One of the speakers at the Devon Sight Loss Conference in September was Victoria Burrow, a Senior Associate from the Private Client Team at Stephens Scown Solicitors, Exeter.

Victoria delivered a very powerful presentation regarding the importance of writing a will and future estate planning and the implications of not doing so. Did you know that making a will is the only way to make sure your money, property, possessions and investments (known as your estate) go to the people and causes that you care about.

Our Community supporting people living with sight loss in Devon

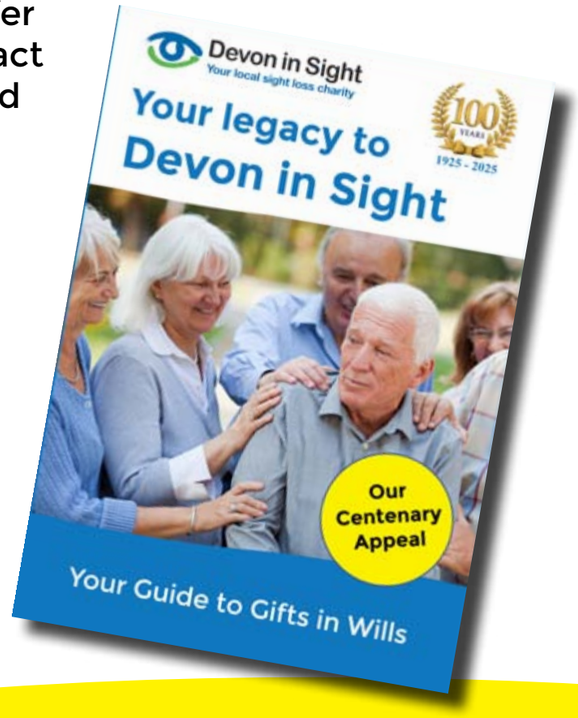
Devon in Sight provides a comprehensive range of award-winning support services for people navigating the challenges of visual impairment, designed to enhance their quality of life and opportunities.

One way that you can help support our work is to consider leaving a gift in your Will. Once you have looked after family and friends, a gift to Devon in Sight would be an incredibly special gift. By leaving us a gift in your Will, you join a community committed to enhancing the quality of life for local people living with sight loss.

Together, we can continue to offer vital services that positively impact on those living with sight loss and ultimately realise our vision to **make Devon a sight loss friendly county.**

A gift in your will can help Devon in Sight to support hundreds of people who are blind or partially sighted **live life to the full.**

Our new Guide to Gifts in Wills brochure is available now!



To order **Your Guide to Gifts in Wills** please call:

Sight Loss Helpline 01392 876 666

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Community Engagement

Helping make Devon a sight loss friendly county



◀ Photo Credit: Grahame Flynn (Devon in Sight)

▲ Mandy Darling and her Support Worker India Luther

Floating Bus Stops

Devon in Sight played an integral part at a recent site visit between members from Devon County Council, their contractors, the local Sensory Team and Elizabeth from Guide Dogs, at the site of a floating bus stop on Rifford Road in Exeter.

These controversial bus stops which sit between the cycle path and the carriageway require someone with a visual impairment to leave the pavement and cross an active cycle way in order to board a bus. Whilst in these times of promoting alternative methods of transport including public transport and cycling, not just for our environment, but for our own health benefits, we must never forget the safety of those who are blind or partially sighted.

Devon in Sight will continue to work with partners to find ways to promote the safety needs of those were present.

Devon Community's Resilience Forum

Devon in Sight were pleased to be invited to the Devon Community's Resilience Forum held in Crediton on Thursday 26th September. The meeting that considered events such as flash floods and other environmental disasters was extremely informative and important for the building of emergency strategies within communities in Devon.

Bus Service Improvement Plan

The Devon Bus Service Improvement Plan aims to make public transport more accessible and inclusive. As a members of the Devon Bus Forum, we are keen that the needs of blind and partially sighted people are taken into consideration by Devon County Council and their partners.

Mandy Darling, our Community Engagement Officer spoke at the recent Exeter Highway and Traffic Orders Committee (HATOC) regarding the Traffic Regulation Orders proposed under the Devon Bus Service Improvement Plan.

Following the meeting Rachel Phillips,Team Leader, Information Management & National Bus Strategy said, "Your speech was great and truly reflected the issues many individuals face when using public transport. We are so pleased that the proposals were all approved and we can now move towards delivering the Bus Service Improvement Schemes. Thank you again for your support."

Devon in Sight's work towards making Devon a sight loss friendly county continues.

Community Champions Awards

Recognising outstanding customer service in our community!

Devon in Sight is keen to recognise outstanding customer service from an individual or organisation for people who are blind or partially sighted in Devon.

We would like to thank those of you who have taken the time to share your positive experiences of customer service.

Specsavers Exeter

This award is being proposed by the clients calling into our Wednesday Telephone Chit-Chat Call Service where Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT) was discussed as a service provided at Specsavers at an affordable cost.

An Optical Coherence Tomography scan (commonly referred to as an OCT scan) is a procedure performed in addition to a routine eye test. It helps opticians to view the health of your eyes in greater detail, by allowing them to see what's going on beneath the surface of the eye.

Opticians can then examine these deeper layers to get an even clearer idea of your eye health. OCT scans take a 3D image of the back of the eye, which helps to spot serious eye conditions including Glaucoma (see page 24).

The group felt that this service offered them peace of mind, particularly if their appointments with the Eye Unit had ended because there was nothing further that could medically be done for them.

To know that their eye health continued to be checked was very reassuring.

Torbay Hospital

Attending hospital for ongoing cancer treatment can be traumatic for anyone but having a visual impairment can compound issues.

Karen King who is severely sight impaired has nominated the Torbay Hospital's Oncology Team, Recovery Team and the Radio Therapy Team for a Community Champion Award.

Karen said, "Their kindness and care throughout my cancer treatment has been beyond what I had expected and their knowledge of supporting someone with reduced vision was second to none."

Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust

Recognising excellent customer service is a positive way to share feedback in a world where people are quick to complain.

All nominees will receive a **Community Champion Certificate.**

To nominate a **Community Champion** please call:

Sight Loss Helpline 01392 876 666

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Seeing in the New Year 2025

This is the twelfth year that we have run our 'Seeing in the New Year' Campaign



◀ Photo Credit: iStock (Barabasa)

▲ An image of an elderly man having an eye examination

Devon in Sight's CEO Grahame Flynn launched our first Seeing in the New Year Campaign in December 2013. The premise is simple. 'Seeing in the New Year' promotes the importance of regular eye tests for everyone.

Eye tests are vital because you may not feel any pain or discomfort when something is wrong with your eyes. A visit to your optician for an examination is an important health check that may detect initial signs of eye conditions before you're aware of any symptoms.

It is important to remember that many eye conditions can be treated if found early.

It's easy to neglect your eyes because our eyes rarely hurt when something is wrong with them, so having regular eye tests is important to help detect potentially harmful conditions.

Therefore, having an eye test won't just tell you if you need new glasses or a change of prescription – it's also an important eye health check. A sight test can detect any number of health problems, including diabetes, macular degeneration, glaucoma, cataracts, detached retinas, the eye cancer retinoblastoma and many others which may otherwise go undetected until it is too late.

Early detection of such conditions means early treatment, which in turn can lead to your sight being saved. That's why Devon in Sight, is running its 'Seeing in the New Year Campaign' to encourage people to make a New Year's resolution to have their eyes tested in 2025.

We would encourage people of all ages to see an optician at least every two years. Even people with an existing problem should get their eyes tested regularly as conditions can get worse or new problems can develop.

We at Devon in Sight are proud of the work we do with people who are blind or partially sighted, but, as they say, prevention is better than cure."

Please encourage everyone you know to make a New Year resolution to book an eye examination in 2025!

Supporting You Feature

An Overview of Our Services

Helping You Navigate Your Sight Loss Journey

Devon in Sight offers a range of holistic services for people who are blind or partially sighted, their families, friends and carers who live or work in Devon. This is a summary of our core services.

Our Information, Advice and Guidance Service

We are committed to providing accurate and impartial Information, Advice and Guidance. You can access our comprehensive information resources through our Helpline on **01392 876 666.** Our website is available at **www.devoninsight.org.uk**

In Vision Magazine is available FREE in a range of accessible formats - large print, digitally via email and in audio. It can also be accessed on your smart phone through the **British Wireless for the Blind App.**

Our Independent Living Service

We work with you to identify the equipment, support and training that will help you maintain your independence and live life to the full. We undertake this valuable work in partnership with Health and Social Care and the Third Sector.

We have a unique **Assistive Technology Partnership** with **Sight and Sound Technology Ltd.**, the UK's leading provider of equipment, software and services for people who are blind and partially sighted. We have also recently launched an **Employment Hub** in partnership with **Thomas Pocklington Trust** to support people into work or change careers.

Our **Living Well with Sight Loss Events** take place across the county where you can meet partners in Health & Social care, the Third Sector and Community Groups.

Our Health & Wellbeing Service

Our Health and Wellbeing Service aims to help keep you physically and mentally fit and safe in your home. We can help you make some healthy lifestyle choices such as smoking cessation or arrange a FREE home safety check with the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service. We can also provide **emotional support** and in some cases **formal counselling.**

For fun, friendship and really useful information about living life with low vision you can join our free weekly telephone based **Chit-Chat Calls. To access the calls simply dial 0808 169 79 30 at 10.30am every Wednesday morning.**

Our free **Telephone Speaker Seminars** take place monthly with speakers from across the sight loss sector and beyond. These are structured so that following a formal information sharing presentation; listeners can contribute by asking questions and share their lived experiences of sight loss. **A schedule of events and joining instructions can be found on pages 26 and 27.**

Influencing Change

We believe that it is important that people who are blind or partially sighted, their family and carers have a voice in the development of sight loss services and other community services across Devon.

If you would like to support the charity to make Devon a Sight Loss Friendly County give us a call.

For more information about our services please ring:

Sight Loss Helpline 01392 876 666

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Articles for the Blind

Return Address: Devon in Sight
Splatford Barton, Splatford, Kennford
Exeter, EX6 7XY



Devon in Sight
Your local sight loss charity

SCAN ME

Sight Loss Helpline 01392 876 666
enquiries@devoninsight.org.uk
www.devoninsight.org.uk

Devon in Sight
Splatford Barton, Kennford,
Exeter, EX6 7XY

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