

# Walthew House News

Issue 28

May 2018



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Welcome to the latest issue of Walthew House News.

**Firstly, we need to let you know, that this is the last time we will be able to send you a newsletter, unless you let us know you would like to continue to receive it.**

This is due to new data protection regulations which come into force in May.

Walthew House holds the names, addresses and mailing preferences (e.g. email, Braille, BSL DVD etc.) of people who have asked to receive our newsletter. This information is held on a password protected database at Walthew House, in accordance with the charity's Privacy Policy. We use this information to send you information about new products in our resource centre, leaflets about new services, events or activities and opportunities to support our work. We don't and would never pass your information to anyone else without your express permission.

We need you to tell us that you are happy for us to continue to use this data to contact to you. To let us know please complete and return the form on the back page of this newsletter, give us a quick call on 0161 480 2612, fax us on 0161 477 4441, email us at [admin.walthewhouse@ntlbusiness.com](mailto:admin.walthewhouse@ntlbusiness.com), or call into the office to see us.

If you have already spoken to us about this in 2018, don't worry, we'll already have your consent on record.

## **Walthew House News**

Our cover photo shows Alan painting the bowl he made at our pottery workshops earlier this year. The sessions were organised as part of our Making More Happen project and were open to anyone with a sight or hearing loss. In total 15 people took part,

making a bowl in the first session, which Mauro from Pottery Corner then took away to fire, and painting the bowls in the second session. These were then glazed and returned. The results were absolutely stunning!

A huge thank you to Mauro and his team from Pottery Corner in Chorlton - feedback was 100% positive and we hope to organise another session later in the year. The photos right and below show Mauro with Ruth at the start of the process, rolling small balls of clay that were then pressed into a plastic bowl to form the shape of the clay bowl; and Rachel, who is further along with the process, with both swirls of clay and balls beginning to take shape. We are planning another pottery workshop later in the year. Let us know if you'd like to take part.



### **More from Making More Happen**

On 5<sup>th</sup> June Stockport Council's Electoral Service will be visiting to discuss how voting can be made more accessible. Let us know if you'd like to come along and give your feedback. We are also looking to trial a new accessible Book Club for people with sight loss, and a 'TechTeam' peer support group for people who want to be able to get more out of the technology available for people with sight loss. Let us know if you're interested in joining either group.

Recently, volunteer Liz went to Quarry Bank Mill with a small group of visually impaired people to recce out the facilities for people with sensory loss. We're hoping to organise a trip later in the year. Let us know if you'd be interested to come along.

### **A Trip to the Plaza**

Also as part of our Making More Happen project we recently teamed up with the Plaza Theatre in Stockport to host an accessible tour of their beautiful building and facilities. Sighted guides and a British Sign Language interpreter were provided to ensure that a mix of people with sight or hearing loss could join us for the tour, with everyone getting the chance to see the backstage dressing rooms and projection room and to walk on the stage, before the group then finished off with lunch in the theatre cafe. Thank you to Ted and the Plaza team for their hospitality. The photo right shows Paul and Vincent in the dressing room closely examining a full length gold sequined gown.



### **See Hear Stockport 2018 - Equipment and Information Day**

Our biennial *See Hear* Equipment and Information day will take place on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> September this year. This year we are hoping to offer lifts from the bus and train stations for anyone coming from outside Stockport and we will be publishing a full list of exhibitors in the summer.

The event is being supported this year by Stockport Council's new Community Investment Fund.

With so many people attending, we always make a big effort to update the demonstration equipment in our own resource centre ahead of our Equipment and Information day.

With support from the Equity Foundation and Viridor, we have just invested in the latest mobile phone from the RNIB which is

available for demonstration and sale in the resource centre. The BlindShell 2 is touchscreen phone specifically designed for people who are visually impaired, operated by just four simple hand gestures. It also has a voice assistant feature so you can control the phone using voice commands and dictate text messages instead of having to type them.

Graham, who volunteers in the resource centre on Wednesdays, has been trying out the phone and says, 'Many mainstream smart phones have good accessibility features these days, but what makes the BlindShell 2 so appealing is its relative simplicity. In addition, the most important features are all so easy to find. Aside from using the BlindShell 2 as a phone, some of the most useful features include a calendar, a verbal notebook, a radio, a book reader, a colour detector and a magnifier. It even has text recognition, so if you hold it over some text, it will read it out to you. Very impressive.'

The same grant funding has also paid for a new Sony Smart LED Television to demonstrate to customers. Many programmes are now audio described of course, so that feature is a given, but the new TV can be controlled by voice command - you can change the channel or volume level simply by speaking into the remote control and the on-screen programme guide can be narrated to you.

The Manchester Guardian Society has just given a grant of £2,000 which will allow us to update more of our demonstration equipment in the resource centre in time for our *See Hear* event. During June and July, Optelec have kindly agreed to loan us the new Compact 6 HD Speech video magnifier to demonstrate to customers. This is a hand held video magnifier that will also read out text. Video magnifiers tend to be very expensive, but Optelec also now have a desk top video magnifier available for under £1,000.

We will also be 'road-testing' the Victor Reader Trek from Humanware, a satellite navigation system for pedestrians. If you would like to see any of the new equipment, please call us on 0161 480 2612 to book an appointment.

## Walthew House Cup

This year we again hosted our Walthew House Cup blind bowling tournament at Tenpin Parris Wood. The event was attended by the Mayor of Stockport, Councillor Linda Holt, pictured right gamely having a go at bowling wearing simspecks to limit her sight. Thank you to everyone who supported the event.



## Quiz Champions

Well done to the Walthew House quiz team, for winning this year's Bramhall and Woodford Rotary Club quiz. Pictured below are, left to right, John, Judy, David, Pat, Nigel and Ben, who brought a wealth of knowledge to the table with some fantastic quiz answers - including the fact that there are 27 arches in Stockport Viaduct! The occasion also saw the presentation of cheques from the monies raised by the Rotary Club Santa collections. Walthew House received a very welcome £450.



## Celebrating Diversity Week

St Peter's Primary School in Hazel Grove held their own Diversity Week in February, and invited Teresa and Dan from Walthew House to speak about the challenges faced by people with sensory loss. The Walthew team ran a short assembly about

hearing loss, which included an interactive sign language demonstration, before leading a classroom session on sight loss. The children all enjoyed learning some sign language, and then taking part in a blindfolded touch test, where they guessed what common objects were from feeling them. Thank you to St Peter's for inviting us to take part.

## **Other News**

### **Sightline**

The following has been submitted by Luke Howarth at Sightline.

'Sightline is an innovative service focused on delivering practical and emotional support to blind and partially sighted people, through a free telephone helpline - *0800 numbers are free to call from BT landlines and most mobile networks*. The helpline, on 0800 587 2252 is open 365 days a year and is staffed by visually impaired volunteers who are able to use their own experience of sight loss to provide emotional support, advice and guidance. Losing some or all of sight can be very distressing and have a big effect on a person's life. People tell us that they struggle with a range of emotions from shock, anger, sadness and frustration to depression and grief. This is quite normal and understandably coping with these emotions can be very difficult. Sightline provides a unique opportunity to speak with volunteers who themselves face the challenges of sight loss and are available when people have told us they feel the most alone – evenings.'

### **Traveleyes**

The following article has been submitted by Dan Raymond at Traveleyes:

'My name is Dan, and I am writing to you today from a unique travel organisation called Traveleyes. You may have heard of Traveleyes – we are the world leading travel organisation offering worldwide adventures for both blind and sighted travellers. On each trip, half the group are blind or visually impaired, and half are fully sighted. We pair a different sighted blind traveller with a different blind traveller for each day of the holiday. In return for

being the eyes for our blind travellers, our sighted travellers receive a discount of their trips, subsidised entirely by Traveleyes. This means that our blind travellers don't pay any more for accessible travel, and benefit from one on one guiding for the whole trip as well as live audio description. Every year we take thousands of travellers on holidays all over the world, from India and China, to Peru and Australia, to Europe and the UK. Traveleyes was founded in 2004 by Amar Latif, the blind entrepreneur and TV presenter, to allow blind people to travel the world with freedom and independence. We now take travellers from all over the world on our adventures, and are always aiming to reach out to as many blind and visually impaired travellers as possible.

We would love to offer Walthew House members a 5% discount off their first trip, so that they can come and experience the world with Traveleyes! To use this offer, just quote the code '5%2018'. All of our trips, and information about Traveleyes, can be found on our fully accessible website, at <https://traveleyes-international.com> If you would like any more information please do get in touch on 0113 834 6094.'

## **Run for Fun**

We have been offered support from a local guide runner: 'Hi, my name is Caroline and I completed Athletics England Guide Runner course last summer. I got in touch with Walthew House as I wondered if there was anyone local to me in the Stockport area who would like to get out running. Whatever your level if you are interested in running then please contact me on [carolinefurious@gmail.com](mailto:carolinefurious@gmail.com) I have the Guide Runners license, a current DBS clearance and a clean driving license.'

## **X-Pil**

X-Pil is a scheme which makes medicine information leaflets available in alternative formats such as Braille, large print and audio. Run by the RNIB, the Medicine Information Line is free to use and can be accessed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on formats can reach the RNIB Medicines Information Line on: 0800 198 5000.

## **A Few Words of Thanks**

Thank you to The Zochonis Charitable Trust, The John Slater Foundation and the Children's Charities Luncheon Club for their support to our youth group, securing the funding needed for 2018/19.

Thank you also to the Garfield Weston Foundation and the W O Street Charitable Foundation which are funding our specialist sight loss counselling service in 2018/19.

Our 'Information Safety Net' accessible information service is starting the second year of this three year project, supported by the Dunhill Medical Trust and the Sobell Foundation. Many thanks to both for their continued support.

Also starting its second year, our Making More Happen project has so far received welcome support from the Coop Community Fund and the Lionel Wigram Memorial Trust.

Thank you to the many individuals and organisations that have recently supported our work - including the Aviva Charities Trust, the No Notes, Stockport Carnival Committee, Stockport Hydro and Woodsmoor Artists' Group. A special mention to our friends at Booth Ainsworth, who continue to raise thousands of pounds every year for Walthew House with dress down days, cake sales and their incredibly popular annual tombola which this year raised £300!

We are grateful for the donations we have received in memory of Bernard Cowley, Winnie Lawson, Veronica Parke, Jack Scott, Elsie Sutcliffe and a legacy from the estate of Josephine Sutton.

## **Business Network Support**

Walthew House was recently accepted as a member of Business Network International, a group of businesses that support each other through a system of referrals and recommendations. We are hoping that joining this group will be of benefit to both ourselves and local businesses, through new opportunities to work together in Stockport. Already we have just replaced our outside signage replaced by Network member Sign Express!

## Raffle Winners

Every year we run a Easter and Christmas Raffles, with a seasonal hamper as first prize.

Congratulations to Mr and Mrs Scott, who won our Christmas Raffle and are pictured right with their hamper and their lovely Scottie dogs.



Our recent Easter raffle was won by Mrs G Turner. Volunteer Rachael is pictured left drawing the winning tickets.

This year second and third prizes were Easter baskets and the photo below shows

David, one of our trustees, presenting third prize to winner Iris who is a regular at our Tuesday social group and luncheon club.

Thank you to everyone who supports us by selling or buying raffle tickets last year. Much appreciated!



## **Support Us At No Extra Cost!**

Easy Fundraising is a website that allows you to donate to our charity, just by shopping online. It works with companies including Amazon and John Lewis, as well as plenty of travel and hotel websites for if you are booking your summer holidays. We now have more supporters than ever on the website and it has helped us to raise more than £100 for our charity so far this year! Speak to Dan in the Walthew office if you would like to know more.

Another way you can support us is by becoming a member of the Co-op. Until at least November this year, the Co-op will be supporting Walthew House with the money they make from the 5p carrier bag charge. You can help us to raise more money by becoming a Co-op member and choosing to support Walthew, meaning that 1% of the money you spend on some products will come straight to us!

## **Coining it In!**

Having collected a bucket full of foreign coins that have found their way into our collecting boxes on shop counters, we recently cashed them in and were amazed to raise £291.71! Having realised how valuable they are, we're happy to accept any foreign coins you might have lurking around after your holidays. We also collect coppers in our 'Tube of Twos' in the resource centre, and have loose change boxes we can post out to you if you'd like one.

We don't collect stamps in aid of Walthew House, but are happy to pass on any you collect the Charity Hearing Dogs for Deaf People.

## **Friends of Walthew House**

Friends of Walthew House is our membership scheme. Members are able to vote at our Annual General Meeting and can stand for election as a trustee of the charity. The cost is £10 per year. Please let us know if you would like to join.

## Mailing List

To join or stay on our mailing list please to **tick this box**  to say that you have read, understood and consent to the terms of our Privacy Policy, which is available from: [admin.walthewhouse@ntlbusiness.com](mailto:admin.walthewhouse@ntlbusiness.com) and in specific accessible formats on request.

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Walthew House Supports People in Stockport who are Blind, Visually Impaired, Deaf or Hard of Hearing, or who have Dual Sensory Loss. Registered Charity Number 1167749. Registered Company number 09306241.

Walthew House News is produced in large print and is available on request in Braille, on audio CD, by email and as a British Sign Language DVD. The next issue will be available in September 2018.