

Autumn 2018

# the eye

# Galloways

Support through sight loss



 @gallowaysblind  /galloways  www.galloways.org.uk



# 2018 AGM



10am  
Leyland  
Civic Hall

## > Keynote Speakers



### Miles Hilton-Barber

Blind Adventurer and international Motivational Speaker Miles is one of the most widely sought-after motivational speakers on the world circuit today.



### Ellie Southwood

Appointed Chair of the RNIB in 2016 Ellie has a genetic condition called Leber's congenital amaurosis and has never had any useful sight.

Plus  
special  
guest  
speaker



Seema Kennedy: South Ribble MP



A Buffet Lunch will be provided.  
Booking is essential as places are limited



Call 01772 744148 or Email [enquiries@galloways.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@galloways.org.uk)

## > Getting Active

03

# Wet, wild & wonderful!

Back in August, over 30 blind and partially sighted people went to Waterpark for a week long residential with Galloway's. Waterpark is an outdoor adventure centre which we attend twice a year. Offering opportunities that the sighted world can so often take for granted and reducing isolation for people living with sight loss, is always at the heart of what we do. Waterpark is designed to offer those opportunities, to help rebuild confidence and to meet new people. Activities throughout the week included windsurfing, canoeing and even ghyll scrambling.

We had the pleasure of speaking to Jane Sellers after she attended Water Park for the first time. "I had the most wonderful time at Water Park and had the chance to try lots of activities I would not have dreamt of doing before. I got to go windsurfing, canoeing and scrambling. The instructors were absolutely brilliant with me. I came away feeling shattered but absolutely great."

But for Jane, who was diagnosed with the rare genetic disorder Laurence-Moon-Bardet-Biedl syndrome at birth, the trip gave her so much more than trying new activities. The week also gave her the chance to meet with another person affected by the same condition.

Jane said: "The condition is extremely rare and I was so amazed to meet somebody else with the syndrome. Thanks to Galloway's I've now got a new friend and we've already got a visit scheduled. When we found out that we both shared the syndrome we just hugged. I would certainly recommend the trip to others. It was the best time I've had in many, many years. I definitely want to return next year."

If you would like more information on Water Park or any other outdoor pursuits activities, please call **James on 01772 744148** or email **[james.coulton@galloways.org.uk](mailto:james.coulton@galloways.org.uk)**

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# Driving the dream...

John Corner started using Galloway's services in 1997, when his sight started to deteriorate. John lived alone and as a result, he relied on support from Galloway's more and more as his sight loss progressed.

John was a real character and we were all deeply saddened to hear the news that he had died unexpectedly, just a few days before his 95th birthday.

We were touched to learn that John had decided to leave Galloway's a generous gift in his will. John had said that it was his way of thanking Galloway's and making sure future generations of blind and partially sighted people could benefit from the services that Galloway's provide.

At Galloway's, we understand that people living with sight loss can feel isolated and cut off from people and things around them. We want to try and make sure that future generations of blind and partially sighted people felt connected to their local communities. Thanks to John, we were able to purchase a new minibus – which we know will be a lifeline for many blind and partially sighted people for years to come.

Our brand new minibus will help to replace our aging and increasingly unreliable fleet of three, the oldest of which is now over 12 years old. As a tribute to John and his generosity, the vehicle has been dedicated to his memory. Thank you John.

If you would like information regarding leaving a gift in your will to support Galloway's please contact **Peter Taylor at Howick House on 01772 744148**, all information will be treated in strictest confidence.



# Volunteer Spotlight

My name is Anne and I have been a volunteer at Galloway's for over 10 years. I have volunteered since I retired over 25 years ago. When my husband sadly died, my circumstances changed, I moved to Penwortham and found it difficult to go back to volunteering within witness support at the Magistrate Courts. That's when I contacted Galloway's. And I haven't looked back since!

I have done a variety of voluntary roles at Galloway's, and I enjoy them all! From helping to put these very newsletters into envelopes, to supporting a weekly cookery social group, to crossing the famous Morecambe Bay – the variety is brilliant. Over half of people living with sight loss feel cut off from people and things around them. I'm inspired by the way Galloway's tackles this in my community and offers blind and partially sighted people a social platform and opportunities that so many of us take for granted.

I get so much from volunteering at Galloway's, it gives me a purpose. I can see the difference I am making – and that's an incredible feeling.

## Current volunteering opportunities

- Minibus drivers and escorts • Galloway's Ambassadors • Administration support
- Social group volunteers • Event support • Brew Me Sunshine – Morecambe
- Collection volunteers • Spotters for the shooting group

**Please email [volunteering@galloways.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@galloways.org.uk)** for more information about volunteering with Galloway's.



# Eye Health Week 2018

Back in September, it was National Eye Health Week which is a national campaign to promote the importance of eye health and regular sight tests every two years as over 50% of sight loss is avoidable. We held a range of activities throughout the week which included:

- Working with staff at Royal Preston Hospital and asking them to try our simulation spectacles, which mimic sight loss conditions
- Awareness days in a variety of Costa Coffee stores which included delivering visual awareness training to staff
- A variety of eye health foods on offer at our Coffee Shop, Brew Me Sunshine. We also gave away free coffee to people who went to get a sight test

We were extremely lucky to gain the support from Countdown Numbers Lady – Rachel Riley, who encouraged all her fans to go and get a sight test and documented her own trip to the opticians.

***"Galloway's are an incredible charity that help people adjust to the changes and challenges that a sight loss diagnosis brings. But they also work hard to make avoidable sight loss a thing of the past. I'm supporting Galloway's during National Eye Health Week because I was shocked to learn that over 50% of sight loss is avoidable. Galloway's prompted me to have my first eye test in over ten years and I hope that by sharing my story, others will do the same."*** Rachel Riley.

The story made national press and we're extremely grateful for Rachel's incredible support. You can read more about our efforts during National Eye Health Week on our Facebook page.



# It's not just about climbing mountains!

The Galloway's Get Active programme has gone from strength to strength recently. The programme hosts a range of activities from local walks, chair based excersises, archery and even a session of indoor skiing.

The Get Active programme exists to enable people living with sight loss to lead a more active life style and enjoy the great outdoors in safety. But it's much more than being active and climbing mountains. The social side of Get Active; meeting new friends, sharing experiences and overcoming the challenges of everyday life with the help of others plays a big part.

***"If it wasn't for the Get Active programme, I would just be sat at home doing very little and having little contact with others."***

At Galloway's, we have seen people go on activities from the start of their sight loss journey and within a short space of time we have watched their confidence soar and their abilities go from strength to strength. It never ceases to amaze us what people can do given the right amount of help and encouragement.

If you would like to know more about the Get Active programme or if you have any suggestions of activities you would like to try, please call **James on 01772 744148** or email **[james.coulton@galloways.org.uk](mailto:james.coulton@galloways.org.uk)**



# Are you in the picture?

Have you ever considered what it would be like to watch your favourite TV programme with limited or no sight? Let's take the new BBC Drama 'Bodyguard'; without sight you would miss the facial expressions, the written documents and with the vast cast it would be very easy to forget the characters' which would mean that the plot of the programme is easily lost. It is for this reason why **Audio Description** is vital to visually impaired viewers.

If you are not familiar with Audio Description, it is a service provided by most channels, providing a description of what is happening on the screen. In order to access Audio Description, you must have Digital TV where the settings allow you to turn on this function. Channels such as the BBC and Channel 4 have a dedicated AD service.

If you use streaming services such as Netflix and Amazon Prime Video many of the programmes and films available on these services are audio described.

Whilst significant steps have been taken to improve access to content for visually impaired viewers there is still a lot of work to be done as many programmes accessed via catch up services such as the All4 app do not have the Audio Description function.

If you would like to find out more about Audio Description, please get in touch with our **Assistive Technology Coordinator Andrew Coleman on 01772 744148** or contact our partner **RNIB on 0303 123 999**.

## Did you know?

Audio Description services are not just available through our televisions: many theatres offer touch tours and Audio Description which can help to bring the performance to life. You can also watch the blockbusters in the cinema as many screenings have Audio Description – just look for the AD symbol in the listings.

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## > Introduction to smart home technology

# A vision for the future

We live in a world where being online is much more than accessing a website or checking your emails. Gone are the days where just computers and tablets have wireless internet connectivity. We can now take advantage of the internet of things (IoT).

Smart home technology such as Alexa (Amazon Echo) and Google home smart speakers use voice commands to control household appliances. They can turn lights on and off, control central heating and hot water schedules, change TV channels and much more. Just imagine being able to turn on your kitchen light by saying “Alexa, turn on my kitchen light”. It’s even possible to make telephone calls by saying “Alexa, call my daughter”.

There is so much possibility for the future with many manufacturers and software developers looking to put the likes of Alexa and Google into their products. Eventually we will expect to see washing machines, microwaves and even ovens with voice activation built in as standard.

At Galloway’s we are committed to the future of smart home technology and how it can benefit blind and partially sighted people. Over the coming 12 months we will be delivering workshops and training around smart home technology and we want you to get involved.

Please get in touch to find out more and arrange an appointment with our Assistive Technology Coordinator **Andrew Coleman** by calling **01772 744 148** or email **[talkingtech@galloways.org.uk](mailto:talkingtech@galloways.org.uk)**



# Fun in the sun!

## Summer fundraising events

It's been a busy Summer and our main events, the Morecambe Bay Walk and the Colour Blast were both another huge success. Sponsorship money is still trickling in and we want to say a huge thank you to everybody who took part in these events or volunteered and made them possible. You're incredible!

**Morecambe Carnival** – We had a fantastic weekend at the Morecambe Carnival on the 11th and 12th of August. Our tombola stall raised a fantastic £291. Thank you to all our volunteers and supporters who helped make the weekend such a success!

**Southport Street Collection** – We would like to thank our Southport volunteers who helped raise a wonderful £123.99 on the 25th August by bucket collecting in Southport Town Centre.

**Chorley Street Collection** – We had a great morning in Chorley Town Centre recently with our collection buckets! Thank you to our volunteer, Dorothy who helped us to raise a fantastic £85.55.

**Ladies of Note** – We would like to say a huge thank you to the members of the Ladies of Note Choir in Morecambe who put on a summer concert in July in support of Galloway's. The event raised an amazing £443!

**Morecambe Golf Club** – Galloway's was the chosen charity of Morecambe Golf Club throughout 2017. The captain and lady captain fundraised tirelessly throughout the year and raised a staggering £7,163.40!

**Our Lady & St. Gerards Parochial Centre** – We were chosen as their charity in 2017 and earlier this year they presented us with a cheque for an amazing £5,000! Thank you to all members for this incredible amount.



## Save the date

2nd Dec- Christmas Fair and Santa Dash at Howick House.

## Easy ways to support us

- **Home Collection Box** Why not turn pennies into pounds by requesting a Home Collection Box.
- **Collection Boxes** Why not see if your local pub, café, shops, workplace or local businesses near to you would take one of our collection boxes? When it's full we will come and collect it!
- **Monthly Draw** For just £2.00 per month You can take part in our Monthly Draw and be in the running to win a top prize of £250!
- **Online Shopping - you can support us while you shop!** When using Amazon, remember to click 'Amazon Smile' and choose Galloway's as a charity to support before you start shopping... it means Amazon donate to Galloway's every time you make a purchase.
- **Used Stamps...** we accept used stamps so remember to think of us when you are clearing out all your paperwork!
- **Merchandise** why not take a box of seasonal novelties to sell in your workplace for us!

For more information on how to support us or for information on any of the above please contact the **Fundraising Team now on 01772 744148. Or email us at [fundraising@galloways.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@galloways.org.uk)**



# Stars and their eyes...

## Sight loss doesn't just affect you and I...



When **Johnny Depp** first swashbuckled across the screen as Captain Jack Sparrow in "Pirates of the Caribbean," he had a secret – he's blind in one eye and near-sighted in the other. He only disclosed his visual impairment a few years ago in an interview for Rolling Stone Magazine. "I've never had proper vision," he said. "Everything is just very, very blurry."

**Judi Dench** has played a vast array of performances, from Queen Victoria in the movie "Mrs. Brown" to M, the head of Britain's MI6, in seven James Bond films. So it's not surprising that she treats her visual impairment with royal resolve. She announced in 2012 that she has age-related macular degeneration – but intends to keep working. "I'm not going to make it something that's going to stop me," she told People magazine. In recent films, like "Spectre" and "Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children," she simply requested her film scripts in a larger print. Do not forget to ask anyone who contacts you for the most accessible format that suits your needs whether it is email, large print, Braille or audio.



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# Simon Booth

I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new Chairman of Galloway's Society for the Blind. However, before I go any further it is important that I recognise the work of John Ward, our previous Chairman, for his sterling work supporting the charity over the past 12 years. I am delighted that John will

remain as a Trustee and no doubt continue to significantly contribute to the continued development of Galloway's.

My family has been a supporter of the charity from its inception and in more recent times, my father was the chairman for a number of years. Therefore, I am immensely proud to take on the role as Chairman and give you my reassurance that I will do my utmost to ensure that Galloway's continues to go from strength to strength. I want to be a visible Chairman and so I have already visited all our sites to gain first-hand experience of our work. I am still trying to piece it all together but I was bowled over by the passion, enthusiasm and skills of everyone I met; staff, volunteers and people using our services.

We all understand that we are working in an ever changing landscape which is why we are focused on building an organisation fit for the future. We are developing exciting plans that will help us to reach more people affected by sight loss, lobby for change and ensure that blind and partially sighted people are at the heart of all that we do. The introduction of a new mobile information service and a Campaigns and Participation position will help us to achieve our aspirations.

It is an absolute privilege to lead this amazing charity through a new and exciting chapter in our long history.

*Simon Booth*

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# A day in the life...

My name is Lesley and I am a Low Vision Practitioner at Galloway's. A Low Vision Assessment looks at the best way of improving your vision if your sight cannot be improved by medical treatment or ordinary spectacles. This can be achieved using magnifying glasses or improved lighting. The assessment also looks at techniques and tools to help cope with poor sight.

I come from an optical background, in fact I am a 3rd generation optician so I'm passionate about supporting people with sight loss. It's such an amazing feeling when somebody can go home after a low vision assessment with a better understanding of their eye condition and is able to read their own mail that drops through the letter box or their local newspaper again.

I hold one low vision clinic every week and within a normal day I will see four people. I often find people haven't been given much information about their diagnosis so I try and explain this as much as possible. I try and go through people's day to day routines to understand the things that are causing problems. People have the opportunity to try a wide range of devices such as simple hand held magnifiers. If magnifiers do help, we can prescribe them for use at home. I can recommend low vision aids, gadgets and training - small things that will make big differences.

If your GP is based in Preston, Chorley, South Ribble, Morecambe or Lancaster, you can access the Galloway's Low Vision Service. If you don't reside in these areas, call us and we will help you find the nearest low vision assessment service.

*Lesley  
Muir-Taylor*



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st george's



  
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SANTA  
NEEDS  
YOU!

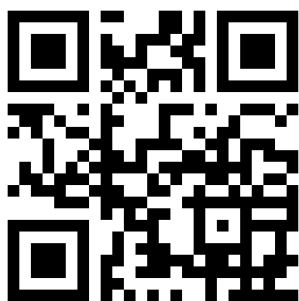
Calling all Santa's, Elves  
and Christmas wrappers...  
Galloway's needs YOU!  
We need volunteers to  
help out at the St.George's  
Shopping Centre over  
the festive period. Any  
time you could give would  
be greatly appreciated.  
Please call Charlotte on  
01772 744148 for more  
information - thanks!

# Let's Get Social!

Keep up to date with all the latest news by following us on Twitter and Facebook. Find us at [facebook.com/galloways](https://facebook.com/galloways) or on twitter [@gallowaysblind](https://twitter.com/gallowaysblind)



## > Find a Galloway's near you



### Preston

Howick House, Howick Park Ave.  
Penwortham PR1 0LS  
01772 744148

### Chorley

1a Farrington St.  
Chorley  
PR7 1DY  
01257 275160

### Southport

22 Wright St.  
Southport  
PR9 0TL  
01704 534555

### Morecambe

12 Victoria Street  
Morecambe  
LA4 4AH  
01524 414846

The distribution of our newsletter is over 5,000. You could help us double this by leaving it somewhere in your community for others to read. **#PassItOn** This newsletter is also available in audio format, by email or in braille. Remember, Galloway's can also offer advice in all areas of living with sight loss and transcribe information into all formats including braille.

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or email us at: [enquiries@galloways.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@galloways.org.uk)

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