

**Sutton Vision**  
Enabling and Empowering

# CONTACT

*Issue 77*



*Photo by Vicky Blencowe @VI\_VickyPhoto*

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**Commented [DC1]:** I don't think we need to include this in the contents with a page number as it is just on the back cover.

## Message from our Chair, Michael Parsons

Welcome to the Spring edition of CONTACT!

In December, with support from the National Lottery Community Fund, we were delighted to launch our newly refurbished Technology and Resource Hub (due to COVID restrictions we were limited in the number of attendees). As part of the launch, we were pleased to welcome The Worshipful the Mayor of the London Borough of Sutton, Councillor Trish Fivey.



The Technology and Resource Hub is now open, so I encourage everyone to come and look at equipment such as phones and tablets that can be adapted for those living with sight loss. Our Assistive Technology Coordinator Vicky can help with setting up your phones, tablets or computers, just email her at [Vicky.blencowe@suttonvision.org.uk](mailto:Vicky.blencowe@suttonvision.org.uk) or come along to one of our tech talks/socials.

As usual, comments and contributions to CONTACT magazine from the Sutton Vision

community and partners are always welcome and may be sent to our Editor at [editor@suttonvision.org.uk](mailto:editor@suttonvision.org.uk).

**GO PAPERLESS, GO GREEN!**

If you would like to switch to an email edition of CONTACT, please let us know by sending an email request to [info@suttonvision.org.uk](mailto:info@suttonvision.org.uk)

Please enjoy our 77<sup>th</sup> Edition.

## Meet our new General Operations Manager, Denise Crone



We're very pleased to announce the appointment of General Operations Manager, Denise Crone. Denise joined Sutton Vision in January 2022 and will lead the charity at a very exciting phase of its history.

Following on from our news in previous editions of Contact, Denise will be overseeing the implementation of the National Lottery Community Fund project, that will see Sutton Vision increasing its reach into the community, with outreach and assisted technology sessions, amongst other work.

She has worked in health and social care for most of her career, spending time at both national and local charities as well as the NHS, in roles as diverse as managing and developing information, support, education and training services for people with long term health conditions and people living with cancer.

Denise joins us from LEAH, a Kingston based charity offering 1:1 and group learning for refugees and migrants where she was Operations Manager.

## Low Vision Clinic

Sutton Vision, in partnership with NHS, runs a fortnightly Community Low Vision Clinic at our premises in Sutton.

You will have an assessment with our Optometrist to find solutions and establish which magnifying devices (if any) and other equipment will be most helpful.

Any equipment prescribed by our optometrist will be on a long-term loan basis. A specialist rehabilitation officer from the Sensory Impairment Team will be available to give advice on your everyday needs, difficulties and discuss your goals.

This service is available to people who have been diagnosed with low vision (a sight problem which is not correctable by spectacles), who live in the London Borough of Sutton and who are not already using the Low Vision Clinic at St Helier Hospital.

Our Low Vision Clinics are by appointment only. To book an appointment or ask any questions about the Low Vision Service, please contact Vanessa on 020 8409 7166 or [vanessavalentine@suttonvision.org.uk](mailto:vanessavalentine@suttonvision.org.uk)

## Sight Loss Advice at St Helier Hospital

Ann Ryan, Sight Loss Adviser is available to provide advice, information and support, which is right for you, when attending St Helier Hospital for Eye Unit appointments.

Please note, mask wearing is still in place in clinic.

If you have any questions or queries, please contact Ann Ryan on 07920 650 613 or [annmarie.ryan1@nhs.net](mailto:annmarie.ryan1@nhs.net)

## Product Awareness Demonstration Day

Sight and Sound Technology will be holding a Product Awareness Demonstration Day here at the Sutton Vision offices on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2022, running from 10am – 2.30 pm.

Sight and Sound Technology manufacture and sell low vision aids to enhance reading. They provide a range of video magnifiers, Braille products, scan and reading machines, mobile phone solutions and accessible software for people with sight problems.

If you are interested in attending, please telephone Vanessa on 020 8409 7166 or e-mail [vanessavalentine@suttonvision.org.uk](mailto:vanessavalentine@suttonvision.org.uk) to book a slot.

## Save the date – Queen’s Platinum Jubilee celebrations

We will be holding a celebration to mark the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> June around 2pm. This is for volunteers and service users alike and we will confirm more details nearer the time.

## New Charles Bonnet group at Sutton Vision

We’re running a support group for those affected by Charles Bonnet Syndrome, family members and carers, starting on the 24<sup>th</sup> March.

The visual hallucinations caused by CBS can vary and can range from simple shapes and dots of colours, simple patterns, straight lines or a network of branches, to detailed pictures of people, animals, insects, landscapes and buildings.

This is an opportunity to meet with others in a similar position and hear about the strategies used by group members to manage their visual hallucinations caused by living with sight loss.

If you would like further information or to register your interest, call Terry Rocks on 020 8409 7166 or [terryrocks@suttonvision.org.uk](mailto:terryrocks@suttonvision.org.uk).

## Have fun on the move

We all know that exercise benefits both physical and mental health, but it doesn't have to be a task! There are lots of ways to keep active that can be fun.

There's a wide range of sports made accessible for those with sight impairment with charities including Metro Blind Sport and British Blind Sport. The sports they support are as varied as archery, climbing, equestrian and powerlifting. You can see these sports in action on their YouTube channels at [youtube.com/BritishBlindSportOrgUK](https://www.youtube.com/BritishBlindSportOrgUK) and [youtube.com/MetroBlindSport](https://www.youtube.com/MetroBlindSport). Closer to home, Merton Sports & Social Club offers bowls, swimming, tandem rides and sound-ball tennis to get you active. You can find out more at [www.mssc.org.uk](http://www.mssc.org.uk).

One person who knows all about the benefits of these sports is Tracy Compton, she is the current B1 Tennis Doubles champion with her partner Roy Turnham after their victory at the LTA Visually Impaired National Competition in Wrexham.

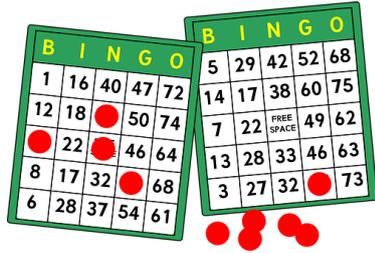
It wasn't a straightforward win for Tracy as she says she was 'double faulting all over the place' but her win followed a regain of belief in herself. You don't have to be a champion for sports to help with your life, she says sport has helped her with 'her confidence and isolation issues'. She says even if you have reservations, 'go and have a try', adding that Visually Impaired sports are very 'accommodating with peer support'.

The experiences Tracy linked into 'day to day life skills', helping with 'problem solving...as well as opening the doors' for other experiences, such as 'meeting new people' and encouraged her to travel to venues. Tennis wasn't part of the plan for Tracy after a negative experience at school, but encouragement from a fellow player at a taster session made the difference and the rest, as they say, is history.

If you feel like you'd like to get active or try something new for 2022, have a look at our 'New for Sutton Vision' activities.

## New for Sutton Vision

- Bingo – VI Bingo, starting on Wednesday 6th April, 1.30pm-3.30pm at Sutton Vision's offices.



- Working Age Social - starting on Thursday 28 April, 4-7pm at Tiempo Lounge, Sutton High Street. You can join like minded VI people in our working age group for a chat and a drink.
- Exercise groups and park walks - If you'd like to feel the benefits of being more active, we'll be running our exercise groups starting in the early Summer and in collaboration with Volunteer Centre Sutton, local park walks, with participants buddied up with sighted guides.



- And lastly...we're launching our Garden Project, working along with Orchard Hill students, to provide a sensory shared space for users of both to enjoy. If you are interested in volunteering some hours or service users who would like to participate, then please get in touch!

If you want to find out more or get involved, please call Amanda 0208 409 7166 for more details.

## Social Groups & Activities: April, May & June

Here are the dates and times of Sutton Vision's upcoming activities, all held at our premises at 3 Robin Hood Lane, Sutton. If you would like more information or to book a place, please call Amanda on 020 8409 7166.

The activities and events are free of charge, though donations are welcome.

We are still taking every care to make sure everyone is safe on their visit to Sutton Vision premises. Please make sure you sanitise your hands on arrival and wear a mask until seated.

### SV COFFEE MORNING

Monday 4th April 10am – 12pm

Monday 2nd May 10am – 12pm

Monday 6th June 10am – 12pm





## ART & CRAFT

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> April 1pm - 3pm

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> May 1pm – 3pm

Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> June 1pm - 3pm



## TECH TALK

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> April 1pm - 3pm

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> May 1pm - 3pm

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> June 1pm - 3pm



## TECH SOCIAL

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> April 1pm - 3pm

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> May 1pm - 3pm

Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1pm - 3pm



## LUNCHTIME QUIZ

Monday 18th April – closed for Easter

Monday 16th May 12 – 2pm

Monday 20th June 12 – 2pm



YOUNG VI GROUP – VI\_ABLE

Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> April 12-2pm

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> May 12-2pm

Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June 12-2pm



If you would like more information or to book a place,  
please call Amanda 0208 409 7166.

## VI Leisure Group (VILG)

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.

They are peer led and always welcome new ideas for groups so if you have any suggestions or are interested in finding out more, please contact Sue Christie on 07891 783291 or e-mail [susanannchristie@gmail.com](mailto:susanannchristie@gmail.com).

Event	Date	Venue
VI Leisure Group Coffee Morning Waterstones	1 <sup>st</sup> Friday of each month from 10.30 a.m.	Waterstones Book Shop, High Street, Sutton
VI Leisure Group Book Club	4 <sup>th</sup> Monday of each month from 10.30 a.m. From end of March	Waterstones Book Shop, High Street, Sutton
VI Leisure Group Lunch Prince of Wales Pub	3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month from 12.00 noon	The Prince of Wales, 28 Malden Road, Cheam
VI Leisure Group The Hope Pub	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday of each month from 12.30pm	The Hope Pub, 48 West Street, Carshalton

## Great days out with VI in mind

### Sensory Tours at Kew Gardens

Kew Gardens are offering this free sensory experience, especially designed for visually impaired visitors. This gives you the chance to explore the Gardens through touch and smell and includes free entry. Tours start from Victoria Gate and run once a month until October.

You can find out more at [discovery@kew.org](mailto:discovery@kew.org) and to book a place on the tours.

### Experience Whitehall Historic House through audio description with their brand-new guide

Explore the fascinating Grade II listed Whitehall Historic House in Cheam, Sutton, with this comprehensive audio-descriptive guide, co-designed with Vocal Eyes (and tested by volunteers and staff from Sutton Vision!) for visitors with visual impairments.

Ask a member of staff or a volunteer at our front desk at Whitehall or visit their website: [whitehallmuseum.wordpress.com/accessibility](http://whitehallmuseum.wordpress.com/accessibility)

### Consider a £15 'Access Card' to get support more easily

This card ([accesscard.org.uk](http://accesscard.org.uk)) enables you to show that you require special assistance or reasonable adjustments at venues or when dealing with service providers. It costs £15 for three years and while not necessary, it can make getting assistance a lot easier.

To apply, you'll need to fill in a form and provide evidence of your disability.

### Get 'free' cinema tickets for friends/carers

The CEA card ([www.ceacard.org.uk](http://www.ceacard.org.uk)) developed by the UK Cinema Association gets you a free ticket for someone to accompany you when you visit the cinema and pay full price yourself. You'll need to pay £6 for the card, which lasts for a year. CEA says about 90% of cinemas accept the card.

## Easy Creamy Chicken Pie Recipe

This Contact's recipe comes from the wonderful Harriet Smith and her blog Harriet's Blind Kitchen. The aim of her blog is to post simple, healthy recipes with up to five ingredients that visually impaired people can cook easily.



Below is her Easy Creamy Chicken Pie, adapted from the BBC Good Food blog. [www.bbc.co.uk/food](http://www.bbc.co.uk/food)

This is a delicious recipe for a light version of a chicken pie made using filo pastry. The sauce is also simple to make as it only has three ingredients: flour, creme fraiche and mushrooms. Mushrooms are high in protein and help to prevent heart disease. They also contain soluble fibre, which aids in the smooth digestion of food. The recipe is adapted from [www.bbc.co.uk/food](http://www.bbc.co.uk/food)

Serves 4

### **Ingredients**

1 tablespoon sunflower oil

3 boneless, skinless chicken breasts cut into roughly 2 centimetre chunks or a packet of chicken chunks

1 finely chopped onion or ready-chopped frozen onion

300g chestnut mushrooms, cut into quarters

4 teaspoons plain flour

1 garlic clove, crushed or garlic in a jar

1 teaspoon parsley (dry or fresh)

400ml chicken stock or 1 stock cube

4 tablespoons creme fraiche

2 sheets filo pastry

85g black pepper

## Method

1. Preheat the oven to 220C/Gas Mark 7.
2. Brush a large, deep non-stick frying pan with a little of the oil and place over a high heat. Add the chicken pieces, season with freshly ground black pepper and stir for 7 minutes over a high heat, or until lightly coloured on all sides. Transfer to a plate.
3. Return the pan to the heat, brush with a little more oil. Fry the onion and mushrooms over a high heat for about 5 minutes, or until lightly browned.
4. Sprinkle over the flour, garlic and parsley and stir well. Gradually add the stock, a little at a time, stirring constantly until the sauce is thickened.
5. Stir in the creme fraiche and return the chicken to the pan. Adjust the seasoning to taste and spoon into a warmed 1 litre pie dish.
6. Cut each pastry sheet into three strips and brush lightly with the remaining sunflower oil (using a pastry brush, you do not have to be too exact with this). Scrunch each sheet loosely and gently place on top of the pie filling so that all the chicken is covered with the crumpled filo pastry. Bake on a baking tray in the centre of the oven for 10-12 minutes, or until the pastry is golden brown and the filling is bubbling.
7. Serve immediately with vegetables of your choice.

## Money saving tips

With the rising living costs, including energy and petrol, it's even more important than ever to make money savings. The list below shows a great range of tips from Martin Lewis and [moneysavingexpert.com](http://moneysavingexpert.com) to help you make the most of your income and find out what you may be entitled to.

If you would like any support in making a claim for schemes or discounts then please contact our Outreach Officer, Terry Rocks at [terry.rocks@suttonvision.org.uk](mailto:terry.rocks@suttonvision.org.uk)

**Gov.uk** - Offers advice on both the Blue Badge Scheme and vehicle tax exemption and reduction and the eligibility for this.

The Blue Badge parking scheme provides a range of parking benefits for disabled people with severe walking difficulties as drivers or passengers. Motability Scheme can help you with leasing a car, powered wheelchair or scooter and vehicle tax exemption and reduction of 50% apply if you receive certain levels of PIP and DLA. More details can be found at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

**Theatres** - Theatres often offer an extra ticket for those with a visual impairment, to bring a companion. They also offer Audio Described performances of their play to make them accessible to all. You can find out more on Delfont Mackintosh at [www.delfontmackintosh.co.uk/accessibility](http://www.delfontmackintosh.co.uk/accessibility)

**Community and public transport** - Your local council may operate dial-a-ride or taxi schemes, for example, using vouchers or tokens. You may also be eligible for a bus pass, a Disabled Persons Railcard or both.

**Council tax discount** - You may be able to get money off your council tax bill if you qualify for the 'disabled band reduction scheme'. It's designed to stop disabled people paying higher council tax simply because they've had to live in a larger house than they would've done otherwise. Check your local council website to find out more.

**Free boiler or contributing towards the cost** - You are likely to be eligible for help if you receive the Warm Home Discount, or certain other types of benefits (including Disability Living Allowance). For further information on the scheme, contact Simple Energy Advice - 0800 444 202

**Energy and water** - WaterSure is designed to help people struggling with their water bills. You also need to be on a water meter (or be waiting to have one installed). The scheme caps your water bill, you'll simply pay for what you use. Eligibility for the scheme depends on your supplier and you need to apply for the scheme via your water supplier.

The Warm Home Discount scheme requires big suppliers to help vulnerable customers in England, Scotland and Wales to pay for energy. Those who are eligible are able to get a £140 rebate on energy bills between September and March. If you're disabled and on certain benefits, you may be eligible for the scheme. Call the Warm Home Discount helpline on 0800 731 0214.

If you have a disability that makes travelling by train difficult, you may qualify for a Disabled Person's Railcard ([disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk](http://disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk)). It's £20 for one year, or £54 for three years and gets you one-third off most train travel. Even better, if you travel with another adult, they'll also get one-third off their ticket.

**Blind person's tax allowance** - You can get an extra amount of tax-free allowance (on top of your personal allowance), which means you can earn more before you start paying income tax. It's currently £2,500 – regardless of your age or income. You'll need to [contact HM Revenue & Customs](#) to claim the allowance.

**Technology** - If you are blind or severely sight-impaired (or someone you live with is), you can get 50% off the cost of a TV licence, making it £78.75. Details on how to apply for the discount are available at [tvlicensing.co.uk](http://tvlicensing.co.uk)

**More tips can be found at:** [moneysavingexpert.com/family/consumer-rights-and-moneysaving-for-disabled-people](http://moneysavingexpert.com/family/consumer-rights-and-moneysaving-for-disabled-people)

## Great Help for Eye Testing

**Shirley and Mick Mitchell, as a result, have tried at home eye tests. They've shared their experience for CONTACT below:**

**Due** to medical reasons, we have had to be in lockdown for nearly two years.

It worried us that we had not had an eye test with an optician for over three years, even with the eye unit appointments, hopefully, coming up. We tried asking our normal optician if they could help in any way but, unfortunately, they were not at all helpful or concerned.

We had seen the advertisement for Specsavers' home visits and we rang the Sutton store, who put us in touch with their domiciliary care.

They could not have been more helpful, explaining they were 'London 4 Domiciliary Specsavers Ltd', offering the service across the country since 2013 and fully funded by the NHS.

We were booked for a home visit for the following week, the only requirement is you must have a need for this service in your home. When they arrived, the whole set-up was very professional. Staff were completely in PPE, with everything they needed coming in specially designed boxes and they set up in our dining room like a normal consultation room.

The test was the same as you would normally get in the store, but with lots of questions about your care and sight, which often does not happen on a shop check-up.

Once the tests were completed, we were shown new frames from a large selection brought with them in specially prepared cantilever cases. The opticians help with the choice, with ideas and suggestions to suit your needs, with the benefit of lots of the information given to us, which had never been explained before.

Once we had chosen, all measurements were taken and the information put into their laptop and we received a printed copy. We were told when the glasses were ready, they would be brought and fitted at our home. Following this, we would be added to their books for any further help we may need.

**Commented [DC2]:** Doesn't make sense here. Maybe add they have been in lockdown for nearly 2 years and have not been able to go to the opticians so, as a result have tried home eye tests.

**Commented [DC3]:** Then this sentence can come out

We have now received our new glasses, that are very smart and, hopefully, will help our vision a little. The young lady who delivered these was helpful and ensured they fitted well.

If you feel this service could be of help to you, you can contact them on 0808 239 9448 or if tech is your remit, you can book online at:

[www.specsavers.co.uk/home-eye-tests](http://www.specsavers.co.uk/home-eye-tests)

We definitely think it's a much more worthwhile way of having your glasses checked within your own home and much more personal.

**Shirley and Mick Mitchell - Volunteers for Sutton Vision**

# Crossword

1		2		3	4		5		6		7	
8												
					9							
10												
										11		12
13						14						
					15							
16								17				
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	19		20				21					
22												
								23				
24												

## CLUES:

### ACROSS

3. Very valuable (9)
8. System of Hindu philosophy (4)
9. Wine producing region of France (8)
10. American aviator, \_\_\_\_\_ Earhart
13. Animal related to a giraffe (5)
14. Track beside a canal (7)
15. Debtor's note (1,1,1)
16. Unfortunate (7)
17. Great strength (5)
21. Commonwealth country, \_\_\_\_\_ Leone
22. English architect (4,4)
23. Provide money (4)
24. Maintains (9)

**Commented [DC4]:** Add number of letters (6)

**Commented [DC5]:** Add number of letters (6)

**Commented [DC6]:** Replace with Formed when milk coagulates (4)

**Commented [DC7]:** Swap for Preserves (9)

### DOWN

1. Place of worship (9)
2. Pleasant (4)
4. Capital of Morocco (5)
5. Large Deer (7)
6. Told fibs (4)
7. Cigar end (4)
11. Hazardous (9)
12. Group of Scottish islands (9)
14. Object to play with (3)
15. Japanese flower arranging (7)
18. Pale with shock (5)
19. Actress, \_\_\_\_\_ Bryan
20. Soon (4)

## Sutton Vision Quiz

1. In which part of your body would you find the cruciate ligament?
2. What is the name of the 1976 film about the Watergate scandal, starring Robert Redford and Dustin Hoffman?
3. How many of Henry VIII's wives were called Catherine?
4. What was the most popular girls name in the UK in 2019?
5. In what US State is the city Nashville?
6. What is the currency of Denmark?
7. Which Tennis Grand Slam is played on a clay surface?
8. In which European country would you find the Rijksmuseum?
9. How many films have Al Pacino and Robert De Niro appeared in together?
10. What was the old name for a Snickers bar before it changed in 1990?
11. What is the smallest planet in our solar system?
12. Which legendary surrealist artist is famous for painting melting clocks?
13. Which football club plays its home games at Loftus Road?
14. What was the Turkish city of Istanbul called before 1930?
15. How many human players are there on each side in a polo match?
16. In what year did Tony Blair become British Prime Minister?
17. How many times has England won the men's football World Cup?
18. What is the capital of New Zealand?
19. Street artist Banksy is originally associated with which British city?
20. From what grain is the Japanese spirit Sake made?

**Commented [DC8]:** Can we move the second line over so it lines up with the numbers? Looks better but if it puts everything else out don't worry!!

**Commented [DC9]:** After the last question can we put a note at the bottom of the page just saying the answers to the quiz can be found on page 26 (someone complained about this before....)

## Crossword answers

### ACROSS

- 3. Priceless
- 8. Yoga
- 9. Bordeaux
- 10. Amelia
- 13. Okapi
- 14. Towpath
- 15. IOU
- 16. Unlucky
- 17. Might
- 21. Sierra
- 22. John Nash
- 23. Paid
- 24. Preserves

Commented [DC10]: Change to Curd

Commented [DC11]: Change for Maintains

### DOWN

- 1. Synagogue
- 2. Agreeable
- 4. Rabat
- 5. Caribou
- 6. Lied
- 7. Stub
- 11. Dangerous
- 12. Shetlands
- 14. Toy
- 15. Ikebana
- 18. Ashen
- 19. Dora
- 25. Anon

## Sutton Vision Quiz answers

1. Knee
2. All the President's Men
3. 3
4. Olivia
5. Tennessee
6. Krone
7. The French Open (Roland Garros)
8. Netherlands
9. Four (The Godfather Part 2, Heat, Righteous Kill, The Irishman)
10. Marathon
11. Mercury
12. Salvador Dali
13. Queen's Park Rangers
14. Constantinople
15. Four
16. 1997
17. Once (1966)
18. Wellington
19. Bristol
20. Rice

## 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
LB Sutton Referral Point	020 8770 4565
Macular Society (National)	01264 350 551
Macular Society (Sutton)	07970 525 143
Merton Sports & Social Club	020 8540 5446
RNIB Helpline	0303 123 9999
St Helier Hospital Eye Unit	020 8296 3800
St Helier Hospital Eye Unit <b>EMERGENCY</b>	020 8296 3817
Sight Loss Adviser, Ann Ryan	07920 650 613
Sutton Carers' Centre	020 8296 5611
Sutton Talking Newspaper	020 3759 6679
Sutton South Hello	07790 031 764

**Commented [DC12]:** For some reason this is the old version with the phone number. We need to put the email address in instead info@mssc.org.uk

