

SRSB

Sheffield Royal Society for the Blind

INSIGHT

SPRING 2015

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN SHEFFIELD

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our latest newsletter which we hope you enjoy. We hope you are keeping warm and safe in the snowy, icy conditions we have been experiencing since Boxing Day. Up to now we have not had to close our centre as a result of the snow although there were two days in January when it was not safe to use our minibuses to bring people into our centre.

CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES

Christmas Lunches and Social Evening

Our Christmas social evening was full to capacity with more than eighty people attending. Many thanks to Brad Pepper for wonderful entertainment. He soon got plenty of you up dancing so we assume you all enjoyed the evening. Thanks also to our special guest, Julia Brammer the wife of the High Sherriff of South Yorkshire.

Many thanks also to the various entertainers for their excellent entertainment at the Christmas lunches which were attended by over 250 people during the week, including the 118th Lord Mayor Cllr Peter Rippon and his wife Susan the Lady Mayoress and to the Master and Mistress Cutler David Grey MBE and his wife Ruth.

SRSB Christmas Raffle

Altogether you sold raffle tickets totalling £2,414.50 which was a slight decrease on last year but we are still delighted with your efforts. Thank you to everybody who helped us by selling tickets and also to those people who included a donation for **SRSB** which we very much appreciate.

Christmas Cards

A big thank you for the kind cards which many of you sent both to staff and to volunteers. Some of you even enclosed a donation to **SRSB** so thank you for that – it is really good to know that so many of you appreciate our services.

NEWSLETTER

We would be delighted to hear from you with articles for inclusion in our newsletter or ideas for things that we could cover in future editions.

This newsletter is available in a variety of formats. If you are struggling to read this newsletter then please contact us to discuss other formats. The formats available are Large Print, Audio on USB memory stick, braille or email.

As mentioned in the last newsletter the audio version of our newsletter is now sent out on USB memory stick for all new audio subscribers. Audio cassettes can no longer be replaced and CD's which can only be used once are expensive. As a result we do need to transfer people who receive the newsletter in those formats over to USB memory stick during the course of the coming year. If you are already able to play a USB memory stick then please let us know

so that we can amend our records. For other people we will be contacting you to discuss the changeover.

The people who have already changed to memory stick have given us good feedback about the ease of use and in conjunction with Sheffield Talking News we are able to supply a free player on loan. You don't need to worry about this as we will show you how to use the new player.

AUDIO BOOKS

Calibre Audio Library

Anybody who still receives audio books from Calibre on audio cassettes should have received a letter from Calibre explaining that they are stopping providing books on cassette and that you will need to transfer to USB memory stick. If you need a player for the memory sticks please contact us as we can supply a free player on loan through Sheffield Talking News. This will also help you move over to the memory stick version of our newsletter.

SRSB Audio Library

Whilst we have disposed of our audio books on cassette we still have a good selection of books on CD which are available on free loan. Either call in to our centre or give Kyle a call to arrange this.

THANK YOU

Sadly a number of clients have passed away in the last few months and we have all lost many friends. We have received donations in lieu of flowers at the funeral from many of our clients' family and friends. We

would like to thank them all for thinking about **SRSB** at such a difficult time.

These donations help to fund our ongoing services and help provide a future for our charity. We always work with the family should they wish to mark the donation or arrange a lasting memory such as a brick on the SRSB History Wall.

We have also received a number of donations from clients who celebrate and donate for **SRSB**. They have asked for donations to **SRSB** in lieu of presents and cards at family occasions such as Birthdays, Anniversaries and even Weddings. Again we are grateful to them all for thinking of us at a special time. Again, thank you to everybody for thinking of **SRSB**.

CONFUSION

Many of you will be aware that Sheffield Royal Society for the Blind (**SRSB**) is a totally independent charity, just serving the city of Sheffield and surrounding areas. However, we are still confused with RNIB, the national charity as people still send us cheques payable to RNIB. Very often donations in lieu of flowers are sent to RNIB when the families think the money is coming to us and people leave money to RNIB in their wills thinking the money is coming to us.

Whilst RNIB does some very valuable work at a national level and we work with them on many projects, they do not provide any direct services in Sheffield and they do not fund any of

our services. Nor do we receive any grants from national or local government or the health service.

The other national charities that people sometimes confuse us with are Guide Dogs and Action for Blind People. Again, neither of these charities fund any of our services. Action for Blind People operate Sheffield Actionnaires, a multi-activity sports group for children at Westfield Sports Centre every Sunday but **SRSB** provides some of the funding for this valuable service.

Just to summarise, **SRSB** is the main service provider for visually impaired people in Sheffield and if you would like to support us in any way and ensure that your money is used for the benefit of people in Sheffield please make any payments to **SRSB**.

CAMPAIGNS & ISSUES

Hospital Sight Loss Advisor

We are working in partnership with a number of organisations, including the Royal Hallamshire Hospital, to develop a service in the hospital eye department to provide support and advice to people who are losing their sight. The eye department already provide a great service and we want to enhance what they already do.

You will recently have received a letter inviting you to attend focus groups to share your experiences with us and help shape any future services. We scheduled 4 dates for these meetings which are taking place as we write this article. We received an unprecedented response to our request for you to attend the focus

groups and unfortunately we have not been able to fit everybody in so we had to invite people on a “first come, first served” basis. However, for those people that did not attend the meetings, we will be issuing a questionnaire to you for completion and this should be with you at around the same time as this newsletter. If we hold your email address we will be emailing you the questionnaire, otherwise it will be sent out in large print. If you are not able to complete the print questionnaire please just give us a call and we will arrange for somebody to call you back and take your responses over the phone.

From the focus groups that have met up to now we have had some really good feedback from people about how any new service should operate with some innovative ideas so thank you to everybody that attended.

Following completion of all the focus groups and receipt of the questionnaires, a report will be written up to share with all the partner organisations including the Royal Hallamshire Hospital Eye Department. This report should be completed by mid-March and copies will be available for anybody that is interested.

We will keep you updated in future newsletters about how the project is developing.

Finally, just to say Thank You to the many people who have expressed an interest in this development – it really does demonstrate how important everybody thinks this is.

MOBILE INFORMATION UNIT

In our last newsletter we told you about our new initiative to help spread the word about **SRSB**'s services and maintaining good eye health with the general public. Liz Bowman, who drives the vehicle and operates the information service with the support of volunteers like Mike Salter, has already done a number of events which have proved very successful. Liz is currently building up a diary of events that we will be attending over the coming months and these are being added to all the time but events currently booked over the next few months are:

19th February – Hillsborough Arena, 11am to 2:30pm

6th March – St Mary's Community Centre, 9:30am to 2:30pm

9th March – Grenoside Reading Room, 10am to 3pm

21st March – Jordanthorpe Shopping Precinct, 10am to 4pm

24th & 25th March – Morrisons Meadowhead, 10am to 4pm

26th March – Fusion Group, 106 Arundel Lane, 9:30am to 12noon

31st March – Newfield Green Library, 9am to 12noon

4th May – Hallamshire Golf Club, times to be confirmed

Please do come along and say hello if we are in your area.

If you have any suggestions of where we should be taking our Mobile Information Unit please call Liz Bowman at **SRSB** or email Liz.Bowman@srsb.org.uk

SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES AT SRSB MAPPIN STREET CENTRE

Equipment Centre

We still have a small stock of this year's Calendars and Diaries though they are going quickly now. The 2015 large print diaries are available in 3 sizes: A6 Pocket Diary - £5, A5 Midi Diary - £6.75 and A4 Desk Diary - £8.50 and the **SRSB** 2015 large print calendars are also available at £3.75. We also have various address and telephone books.

If you are unable to get in to our centre then please give us a call – we will be able to take your order and post most items out to you (there is a 25p charge for packaging).

The diaries especially are going fast so do drop in or let us know if you need one as we may not be able to get more stock in.

As usual we have a wide range of other equipment such as watches, clocks, telephones, mobiles, anti-glare specs, lamps and many other gadgets. All of these are especially suitable for people with a visual impairment.

Used Equipment for Sale

We have a wide range of used equipment available ranging from small items such as telephones, lighting etc through to larger items such as electronic video magnifiers (CCTV's), both desktop and pocket size, video magnifiers that can connect to your TV and scanner readers, all at bargain prices.

Please call in to our centre and see either Rob or Kyle for a demonstration. The larger, more expensive items can be delivered to you and we can provide training in their use. You can keep them for a few weeks on trial before payment is required.

Also, we currently have a stock of refurbished BT100 Big Button phones which we are offering, as seen, at a bargain price of £10.

Wheeled Walkers

We have a few 3 wheeled walkers for sale at a bargain price of £25 each. They fold up small for storage or to put in a car. Please call in to our centre to ask for a demo if you think that one would help you.

Large Print Books

We have been having a sort out in our library and have a small stock of large print books, mostly novels, which we are clearing out. If anybody would like these please call in to our centre and take what you want, no charge.

Braille Books

We have braille and moon learning materials which we can loan people. If anybody requires tuition we can also provide training.

We also have a small stock of braille books available for loan, including Little Oxford Dictionary (16 volumes) and the Methodist Hymns and Psalms (11 volumes) and a Guide to Weston Park. The rest are a mixture of novels and non-fiction.

If you would like a full list of the available books please give us a call.

Optelec and Dolphin Exhibition

Tuesday 3rd March, 10am to 3pm

Optelec and Dolphin will be exhibiting a wide range of computer packages, and magnifiers – more details in the enclosed flyer.

Sight and Sound Exhibition

Sight and Sound have been providing solutions for people with visual impairment for 30 years. They will be exhibiting at our centre on Thursday 28th May from 10am to 3pm.

Do drop in to the exhibitions and why not visit our Equipment Centre at the same time. You can even have coffee or lunch in our café.

Café – Food Allergies and intolerances

Clients who purchase or consume food provided at the centre need to be aware of the new regulations regarding food allergens and intolerances. If you have allergies or intolerances to the following fourteen allergens please let a member of staff know when you attend the centre.

A Food Allergy is an adverse reaction to a food that involves the immune system and can be a potentially life threatening condition. Symptoms can appear within minutes, or up to several hours after a person has eaten a food they are allergic to. There is no cure for food allergy. An allergic individual must avoid food which makes them ill.

The fourteen allergens are:-

- Cereals (such as spelt, wheat, rye, barley and oats)

- Crustaceans and products thereof (for example prawns, lobster, crabs and crayfish)
- Egg and products thereof.
- Fish and products thereof.
- Peanuts and products thereof.
- Soybeans and products thereof.
- Milk and products thereof.
- Nuts (namely almond, hazelnut, walnut, cashew, pecan, Brazil, pistachio, and Macadamia nut)
- Celery and products thereof.
- Mustard and products thereof.
- Sesame seeds and products thereof.
- Sulphur dioxide
- Lupin and products thereof.
- Molluscs and products thereof (for example mussels, clams oysters, scallops, snails and squid)

If you are in any doubt before you order food or drinks at the centre please speak to our staff if you want to know about our ingredients.

Activity Centre

Just to remind you we have a daily set of activities here in our centre, together with regular short outings, talks etc as well as a freshly cooked lunch.

We have a few spare spaces for more people on most days and door-to-door transport may be available on one of our minibuses or we can help arrange alternative transport. If you are interested in finding out more please contact Olwen at **SRSB**.

Health and Beauty Centre

Just a reminder that we have a chiropodist, hairdresser and others who offer services in our Health and Beauty Centre. Please contact Carol on Reception at **SRSB** for more information about which days the services are available.

Tai Chi

The Tai Chi group which meets every Friday afternoon at our Mappin Street centre has been very popular with participants over the last four years. People find it an excellent way to relax; it also increases circulation and improves balance. This class is suitable for people of all mobilities.

If you want to find out more or join the group then please contact **SRSB** as soon as possible.

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Activities Centre

We are still recruiting for an Activities Centre Co-ordinator to share the role with Lesley Miles. In the meantime Lesley is managing well with excellent support from Serina France and the volunteers.

Ben Shaw who was working in the centre as an apprentice unfortunately experienced health problems and had to leave us on health grounds so we wish him a speedy recovery.

Volunteers

We are always recruiting volunteers for a variety of roles. At the moment we are particularly looking to recruit people to assist Liz Bowman on our Mobile Information Unit and also people to visit our clients at home to

provide companionship, reading correspondence etc. If you know anyone who may want to get involved please ask them to contact Dyane Fisher, Volunteer and Training Co-ordinator, on **0114 272 2757** or Volunteers@srsb.org.uk

HOLIDAYS

We are looking to liaise with one of the travel companies to arrange a suitable holiday this year. At the moment we haven't made a firm plans though we have a possibility of one in St Annes-on-Sea and the Lake District – six days from £425.

If you are interested in joining any of our holidays please contact Olwen at **SRSB** as soon as possible. If you have new ideas for places for our holiday trips then please call Olwen to put forward your suggestions.

Gill's Day Trips

SRSB supporter Gill Dalton organises a number of day trips through the year with all profits from the trips going to support Cairn Home and **SRSB**. Gill's Mum was a resident in Cairn Home for a number of years and Gill was delighted with the support they gave. She originally was part of the Friends of Cairn Home support group. Last year Gill raised over £3,000 and we are so grateful for her continued support. This year's trips are as follows:

Tuesday 14th April – Liverpool; Albert Docks, Maritime Museum, free (Titanic exhibition), Beatles Story, Mersey Ferry plus lots more Coach £18.

Tuesday 19th May – AM: Litchfield (Market day, Cathedral, Erasmus Darwin House, free) then PM: Alrewas National Arboretum. Coach £17.

Thursday 2nd July – Settle to Carlisle Railway, Coach £18, Train £22.

Friday 24th July – Tatton Park Flower Show, Coach £17, Entrance £21.50.

Thursday 24th September Stratford on Avon, Coach £20.

Monday 16th November - York & McArthur Glen Outlet, Coach £17.

All the trips have 2 pickup and drop off points, at Tesco Abbeydale Road and Pentland Road, Dronfield Woodhouse. You will need to make your own travel arrangements to/from the pickup/drop off points. The cost includes a tip for the driver. The trips are open to all if you would like to take part please contact Gill on **07811 559496** or gandgdalton@talktalk.net

NEWS AND NOTICES

Mailing Preference Service

The Mailing Preference Service (MPS) can put a stop to named and addressed junk mail sent from companies and organisations that you have never had any dealings with before. The MPS can remove your name and address from up to 95% of direct mailing lists.

You can register with the scheme for free online at www.mpsonline.org.uk or call **0207 291 3310**.

Once you have registered with the MPS, it will take up to four months for you notice a reduction in such mail.

You will need to renew your registration after 5 years.

Telephone Preference Services

The Telephone Preference Service (TPS) is also a free service. It is the official central opt out register on which you can record your preference not to receive unsolicited sales or marketing calls. It is a legal requirement that all organisations (including charities, voluntary organisations and political parties) do not make such calls to numbers registered on the TPS unless they have your consent to do so.

Organisations with which you have an ongoing relationship, for example those who regard you as a customer, (or in the case of charities - a donor) may well gather your consent during the early stages of your relationship with them and will therefore be entitled to call you even if your number is registered on TPS, unless you have previously told them specifically that you object to them calling you for marketing purposes.

The TPS can accept the registration of mobile telephone numbers, however it is important to note that this will prevent the receipt of marketing voice calls but not SMS (text) messages. If you wish to stop receiving SMS marketing messages, please send an 'opt-out' request to the company involved.

As TPS registration only prevents marketing calls, organisations will still be able to call you for the purposes of genuine market research.

You can register with the scheme for free online at www.tpsonline.org.uk or call **0845 070 0707**

TPS and MPS Hoax Calls

Unfortunately there are some hoax calls being made to people advising them of the mail and telephone preference service but saying that there is a charge to register with them and then they ask for your card details for payment. These are definitely hoax calls and should be reported to the police and trading standards.

Computer Course

As you may know we have asked previously that if you have some useful sight you can attend a computer course that is held only for visually impaired people.

We are constantly looking for new learners to attend this course which is held in Hillsborough, on a Tuesday.

A person does need to have some useful sight, so if you are able to read this newsletter with only the aid of your reading glasses this course may well be for you.

For any more info please contact Alan Thorpe on **0114 220 7007**.

Braille

Unified English Braille

A few years ago the braille code was changed in the UK, from SEB (Standard English Braille) to UEB (Unified English Braille) but it is only now that the changes are being implemented.

Alan Thorpe is holding a UEB information and workshop day at

SRSB on Wednesday 11th March, time to be arranged

This is not a course, the aim of the day is to introduce some of the changes, for you to talk about your findings and to assess if a course is required for those established braille readers.

You may not think that you need to attend this day or that you need to learn about UEB, but as from April this year any braille publications you receive from RNIB will be in UEB format.

Also any new books and many other braille publications will also be produced in this way in the future.

If you would like to attend please book your place direct with Alan Thorpe so he can plan the day and produce the correct number of hand-outs.

International Braille Competition

By the time of the next newsletter the invite for the international braille competition will have been made.

This is a worldwide competition for people to write about braille – you do not need to use braille or even write your entry in braille, they actually ask you to submit as a word document so no test for your braille skills!

At the time of writing we do not know the subject topic but they usually have an open section where you can write up to 1000 words about braille. You have a chance of winning \$5,000. Last year a 13 year old boy from England won \$1,000 which he received in time for Christmas shopping.

Again for any further details when they are released please contact Alan Thorpe on **0114 220 7007** or Alan@eyecan.org.uk

SRSB Insight Event

Sheffield Town Hall,
Wednesday 15th April, 3pm to 6pm.

We are holding our annual event at the Town Hall where we showcase our services. There are a limited number of seats for people and last year many people were disappointed not to be able to attend so if you would like to attend please book your place by calling **SRSB** as soon as possible. Bookings will be taken on a first come, first served basis.

Teadance

SRSB's Mappin Street Centre,
Saturday 14th March, 11:30am to 2pm.

Back by popular demand! This will be our third Teadance in conjunction with the University of Sheffield. Everyone who came previously had a wonderful time dancing with the volunteers from Volunteering Sheffield. The volunteers are given Visual Impairment Awareness Training before the event and are so enthusiastic to give our guests a great time! When we have a breather, students who are part of dancing societies at the University, put on performances. We also provide refreshments and sandwiches at lunchtime too.

This event is FREE and is available exclusively for **SRSB's** clients and their guests, but please let us know if

you would like to come so that there will be enough sandwiches for everyone!

A Day at the Races

Wetherby, Sunday 26th April.

This date is Wetherby Races Family Day which includes a Mascot Race (our own mascot, Ellie, is entered for this race!) and a circus for children – Free entry for children under 16.

We have negotiated discounted admission tickets and the total cost per person, including coach and admission to the paddock area is £17.50 per person, Children under 16 accompanied by a parent £10.

We hope you will be able to join us on what promises to be a fun day out, especially supporting our mascot Ellie.

We are planning to leave Sheffield from a central pick up point at 10am and with the last race at 5pm we would expect to be back in Sheffield by 7:30pm

Please give us a call to book your place, payment by cash, cheque or card required at time of booking.

RP Group

We held our last meeting in November when Rob from our Equipment Shop talked about his experiences on the stem cell trials. The group found it really fascinating and once again we had a couple of new members so the group continues to grow. Our next meeting is planned for Wednesday 18th March at 2:30pm.

Welfare Benefits

Please don't forget to contact us if you receive any communication relating to

your benefits. We are still coming across people who come to us for advice very late in the day and who sometimes lose out on their entitlement because of this.

If you think you may be entitled to any benefits or would just like to check that your current benefits are the best available please do not hesitate to contact us. We have a "drop in" surgery every Monday from 9:30am to 4pm. If that is not convenient please give us a call and one of our Community Advice Officers will be able to assist you.

Audio Described Performances at Sheffield Theatres.

If you would like further information on audio described performances listed below or to make a booking, please contact the Theatre on **0114 249 6000**.

More information can be found at <http://digbig.com/5bgjet>

February	Jeeves & Wooster
March	Top Hat
April	Barnum
May	The Full Monty
June	Shrek
September	The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time

Do bear in mind that our Culture Club is organising trips to some of these – see below for more details.

100th Birthdays Congratulations

Many congratulations to Amy Perry, Maurice Brice, Frederick Stannard, Joan Wells, Vera McDonagh, and Ida

Barrett, who all celebrated their 100th birthdays recently.

Cairn Home

Cairn Home, our residential care home at Crosspool, enjoys high levels of occupancy but vacancies do occur from time to time. For anybody thinking about residential care but who is a little unsure what a residential care home is like, then why not book into our Respite Room which is available for short term bookings of just a few nights. Alternatively you can have a look around at any time. For further information please contact Kevin McGrath, Manager on **0114 266 1536**.

Student Links

SRSB always welcomes students as they are of great benefit to us as well as taking with them a much deeper understanding of the issues affecting visually impaired people.

Sam Clarkson is a medical student on a six week placement. He has enjoyed working in the centre as well as visiting some of you at home.

Sophie Warburton and Helen Whitaker, two occupational therapy students have just joined us and will be with us until the beginning of May working in our Activity Centre and extending the range of activities on offer.

Tacmap

We now have a large tactile plan of our centre which is suitable for sighted, partially sighted and totally blind people. It is located on the left, immediately inside the double doors

when entering our building. We are very grateful to Sheffield and District Association for the Disabled who funded this great addition to our Mappin Street Centre.

TacMap is a local business that we have a long association with. They have the expertise to make spaces accessible to visually impaired people.

If you have any comments to make or require any further information Patricia Dieng, who runs TacMap, will be pleased to assist you.

www.tacmap.co.uk,
info@tacmap.co.uk or **07540 428 654**.

Keeping Healthy

Senior Snippets: Exercise

Welcome to the latest edition of the monthly advisory column with the older members of our community in mind, brought to you by Bryn Evans of Home Instead Senior Care in Sheffield.

In this instalment, you will find some easy and effective exercises specifically designed for older people.

Everyone knows that it's good to exercise to stay fit and healthy, but with adults aged 65 and over spending an average of 10 hours a day sitting down, maintaining an exercise regime for older people is vital. Whilst you should check with your doctor before engaging in any kind of exercise, the following are simple, low-intensity NHS-recommended exercises which can still make a difference to your health and wellbeing:

1. To improve upper back flexibility, sit on a chair and cross your arms with your hands on your shoulders. Using just your upper body, twist to the left and hold for five seconds before twisting to the right.
2. To stretch your calves; place both hands against a wall and, keeping both feet flat, bend one leg whilst stepping the other behind you, keeping it straight. You will feel the stretch in the straightened leg. Repeat with the opposite leg and alternate three times.
3. To strengthen leg muscles place your hands on the back of a chair and stand with your feet hip-width apart. Slowly bend your knees as far as you can, keeping your back straight. Slowly raise yourself up and repeat five times.
4. To improve and maintain balance, face a wall: stretch your arms so your fingertips touch the wall. Lift one leg, keep the other one slightly bent, hold for five to ten seconds. Repeat 3 times for each leg.

I'd love to hear from you! To make a suggestion for a future topic, please write to me at bryn.evans@homeinstead.co.uk or, you can also call on **0114 246 9666**. www.homeinstead.co.uk/sheffieldnorth

While you should check with your doctor before engaging in any kind of exercise, you can also find general exercise advice on various other websites including:

Arthritis Foundation
<http://digbig.com/5bkrdc>

Sheffield Aches & Pains
<http://digbig.com/5bkrdd>

Sheffield Back Pain
<http://digbig.com/5bkrde>

TRANSPORT

Supertram Rail Works

Currently the work to replace the Supertram rail track is suspended until the end of the winter as it cannot be carried out in cold weather.

To receive information about the works when they resume in the spring and other important news please let us have an up to date email address.

There will also be road works on West Street possibly starting later this month so we expect some disruption around our centre in the coming months – we will also keep you up to date with this if we have your email address. We can also send out weekly information about things such as cinema film times with audio description and other events.

TM Travel

Whilst not as large a bus company as First or Stagecoach, TM travel operates a number of bus services in Sheffield, Rotherham and Derbyshire. They have recently launched a new very accessible bus which is currently operating on the 218 route running every 30 minutes throughout the day from Bakewell to Sheffield, coming into Sheffield via Topley and Millhouses.

This new bus is fully accessible with 1 wheelchair space, lots of handrails, 6 fold down seats at the front. Seats have USB charger points and, most

importantly for visually impaired people, audible bus stop announcements.

This new bus is a trial but we hope that the new features are appreciated by travellers and that TM Travel receive positive feedback, hopefully ensuring that future new buses incorporate the same level of accessibility and audible announcements. It may also encourage First and Stagecoach to look at similar features on their buses.

TM Travel can be contacted via <http://www.tmtravel.co.uk/>, info@tmtravel.co.uk or **0871 200 22 33**

CULTURE CLUB

Once again we've had a busy few months, back in November we visited Chatsworth to see the Christmas decorations which this year had an Alice in Wonderland theme. The clients really enjoyed it and have asked if it can become a regular fixture in our Culture Club diary as each year they have a different theme.

December saw us back at the theatre; we visited the Crucible to see the audio described performance of Anything Goes. We also managed to get a small number of tickets for Peter Pan at the City Hall, which we split between the Culture Club and the children's group. This was the first time the City Hall had provided audio description and it was really a bit of a trial; they have taken on board our feedback and hopefully there will be more audio described events in the

future. We also held our annual Culture Club Christmas Catch Up when we enjoyed mulled wine and mince pies whilst we discussed what events we could access over the forthcoming year. In January we were back at the Lyceum to watch Blood Brothers. We have a number of theatre trips booked for the coming year including Shrek, Barnum, King's Speech, Oklahoma, Jesus Christ Superstar and Bodyguard. We are also just in the process of putting a diary of events together utilising all the fantastic suggestions we've had.

If you are interested in any of these events or wish to put your name on the Culture Club mailing list to ensure you don't miss out on future events please contact us at **SRSB**.

Book Club

The book group continues to run monthly with its regular members. We always have a lively discussion and a lot of laughs. Please contact us if you would like to join us.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

We have had a busy time over the festive period. We held our Sparklers party first at Jungle Mania, we had a fantastic time when Emma from Mini Beast Music came along and did us a music session. We also had Father Christmas who the children loved. Our main party took place at Monkey Bizness, we had about one hundred children attend and it was a great family event. Again Father Christmas was there and was a huge success, happily chatting to all the children, giving out the presents. We also

provided transport for Actionnaires Christmas party which was a regional event up at Xscape near Castleford. The children had a fantastic time sledging in the Snowzone.

In October we started our new Youth Club. The group was set up and has been run by Jemma and Jo, two Post-Graduate Youth Workers who are with us on placement. The sessions run on a Monday 4:15 to 6:15pm. We now have a regular group of children attending and are hopeful the club will continue to develop as feedback has been excellent.

In January we had our annual trip up to the West Yorkshire Playhouse to attend the regional event organised by Action for Blind People and RNIB. This year was an audio described performance of James and the Giant Peach. The kids (and adults) really enjoyed the day. They have a lovely lunch, then chance to try on costumes and meet the cast. At the end of the performance every child received a goody bag. There was also a draw for a number of Pen Friends which two of our group were lucky enough to win.

We are now looking at planning our Spring/Easter activities.

Further info from Joanne at **SRSB**.

LEISURE EVENTS AND SPORT

There are a wide range of sports and leisure activity groups for visually impaired people in Sheffield. These are all detailed in the enclosed list of self-help, sports, and leisure groups.

Sheffield Visually Impaired Walking Group

The Sheffield Visually Impaired Walking Group (SVIWG) would like to welcome new visually impaired members, so if you are interested in joining, or if you know someone who is visually impaired who would enjoy taking part, please read on...

SVIWG has about 125 members, roughly half and half VIPs and sighted guides and is a very friendly, fun group and is an enjoyable social outing as well as great exercise!

The group usually walk four times a month. There is an easy short (4 or 5 miles) walk on the first Tuesday of each month; a 7 mile or so walk on the second Wednesday of each month and a similar distance on the fourth Sunday. There is also a more challenging walk on one of the Thursdays in the month. They walk in the countryside surrounding the city, including the Peak District National Park. The programme usually has a mix of linear and circular walks.

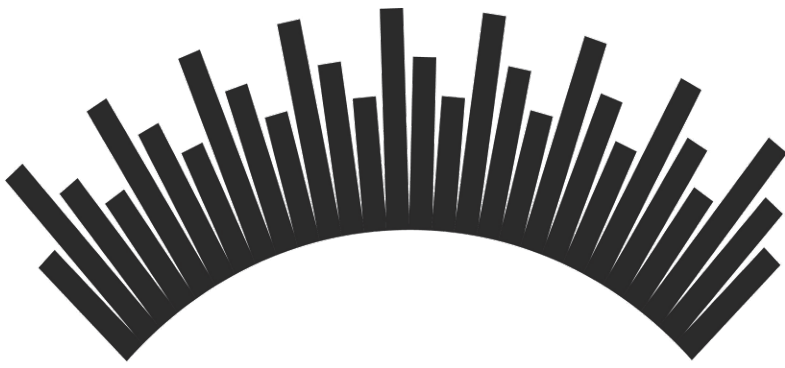
To find out more please contact Christine Hewitt: **0114 236 6685** or hewitt.c4@sky.com

CONCLUSION

Don't forget, we are **here to help** you. If we can't do something ourselves we almost certainly know somebody who can – Just contact us at **SRSB**,

Making a Difference in Sheffield

Our next newsletter will be arriving with you in May. Do let us have any information which you think would be of interest to others that we can include in future newsletters.



SRSB

Sheffield Royal Society for the Blind

Making a Difference in Sheffield



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