



working to make life better for blind and partially sighted people

sight action news

August 2016 Edition

Supported by the Highland & Islands Society for Blind People

WESTERN ISLES SENSORY CENTRE

The Western Isles Sensory Centre (WISC) and Sight Action are pleased to inform everyone about our exciting new support groups. The formation of these new groups has been made possible by the See Hear funding from the Scottish Government and the Western Isles Council. The three groups will initially be supported by the WISC staff and volunteers, with the aim of becoming self-supporting at the end of the first year.

The main aim is to reduce the feeling of isolation among the visually impaired, the deaf and parents of children with a sensory loss. Social isolation is one part of a sensory loss that many people out in the community find the hardest thing to deal with.

WISC and Sight Action see the formation of these groups as a way of reducing the feeling of loss by helping each other on this journey.

The funding bid is to provide transport and back up for our staff in Stornoway for the first year after which the groups will run independently. Unfortunately we have only been able to secure transport for the Stornoway area, so anyone outside this area would require to get help or travel independently to the meetings. However, we are keen to

encourage people to attend who live out with Stornoway and anyone who can get assistance to attend the groups will be more than welcome.

The groups will be held in the first week of every month, between 2.00pm and 4.00pm and the group for the parents of children with a sensory loss will be asked when they would like to attend meetings, due to school commitments.

It is important to stress that these are self-help groups for those living with a sensory loss in the Western Isles. The meetings will be held at the Centre in Stornoway for at least the first year. This is a model which is used all over Highland with proven success.

If you would like to attend or you know someone who would like to volunteer or you need more information – please contact WISC on 01851701788



Befrienders Highland, based in Inverness, has supported people with mental health issues since 1993. We recognise how loneliness can impact hugely on people's mental health and wellbeing and our aim is to provide social contact to those who may feel alone in Highland.

Befrienders Highland Dementia Befriending Project

This project offers supported friendship to people with **memory issues** (including dementia) and their carers. You do not have to be formally diagnosed with dementia to use our service.

Befriending involves having weekly **social contact** with a trained volunteer. This is offered via phone, letter or email for carers and over the phone for people with memory issues. We are also offering a small number of face – to face friendships in the Nairn and Inverness areas. The service is free of charge.

Befriending makes a big difference to people's lives. Here is some feedback from people who use our service:

“It does help to speak to my befriender, we always have a laugh, and I am managing to open up a wee bit”.

“It is lovely to know that Befrienders Highland is there for me and cares for me.”

Get in touch...

If you would like to discuss the service, or have questions regarding a referral, please contact Liz or Carol on **03303 552255**. You can email us too – **liz.tufnell@befriendershighland.org.uk** or find us on Facebook

If you would like to **volunteer with us** please get in touch. We offer excellent training opportunities and provide full support to carry out your role.

Do you care for someone with memory issues or dementia? We currently have volunteers available who are trained to provide **friendship via email** at a time that can fit in around your caring role.

NEW PORTABLE LAMPS

Daylight Foldi

- The Daylight Foldi is illuminated by 30 bright Daylight LEDs.
- 3 x AA batteries give around 8 hours usage or alternatively the USB adapter included can be used instead of batteries.
- Very slim when closed. Automatically switches on or off when head is opened or closed. A good travel companion.



Multilight LED Mobil

- Handy Folding Task lamp with 30 durable and energy efficient SMD LED lights.
- Switches on and off automatically as head is opened and closed.
- Lightweight. Requires little space. Uses 3 x AA Batteries

Please contact Catriona on **01463 233663** for more information

THE STATIONERY CUPBOARD

Tidying a stationery cupboard reminds me of life; no matter how hard you try to fit things in different ways; moving the paper from the top shelf to the bottom; putting the small footery things in wee boxes.

It doesn't matter, you end up putting everything back the way it was; it's the only way it fits!

I wouldn't have known that if I hadn't tried, and that's life. Isn't it strange and amazing too.

Mary Ross – Volunteer who helps with administration and the Daytrippers group

ODE TO THE ZIMMER

I'm now walking with a zimmer
 Which is much, much trimmer than I thought –
 It helps me get from A to B with amazing panache and alacrity
 It also helps with the household chores before we go strolling in the great outdoors

I really love my zimmer
 And I keep it fresh and clean
 And I only overdo the paint when I think it's lost its sheen!

Now marathons and pelotons are not for me and zimmer
 But I still insist on my daily walk
 To keep me fit and leaner

So, if one day when you're out walking
 You see a woman come towards you

Talking rather loudly to a zimmer painted blue, don't feel embarrassed and shy away

Just turn around and say 'Good day – I love your zimmer painted blue
'Do you think that I could have one too?'

Anne MacLeod Benfield, 2015

RECIPES TO TRY...!

Mole Kahlo

Mole with chicken or pork can be a feast of taste for those who are brave to mix different flavours.

Please note it nothing to do with the animal you think while reading the word 'mole' – in Spanish it is pronounced as Moollea

Ingredients:

8 pieces of chicken (I prefer thighs than breast because they are less dry, but it is up to you)

100 g of dark chocolate, or dark chocolate with chili flavour, you can eat some chocolate while cooking, nobody would notice...

1 large onion

1 clove of garlic (not the head, the 'tooth')

2 sweet tomatoes,

Sweet paprika powder

Half of a small spicy chilli

1 cinnamon stick

1 star of anise, or tip of a teaspoon of ground anise

3 pieces of clove

1 teaspoon of black pepper

1 tablespoon of powdered pumpkin seeds

A fistful of raisins

A fistful of almond flakes

1 tablespoon of lard (optional) – there is some fat in chocolate already

Pinch of salt

Rice or tortillas to serve with the sauce

Method

1. Rub the chicken with salt, fry it a little in the pan, put away into a bowl or a plate
2. In the pan still hot from previous step, fry onions with garlic and chilli.
3. Add tomatoes – without skin, cut in small swuares – they will disintegrate in mole. You can add tomato puree if you wish an easier version
4. Add all the spice, and at the chicken.
5. Keep in on small fire for about 40 minutes checking it isn't burning
6. Add water if needed
7. Add broken chocolate raisins and almond flakes and simmer for another 15 minutes.
8. You can serve it with rice or tortillas.

Enjoy!

Andhra Chepala Pulusu - from Karthika Chodisetty, Children and Families Worker

Ingredients;

Fish - 1kg of sea bream, plaice or cod

1 large onion - make into paste

Ginger garlic paste – 1 tbsp

2 Green chillies- slit into 2

A few curry leaves and fresh coriander leaves

Turmeric powder- ½ tsp

Coriander powder- 1 tsp

Cumin powder- 1 tsp

Chilli powder- 2 tbsp

1 large Tamarind - lemon sized (add hot water until the tamarind is immersed, and squeeze to make a pulp) - 1 cup

Oil - 4 tsbps

Salt to taste

Method;

1. Marinate fish with teaspoon each of chilli, salt and turmeric powder and keep aside. (These not included in ingredients)
2. Heat oil add green chillies and onion paste and fry well till the raw smell goes away and turn into light brown in colour.
3. Add ginger & garlic paste fry till raw smell goes away.
4. Add turmeric, red chilli powder & Mix well.
5. Add the fish pieces and mix till the masala sticks to fish. Cover the lid for 1 minute.
6. Add water until fish pieces are immersed, keep the heat on high, when it starts boiling, simmer and cover for 6mins.
7. Add Tamarind water and curry leaves, close the lid and cook until oil floats on top and the raw smell of tamarind disappears, do not mix the curry with the spatula instead carefully hold both the handle of the dish and rotate.(fish will be very delicate and breaks)
8. Add coriander leaves and check for salt, cook it for 5 more mins and serve with rice.

Barley Bread Recipe – from Ishbel Murray, Support Worker, Western Isles Sensory Centre

Ingredients:

- 2-3 handfuls of barley flour
- 1 oz butter
- 1 teaspn of bicarbonate of soda
- A pinch of salt
- 1 cup of milk

Method;

1. Heat Griddle
2. Mix the butter, bicarb, and salt together
3. Slowly add the milk bit by bit until all is incorporated.
4. Flour the board with barley flour.
5. Spread mixture onto the board until is a half inch thick round of mixture.
6. Cut into 4 parts and place onto a slightly buttered griddle for around six minutes per side. It is important to make sure that the griddle is not too hot.

When cooked ideally eat with butter.



With us...it's personal

Since its birth in Bolton in 1994, Travel Counsellors is now a truly dynamic and global travel company with 1,500 Travel Counsellors across seven countries, and a 250 strong head office support team in Manchester. My customers benefit from having their own Personal Travel Counsellor who takes pride in getting to know each and every client, enabling me to provide tailor-made, unique and authentic trips.

Every day I go the extra mile to take excellent care of my customers leisure and business travel arrangements, down to the very last detail - that's why Travel Counsellors have the highest customer satisfaction score in the world with 96% recommencing us to family and friends and 60% of our business coming from our loyal customer base.

The fact that I work from home means that I am available whenever is most convenient for my customers. I have been a Travel Counsellor for nearly 10 years, but have been in the travel Industry for over 30 years. I have many customers I help with their travel arrangements who require special assistance at airports, on their flights and also at accomodations for various reasons and illnesses. This is all taken care of so that clients can have totally seam-free travel.

Importantly, I can also offer my customers complete peace of mind when it comes to financial protection. Travel Counsellors provides the highest level of protection you could wish for because its fully independent. Its sits alongside our ATOL cover protecting every trip, its completely robust meaning no matter what happens, all elements and your money are safe.

BARBARA WATSON – Travel Counsellor

Please get in touch or find out more on our website.

Telephone – 01475 779030 or 07952130485

Email - barbara.watson@travelcounsellors.com

Website - www.travelcounsellors.co.uk/barbara.watson

STOP PRESS

- **Six Kippers – An Orcadian Adventure – price £9.99**

This book has been written by Anthony Bryant, who is one of Sight Action's service users. Mr Bryant has very kindly provided us with 6 copies of the book to sell for funds. They are currently available at reception at a cost of £9.99.

- **Cup of Tea and a blether – Community Lounge, Golspie High School between 1.00 and 4.00 on Friday September 2nd.**

This event was held on Friday 2nd and it would be interesting to hear from those people who attended to see if they enjoyed and also anyone who was unable to come along and would like to find out more about what the volunteers can do to help. Please do give me a ring on 01463 233663

Sarah Shaw

MIKE IS GOING...

Dear all,

It is with sadness that I have to inform you that I am leaving Guide dogs at the end of September after nearly 30 years, the last 5 in Highland. I will be setting out on my own in a new business where I hope to use the skills I have acquired with Guide Dogs to provide dog behaviour training, carry out dog walking, obedience training and offer a dog boarding service from my home.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone I have met since becoming the Guide Dog instructor in Inverness for their help and their willingness to put up with me. Particular thanks go to all of the Guide dog

Owners I have worked with over this time and all of the staff at Sight Action.

My post has now been advertised and I hope that there will be as little disruption to the service from Guide Dogs as possible as a new person comes into position. I will contact them as soon as they are appointed and offer whatever help is required to help them settle into their new role.

I wish you all the best for the future and if you feel my new business has a relevance to your needs please do not hesitate to get in touch. I will be leaving leaflets and contact details with Sight Action when I leave.

Best wishes to all

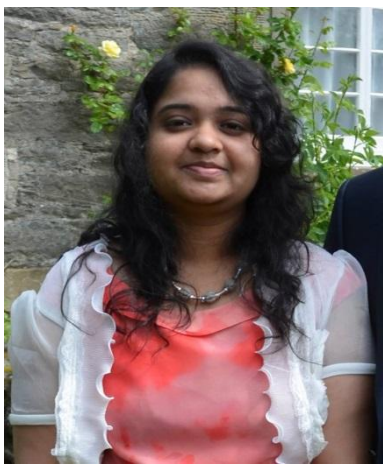
Mike Waites, Guide Dogs

• **NEW DIRECTOR FOR THE BOARD**



Dr Shona Turnbull has lived in the Highlands for most of her life; apart from about 12 years spent south of the border gaining various academic qualifications, including a PhD in Urban Ecology. Now living and working in Caithness, she is a coastal planner at the Highland Council where she is mainly working on marine related issues, including working with the Moray Firth Partnership. Keen to support those with sight issues, she hopes to help Sight Action grow and develop its valuable work.

• **NEW MEMBER OF STAFF**



My name is Karthika Chodisetty, a post graduate in applied psychology. I have worked as a psychologist in two schools and the Indian navy

before moving to Inverness from Vizag, India in 2013. Although it is a big change, I thoroughly enjoy living here in the beautiful surroundings. Since my arrival I have been involved in a number of voluntary positions in various mental health organisations in Inverness, before joining Sight Action in my new role as their children & families worker in May 2016. I am really excited to bring in my experience to play a key role in supporting children and their families, alongside working with very knowledgeable colleagues.

MEDICATION MANAGEMENT RESEARCH. CAN YOU HELP?

Are you 65 or over, with a sensory loss and using more than 4 medicines?

We are looking to speak to people aged 65 or over with sight / hearing loss who use more than 4 medicines. This can include inhalers, creams, pessaries and tablets.

The study is run by the Universities of Aberdeen, Dundee and Stirling and would involve a researcher, Dr Kirsty Killick, coming to your home for around an hour to ask you about how you manage your medicines and if your community pharmacy (sometimes known as the 'chemist') helps you to do this.

If you are a BSL user an interpreter can be organised to assist.

For more information or to take part, please contact Kirsty on **07973184217** or email **k.killick@dundee.ac.uk**

Grantown Support Group – Peter McLaughlin

In July we had Mr Bob Shanks, Chairman of the Seaforth Association, give an interesting talk on military medals and equipment, and we were joined by the Aviemore group. August was a chat and tea meeting in the

Grant Arms in Grantown. Looking forward, on the 14th of September we are having an outing to Avoch on the Black Isle, where, by kind permission of the Church of Scotland, we are holding a "soup and sweet lunch" to raise some funds for the group and we would be delighted if others joined us! Bring a friend, everybody is welcome, it starts at 12.00pm on September 14th in the Church Hall, Avoch.



See For Yourself

OrCam Comes to the Highlands!!!

The latest much talked about assistive technology for blind and visually impaired people will make an appearance in the Highlands next month. The OrCam My Eye is an intuitive mobile device, a smart camera that fits neatly to the leg of a pair of eye glasses and with a simple motion of pointing your finger at some text, the OrCam will read the text from a letter, book, newspaper or magazine to the user real time, the OrCam doesn't need to be connected to Wifi, Bluetooth or a PC, all you need to do is switch it on and your good to go, it can be used in a Supermarket, Train, Plane or even a Restaurant to read a Menu.

OrCam are delighted to announce that we have teamed up with the Highland Sensory Services at Sight Action in Inverness to bring the New OrCam My Eye Version 7 and demonstrate its capabilities.

OrCam Trainer Ian White, who is registered blind himself, says this is a very intuitive aid which can help give blind and visually impaired people the independence to do things for themselves.

Free OrCam demonstration -

Please note that Ian White will be at Beechwood on:

Friday October 7th

Time: 10.00 – 3.00

To book in for this taster session please call Sight Action on 01463 233663

You can also contact Ian for more information

Telephone: **07980302743** or e-mail: **iwhite62@outlook.com** or take a look at our website at **www.orcam.com** or look us up on Facebook.

VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Sight Action's volunteers can assist in lots of ways:

Handy Person Volunteers – Both John and Alfred can help with small jobs in the home and garden. It is important to remember they do not touch gas, electricity or plumbing. So if you need the help of a handy man and you live in Inverness, Nairn or Badenoch & Strathspey. Give us a ring

Drivers – we can help with lifts to appointments but we do need a minimum of 3 days notice

Talking Books Service – if you want to find out more about this a volunteer can phone you or come out and see you.

Support Groups – there are groups in Inverness, Dingwall, Aviemore, Grantown, Wick, Thurso, Kyle of Lochalsh and soon starting in the Western Isles.

If you live in Sutherland and Tain and are interested in a group starting in your area please let me know.

Walking Group – meets once a month on the first Tuesday of the month. If you would like to find out more we can arrange for one of the volunteers to talk to you about it.

IT - Sight Action is going to deliver iPad training in the next few months. It will be held at Beechwood House and will run over 6 weeks probably a morning a week. If you are interested please ring and give us your name.

We also have volunteers who can help with IT problems in your own home.

Caithness and Sutherland - Sight Action are now recruiting volunteers in both Caithness and Sutherland. We have someone who will help with Talking Books, IT and visiting in Caithness. In Sutherland we have a gentleman who will help with odd jobs, driving and IT.

Please contact Sarah Shaw on 01463 233663 or direct dial 01463 256112

Hot Tip!

**Do you have difficulty getting the toothpaste onto the tooth brush?
Does it end up in the sink?**

Solution: Squeeze the toothpaste directly onto your tongue

No more spillage!

Services that can help you reach full potential

Life does not stop after vision loss!

Sight Action are here to support all people with a vision loss in Highland and the Western Isles, providing quality statutory services on behalf of NHS Highland, the Highland Council, the NHS Western Isles and the Western Isles Council.

If you are experiencing difficulties with day to day tasks, you may wish to tap into the broad experiences of our professionally trained staff.

We provide free assessments, creative solutions and support that could offer a new outlook for you.

Our low vision service, uses personalised testing, often within your home, or at our resource centres, creating personalised tailored solutions. We give advice and information to you and your family so you will have a better understanding of your vision loss.


Free demonstrations of the latest optical aids, speciality equipment and I.T. solutions can be brought to your home.

Do you want to talk to other people affected by the same condition as you? Why not come along to one of our many support groups? We also have access to trained counsellors who have experience with low vision, should you wish more professional help.

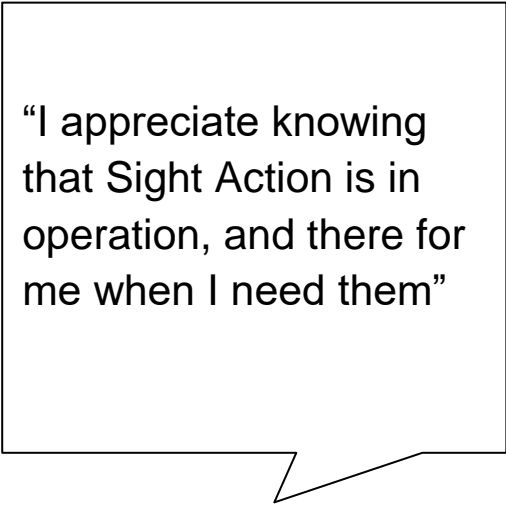
Anyone can refer to our services

Call us on 01463 233 663 or have a look at our web site.

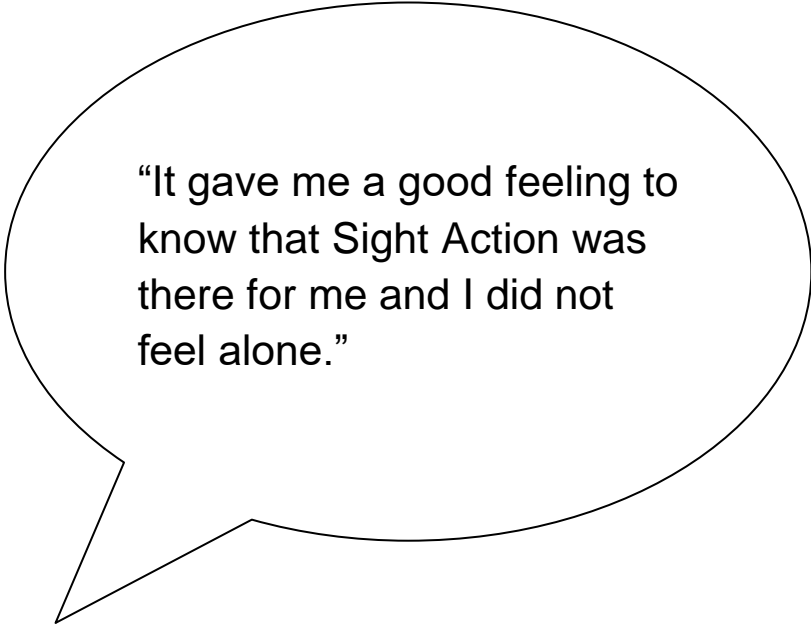
WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT US



“a friend told me about your organization. I have found everyone so pleasant and helpful. Everyone was so nice speak to”



“I appreciate knowing that Sight Action is in operation, and there for me when I need them”



“It gave me a good feeling to know that Sight Action was there for me and I did not feel alone.”

DO NOT FORGET THE TALKING NEWSPAPER SERVICES

Inverness Talking Newspapers – 01463 242600

Talk Lochaber - 01397 702240

01397 702990

Caithness Talking Newspapers - 01955 603821

Sutherland Talking Newspapers – 01408 633405

HEARING AND SIGHT CENTRE, CAITHNESS

Caithness Disabled Access Panel along with Lee Gunn of North of Scotland Computer Services recently donated the new Optelec hand held electronic magnifier for use in Thurso Library. At a recent presentation members of Caithness Visual Impairment Group attended and were

shown how to use the magnifier. This magnifier can change colour of font and background as well as magnification size. It is light and easy to use with a handle that can fold away for ease of use and it is designed to be portable. Anyone wishing to try it should go to Thurso Library, Davidsons Lane, and ask a member of staff who will demonstrate the magnifier and let you try it. Any enquiries about the magnifier can be made to Hearing and Sight Care or Sight Action.



Simple talking computers for people with sight loss



- Ideal for beginners
- Step-by-step choices
- Natural sounding voices
- FREE UK telephone support



Magnification and speech for windows computers

- Available in 3 editions to suit your sight loss
- Crystal clear magnification
- Scan and read paper documents
- Human sounding voices



ALL Dolphin products include free telephone, email and remote access support.
Call our Worcester support team on:
01905 754 577
or email: support@yourdolphin.com

COME AND SEE OUR PRODUCTS IN ACTION:

Caithness - Monday 26th September

Inverness - Tuesday 27th September

For full details see our website - YourDolphin.com