



# Sheffield Royal Society for the Blind Rotherham Sight & Sound Cairn Home

Providing opportunity, support, friendship and services to people with sight and/or hearing loss in the Sheffield & Rotherham area, helping them to achieve whatever they wish to do and whatever they aspire to be.



Community Event in Rotherham



Trip to Yorkshire Sculpture Park

## INSIGHT Autumn 2022

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#### Introduction

I hope you're all enjoying the summer and managed to keep safe during the extreme heat recently.

It's been a really busy year so far, we have had lots of changes and although it has been an exciting time there have been challenges.

As we have always done throughout our 162 year history, we continue to adapt to provide relevant services to our client base. We're moving forward as a charity to cater for the requirements of a wide range of people of all different ages with an equally wide range of support requirements. Our ethos at SRSB/ **RSS** remains the same: To provide opportunity, support, friendship and services to people with sight and/ or hearing loss in the Sheffield and Rotherham area helping them to achieve whatever they wish to do and whatever they aspire to be.

Our services are all about enabling people, achieving goals, gaining skills and building confidence. Our referrals come from various sources including hospitals, opticians, doctors etc. We're there to support clients through their journey, including:

- Initial assessment
- · Benefits advice
- Adapting to sight/hearing loss
- Accessibility
- Equipment and technical advice
- Emotional support
- Confidence building
- Leisure/friendship groups
- Support groups
- Sports activities
- Special interest groups

Please don't be afraid to ask us for help. Our team is passionate about supporting our clients and is here to direct you to the appropriate service and support.

Joanne Ardern, CEO

#### **Did You Know?**

We currently send out over 5,000 of these newsletters by print each mailout. We're trying to be more environmentally friendly as well as cutting down on printing and postage costs and would really appreciate you letting us know if you would like to help us by receiving the newsletter by email or memory stick.

Please email marketing@srsb.org. uk from the email you would like us to use and let us know that you are happy to receive it in this way. We'd really appreciate it. Thank you.

#### **SRSB & RSS Updates**

**Covid:** We've recently had another wave of staff testing positive. However, because we are still testing twice a week, this has been picked up quickly (and fortunately everyone has had mild symptoms). We ask that you do not attend our services if you've tested positive, have symptoms or suspect you have Covid to help us protect everyone.

**Transport:** Our new model of a wider variety of groups, both in our Centres and in the local communities, has meant that we will not be running one of our previous services (the daily Activities Centre) in the same way. More details about all the different services are below and there's something for everyone. We offer limited transport for some of the groups with our two minibuses, so please check when booking.

There are other transport options available to our clients to access the Centres and groups:

- Community Transport Sheffield: 0114 276 6148
- Community Transport Rotherham: 01709 516 092
- Taxis
- Family & Friends

We're also working on the My Sighted Guide project with Guide Dogs which, as well as promoting mobility, means the volunteer service can build your confidence and independence.

If transport is an issue for you or you need help setting up Community Transport please contact our Community Advice Officers who will also be happy to discuss your different transport options with you.

**Dropping Off at SRSB**. Please be aware of the road layout at the front of **SRSB**. The road is now one way for cars (from Broad Lane to West Street) and has a cycle lane directly in front of the building in the opposite direction (from West Street to Broad Lane). If your transport is dropping you off please ask them to locate a safe space to do so.

**Staff Updates:** We've welcomed some new staff recently: Matthew Pollard our Training & Development Officer, Ben Gilder our Fundraising & Activities Support Officer, Clare Thornton now works part time as Community Advice Officer

alongside her part time role as Eye Clinic Liaison Officer and Jack Silveroak will also join our staff team as part time Counsellor and Psychotherapist.

#### Meet the Team:

Helen: "I'm Helen and I started working at Rotherham Sight & Sound, part of SRSB, as Business Support Officer in February this year, I previously worked for the NHS in a GP practice for 8 years as a receptionist, I loved the job but it became very stressful during Covid and afterwards. I love my job here at Rotherham, it's great seeing all the clients that come into the centre and I love the guide dogs, but I know they do an important job so have to resist stroking them when they are working.

"It's such a lovely atmosphere here, it doesn't feel like work, I'm lucky I can get involved with the events here at the Centre, we have had some lovely afternoon teas, and I was lucky to go on one of the trips with clients too.

I've really learned a lot about the different eye conditions and hearing impairment too, but I know there's a lot more to learn. I'm proud to work here and I think it's good to offer the local people in our area help and support, and sometimes that's just having the time to chat to people and ask if they're okay. I'm here to help so give me a ring."





Helen pictured left and Matt right

Matt: "Hi there, I'm Matt and I've recently joined SRSB/RSS as the new Training and Development Officer. I've been made to feel really welcome by both staff and clients and have been spending time getting to know my role and what the charity does. I've been going home most evenings and telling my family about the wonderful people I have met and the activities I have experienced, it's a lovely feeling.

"Before joining the charity, I worked as a Civil Servant in the Home Office for 24 years in a variety of senior roles including training, project and risk management, operational management and customer service. I heard about the role when I was a client of **RSS** when Hannah (one of our CAO's) came to see me when I had sight problems earlier in the year and the rest is history. It's a big change for me and a new challenge that I will relish as I seek to establish myself in the role.

"It's really important to me that your insight into sight loss is captured and fed back into our training programme so that it can benefit our clients. Over the coming weeks and months, I aim to establish new training opportunities for both new and existing clients. I would welcome suggestions and comments from you so please get in touch if you would like to discuss any training and development ideas you may have. I look forward to meeting you if I

haven't already done so and please don't hesitate to say hello."

**Services** 

For any of the services mentioned below, you can call us on Sheffield: 0114 272 2757, Rotherham: 01709 722 420, or email info@srsb.org. uk to find out more or to book. Most are available to our clients with sight and/or hearing loss unless specified. Our services that are specific to clients with hearing loss are listed in the 'Hearing Impairment Services' section.

SRSB/RSS clients can access services in both Centres if they wish. Please visit www.srsb.org.uk/ client-events.aspx to see dates and times for Client Events.

Cafe VIPs (SRSB): Don't forget our Cafe is open Mon to Fri 10am to 3pm and offers a range of tasty hot and cold snacks and drinks available including a number of specials that change on a regular basis. The café is also a great meeting point for our clients to come in and grab a coffee or a snack before heading off to access another service, or just to pop in when they are in town.

CAOs (SRSB & RSS): Our team of 11 Community Advice Officers (CAOs) are continuing with home visits and telephone appointments. Cheryle, one of our longest serving members of the team, tells us about their role: "My name is Cheryle and I am a Community Advice Officer

and I work across both Sheffield and Rotherham.

"I thought I would give you an insight into the work our team do, however, we do all work differently and try to work to each of our strengths. We have to adopt a flexible approach as often more urgent referrals come along which have to be prioritised. Our referrals come from various routes including self-referral. We would then contact the client to complete an Initial Assessment, this allows us to get to know the person better and to assess their needs in relation to the following:

- Equipment to assist with maintaining independence and to promote safe practice in the home with regard to sight and/or hearing loss.
- We look at promoting and maintaining independence outside of the home and this will differ from person to person.
- We carry out benefit checks to try and maximise income wherever possible.
- We look at social inclusion.
- We deal with service users who are of working age, this can be someone who is trying to maintain employment with the onset of sight or hearing loss (or both).
- We deal with service users who have been out of employment but would like support to get back into employment.

Above are just a few examples but in reality, the list is much more varied

and often no 2 days are the same, as indeed our service users are individuals with individual needs. We try very hard to look at each referral on a 'needs basis'. A home visit is not always required, a phone call can often be sufficient or some people may feel more comfortable coming in to one of our Centres for initial contact, we try to be led by the person requiring support.

#### Other CAO updates:

Members of our team will be taking part in refresher benefits training in the coming months as part of ongoing staff training.

If you have a benefit form that you need support with, please could you get in touch as soon as possible to enable us to meet your deadline. On some occasions we may need to request extensions during our busy periods.

The CAO Team recently had a really positive meeting with Sheffield Talking News (STN) who updated us on their service and range of ways to listen to local news. This is easy to set up, so if you wish to know more, please get in touch about this or any other queries you may have.

Children & Young People Support (SRSB & RSS): We offer a range of activities and services for our young clients and their families.

Benefits Advice: SRSB & RSSActivity Days: SRSB & RSS

- Children's Activity Packs: Postal
- Little Sparklers Playgroup: SRSB
- Theatre/Cinema Trips: Various locations
- Christmas Parties: Monkey Bizness in 2022.

Hannah, our Children & Family Support Officer updates us about one of the groups: "We have just had our second Youth Group session for children aged 10 to 17 years old. It was amazing to see everyone so involved in the activities we put on! This session was arts and crafts, following our first session where we took everyone to the dessert place on West Street. The arts and crafts session resulted in so many beautiful and colourful canvases as well as many tie-dyed socks and t-shirts!

"We are hoping to instil the Youth Group as a monthly long-term group available for any client aged 10 to 17 years old who would like to meet different people and get involved in the activities and events we plan. Some plans for the future include bowling, pizza-making, theme parks, theatres and cinema, and many restaurants! So, keep checking for future announcements and do get in touch if you have any questions or ideas!"

Courses (SRSB & RSS): We run courses periodically and currently offer the following:

VI Looking Ahead: Open to newly referred vision impaired clients

or clients who have experienced changes in their sight loss, this course offers an introduction to help and support for daily living. The current sessions are booked from 26th July to 6th Sept. Please get in touch with Matt to enquire about future groups.

Comments from past attendees have highlighted a growth in confidence, friendships formed during the course and increased knowledge about how to access support as well as what is available.

#### Culture Club (SRSB & RSS):

Our group for those who enjoy a bit of theatre, museums and art: The theatre performances are audio described and signed and the group usually go for a bite to eat beforehand. Please get in touch for prices and availability:

- Brodsworth Hall: This had to be cancelled because of the extreme heat on the day of the trip. We'll be rearranging soon.
- Bosworth Battlefield: 20th Aug.
- The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel:
   15th Sept. Sheffield Lyceum
- The Commitments: 20th Oct. Sheffield Lyceum.
- Mamma Mia: 3rd Nov. Sheffield Lyceum.
- Jack and the Beanstalk: 22nd Dec. Sheffield Lyceum.

### ECLO's (Eye Clinic Liaison Officers)

Sharon and Clare share the post of Eye Clinic Liaison Officer, and are based at the Eye Clinic in the Royal Hallamshire Hospital, helping to make a difference to the lives of blind or partially sighted people.

They are a point of contact at the hospital to provide information and advice to blind and partially sighted people, family members and carers at the time they are given a diagnosis about their sight loss.

The ECLOs provide emotional support and raise awareness of the services available to empower visually impaired people to make informed choices to maintain and develop their independence. Without this post being in place, patients and their families could be left reeling from a diagnosis they have been given and unsure where to turn, many people likening this diagnosis to bereavement. At this point, they can feel overwhelmed and potentially miss information that is critical for their future wellbeing. This link ensures that people are directed to our charity and supported through a difficult time as well as referrals to other relevant agencies.

**Emotional Support (SRSB & RSS):** Our Emotional Support Officer Hayley has been developing Peer Support Groups and is currently working on a group for younger clients. There is also a new group on Sept 19th at **SRSB**'s Mappin Street Centre aimed at anyone who has a visual impairment who looks after school age children.

Jack has now joined our staff team

after qualifying as a Counsellor and Psychotherapist. He can support our clients who may be experiencing issues surrounding their sight loss, or other life issues, by offering a safe place to discuss and express their feelings and help process emotions in a one to one environment. This service is also extended to carers or relatives who may benefit from some support. Sessions are free of charge and in blocks of 10 lasting 50 mins each. However, there is flexibility around the number of sessions to suit your requirements. They're available in person, by phone or via Zoom. If you'd like to find out more Jack will book a half hour informal chat to discuss any questions.

Introduction from Jack: "Hi everyone. I began volunteering at SRSB/RSS as a trainee counsellor in October '21 and, having recently qualified, am grateful to now be working here.

"I have had a visual impairment from birth but only registered in 2019 when I started to realise that I needed support and was ready to accept it. This required a shift in how I saw myself and a real change to my mental health which is something I hope to offer clients when they come to see me who may be experiencing something similar. I have really enjoyed meeting the staff and clients, and am excited to be working in the role."

Please get in touch about any of these services.

Equipment Advice (SRSB & RSS): Our Equipment Advisor
Rob can advise on a wide range of products. For this newsletter, Rob's equipment of choice is the humble writing frame, "A simple yet elegant solution to writing letters, lists, birthday cards and so much more.

"There are two types of frame; hard line, and elasticated line, each comes in two sizes A5 and A4. the larger A4 lends itself to writing letters, stories, poems and longer lists. The A5 is good for short lists and Birthday cards. The two types differ in style and price. The basic is made of stout thick card with full width slots cut through it to allow you to wright with a broad bold pen and the slightly more expensive one is made of plastic with tight elastic creating the slots. Both types are book style and open to allow you to insert the material that you want to write on. If you have the one with elasticated lines you can write letters that drop below the line like lower case "g."

These are great solutions where you need a little help with your writing and subsequent reading."

Want to find out more about this or other products, or find a solution to a problem? Please get in touch.

**Groups & Activities:** Some are operated by **SRSB/RSS** but some are independent groups, with support from **SRSB/RSS**. Many are free, some have a small fee.

Here's a list and the location. Just get in touch to find out more or view online here: www.srsb.org.uk/client-events.aspx

Please remember that clients from **SRSB** or **RSS** can access our services at either Centre. Some of the groups offer a Zoom option too. For activities outside **SRSB/RSS** transport is sometimes available, please check about the group you are interested in:

Activity Packs: Postal
Afternoon Teas: RSS
Archery: Sheffield

• Baseball: Sheffield

• Bingo: RSS

 Book Club: SRSB and RSS & Online/Zoom

• Children's Activity Packs: Postal

• Craft Groups: RSS

• Creative Writing: SRSB

• Crown Green Bowling: Sheffield

• Coffee Mornings: SRSB

• Coffee & Cakes: RSS

• Culture Club: Various locations

Cycling: Sheffield

• Day Trips: Various locations

Horse Riding: Rotherham

• Meditation: Online/Zoom

• Painting Group: SRSB

 Rotherham Guided Walks: Rotherham

 Sheffield Visually Impaired Walking Group (SVIWG): Various locations

• Snooker: Sheffield

 South Yorkshire Goalball Club: Sheffield

 South Yorkshire VI Tennis Group: Sheffield

Summer Swimming Sessions:

Hathersage Lido.

• Swimming Group: Sheffield

• Tai Chi: SRSB

• Ten Pin Bowling: Rotherham

• VI Football: Sheffield

 VI Running with Sighted Guides: Sheffield and Rotherham

• VI Shooting: Rotherham

• Yoga: Online/Zoom

 Yorkshire VI Cricket Club: Various locations

Health & Beauty Room: This is now open with visiting services provided by external suppliers with whom you can book your appointment directly. A price list is available on request for each service, give us a call us to request one or ask at reception.

The providers are:

 Podiatrist: Last Monday of month with Emma. Tel: 07865 998 022

 Aromatherapy Massage & Reflexology: Tuesdays with Chris. Tel: 07852 589258

 Hairdressing: Thursdays with Anne. Tel: 07939 201622

• **Sports Massage:** Fridays with Jordan. Tel: 07807 400952

Manicures: TBC

#### Hearing Impairment Services:

Our services include:

- BSL (British Sign Language)
   Community Access Point: First
   Friday of every month at RSS
   for anyone who doesn't have
   technology at home, enabling them
   to access a BSL Deaf advisor from
   Deaf Advice Sheffield.
- **BSL Social Group:** RSS monthly on Thursdays.

- BSL Taster Sessions: Demand led short courses at RSS.
- Hear to Help Hearing Aid services at RSS: For tubing, batteries, domes, help and advice at RSS.
- Lip Reading Group: At RSS Mondays and SRSB Tuesdays
- Rotherham Hard of Hearing Group: Monthly at RSS
- Cleethorpes Deaf Group Trip August 9th

#### **One-Off Events:**

Optalec Roadshow: SRSB Mappin Street Centre. Tues 23rd August from 9:30am to 3:30pm. Leaflet with more information included in this mailshot. Please call to book an appointment.

#### **Working Win Session: SRSB**

Mappin Street Centre. Thurs 25th August. 1 to 4pm. This is an open information session for interested clients looking to either get back into work or maintain their employment if they are struggling.

Working Win supports people with health conditions to find, stay and thrive in employment. If you're struggling in work, or you're off sick and want to return, sign up for their free, one-to-one employment support. Working Win also supports unemployed people who are looking for a job.

Staff from Working Win will explain what they offer.

Back to School Fancy Dress. RSS Ship Hill Centre. September 9th (evening) £3 each. Inc food but bring your own bottle. limited to 30 people Tickets from RSS

Sight Village Leeds: Wed 21st September. Sight Village enables visitors to find out more about the latest technology, equipment and support services available to people who are blind or partially-sighted. If you or a family member have a visual impairment it could be of great help to visit the show.

An Evening with John Taylor: Fri 30th September. SRSB Mappin Street Centre. 7 to 9pm. £10. Join us for an evening with John singing many of the old favourites including Elvis, The Rat Pack and Matt Munro. Drinks and buffet included.

RSS Halloween night. RSS Ship Hill Centre. October 28th. (evening) £3 each Inc food but bring your own bottle, limited to 30 people. Tickets from RSS

**Trip to Bury Christmas Market. SRSB & RSS** Date TBC dependent on interest.

Have a Go Day, York: We're planning a trip to this event from British Blind Sport in Dec.

Christmas Lunches: Mon 12th to Fri 16th Dec. SRSB's Mappin Street Centre. We're delighted to

be able to host our first Christmas Lunch week since the pandemic and look forward to welcoming you all back to our festive celebrations. We will be offering plated turkey sandwiches, with a side of roast potatoes, followed by Christmas pudding and drinks along with entertainment each day.

#### **Self Help & Support Groups:**

The following groups are either operated by **SRSB/RSS** or independently, with support from us.

- CBS (Charles Bonnet Syndrome)
   Support Group: SRSB
- DeafBlind Group: SRSB
- Peer Support Groups: Sheffield and Rotherham
- Retinitis Pigmentosa Support Group: SRSB
- Sheffield Macular Group: Sheffield
- Rotherham Macular Group: RSS
- Rotherham Hard of Hearing Group: RSS

**NEW!** We want to develop new support groups for our clients and here are some updates:

**Stroke Support Group:** To support people who have lost their sight through stroke or head injury and the first two sessions will be held at the **RSS** Ship Hill Centre on Wednesday 22nd Sept from 10am to 12pm.

#### **Stargardt's Support Group:**

Tuesday 4th Oct at **SRSB**'s Mappin Street Centre. This group is for our clients with Stargardt's Macular Dystrophy. If you have Stargardt's or are the parent of someone with Stargardt's then let us know and we'll place your name on the group list for the in-person meeting, please call to register your interest.

The first meeting will be an introduction and getting to know you session, after that we will have a theme each time suggested by yourselves and try to get guest speakers to visit with the latest medical or tech news.

Rob our Equipment Advisor was diagnosed with Stargardt's 41 years ago and would love to meet you all.

Talking News: Sheffield Talking News and Rotherham Talking News are separate charitable organisations to SRSB/RSS but provide their service to our clients on request. They both record local news stories which you can listen to online, via an app or by a postal service. Ask us for details or visit: www.sheffieldtalkingnews.org.uk and www.rothnewstalk.co.uk

#### **Technology Support:**

Our Technology Trainer Jake can help you with the latest assistive tech or to learn something new. This newsletter, he's chosen to highlight 'Lookout: assisted vision' app. Using the document mode you can read letters/handwriting. The short text mode can be used for reading items such as food packaging and instructions for cooking. Want to find out more about

this or other apps, or expand your tech knowledge? Then get in touch to book an appointment.

## Cairn Home Staff Updates:

Our team at Cairn have had some changes in roles as Lisa has become Team Leader, Sara has become Cleaner and Rafina is now a Night Care Assistant. We've welcomed 3 new members of staff: Anureet, Freya and Holly.

Cairn Open Day 20th August 10am to 4pm: If you're thinking about residential care you can drop in, have a chat and be shown around to find out more.

Cairn's Activities Coordinator, Joanne, has scheduled new themed evening meals that will take place at Cairn each month.

The greenhouse in the garden is up and running and the tomatoes, spring onions and runner beans are coming on really well! Staff Joanne and Lindsey, along with clients who are interested in gardening, are also working on a new vegetable patch.



Cairn Home Jubilee Garden Party

If you'd like to find out more about Cairn, please get in touch: **0114 266 1536** or **cairn@srsb.org.uk** 

#### **Awareness**

We work hard to raise awareness of issues that our clients face and also about our charity. This includes being involved in consultations and focus groups on a variety of issues.

For example, one event to be held on Wednesday September 21st at 2pm at Mappin Street is a consultation around the proposals to move some GP sites in the North of the city into larger hub sites located between the existing sites. There are 3 different hubs proposed in the North, and one city centre hub proposal. We are gathering feedback from this group.

If you're interested in being notified directly about any meetings, consultations or focus groups we take part in or other events, please contact us: marketing@srsb.org.uk

Visual Impairment Awareness Training: This service is available to any organisation including businesses, public bodies, charities. SRSB/RSS staff and volunteers also benefit from this training.

#### **Heritage Update:**

Many of the Heritage Awareness work this year were made possible thanks to National Lottery Players.

**Sensory Garden:** At Graves Park in Sheffield. If you fancy getting

involved or know someone who would like to, please get in touch.

#### **Displays:**

We've completed several of our Heritage Awareness events and thank Sheffield Central Library, Walkley Library, Darnall Library and Woodseats Library for their support.

#### Other Heritage Events:

- Woodseats Library: 15th to 31st August.
- Ecclesall Library: 15th to 31st August.
- Winter Gardens Sheffield: 5th to 11th Sept.
- Heritage Open Day Event at SRSB's Mappin Street Centre: Saturday 17th September. 11am to 3pm. Free open event highlighting our 160+ year history and the national Heritage Open Days event theme of 'Astounding Inventions'
- Firth Park Library: TBC

We Need Your Help! We've had a request from some volunteers from the Ken Hawley Collection Trust (based at Kelham Island Museum). In the New Year they're hoping to stage an exhibition about the manufacture and use of micrometers, as well as the people who used them. In particular, they hope to focus on the Braille micrometer that was developed immediately post WW2. They believe this was produced to allow injured servicemen to work in the Sheffield manufacturing industry taking precision measurements of engineering products. It would be great to hear from anyone

who knows anything about these micrometers and could help the Trust to bring the story to life.

#### We Need Your Stories!

We are going to put together some oral history recollections from our clients to mark our heritage celebrations. Please get in touch if you would like to take part.

## Feedback Hear about it from our clients:

It's great to hear from you about our services and we'll feature some feedback in each newsletter.

Finlay, one of our younger clients tells us about his journey with SRSB: "I started at SRSB when I was a baby. I can't remember a lot but do remember going to Little Sparklers with either my Mum or Nan and it being fun, playing with the sensory toys and one time making plates with our handprints on. Mum has told me we went on visits to places too including Sundown Adventure and the sensory rooms at Concord Sports Centre. We've a picture at home of me with the then Lord Mayor who came to visit Little Sparklers once!

"As Sparklers is for little children, once I finished going there **SRSB** still had things for me to get involved in if I wanted to. Actionnaires for doing sporty things and during school holidays there were activity afternoons doing art and craft or getting involved in focus groups. Sometimes we'd just pop into the café and I'd look in the equipment

centre (I'm a bit of a tech geek!).

"Obviously Covid put a stop to inperson activities, but the team was great and sent themed activity packs throughout the year, Christmas, Valentines, Halloween etc

"I made friends whilst at Sparklers and we are still in touch, we all go to the Youth Group now we are older. I've also met new friends at Youth Group and I will be seeing some of them when I start secondary school in September.

"SRSB has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. I know they have helped my Mum with my claim for DLA and I'm sure I'll be accessing support for a long time to come."



Photo of Finlay at the youth group

Penny tells us about the Cafe at SRSB: "The food in the café is very, very nice and well-presented, and the prices are really reasonable.

"Pamela (**SRSB**'s Café Manager) is very friendly and very aware of

people's requirements. The new tables and chairs have made a difference too, they are really comfy!

"I have been popping in to meet friends and had a good catch up with them, and it was lovely to see everybody, everyone was saying hello to me!"



Photo of Paul at the archery group taster session.

Paul tells us about the Archery Taster Session: "I went to the Archery taster session recently, which is held at the Northern General Hospital Spinal Injuries Unit Wheelchair Sports Hall. I hadn't tried archery for years and it was great to have the opportunity to give it a go again. I really enjoyed it and found the group helpful and the instructions straightforward. I definitely got better as the night went on, but there is still room for improvement! So I would definitely go back again."

The group meets twice each week to practice. There is also the opportunity to enter competitions. Beginners and intermediate newcomers always welcome.

Volunteering

A message from Andrea to our volunteers: "Many thanks to all our wonderful volunteers whose time and effort are invaluable to SRSB/RSS. Our Tele Befrienders reach out to nearly 200 of our clients every week which is fantastic. However we'd like to continue to expand our Befriending Service, incorporating more face to face contact, so if you feel you could give a few hours a week and would like to join our growing team please get in touch.

"We are also busy and active with many varied groups, activities, events and courses now up and running, and many more in the pipeline. However, we need sighted guides to keep these experiences safe and more enjoyable for our clients, so if you know anyone who might fancy helping out with a bit of Horse Riding, Rifle Shooting, Ten Pin Bowling, VI Football, Snooker, or any other of our activities **SRSB/RSS** is the place to be, full Visual Awareness training will be given."

Andrea is also developing the My Sighted Guide service, integrating this into her work, training and supporting volunteers through the process, then utilising this service to enable our clients to access activities and groups, and also achieve their own personal goals.

#### **Volunteer Award:**

Huge congratulations to Sarah, our client and volunteer, who won an award at the Sheffield Star's Inspirational Women of Sheffield event in May, where the room was full of Inspirational Women. It was lovely (and sometimes very moving) to hear the stories of those who had been shortlisted and who won their categories. So we were over the moon that Sarah won her category 'The Dorrett Buckly-Greaves MBE Award for Community.'

Sarah is just one of our amazing team of volunteers and it's lovely to be able to shine a light on their work at these events.

Here's Sarah's story:

Sarah volunteers for **SRSB** and **RSS**. However, not only is she a dedicated volunteer, but she is also a client who has experienced a transformation from absolute despair and denial about the limitations of her sight loss, to a woman who happily welcomes the challenges that each day brings. She acknowledges that becoming involved with the charity was a catalyst in this transformation.

Since the resulting growth in her confidence, she has taken part in several daring fundraising activities to give something back, such as a Skydive, Firewalk, Blind Driving and a Wing Walk! Her talents are not limited to fundraising however; she now wants to raise awareness of sight loss, and help others with a visual impairment to regain their confidence too. She volunteers with

SRSB/RSS's Visual Impairment Awareness (VIA) Training and speaks at 'Looking Ahead' courses, for people who are newly registered or experiencing new challenges with their sight loss.

Public speaking is something that at one time, she never thought she could do! But now, Sarah says, "I've talked to big groups of children who asked lovely questions such as how do I dream, talked to people in the workplace, discussed with psychology students the emotional side of sight loss; the isolation and the feeling that there is no point to life. It's hard to believe I was in that dark place myself, it seems like a lifetime ago."

During the pandemic, Sarah quickly adapted, becoming a Tele Friend volunteer. She has now resumed volunteering for Looking Ahead and VIA Training as soon as we were able to begin in-person groups.

Sarah has made a big impact on many people and helped to enable many to come to terms with their sight loss by being a shining example of the happiness that can be found through acceptance. "People tell me I am an inspiration, but for me it's just about going out and getting a life which makes you happy."

Very well done and very well deserved Sarah! And our

congratulations go to all the other amazing nominees and winners! Many thanks to the Sheffield Star for organising the event and all the sponsors.

You can read more about Sarah's story at: https://tinyurl.com/2d45utr9

#### **Fundraising**

Steve, our Fundraising Manager updates us: "At the time of writing Sheffield was experiencing its hottest ever temperatures with thermometers hovering around the 40 degrees mark! We hope you all coped OK during the heatwave and managed to keep safe and cool.

"So what's been happening in fundraising since the last newsletter? Well things have definitely been heating up here too, which is long overdue after 18 months of restrictions!

"We've appointed a new member to the team. Ben Gilder joined our team and will be supporting both fundraising and our client activities. Ben is initially looking after our collections, Ellie and home collection boxes and helping with other events. Welcome Ben!

"33 daredevils took part in our 160ft Abseil at Sheffield Hallam University in May and collectively raised almost £7,000, after costs, to support our work, huge thanks to everyone. Most of them also signed up for our Take on 160+ challenge. They've been

joined by buskers, line dancers, zip liners, swimmers, artists, coffee drinkers and garden partiers, so a big thank you to you all. We've had a good start to the year with a number of trusts and foundations supporting our work. We've also had help from several companies, groups and associations."

To join us at any event or find out about any of the fundraising mentioned below you can book online at www.srsb.org.uk/fundraising-events.aspx call Steve or Ben on 0114 272 2757 or email



fundraising@srsb.org.uk
Someone taking part in the abseil

**Summer Raffle:** Thank you so much to everyone who supported our Summer raffle which has raised over £2,600! Our next raffle will be with the Winter newsletter.

SRSB/RSS Golf Day: We're looking for teams of 4 to take part in our Golf Day at Dore & Totley Golf Club on Friday 16th September.

Team entry is £220 or £55 per

person. We've kept the format and price the same as last year. The event is a 4 Ball Am Am Stapleford Competition. 3/4 handicap (max: men 28 women 36) There's coffee and a bacon roll on arrival, complimentary refreshments at the Halfway House and a 2 course meal at the end. There are prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place and a raffle on the day. We have nearest the pin, nearest the line and a SIM spec putting competitions.

Dore and Totley Golf Club in Sheffield, South Yorkshire, was voted by Today's Golfer as one of the top 50 fun courses to play in the UK.

Can You Take On 160+ for SRSB? So far, over 50 people have signed up for this challenge, where people organise a fundraiser and aim to raise over £160 in 2022.

There are far too many people to acknowledge here individually, but here's just a few that we'd like to give a special mention. Annette, our very own Activities Co-ordinator, ran the Race to the Tower in June, completing a challenging double marathon trail race over 2 days, finishing 6th in her category and raised a brilliant £1,110. And there's no stopping Ann from the SRSB Deaf/Blind Group! Having had all her hair cut off last year, Ann donned her angel wings and abseiled 160ft raising over £600 as well, and was our highest individual fundraiser on the day. And then there's Emma's

challenge swimming 100,000 meters (100km) in Sept - good luck Emma! A huge well done to all our Take On 160+ challengers this year.

Charity Pub Quiz: The Old Queens Head, Pond Hill Thursday 22nd September 7:30pm Thanks to everyone who came in June, we raised a fantastic £226! Why not join us in September? You'll enjoy a great evening out including sandwiches and chips at half time. Don't worry if you don't know anyone, we can match you up with other players. Prizes for the top team on the night and the chance to win in our raffle too! £4 per person (max of 4 per team).

Grants and Foundations: SRSB/RSS has been successful in securing several grants recently from different trusts and foundations. Sheffield Church Burgesses Trust provided a grant to help us expand a counselling project so we could see twice as many clients.

We received a grant from Sport England via British Blind Sport to help the South Yorkshire Visually Impaired Tennis Club.

The Primary Club provided two new sets of visually impaired shooting equipment, so we can now offer this activity to a much bigger group.

The HM Burdall Charity donated new café furniture, and materials for our painting & creative writing groups.

The Earl Fitzwilliam Charitable Trust provided a grant for BSL interpreter costs for our hearing-impaired clients in Rotherham.

Nationwide Building Society in Rotherham provided a grant of £5,562 for new furniture at **RSS**.

The Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers donated funds for tandem repairs and a tandem trailer for our Visually Impaired Pedlars group.

The Freshgate Foundation Trust provided a grant for our Art Club and 3 Craft Groups. We are very grateful to all of them for their support, and to any others who have helped, but are not mentioned here. Thank You.

#### **Community Support:**

We rely heavily on the support of organisations and groups to help deliver our local services. A big thank you to everyone who has supported us, including:

The Yorkshire Cricket Lovers' donation of £500 from their delayed 60th anniversary dinner.

The University of Sheffield Tennis Club raised £345.50 from a raffle at their Tennis Club Ball.

Dore & Totley Reform Church donated £450 from Church funds.

Foxhill Forum 50+ Craft Group's £70.50 from their Christmas Raffle.

Rotherham Choir Group raised £1,000 for the **RSS** Appeal from their recent event.

Y7 pupils at Sheffield High School for Girls raised £972 from their sponsored Read-On.

Universal Office Products raised £500 from a fundraising challenge at their annual golf day at Hillsborough.

Again, sorry if you haven't been mentioned here and thank you all for your support.

If you know a group who might be considering organising an event or making a donation, please put them in touch.

Legacy Update. Free Wills Weeks: Thank you to everyone who took advantage of our Free Will Week at the end of June. The next Free Will Week will be from Monday 10th to Friday 14th October.

During the week people get the chance to see a solicitor for advice about making a will, and if you decide to make a Will, we pay the cost of a straightforward, basic will and hope that you Will consider making **SRSB/RSS** a beneficiary under the will and/or make a small donation, but there's no obligation to do so. Meetings can be arranged in our centres, at the solicitor's office or in certain circumstances at home.

# **Guardian Angel Online Service**We've also recently started a new relationship with Guardian Angel to

provide a simple will for free, that would usually cost £90, that can be produced online or over the phone, and give you peace of mind. This service is available at any date to suit during the year.

By leaving a gift in your will to SRSB/RSS, you will help ensure our valuable work continues for many more years to come. For further details please call Steve or email: giftinwills@srsb.org.uk

#### **SRSB/RSS Weather Lottery:**

Why not join our £1 weekly lottery with the chance to win £25,000?

#### **Collection Volunteers Needed!**

We're now being offered more store collection opportunities and urgently need people to help at the following:

- Atkinsons. Fri 7th and Sat 8th Oct
- ASDA Drakehouse. Thurs 24th and Fri 25th Nov
  To volunteer at our collections, please call Ben.

#### **OTHER EVENTS:**

**Skydive:** Hilbaldstow Airfield, Lincs. Dates to suit in 2022

Wing Walk: Wickenby, Lincs. Dates to suit in 2022

Enjoy the rest of the Summer from everyone at **SRSB/RSS** and **THANK YOU** for everything you do.

#### **Sheffield Royal Society for the Blind (SRSB)**

5 Mappin Street Sheffield S1 4DT

Tel: 0114 272 2757 E: info@srsb.org.uk Web: www.srsb.org.uk

#### **Cairn Home**

58 Selborne Road Crosspool Sheffield S10 5ND

**Tel:** 0114 266 1536 **E:** cairn@srsb.org.uk

Web: www.cairnhome.org.uk

#### **Rotherham Sight & Sound**

8 Ship Hill Rotherham S60 2HG

Tel: 01709 722420

**E:** enquiries@rotherss.org.uk **Web:** www.RotherSS.org.uk









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