Below is the London NFB UK logo -it is a line drawing of the London eye with the NFB UK name as part of its spokes to support the wheel of capsules.

Dear London members,

Welcome to issue 58 of London Life. As usual this bulletin contains news about our members, activities provided by the London branch and other organisations. A huge thanks to everyone who continues to contribute to this publication. If you have any articles or would like to submit a personal story please email:london@nfb.org

Please use this email, if you would like to unsubscribe from this circulation.

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CRUISING WITH VISUALLY IMPAIRED CREW Ipswich, Suffolk

Eye Matter are delighted to offer the Living Well with Sight Loss Workshop

Eye Matter and Tideway Sailability are delighted to announce - A sailing day opportunity for Eye Matter members

Eye Matter Sports Day Saturday 3rd June

Eyes 4 Positivity

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And now for something different by Terry White

ΩOur next Technology Forum

Our second forum is on, Monday 27th March at 7pm on Zoom.

We will be discussing future collaboration with TAVIP and other organisations within this forum as well as ideas for more informal opportunities for members to become engaged with. These forums areanopportunity for members to share ideas and experiences using different technologies.

If you would like to attend please email london@nfbuk.org to receive Minutes and log in details

Next branch meeting Monday 3rd April at 7pm on Zoom

We are delighted to be joined by, Sarah Gayton, who has worked for many years on delivery of different campaigns for NFB UK.

If you would like to submit a question, to Sarah, on the subject of “what makes effective campaigning?” Please email: london@nfbuk.org

Alternatively, there will be a short time to ask questions on the evening.

TAVIP to make a presentation on Tuesday 25th April at 7pm on Zoom

We are delighted to announce, that Jeff, from TAVIP, will be making a presentation at this forum, for London Members. If you would like to register please email: london@nfbuk.org

TAVIP (Technology Association of Visually impaired people) is a lively community of blind and partially sighted people who are keen to spread the use and benefits of technology among its members and to support those members in its use.

Membership is free. To this end we have a website www.tavip.org.uk, a monthly get together over Zoom, a members’ list, for announcements, a discussion list where members can pose and get help with queries. Our website contains a training directory. In addition, we are running a pilot project on technology for work where accepted applicants receive an audit of their existing skills and training in the use of specific applications.

London is keen to share its opportunities with other NFB branches and will be hosting this event, in collaboration with our Nottingham branch.

If you would like to receive an invitation please email: london@nfbuk.org

Campaigns Forum update

On Monday 20th March, we discussed a list of potential campaigns members felt they would like to become involved with in 2023. These included: Audio description, Driverless cars, online forms and information, medicine labelling, audio on buses, storage of E:Skooters and street clutter. The Chair asked everyone to submit their three choices by email so a decision can be reached at our next meeting on Monday 17th April. Over 2023 a range of campaigning organisations and individuals will be invited to our monthly branch meetings to understand the different dynamics and strategies used in campaigning.

There is still time for you to become involved in this forum and receive our Minutes detailing the various potential campaigns .

Please email: london@nfbuk.org

We acknowledge some of these campaigns are not exclusive to London but are a concern for London members wherever they live.

Helpline for men

Thanks to Clive for sharing this information.

Following the Vision Foundation’s presentation on the Unseen report, please note: For male victims and survivors, the Mankind Initiative have a directory of services, where you can look up the details of the ones in your area. You can find it at:

https://www.mankind.org.uk/help-for-victims/directory/

Meet your friends in Eastbourne 2023

We have secured 30 rooms for London members at the Cumberland Hotel for the weekend of 6th-9th October 2023. Bookings are to be done direct with the hotel.

There are two options available:

A dinner bed and breakfast rate of £65 per person per night or Bed and breakfast rate of £55 per person per night in their standard rooms.

The sea view supplement will be £10.00 per person per night and the balcony supplement £25.00 per person per night. Anyone wishing to have a twin/double room for single occupancy there will be a supplement of £25.00 per night.

Booking information

Hotel telephone number is: 01323 730342

Please book your room type and number of nights under the name NFB for the weekend beginning 6th October 2023.

We would appreciate you dropping us a short confirmation of your booking : londoneastbourne@nfbuk.org

Help NFB UK make a difference

Following NFB UK’s meeting with the Chair of the Transport Select Committee, in Parliament, on 11th January, the committee's review of accessible public transport now covers access to use of the streets and bus stops. This falls in line with discussions with Chair Iain Stewart MP, who said he expected it would, having heard about floating bus stop issues from organisations such as NFB UK..

Now it is over to you, to respond to the members of the Government’s Transport Select Committee, who would like to hear about the barriers that people with all kinds of disabilities and accessibility needs in the UK can experience when using passenger transport. This includes buses, trains, taxis, planes, and using the streets to get around.

Please help shape and raise awareness of our specific needs by completing this short survey

https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=nt3mHDeziEC-Xo277ASzSugWXtlS9G1OpuyhNtc2h8lUM0pLWlgwOEQ5QTRWQlc1TlJEME1YWUZVVCQlQCN0PWcu&wdLOR=c4D0C452B-D8BE-4FD3-9E60-CDFD26662691

News from members

Aquobats event nine March at the Lucas Arms by Colin Palgrave

Aquobats has been around for many decades. As the name implies,it is centred around activities, in and on water! These include; swimming, canoeing and rafting. They now embrace other activities, including; bowling. walks, an annual barbecue, and of course socialising either in the pub or a meal.

Although, this evening was for our AGM, Don’t let that put you off! The AGM started at 7 o’clock and included a raffle. However, most of us were downstairs, in the bar, two hours before. Here we we could have a meal and a drink whilst catching up with friends.

The Lucas arms, kindly gave us a private meeting room upstairs. Their staff are friendly and helpful. it is a short walk from King’s Cross tube station. It was a very enjoyable evening, and I would heartily recommend trying one of their events.

In response from concerns from members regarding completing PIP forms by Christine Ward

I would advise to always approach via the RNIB WELFARE BENEFITS TEAM, who,

in my experience, the RNIB were, 10/10 supporting me when dealing with and applying to the DWP. Especially for new or additional claims. Don’t go it alone. Get the FREE help and experience advice from the RNIB.

The amazing adventures of an extraordinary VIP: Part 1.

by Fiona Musgrove

Below is a photo of Richard, standing at Land’s End, in 2022. He is wearing an RNIB t-shirt and shorts. He is standing on a cliff, overlooking the blue sea, on a bright sunny day. There is a sign behind him stating; New York 3147 miles



In considering a reasonable title for this article, for once I was confounded! Should I call him inspirational, a trail-blazer, an extraordinary VIP, whose fearless determination to not let sight-loss stop him, has and continues, to lead him into some amazing adventures> Or just Richard?. As I checked through my list of questions and Richard adjusted his Zoom background to a field of sheep to reflect where he thought I was calling from I knew this was going to be a very different interview!

So who is Richard? He repeats, chomping on his noodles, as I accidentally called earlier than agreed. He ‘s a dad of three, originially from Yorkshire but, as I found out, the previous night on a whatsapp chat, he knows London better than me.He, of course, was also the lead in a Neutragena hand cream advert, during one of his adventures; A surprising advancement for an ex-miner.

https://youtube.com/shorts/wtRTTt3iwUc?feature=share

He is, also, a qualified teacher of English as a second language, has three degrees from engineering to the arts and a certified massage therapist. Nowadays, he often appears as a Supportive Artist on film and TV with his white cane and featured roles in TV series such as Bargain Brits along with various music videos. All using his white cane. His most recent role was in a French show, called Mademoiselle Holmes, filmed inPortobello Road, Nottinghilll.

In April, he will embark on another adventure, to walk the 500mile Camino Frances pilgrim trail to the last resting place of St James in Saintiago. Richard’s route will start in France and will entail climbing over the spectacular Pyrenees Mountains into Spain. It is seen as both the most spiritual and social trail, with pilgrims receiving a certificate and clam shell, from the Catholic Church.

There are plenty of refreshment opportunities on the walk. Richard is particularly looking forward to the free wine tap at one of the monasteries on route. He will be resting overnight, in various Alberges. These are a network of pilgrim hostels, where people can sleep in communal dormitories along the Camino trail for a small price.

There are several pilgrim trails across Europe, with the longest starting in Belgium. It was important for Richard to select one of the better worn pathways as he will be using a roller-ball white cane. However, at this time of year there is often snow which is an added difficulty for someone using a roller-ball cane.

Richard is looking forward to meeting lots of fellow pilgrims along the path, which passes through a number of cities and villages along its 485 miles. He will be following in the footsteps of millions of pilgrims but very few with sightloss

The inspiration for this amazing trek began in 2021,when Richard took a train to John o’Groats at the tip of Scotland and walked the 900miles to Lamds End.

Police Scotland frequently responded to concerns about him walking on busy roads, with a white cane, which he had to do this as there were no pavements. Richard told me that one day he was unaware he was being followed by a police car as it appeared on his blindside. When they eventually stopped him and learned he was walking the 900 miles to Lands End with his roller-ball cane, they checked his identification against any missing hospital patients. However, when the Police stops became even more frequent they arranged A “Spot Richard” alert system and simply phoned him to check on his progress. When he entered England he had to again put up with a deluge of different Police enquiries.

Richard grinned, as he admitted that his journey would have been quicker if he hadn’t continued to stop[ to talk to so many people. I can vouch for his friendly nature, as originally I had allocated half an hour for the interview, but, actually ended up over four hours long !

So for this epic adventure, I asked how much luggage would he be taking?He showed me a snood, which doubles as a towel or a hat. Also, he will be bringing some pieces of clothing, a sleeping bag, washing items and, of course, a couple of power packs. He aims to keep his small Osprey back pack to a maximum weight of 5kg. Additionally, he will carry a solar panel, to keep us all updated along the route.

If you would like to know more about his adventure please contact:

Social media: Insta @RichardsBigBlindCamino

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/

If you would like to donate to his JustGiving page: https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/richardsbigblindjogl

In our next edition of London Life, we will hear about his adventures on one of the world’s busiest rivers and how taking the wrong archway, under Westminster Bridge, almost stopped his adventures short. We will also, learn about his next adventure, in September.

If you want a sneak preview watch this video:https://youtu.be/-ilX8r2uEB0

Emergency alert planned for Sunday 23rd April on all mobile phones and tablets

Thanks to Berin for bringing this to our attention.

The government are to test a national alert system to all mobile phones and tablets on Sunday 23rd April. No time has been provided.

• An audible alert will sound and the phone will also vibrate for those with hearing loss.

• It is advised you respond to this alert by following the given instructions.

• This will still be received if Location services are switched off.

Please read more here: https://www.gov.uk/alerts

News and activities from other organisations

Aquobats Sports and Social Club

Thursday30 March - Monthly Zoom social.

Join Fiona , with special music from Arthur for an hour of entertainment.

27 April Zoom social

4 May boat trip London Regatta Centre

11 May walk at Cockfosters

25 May Zoom social final one until September

10 June proposing a joint Aquobats/London Sports walk at Bexleyheath.

These dates are subject to change due to rail strikes announced nearer the time. To register your interest please email: arthur.payne@trade.gov.uk

Blind Ambition

This -organisation provides a range of on-line forums around employment and IT issues for those looking for employment and those with an interest in IT.

WAF Newsletter #9

Register for next WAF Apr 12th

The WAF Newsletter is designed to help Visually Impaired People of Working Age to find and retain jobs. We want to help them obtain the skills and confidence to move forward with their lives.

This newsletter has a variety of information and opportunities surrounding all we discussed during the WAF session as well as contact details for people involved if you need help, guidance or have any enquiries.

The Employment Webinars Series 3 - Live

Employment webinars: RNIB and Blind Ambition invite you to a series of free weekly webinars to support job seekers with sight loss. We'd like to help as many jobseekers with sight loss as we can to get to the next stage of their career. This could be finding a new role, entering employment, starting an apprenticeship, or starting up a new business. Over the next few months, we will be covering a range of topics from help with CV writing, different ways to market yourself, interview tips and much more. There are 16 sessions as part of the employment webinar programme, and you can join any or all of them:

Please email : contact@blindambition.co.ukto be placed on their mailing list.

Central London Macular Support Group

on Thursday 6th April at 6.30 to 7.30pm via phone 01264560467 pin1

Guest speaker lead injector from Moorfields at St. Georges Hospital

The Central London Macular Support Group will be the first Thursday of every month same time and same phone number also pin to enter

CRUISING WITH VISUALLY IMPAIRED CREW Ipswich, Suffolk

The EAST Anglian Sailing Trust organises 3 cruises each year offering yacht sailing

opportunities for visually impaired crew. This is our 30th year of organising cruises.

We organise three cruises each year, two weekend and one a week long. Each cruise has about 8 yachts in the fleet. Crews are a mix of visually impaired and experienced sighted crew. The VI crew are encouraged to do as much crewing as they would like. This ranges from helming their yacht to putting out the fenders, winching the ropes(sheets) to adjust the sails, galley duties, throwing ropes and anchoring.

Our cruise from Friday 12th May 6pm to Sunday 14th May at 2pm ish is aimed at VI people who have not sailed before. If possible first timers can come on a day sail.

If you think you might be interested and would like more information, please email Judith Hedges cruisingsec@e-a-s-t.org.uk or phone me 01394 272677 or 07773 684036

East Anglian Sailing Trust | Levington

www.east-anglian-sailing-trust.org.uk

Message from Judith Hedges:-

The sighted and VI crew come from all over UK and we can pick people up from Ipswich Station which comes out of Liverpool St Station or from Peterborough.

First timers do initially need to come on the short taster cruise in May or a day sail if they live near enough.

Costs are £30 per person per night.

Includes all food, marina costs, and yacht diesel.

All the yachts are skippered by volunteer yacht owners.

Vision of Adventure, Strickland gate House, 92 Strickland gate, Kendal, Cumbria LA9 4PU, United Kingdom,

07827340379

Eye Matter are delighted to offer the Living Well with Sight Loss Workshop with guest speakers and to meet and share experiences with other people in similar situations. Boost your confidence and get practical advice, information, and resources.

Transport for London Accessibility speaker, technology for life, rehab worker, ECLO, low vision advice, understanding welfare rights, sports and leisure, mental health well-being session and resource Centre with everyday gadgets.

Our free and informal Zoom based Living Well with Sight Loss course is an ideal way to help you adjust to your sight condition, increase your independence, and grow your confidence.

Through our sessions, you will find out about practical solutions and support that can help you adjust to life with sight loss. You will also have the chance to learn from each other's personal experiences and share your top tips.

May 2023

Thursday 4th May 11am to 1pm

Thursday 11th May 11am to 1pm

Thursday 18th May 11am to 1pm

Thursday 25th May 11am to 1pm

Thursday 1st June 11am to 1pm

Thursday 8th June 11am to 1pm

For more information, please contact Suzie on 07968722664 or email eyemattervi@gmail.com with the subject ‘living well with sight loss’

Eye Matter and Tideway Sailability are delighted to announce - A sailing day opportunity for Eye Matter members

On Tuesday 11th Aprilfrom 10:30am to 3:30pm with a break in the middle for a picnic Please bring your own

We have limited spaces available for this amazing opportunity,

This is on a first come, first serve basis,

after you have an acceptance email you will receive payment details,

only when we've received payment will your place be guaranteed.

Venue: Surrey Docks Watersports Centre, Greenland Dock, Rope Street, London, SE16 7SX

Meet and greet at Canada Water at 10am

Time: 10:30 - 15:30

Date: Tuesday 11th April

Cost: a sailing fee of £10

Eye Matter Sports Day Saturday 3rd June

Eye Matter is running the first Eye Matter sports day, to be held at Islington Tennis Centre and Gym and Caledonian Park.

More details to follow in next edition.

Eyes 4 Positivity

Eyes 4 Positivity will run dance classes for children and adults with sight loss, in collaboration With Rambert dance studios. The group will be called DANCE TO INSPIRE.

These Classes will be taught by experienced and qualified dance instructors. Each class will be specifically adapted for those who are living with sight loss. They will combine both ballet and contemporary dance, to encourage creative movement and improvisation.

Eyes 4 Positivity aims to provide a safe and accessible environment, for people with sight loss, to explore their creativity and express themselves through movement. The class will provide an opportunity for social interaction and help reduce social isolation.

If you are interested in supporting this GoFundMe, https://gofund.me/47453a08

Please contact Ramona : 07730410788

Web site: https://www.eyes4positivity.org/

RNIB new address

RNIB have now moved into their new address:

The Grimoldi building

154a Pentenville Road

London

N1 9JE

Transport News

Survey around Kings Cross

We have launched a consultation on proposals to improve safety for people walking and cycling around Kings Cross.

We are proposing to make changes at Kings Cross Road and Pentonville Road, including improved pedestrian crossings, cycle signals, widened pavement and a new section of bus lane. We also propose to close Northdown Street to motor traffic to and from Pentenville Road.

How do I respond to the consultation?

You can read more about the proposed changes and respond to the consultation on our website: https://haveyoursay.tfl.gov.uk/kings-cross-improvements

You need to register your email address before you can submit a response through our website. We will keep your information secure and, if you agree, we will send you updates about the scheme periodically. If you cannot submit a response online, or would prefer not to, you can do so:

By emailing haveyoursay@tfl.gov.uk

By writing by Freepost to TfL HAVE YOUR SAY

The consultation will be open for seven weeks so you can respond at any time up to 2 May 2023.

If you would like to receive information about our consultation through the post, please call us on 020 3054 0898 and quote ‘Kings Cross’ when recording your message.

In person drop in event

We will be holding a drop in event a local venue during the consultation process and we will update our website with the time and further details shortly.

This will give you an opportunity to see further information about the proposals and provide your thoughts and feedback, to allow us to consider your views.

Virtual Community Conversation

As part of our consultation, we are hosting one-on-one ‘Community Conversations’ with local people who have questions about the scheme. These conversations will last 15 minutes and are intended only for people who need to talk to us about a question they have before they can submit a response to the consultation. If you would like to take part, please see our website: https://haveyoursay.tfl.gov.uk/kings-cross-improvements

If you have any questions about the consultation, please contact us at haveyoursay@tfl.gov.uk or by calling us on 020 3054 0898 and quoting ‘King’s Cross’ when recording your message.

Yours sincerely

Fraser MacDonald

Strategic Consultations Lead

Transport for London

Rights on flights campaign

Disability Rites UK is joining TV presenter Sophie Morgan and MP Marion Fellows to demand that the Government gives the Civil Aviation Authority more powers to fine airlines and other actors who fail in their obligations to disabled travellers. Whether it's assistance not being properly provided, being left alone on aircraft long after landing, or having essential mobility equipment damaged or broken, each Disabled traveller has their own story to tell. There is still time to take action. Write to your MP and ask them to sign the letter to the Prime Minister. Over a hundred MPs have already committed to this.

For more information please click here :https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/rights-flights

And now for something different by Terry White

I had a call from a scammer the other day.

Me: “Hello.”

NOT-Microsoft support: “Hello. This is Bob Bobson from Microsoft Support. We are seeing a lot of virus activity from your device.”

Me: “Oh no. My device? Are you sure?”

NOT-Microsoft support: “Oh yes, we have many reports.”

Me: “Oh jeez. How can I fix it?”

NOT-Microsoft support: “It’s okay Sir. We can help you right now. Are you in front of your device Sir?”

Me: “Yes. I was just about to use it. I’m glad you called.”

NOT-Microsoft support: “Yes Sir, we are going to help you. Can you please push the Start button?”

Me: “I think it’s already on.”

NOT-Microsoft support: “Okay, Sir. Now you want to click on Control Panel.”

Me: “I don’t see that.”

NOT-Microsoft support: “Do you see a bunch of information above the Start button?”

Me: “Yes.”

NOT-Microsoft support: “That is your Control Panel.”

Me: “Wow, I didn’t realise it had a name.”

NOT-Microsoft support: “Yes Sir, now press on Internet Options.”

Me: “Yeah, I definitely don’t see any Internet options. I don’t think I purchased that feature. This is just a cheap one.”

NOT-Microsoft support: “They all have the Internet, Sir. Press the Start button again.”

Me: “Okay, it’s the same as before.”

NOT-Microsoft support: “That’s okay Sir. We are going to restart your device. Can you please turn it off?”

Me: “Um … I don’t know how. I’ve never turned it off. Since I bought it, it just kind of stays on all the time.”

NOT-Microsoft support: “There must be an off button on your device. How do you stop it when it’s running?”

Me: “In those cases, I usually press the big button.”

NOT-Microsoft support: “Okay sir. Please press that button.”

Me: “Okay.”

NOT-Microsoft support: “Is your device off?”

Me: “No. The door popped open.”

NOT-Microsoft support: “Door? Is there a disc inside the door?”

Me: “No, there’s a burrito.”

NOT-Microsoft support: “Why is there a burrito in your computer?”

Me: “Computer? I thought you said this was microwave support.”

Thanks for reading and supporting this publication. We look forward to receiving your contributions and meeting some of you wither virtually or physically at some of these events.

“Keep walking on sunshine”

Fiona and Jane

London NFB UK