

Issue 1
2020

ViewPoint

THE EBS NEWSLETTER

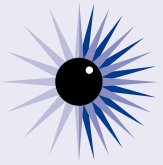
Chief Executive's Message

Happy New Year! Welcome to the first Viewpoint of the year and, as it happens, the decade. We hope Christmas was a time of blessing for you all and wish you all the best for 2020. Thank you to everyone who sent us cards and donations over the Christmas period. We appreciate the effort and thought that goes into such things and they are very gratefully received.

In our last edition of Viewpoint we talked a lot about how change had been a prominent theme of the past year and I see this year and the decade following it being very similar. At least there is some consistency there! With the start of a new year comes the inevitable thoughts of making changes and the resolutions we make to improve ourselves. The best resolution I have heard was from someone who said that their 'New Year's Resolution was to not make any!' Whilst understanding that often making a New Year's Resolution is a recipe to fail (of the 45% of Americans who say they make a New Year's Resolution only 8% actually keep them) looking back at last year and setting goals to do things differently to help achieve a better, or more improved, result can be a useful thing to do. The 'New Year, New You' mentality can be very useful if you are hoping to lose weight, stop smoking or be more confident or assertive in aspects of your life for example.

In this New Year why not try something new and resolve to make the most of the year? It doesn't have to be about giving up, it can be just as motivating to start something new! We have plenty of activities available here at EBS for you to try and are open to new ideas, so please do contact us with anything you want to suggest.

As a Society we have a number of ideas that we would like to start making a reality over the next year or so.



Please watch this space for some new activities and hopefully exciting news throughout 2020.

In 2019 we had to say some very sad goodbyes. My predecessor, Deirdre Dean, unfortunately lost her husband (Kit/Chris) and one of our old volunteers, Paul Houston, also sadly passed away. Both were good friends of the Society and will be sorely missed by us all.

We have also said goodbye, but not in such a final way, to one of our trustees. Mr Dennis Stringer MBE, who is very well known to a number of our members, has decided to step down as a trustee and to end his 35 year relationship with the running of the charity. He still remains a member and we give him thanks for all his hard work over the years and wish him well in the next phase of his life.

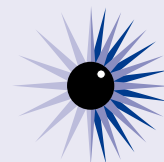
All the best

Mark

Updates

- **Airbourne** – we are delighted to inform you that last summer's collection raised £2,500 for the work of EBS. Thank you to all who helped and contributed.
- **Beacon Table Sale** – a huge thank you to our volunteers who spend their time creating the fantastic items we sell in November. This year we raised an amazing total of over £2,000. Well done to all.
- **Polyphony** – thank you goes to all the members of the Polyphony Vocal Ensemble who throughout the year hold a number of concerts to raise money for EBS. This year they have raised just over £1,100.
- **Win A Car** – just before Christmas we were chosen to sell tickets for the Beacon's annual raffle and thanks to staff and volunteers we managed to raise £453 for EBS.
- **Eastbourne Local Lottery** – we are part of this scheme that means we receive 50% of the cost of all tickets purchased by our supporters (along with the 10% that goes towards other charitable causes in the town).

To be in with a chance of winning the top prize of £25,000, whilst donating to local good causes, buy your tickets via www.eastbournelocalottery.co.uk/support/eastbourne-blind-society or by phoning **01323 332323** – Good luck.



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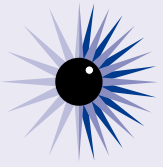
- **Amazon Smile** – we are now also signed up to benefit from this scheme run by Amazon whereby products bought through the online store raise funds for EBS. If you shop in this way please go through Amazon Smile (www.smile.amazon.co.uk) and select Eastbourne Blind Society in order for us to benefit. We receive a percentage of what is paid for an item – at no cost to the purchaser!

All the money that we raise through these activities and via the regular and very generous donations of our members, family, friends and others, enable EBS to carrying on doing what we do. So, thank you once again for your contributions, we are always amazed by peoples kindness to us. Whilst money is obviously important it is also true that events such as those mentioned have also helped more people know about who we are and what we do. This will then mean that they will know where to come if they need us in the future.

Open Day

Our next Open Day will be held on Thursday 19th March and will run from 10am until 2pm. We will be joined by Enhanced Vision who will be demonstrating a number of their magnifying devices. Our Open Days are a great opportunity to come along and see what new things might be on offer to help Visually Impaired People maintain their independence and complete daily living tasks.

We will also have the East Sussex Hearing Resource Centre, Care for the Carers, The Macular Society, Care Co. and a number of other charities and organisations showcasing what they do and being available with help and advice. To find out more please contact Hannah at the Centre. Please do come along if you can, there is no need to book just pop in whenever suits you.



Socials and Activities

Here at EBS we run a number of Social Activities and we would really like to encourage as many of you as possible to come along. Those who do really find it beneficial and, we hope, would highly recommend giving them a go. Please talk to one of our Welfare Officers or contact the office for more information on what we offer and give us a go.

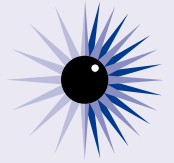
Eastbourne Access Day

As a result of the successful first Disabled Access Day we will again be involved in this event on Saturday June 6th in the Beacon, Barclays Bank and around Bankers Corner in Eastbourne. The event is designed to encourage people with disabilities to see what Eastbourne has to offer in terms of shopping, leisure activities, transport and advice. Among a number of other organisations EBS will be having a stall giving information about what we do and helping people find out where they can go for help and support should they need it. If you are around do come and say hello to us and have a look at the other stands – there may be something NEW for you to try?

Parkrun inspiration

We are always pleased to hear from members who have something they would like to share with others. This may be because they have an inspirational story to tell or they have found something that has helped them in some way. A couple of years ago (in our January 2017 ViewPoint) one of our members, Martin Sales, shared his journey of sight loss and his new found interest for running. Here we share an update from Martin and also hear from another member, Nina Blount, who has recently started with Parkrun, as a walker. If anyone has any similar stories they would like to share please do get in contact.

Martin writes: Since my first article introducing myself and discussing my early experiences of being a VI-Parkrun

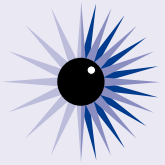


member or even going so far as to say parkrun fan, I have continued running every Saturday (or as it is known by regulars “Parkrunday”) I am able. In the process I have completed 128 Parkruns, in 17 different locations and volunteered 34 times including actually pacing a particular time to help others looking for a PB (personal best). My first Parkrun took over 32 minutes, last year I set myself the simple target of as many sub 25 minute times as possible, I overshot this target by achieving several sub 24 minute times. I am soon to start training for my second time of doing the Hastings Half Marathon, amongst many other shorter races for this year.

A message I would like to share on the back of this, and Nina having said I have assisted in inspiring her to take up parkrun, is that out of the many people I have introduced to parkrun, only 1 person has said it isn't for them. All the others have continued with it due to the amazing support, brilliant community feel and the physical and mental health benefits achieved. There is also an amazing network of trained VI ‘runner guides’ out there who jump at the opportunity to support our community. So join me, Nina and many others in getting out there to make the most of what's available like Parkrun, sound tennis, bowls, etc., you can do it, you know you can.

Nina adds: Currently I have no sight in my right eye and some sight loss in my left eye, I also have no depth perception and continue hospital treatment. My sight loss was sudden and unexpected and began in November 2017 with the first of several emergency eye surgeries at the Sussex Eye hospital in Brighton after transfer from Eastbourne A&E. I had an Acquired Brain Injury in my 30s and currently have several chronic health conditions, but to date there is no diagnosis for the sight loss.

In 2018 we wanted to say thank you to the hospital who cared for me and chose to do a charity walk to raise funds for them. We took part in the 50k part of the South Coast Ultra Challenge across the Downs and have gone on to



help other charities in this way and gained medals from Beachy Head 10k and the Brighton 5:30 amongst others. My pace has slowed up though and have trailed in as the last person many times. I wanted to return to running which I had enjoyed previously. So we approached Parkrun in Eastbourne for the 5k walk/jog/run on Saturdays with a view to picking up my pace. My husband has been able to run while I walk and, although still trailing in late, I am never last on the Parkrun results page as 'tail walkers' are provided for the encouragement of slower participants. Results vary from the very fastest, most of whom have joined running clubs, to the slowest walkers. So far I have always managed to come in at just under the hour mark.

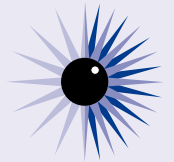
It is not a race but you can choose to have a result so you can check progress. I have met all age groups and there is also a junior 2k group for ages 4-14 on Sundays on the seafront. Apart from needing a t-shirt, jogging bottoms and trainers it's free. And don't feel embarrassed we are very diverse. I have several prescribed steroids to take for eyes, joints and lungs so you can imagine the weight gain and mobility issues that I currently have.

My hospital specialists can see the effort I'm putting in and the advice is to keep going as there are many health benefits. I own up to a few swear words under my breath as I have ankle and knee injuries related to my conditions, but it keeps the joints from seizing up. As an optional extra we meet up for coffee straight after park run at a local hospice where they gather the results each week. It's sociable and you are able to share and gain advice from others.

So no matter what your size, shape, age or ability please join us, or try one of the many exercise classes that Eastbourne has to offer including the EBS sitting exercises and Sound Tennis. For further information please contact Mark. Always check with your GP before any sudden increase in exercise.

Barclays Bank

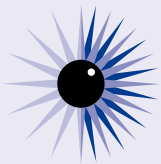
We have recently heard about some of the measures that Barclays Bank are taking to help their Visually Impaired customers use their services. Other banks may offer similar services:



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- **Accessible statements** – these are available in either standard print, large print, audio CD, Braille or online.
- **Audio accessible PinSentry card reader** – this device is larger than the standard issued one, has a larger screen and keypad and has a speaker (headphones can also be used) that will enable you to receive spoken instructions.
- **High visibility debit cards** – There are 12 designs available four feature a bright stripe and arrow to indicate the leading edge of the card that you insert into a cash machine or chip-and-PIN reader, while eight others come in a range of high-contrast colours that make it easier to locate and read the text on your card. All high-visibility cards have a larger security number on the back of the card (CVV) and a notch to show which end to insert into cash machines or chip-and-PIN readers. Then you just use it as you would any other debit card.
- **Cheque guides** – templates are available to help you write cheques, fill out credit slips and sign your debit or credit cards. Use the spaces and Braille instructions on the relevant template to show you where to write the amount, payee, date and signature for cheques and slips and your signature for cards.
- **Large Print cheque books and credit books** – these are the same as a standard book and are used in the same way, however, they have been produced in large print.

In order to use any of these features, if you are a Barclays Bank customer, please visit your local branch or call **0345 734 5345**.



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Eastbourne Half Marathon

Our resource officer, Hannah, has decided that she would like to raise some money for EBS and as a result has entered herself into this year's Eastbourne Half Marathon. This is on 1st March and Hannah would very much appreciate your sponsorship, not only will you be supporting EBS you will be helping to motivate her training. If you would like to sponsor Hannah please either contact her at the Centre or visit our Facebook page where you can make an online donation if you wish to do so. Our thanks go to Hannah and we are sure you join us in saying a very big good luck to her for the run!

Dates for your diary

Open Day – Thursday 19th March 10am to 2pm at EBS
Disability Awareness Month – March 1st to 31st
in The Beacon

Open Day – Thursday 4th June 10am to 2pm at EBS

Eastbourne Access Day – Saturday 6th June ALL DAY
in The Beacon

Polyphony Concert – Sunday 17th May at Christ The King

Polyphony Concert – Saturday 30th May at St Nicholas
Church, Pevensey

EBS Contact details

Telephone – **01323 729511**

Email – **info@eastbourneblindsociety.org.uk**

Website – **www.eastbourneblindsociety.org.uk**

Facebook – **www.facebook.com/eastbourneblindsociety/**

Office opening times

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday – 9am to 4pm

Wednesday – 9am to 1pm

Saturday, Sunday & Bank Holidays – CLOSED

Disclaimer

Any items mentioned in this newsletter are for information purposes and their inclusion does not imply their suitability for anyone.

Edited by Mark Simmons