

Sutton Vision
Enabling and Empowering

CONTACT

Winter Issue 69



Sutton Vision
3 Robin Hood Lane
Sutton
Surrey
SM1 2SW



Telephone: 020 8409 7166
info@suttonvision.org.uk
www.suttonvision.org.uk

Contents

Editorial	1
Quote for the Quarter	1
VI Leisure Group	2
Christmas Message from the Chairman	3
Meet the Trustee	4
Quiz- Test your knowledge questions	5
GLFB – London Vision	6
Sutton Vision Premises update	7
Go Sutton Bus App feedback	8
Coffee Raisin Pudding Recipe	9
Technology is transforming	10
Quiz- Test your Knowledge answers	11
Our activities & groups	12
Sunflower Lanyard	13
Mayors Charity events	14
Cat Adventures – Part Two	15
Useful Telephone Numbers	17

Editorial

Welcome to the Winter Edition 2019 of Sutton Vision's CONTACT magazine.

According to the scientists, at the Equator the surface of the Earth is travelling at a speed of 400 metres per second or approximately 1,000 miles per hour – yet, we don't fall off into space!! How amazing creation is.

Seasons come, and seasons go. Now, as Winter is upon us with its shorter days, darker nights, lower temperatures, and 'oh' all that rain – like our Chairman says in his Christmas message (see below), we can all look forward to a brighter future confident that Sutton Vision will continue, just like the seasons of the year.

Comments and contributions from Sutton Vision members and local partners are always welcome and may be sent to our Editor, Michael Parsons, at editor@suttonvision.org.uk. We are always interested to hear what you think of the newsletter and to receive ideas about articles for inclusion.

Quote for the Quarter

Here is another in our series of Quotes for you to contemplate:

"No one can make you feel inferior....without your consent!"

Eleanor Roosevelt

VI Leisure Group

The VILG organises its own programme and acts as the point of contact for participants. Although Sutton Vision supports and encourages the VILG and their activities, those partaking should be aware that any events organised directly by the VILG are independent of Sutton Vision and are the responsibility of the VILG only. If you are interested in finding out more please contact Sue Christie on 07891 783291 or e-mail susanchristie48@outlook.com

Event	Date	Venue
VI Leisure Group Coffee Morning Waterstones	1 st Friday of each month from 10.30 a.m.	Waterstones Book Shop, High Street, Sutton
VI Leisure Group Book Club	4 th Monday of each month from 10.30 a.m.	Waterstones Book Shop, High Street, Sutton
VI Leisure Group Lunch Prince of Wales Pub	3 rd Tuesday of each month from 12.00 noon	The Prince of Wales, 28 Malden Road, Cheam,
VI Leisure Group Eve. The Hope Pub	1 st Monday of each month from 7.00 p.m.	The Hope Pub, 48 West Street, Carshalton
VI Leisure Group Wallington	2 nd Wednesday of each month from 10.30 a.m.	Garden Café, Wallington Library

Volunteer News

If you are interested in joining our strong team of volunteers. No qualifications are needed – why not telephone Amanda our Volunteer Co-Ordinator on 020 8409 7166 or e-mail her amandalarter@suttonvision.org.uk for a chat?

At Sutton Vision we rely on our volunteers to help us with our services and social groups, we are incredibly grateful for their ongoing support and commitment – Thank You!

A Christmas Message From The Chairman

As I write this message just one month before the General Election, it seems to me and, I'm sure, to everybody else, that confusion, frustration, uncertainty and indecision have consumed us all throughout this year. Perhaps some calm and hope will descend upon us as we approach the Christmas period. And, of course, the arrival of a new year always provides an optimistic, expectation of a brighter and more positive future.

On a much smaller scale but nonetheless just as relevant, Sutton Vision has come through a disquieting year, primarily because of LBS requiring us to vacate 3 Robin Hood Lane. However, I can assure you all that SV's immediate future is looking definitely brighter and more settled. Although not yet signed and sealed, the strong likelihood of new premises and chance to move forward with development and expansion of high standard services, is very much on the cards.

Much thanks must go to all our staff, ably assisted by our team of volunteers, who have done so well in maintaining appropriate, high quality services to our service users.

The Sutton Board of Trustees, who have been diligent in planning and facilitating a smooth pathway through unavoidable changes, wish all our readers a very happy, peaceful Christmas and New Year.

Eric Kennedy
Chair of Trustees.

Meet the Trustee



Hi! I am Anthony Richman and honoured to have recently become a trustee at Sutton Vision. I am a chartered management accountant, love sports, especially following Welsh rugby. I also enjoy running and last year I ran a half marathon in the Arctic city of Tromso in Norway.

I was lucky enough to live in Hong Kong for 5 years and whilst there volunteered with an international children's charity operating in Mongolia and Vietnam; involving hospitals, schools, and shelters. I also helped other charities during my time in Hong Kong and learnt a lot about the charity sector finances and fund raising.

Most of my career has been working for small businesses in a finance or commercial role. When I moved to Hong Kong, I set up my own business consulting for small businesses as a part time Finance Director. I was lucky enough to find interesting clients across many different industries and I still run the business, now based in Teddington.

I started volunteering with Sutton Vision in May 2018. The induction process was very professional and enlightening. I was born with an obstruction in my right eye, which means I have low vision in that eye but I have normal sight carried by my good eye. I was keen to work with a charity in VI and after some research I approached Sutton Vision.

Since my time with Sutton Vision I have concentrated on fund raising opportunities. I really enjoy working with the office team and trustees and I am confident that together we can have great fundraising success. I am currently working on several grant applications to help expand the fantastic work of Sutton Vision.

QUIZ

Test Your Knowledge!

1. Which two of Father Christmas's reindeers are named after meteorological terms?
2. Who, from his cave, can hear the noisy Christmas festivities that take place in Whoville?
3. In the poem 'The Night Before Christmas', visions of what danced in children's heads?
4. The American states of Georgia, Arizona, and Indiana all have towns that share which same Christmassy name?
5. Popular in Victorian England at Christmas and also appearing in the Dickens' story A Christmas Carol, what is 'Smoking Bishop'?
6. In the 1947 Christmas comedy-drama Miracle on 34th Street, which actress plays the little girl brought up not to believe in Santa Claus?
7. 'Driving Home for Christmas' was used in Christmas commercials for which supermarket chain in 1997, 1998, and 2011?
8. Christmas Island, a territory of the Commonwealth of Australia, is located in which ocean?
9. Which novelty Christmas song was written in 1944 by New York music teacher Donald Yetter Gardner?
10. Which country was the first to use the tradition of the Christmas tree?

Answers on page 11

GLFB - Rebranding



The Vision Foundation has been supporting and speaking out on behalf of blind and partially sighted

people across London for close to 100 years. Formerly known as the Greater London Fund for the Blind, the charity supports organisations that provide a necessary lifeline and essential resource for London's visually impaired community. The Vision Foundation focuses on transforming lives and saving sight by working in partnership with others to deliver projects which inform, empower, and include blind and partially sighted people.

Article/blog post about changing name and new strategy:

The Vision Foundation has achieved a lot since it was formed in 1921, But 98 years after we were founded alarmingly more people than ever before are needlessly going blind and the life experiences of blind and partially sighted people in the capital are deteriorating. We are needed now more than ever.

A new name

London's visually impaired community have overwhelmingly told us we need a name that better reflects modern values. The name Greater London Fund for the Blind has served us well, but we believe the Vision Foundation better reflects who we are, our values and what we do.

A new approach

But we're not just changing our name. We want to do more for more people. Sight loss is a growing problem. There are more than 200,000 people in London living with sight loss today, and 680,000 (1 in 12) adults are living with a sight threatening conditions.

We plan to open up London's cultural, social and economic opportunities to all blind and partially sighted people and celebrate and champion London's visually impaired talent.

But we also want to expose and address some of the darker truths around sight loss – including the exclusion, abuse and loneliness; and by working hard in at-risk communities, we will start to prevent the avoidable but irreversible sight loss still occurring each day.

A new point of view

We're modernising the way we work and stopping some fundraising activities, such as year-round public cash collections and door-to door fundraising, and developing others to better support this approach. Our much-loved charity shops will have a new look and continue to generate vital funds and keep the Vision Foundation's name on London's streets.

We want to make London a shining example of a sight loss aware city. So, if you have supported us before, please continue with us on this journey. If you are new to our work, please consider giving or getting involved, however you can. And if you are already working in sight loss and have an idea for a brilliant project, we'd love to make it happen.

Sutton Vision Premises

The London Borough of Sutton has taken up its option of terminating its lease agreement with Sutton Vision. Sutton Vision is requested to vacate 3 Robin Hood Lane by the end of January 2020. Apparently, the building is to be restored to a school. Over the months, the London Borough of Sutton have been supporting Sutton Vision in sourcing alternative accommodation.

A potential site has been identified, 1 and 2 Lover Square (formally the home of Age UK Sutton), the premises are located near the library, college and Civic offices.

We have been in negotiations and plan to be in our new premises by the end of January 2020.

We will keep you updated with more information once negotiations have been completed.

Jacqui Thomas, Sutton Vision Development Manager

Go Sutton feedback

Hello, My name is Joan and I am a volunteer at Sutton Vision. I thought I would share my experience with travelling on GoSutton with you, I started using the service some months ago and I have found it very useful. I book the transport via an app on my smart phone. However, those of you who are unable to do this can ring them on 01903924259, Invariably it takes about ten minutes for the van to turn up at the location, usually about two hundred meters from where it was requested. During peak times it can take thirty minutes for the bus to come. Before I could use the service, I had to set up an account by registering via the app. The service is free for those who have a Freedom Pass, otherwise you need to register with a credit card. I had a few problems at first, mainly because I did not know the names of the roads/location, where I needed to wait for the van. But I persevered, and it has been well worth it. The drivers are very pleasant and helpful and it has saved me on journey times especially where I needed to take two buses to get to my destination. Currently the service is on trial due to end in May2020. However, there is a petition to extend the service and keep it permanently. I do hope you find GoSutton useful during the coming winter months.



Christmas Is Coming!

Yes, it's that time of year when our thoughts turn to planning our Christmas activities! As part of the celebration we have booked a table at The Spaghetti Tree Restaurant, Sutton on **Thursday 12th December 2019** at lunchtime, time to be confirmed. Places are limited and we are still waiting for details regarding the cost but if you would like to register your interest or book a place please get in touch with us by telephoning 020 8409 7166 or e-mail info@suttonvision.org.uk.

Coffee Raisin Pudding



Ingredients

- 4 oz butter
- 4 oz castor sugar
- 2 eggs
- 6 oz self raising flour
- 3 oz stoned raisins (I used sultanas)
- 3 tablespoons coffee essence
- 1 tablespoon milk.

Method:

1. Cream butter and sugar together until soft and light.
2. Gradually add beaten eggs to the butter mixture - add a tablespoon of flour if the mixture appears to be curdling.
3. Fold in the remainder of the flour, raisins or sultanas, coffee essence and milk.
4. Turn into greased pudding basin (one and a half pint). Cover with greaseproof paper and foil. (I used an elastic band to secure the cover).
5. Steam over boiling water for one and a half hours.

This makes a nice alternative to Christmas pudding. I made it last year and we had it on Christmas Day.

To serve with this pudding:

Creamy Cognac Ice - Cream

600 ml creme Freshe.

6 oz icing sugar

4 tablespoons cognac.

Sift icing sugar into a large bowl. add creme fresh and cognac and whisk well, continuing to whisk until the mixture thickens slightly.

pour the mixture into a baking paper lined loaf tin, cover with cling film and freeze overnight.

A great Christmas Pudding accompaniment. I know, because I've made it.

Mary Phillips

How Technology Is Transforming The Way Visual Impairment Is Treated

Historically, visual impairments have been treated with walking canes and personal coping methods such as echolocation. But with the great advances in technology in the last 50 years or so, a variety of new and exciting treatments have been developed.

Bionic eyes are now a genuinely viable method of treating visual impairment.

Bionic eyes have their roots in experiments performed at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, in which a biomedical engineer named Mark Humayun stimulated the retinas of blind people with electricity.

The experiment resulted in the patients perceiving spots of light known as phosphenes. Fast forward to 2002, and Humayan and his team had created a bionic eye capable of being implanted in a living person.

The team trialled the devices in a number of patients with complete or near-complete blindness in a single eye. Patients reported perceiving phosphenes, shapes, and directional movement. This paved the way for the device's next prototype, the Argus II, to be rolled out to around 300 people worldwide. The Argus II is attached in a simple surgical procedure and the individual undergoes training to help them use the device better. For instance, the built-in camera does not track the eye's movement, so the user has to move their head to perceive something. While the visuals offered by bionic eyes are currently limited, a number of biotechnology companies are working on more advanced devices for public sale.

Target specific visual mutations with gene therapy

In simple terms, gene therapy is a method of manipulating genes (that is, the body's genetic building blocks) through the introduction of viruses in order to prevent visual impairment developing.

The eyes are a particularly good area for gene therapy because they are relatively isolated from the rest of the body.

Consequently, viruses that move genes into the retina's cells cannot move to other areas of the body.

Eyes also have immune privilege, meaning they can tolerate the introduction of inflammatory chemicals known as antigens. As a result, the eye's immune system does not react as strongly against gene therapy's viruses.

In one experiment, researchers used gene therapy to treat patients with Leber congenital amaurosis (LCA), an inherited eye disorder that impacts the retina. The treatment was successful, and a further experiment was conducted on individuals suffering from a mutation of the condition.

While these experiments were successful, gene therapy does have its limitations. Over 250 different genes can be responsible for visual impairment. Each one of these genes can be impacted by different mutations that cause blindness.

Consequently, the number of potential targets for treatment is huge — there are just too many causes to create a gene therapy for. However, researchers are still striving to find a solution to this.



Test Your Knowledge – Answers

1. Donner and Blitzen (the names mean 'thunder' and 'lightning' in German)
2. The Grinch (from How the Grinch Stole Christmas!, a children's book by Dr. Seuss)
3. Sugar Plums
4. Santa Claus
5. A type of mulled wine
6. Natalie Wood
7. Iceland
8. Indian Ocean
9. All I Want for Christmas Is My Two Front Teeth
10. Germany

Our Activities & Groups

EVENT	DATE	TIME
Christmas Party	Thursday 19 th December	13:00-16:00
Music Group	Thursday 19 th December Thursday 16 th January (TBC) Thursday 20 th February	11:30-13:30
Tech Talk	Thursday 23 rd January (TBC) Thursday 27 th February	10:00- 12:00
Social Eyes	Thursday 19 th December	14:00-16:00
Scrabble	Monday 9 th December Monday 13 th & 27 th January (TBC)	14:00- 16:30
Singing (NEW)	Wednesday 29 th January (TBC)	10:30-12:00
Arts & Craft (NEW)	Wednesday 11 th December Wednesday 29 th January (TBC)	10:30- 12:30

Our singing group and arts and crafts group has had a successful start. From card making, knitting, painting and in the next few months we will be preparing Christmas decorations.

We will also be arranging a games morning to consist of Dominos, Crosswords, Word search's, Monopoly & Cluedo, if you have any interest of attending any of the sessions and joining our groups please contact Sutton Vision 020 8409 7166 spaces are limited and on a first come first serve basis so be quick.

Sunflower Lanyard



If you've ever been out and about, either in the supermarket, on public transport or even at the airport and have seen someone wear a sunflower lanyard, then it could mean more than you think.

What are sunflowers lanyards?

It's not always easy for those with disabilities that aren't visible to ask for help, with some feeling that they'll be judged if they ask for help or finding it frustrating trying to explain symptoms that can't be seen to others.

However, a scheme - which is supported by charities including RNIB, Alzheimer's Society, The National Autistic Society and Action on Hearing Loss - has now been introduced where sunflower lanyards can let others know if you have hidden disabilities.

These lanyards are bright green in colour and decorated with a sunflower design.

Gatwick airport first introduced the lanyards in 2016, with nine other airports across the UK having also welcomed the scheme since then. Manchester airport has also recently opened a new Sunflower Room, which allows passengers to have some time away from the busy departure lounges if needed.

After the success of sunflower lanyards in UK airports, other transport providers and supermarkets are also getting involved in the scheme. Sainsbury's and Tesco are currently trialling the sunflower scheme in a number of their stores.

The Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) said, “If you have a disability that may not be immediately obvious but would appreciate support from staff in airports or supermarkets, then you may be interested to know there is a lanyard you can wear to signal this.

“The lanyard, which is entirely voluntary for people with hidden disabilities and their families, acts as a discreet sign for staff that additional support or help may be required.”

How do I get one?

RNIB explains that “if you’re due to fly from a major UK airport, you should be able to ask for a lanyard from an airport assistance desk, or order it in advance, depending on your chosen airport. Find out more about the best way of getting the lanyard by contacting the airport before you travel.

“And if you happen to shop in any of the Sainsbury’s or Tesco stores running the trial, you can request the lanyard at the customer service desk of larger stores or the checkout at smaller ones.”

By Helen Johnson

Digital Journalist

The Mayor’s Chosen Charity Events

EVENT	VENUE	DATE & TIME
Christmas Carol Service	All Saints Church, SM5 3PD	Friday 13 th December- 7:30pm
Cllr Richard Cliftons Carol	St Nicholas Centre, Sutton	Saturday 14 th December 1-2pm
Cllr Richard Cliftons Carol	St Nicholas Centre, Sutton	Saturday 21 st December 1-2pm

Cat Adventures- Part Two

Now then, where were we up to in my cat story: - if you wish to re-cap, read part one in previous issue: But to continue:-

It's six in the morning and Smoky has come in after her night of adventures. Relief to the both of us! But it's a nice fresh morning and I choose to leave my bedroom window open whilst I go downstairs to make myself a cup of tea and start my day. Note this as it is an important piece of info! So, time moves on and I begin to plan to go into town and get my hair done as it is badly in need of cutting. I'm just contemplating this when I hear something of a racket upstairs. What is going on here, I wonder? And upstairs I go to investigate. Well, I get near to her, and to my absolute amazement and shock, she starts hissing and growling at me, something she has never ever done - In a firm voice I say, "Smoky stop that," and I walk away, a little concerned something might have happened outside to upset her, but wanting to get on with my day anyway.

As planned, I pop into town and on my return home my guide dog, Dotty is pleased to see me, but there appears to be no sign of Smoky for the moment. With my newfound confidence in her outdoor escapades, I think, no worries, she will turn up soon.

A little while later, I go upstairs, when again I come across Smokey, and it seems she is still in a strop, because she again starts growling and hissing at me this is so out of character for her, that I am now really concerned that she might be hurt. I want to examine her, but she just won't let me near her, in fact she actually starts going for me. Well, since I'm not yet planning to lose any limbs or have them scratched to pieces, I withdraw and I reckon I am going to have to get this cat to the vet, if I can coax her into her carrier. I inch tentatively past her to go and get it - phew! I make it without a further attack and, having retrieved it, I pop it on my bed, covering the inside with 'Dreamies' and cat treats. "Kitty Kitty Kitty," I coax, in a high-pitched sweet voice, but all I get in response is more snarling and hissing!

I'm remembering the James Herriot stories where he wraps cats in blankets to try and stop them scratching him, and I'm just thinking that this is what I'm probably going to have to do, when, oddly, Smoky starts pacing back and forth along my windowsill!

Why would she do that? it is as if she feels trapped - desperate to get out! ...And then, all in a flash, a dawning begins to happen in my mind. The snarling, the hissing, the out of character behaviour, this isn't my Smoky at all! It is a different cat! of course it wants to get out through this window, because that is the way it came in!! It followed my girl home this morning! Well! I can't believe I didn't work it out sooner! But I've sussed it now but I have to be absolutely sure of course, so I leave my bedroom, close the door on the snarling animal on my windowsill and call my Smokes.

Luckily enough, she happens to be indoors and with a little plaintive meow, as if to say "sorry mum, I thought he was a nice boy"!! She jumps into my arms. Well, with no further ado, I dash back into my bedroom and let the impostor out!!

All is well that ends well – neither of my animals is harmed, but my Smoky now has a bell on her collar so that I can identify her easily. She is not terribly impressed with it, but then ... I can't say I was not overly impressed with her choice in male mates she has brought home either!!

And there's another thing, thank goodness I had her spayed when I did - Life in my house could've been very interesting in the next couple of months had I not!!

--

By Erica Grimsey

Logic will get you from A to B, imagination will take you Everywhere! - Albert Einstein



Useful Telephone Numbers

The following list of useful numbers includes an emergency number for the London Borough of Sutton and St Helier Hospital Eye Unit.

Advice Link Partnership Sutton (ALPS)	020 8254 2616
Age UK (Sutton)	020 8770 4090
Friendly Club	020 8669 4106
London Borough of Sutton	020 8770 5000
L B of Sutton Referral Point	020 8770 4565
Macular Society (National)	01264 350 551
Macular Society (Sutton)	07970 525 143
RNIB Helpline	0303 123 9999
St Helier Hosp Eye Unit	020 8296 3800
St Helier Hosp Eye Unit EMERGENCY	020 8296 3817
Sight Loss Advisor Ann Ryan	07920 650 613
Sutton Carers Centre	020 8296 5611
Sutton Talking Newspaper	020 3759 6679
Sutton South Hello	07790 031 764