



# Southampton Sight

supporting people living with sight loss

December 2020

## We are here to help

Dear All

As we countdown to Christmas I have been reflecting on what we have managed to achieve since 18th March when we had to close our doors. As a small local charity, we were determined to support our members and others during this time. I am so proud that we have adapted and continue to be **HERE TO HELP** and will continue to do so as long as we are needed. Please contact us on **023 8076 9882** if we can help in anyway.

Recently I got indecently excited about a sticky toffee pudding. To be fair, during the last lockdown I got excited about food a lot. It felt good, experiencing this raging bubble of happiness rise up inside me as I planned our meals every day and I forgot that we were all wearing masks

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### Southampton Sight

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and that we were socially distancing. That's what cooking does for me – I think you may have guessed it, but I enjoy cooking! It made the world seem better and was a great distraction. So, as I write this, and we are now in our second lockdown food seems to be dominating my every move. I am so proud that since June we have delivered over 1,300 meals to members and let me tell you it has been a logistics learning curve. We have also made over 3,500 telephone calls. When we started, I thought how hard can it be to cook 50 meals and desserts a week and then deliver them? Well it was but we did it and will continue to do so but we couldn't have done this without our wonderful volunteers and I really want to thank them all whether they are delivering, preparing vegetables or telephoning you for your orders. I would also like to thank our staff who have been so flexible in these unprecedented times.

Please accept our wishes for a Happy Christmas and we look forward to seeing you all next year. The Christmas card enclosed with this newsletter was drawn by Mylie Dudley-Ward (aged 10 years), one of our younger members - THANK YOU Miley. It features a beautiful scene with a Christmas tree, a stocking full of presents and a beautiful dog 'Santa Paws!' Please be aware there will be no newsletter in January but if you need us please don't hesitate to get in touch.

**Jackie Powers**  
Chief Executive

## **Kate's Blog: Good KARMA really does find you when you least expect it**

Southampton Sight delivers sight loss awareness sessions at Southampton University Hospital Trust as part of the 4th year medical student Ophthalmology week. Initially this was a voluntary element but has now become a mandatory part of the weeks learning but proving IMPACT can always be difficult so this real testimony from Kate shows that this learning has made a REAL difference.

Recently something happened that shocked and pleased me at the same time. I was on my way to meet my partner for our last visit to a pub before England's second national lock down. I was approaching a rather complicated junction and as I do not do this route every day, I could not quite remember the exact location of the traffic lights. I found the box and the spinning cone that would tell me it was safe to cross but because of

the angle of the box and the fact that the pavement isn't straight I hadn't realised that when I stepped into the road I wasn't aware that I'd not walked in a straight line so when I thought I should have been approaching the central island I just couldn't figure out where it was. Adding to my anxiety I could hear traffic moving in front of me and just did not know what to do. Luckily, a cyclist had spotted me and over the noise of the vehicles tried to give me some verbal guidance, but I was so panic stricken that I just could not move.

Fortunately, someone else had seen what was going on and approached me and kindly guided me away from my situation and helped me to continue some of my journey. While I was being guided by this lovely stranger who had gone out of their way to help me and to make me feel safe, I asked him how he knew to guide me. He said he was a doctor and he had voluntarily attended a sight loss awareness session two years ago when he was a fourth-year medic student. I was shocked and was convinced that he had attended one of the very first sight loss awareness training sessions that Southampton Sight delivered at Southampton General hospital.

I did make it to the pub by the way feeling very relieved and grateful for the time he had taken to help me and am elated that he'd remembered what he had been taught two years ago. When the sight loss awareness workshops for medic students started, I never imagined that one of the students would end up remembering what my colleagues and I had taught him and used it to rescue me! 😊

Life has its own little ways of proving that people are willing to help others in times of worry and distress and even when the world is in the middle of a pandemic. I cannot thank the individual enough and although I would have been ok and would have eventually found my way, he enabled me to feel safer and got me out of the situation faster than I would have gotten out of it myself.

## **Christmas Closure**

We will be closed from Monday 21st December and will reopen on Monday 4th January 2021. We will be delivering meals on Tuesday 22nd December but not the following week (29th December). Please see the next page for a list of useful telephone numbers.

## Useful Telephone Numbers

### Sight Loss Charities

Southampton Sight	...	...	023 8076 9882
Open Sight Hampshire	...	...	023 8064 1244
RNIB (Royal National Institute of Blind People)	...	...	0303 123 9999
Macular Society	...	...	0300 3030 111
Guide Dogs	...	...	0800 781 1444

### Southampton City Council

Covid-19 Helpline	...	...	023 8083 4800
Adult Social Care	...	...	023 8083 3003
Sensory Services	...	...	0300 123 4026

### Hampshire County Council

Covid-19 Helpline	...	...	0333 370 4000
Adult Social Care	...	...	0300 555 1386
Sensory Services	...	...	0300 555 1386

### Citizens Advice Southampton

provide free, confidential and impartial advice and campaign on issues affecting people's lives

... 0300 330 2166

### Love Southampton

is an initiative of local churches and organisations helping those impacted by the Coronavirus outbreak

... 023 8097 1084

If you need medical help **call the NHS on 111**

If it is a **medical emergency call 999**