

Issue 2
2019

ViewPoint

THE EBS NEWSLETTER

Chief Executive's Message

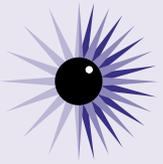
Welcome to our 2nd ViewPoint of 2019 and my last Message to you as Chief Executive of Eastbourne Blind Society.

I joined EBS in January 2003 and will retire as your CEO on June 30th of this year, 2019. As I said in my letter to you all, it has been a privilege to work with this wonderful charity and I am proud of what we have achieved together over the years.

I want to thank all those who have financially supported EBS through regular giving, donations, legacies and fund raising during my time as CEO. Your support has been so important to us, and I hope you will continue to do what you can in the future to help EBS keep going.

I am particularly proud of developing the Resource Room which has become a vital aspect of the work carried out by EBS, and an important source of help to visually impaired people. I am grateful to the Trustees who supported my wish to start this back in 2008, and to the staff who have shared my vision to make this into the successful service that it is. I acknowledge the work that David did as our first Resource Officer, and all that Mark has achieved during his time in the role. I am also taking this opportunity to wish Mark well in his promotion to CEO after my retirement.

I am also proud of introducing the Low Vision Support Worker service which we started in Eastbourne in 2009. I remember many, many meetings with East Sussex County Council and with EBS Trustees at that



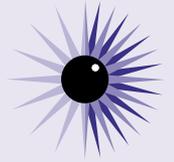
time working hard to ensure that they shared my conviction that this service is essential to getting the best help as quickly as possible for people facing sight loss. Over the years since then we have had a number of Low Vision Support Workers and I particularly want to thank Virginie, Mary and Janice for their support and friendship and for their incredible hard work and care.

There have been several Welfare Officers over the years I have been in post, visiting you at home, encouraging you to become involved in social activities and training modules, helping you in a range of ways and generally showing how much they care. I'm sure there will still be some of you that remember Liz, Pam, Kath, Jane, Denise and Lucy. And of course we currently have Elizabeth, Sandra, Jo and Linda who are such an important part of our team.

Sadly Jo is planning to move north in July, so will be leaving EBS in mid-June. I want to take this opportunity to wish her happiness "oop north" and to thank her for using her knowledge to run our Benefits Surgery for a few years which proved so helpful to so many.

I can't let this last Message go by without thanking Graham who has worked beside me right from the beginning, and has been unfailingly supportive and always ready to listen to my "thinking out loud!" He has seen his job change beyond all recognition from the early days and I have to thank him for always being ready to take on anything I threw at him! (Including singing to the social groups at Christmas and wearing Easter bonnets!!)

I want to thank our "mad Mexican" too. Angelica is our caretaker and welcomes me with a cup of tea every morning! She also drives the minibuses and has to do that more and more as we continue to look for volunteers. Thanks for all the laughs Angelica!



There have been so many volunteers and Trustees over these 16½ years that I haven't room to name them all, but I must mention Dennis Stringer MBE who was Administrator here at EBS before he retired to become a volunteer and Trustee. Dennis has always supported my ideas and new initiatives and never stops being interested in EBS and all that goes on here.

I have served under four Chairmen over the years. Adrian Ley has been Chair since 2009 and has been invaluable in helping us to secure contracts with East Sussex County Council. I want to thank him for always supporting me – I don't think we have ever disagreed – and for being so generous with his time and his interest.

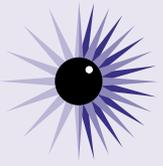
By the end of June we will know whether we have been successful in our bid for a new Contract with East Sussex County Council. This has occupied a lot of time in the past months, and we are hopeful that we will have secured the funding.

So, July will see a new team at EBS. No doubt the future will see change of one sort or another, but what will not change is what has always been at the heart of Eastbourne Blind Society, and that is an ethos of care and commitment, and a passion to represent the needs of visually impaired people in whatever way we can. It has been a privilege to be your CEO and I wish you all the best for the future.

Deirdre

Social Media

If you use Facebook please remember that we have a page that is regularly updated with news about EBS and inspiring stories from elsewhere. Please LIKE and SHARE as much as possible.



Lifeline

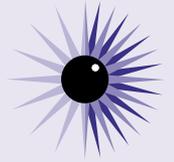
Sadly, we often hear about people who have fallen and who have been on the floor for several hours before receiving help. Regularly we find that the person has not been wearing a Lifeline, or that they didn't press theirs because they were worried about being a nuisance...

Here are a few points that we hope will encourage you to wear, and use, yours.

- **Wear it at ALL times.**
- **You CAN wear your lifeline in the shower.** It doesn't matter if it gets wet.
- **DO wear it if you go into the garden.** A fall outside with a possible delay in getting help will not do you any good!
- **DON'T take it off at night.** If it occasionally goes off when you haven't pressed it, it really doesn't matter. The staff are there anyway and don't mind in the slightest. So don't hang it on the bedpost – you might fall and find it is out of reach.
- **If you need help DO press it.** Don't be worried that you might be bothering someone. That is why they are there.
- **There are different kinds you can wear** – round the neck pendant, or a wrist strap – so you have choices. **If you don't have a Lifeline** and want to know more about it, please get in touch or ring **Wealden and Eastbourne Lifeline directly on 01323 644422**

Open Day

Our next Open day will be on the 12 September between 10am and 2pm. This time Professional Vision Services will be joining us. Do come along and spread the word among your contacts.



Something Special

We have received the following item from Ruth (90) who is one of our members:

“Something special happens for me on Tuesday mornings, when I attend the Seated Yoga class. I make my way, although I have poor sight and poor hearing, to the Eastbourne Blind Society. I enjoy an hour of exercise whilst sitting down.

Our expert instructress creates a friendly atmosphere and I feel much better physically and mentally after the session. We are encouraged and helped to use the exercise at home. We are each advised to adapt the instructions to suit our own capabilities. The classes are free of charge and I have been using them for the last 3 years. The staff are all great.

If you can, why not join us?

Ruth”

Fundraising opportunities

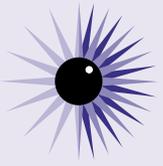
We are very pleased that, thanks to our members ‘putting us forward’ we have had a number of organisations pledge to raise money for EBS during this coming year.

We are the charity of the year for Sovereign Harbour Rotary Club, which includes being the recipient of 10% of all money raised by the Airbourne flying display in August.

EBS is also the charity of choice for a local Women’s Institute branch for April, May and June.

The British Queen public house has also chosen us their charity for June.

Please feel free to put our name forward for anyone who would like to support us in this way, we are more than happy to come along to talk to any groups who may want us to do so.



Social Groups and Activities

Just by way of a reminder and for information to those who may not know, EBS provides a number of social groups and activities for our members. These are based both at the Centre in Longstone Road and elsewhere in Eastbourne. Below is a list of these events:

Art and Craft – held on Monday afternoons and led by a professional artist. Various different mediums are used to create impressive displays for the walls of the centre.

Seated Yoga – held on Tuesday mornings. Led by a qualified instructor and Ruth has said it all!

Dominoes & Cribbage – Tuesday afternoon opportunity to meet with others to play a couple of games, be warned it can get competitive!!

Bowls – both friendly matches and practice roll ups are held on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons outdoors in the summer and indoors (at EBS) in the winter. Shopping Bus – an opportunity to be picked up in one of our minibuses taken to Asda and then returned home (along with your shopping).

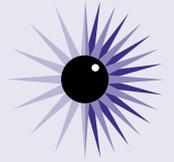
Café Club – as its name suggests this group is an opportunity to join a group of people who like to go to a café, have a drink and eat cake! Happens on the first Thursday morning of each month.

Walking Group – meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month. Why not join them for a walk along the seafront and a spot of refreshment along the route.

Sound Tennis – this group meets on a Friday morning at the Eastbourne Sports Park to play the specially adapted version of tennis. Professional coach and good facilities are paid for by EBS.

Bingo & Scrabble – held on Friday afternoons using large print scrabble boards and dominoes instead of bingo balls and cards.

Please contact us for more information and details of cost, transport, timings etc.



Disabled Access Day

Just to let you know that the event that EBS were a big part of in the Beacon back in March was a big success. We have had a lot of positive feedback from the public, Beacon staff and shop owners. Numbers of people visiting the centre was higher than that of comparative dates in past years and there are discussions already ongoing as to what we do to follow this up. Thanks to all who helped on our stand and to those who came and said hello.

Wise Sayings

A few of us were chatting in the office recently after Janice came up with the quote

“What if the hokey-cokey really is what it’s all about?!”

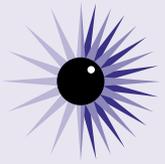
It started us thinking of others and I thought you might like to share some of them.

- “You can’t have everything. Where would you put it?”
- “As you get older, 3 things happen. The first is your memory goes, and I can’t remember the other 2!”
- “The expert in anything was once a beginner.”
- “Life is not about how fast you run or how high you climb, but how well you bounce.”
- “Be yourself; everyone else is already taken.”
- “Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do.”
- “Courage doesn’t always roar. Sometimes courage is the little voice at the end of the day that says ‘I’ll try again tomorrow.’”

Have you got any favourite or encouraging sayings you would like to share? Let us know.

And here is a final one from me, Deirdre

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven.



ViewPoint

Wayfinding at DGH

EBS have been involved over the last year in a project to improve the signage in the Eastbourne District General Hospital. It was really good to be invited along to give the opinion of Visually Impaired People and to have a real input on what the new signs will look like. Hopefully these signs will start to be installed soon and everyone will find it much easier to find their way around the hospital.

Contact Details

EBS phone number is **01323 729511**

Our email address is
info@eastbourneblindsociety.org.uk

Our website address is
www.eastbourneblindsociety.org.uk

Our Facebook page can be found at **www.facebook.com/eastbourneblindsociety/**

To be sure of seeing Mark in the Resource Room, please contact the Centre to make an appointment.

Opening Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday	9.00 to 4.00
Wednesday	9.00 to 1.00
Saturday, Sunday and 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 Deirdre Dean and Mark Simmons