

# Northumberland County Blind Association

*Supporting blind and partially sighted people*



# InSight

Autumn 2021

Hello all! Autumn is upon us, and the tree colours are turning golden brown. NCBA are entering a new phase also, slowly and safely moving forward out of lock down.

As you probably know NCBA has been awarded the Queens Award for Voluntary Service. For an organisation, it is the equivalent of an MBE, so it's quite a recognition. Again, well done to all our staff and volunteers. It's your hard work that has secured this accolade. We will be attending an award ceremony at Alnwick Castle to be presented with the award by the Duchess of Northumberland.



InSight magazine is not just here to offer you information and guidance, but also to be an interesting read. Please feel free to contact me with any little snippets of news or information you would like to be included in the next issue.

Email me at [Michael.Rickwood@ncba.org.uk](mailto:Michael.Rickwood@ncba.org.uk) Tel. 01670 862554

## **Information and Equipment Day Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021 10am - 3pm**

**We would like to invite you our Information and Equipment Day to be held at Reiver House Morpeth. There will be representatives from organisations such as RNIB, Citizens Advice, BID, Deaf / Blind Enablement and Ageing Well. It will be a good opportunity to speak to various organisations and see what low vision equipment and services are available to help. Our new Chatterbox Café will be open for refreshments.**

## **Our Café**

We are pleased to announce the opening of our NCBA Café on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup>. September 2021, at Reiver House, Staithes Lane, Morpeth, NE61 1TD. Opening times: Tuesdays 10am - 12noon: Tea, coffee, biscuits and cakes plus free low vision advice and demonstrations. Thursdays 10am - 12noon: Tea, coffee and home-made tray bakes & scones.



Come and join us have a chat and laugh, pull up a chair and find out how we can support you.

## Volunteers

NCBA is a charity that provides information and support to blind and partially sighted people helping them to maintain their independence.

NCBA can only offer the support it does with the help of its wonderful volunteers. If you feel you can offer support to someone with sight loss in Northumberland, then we need to hear from you. You can help us in lots of ways.



## Benefits of Volunteering

- Make a difference to someone's life.
- Volunteer with other passionate people.
- Be recognised for the skills and experience you bring to our organisation.
- Learn new skills that could help your career.
- Ongoing in-house training.
- That feel good feeling.



# **A Day in the Life of a Volunteer**

## **Judith Cassidy**

I'm Judith and the onset of a visual impairment led me to NCBA for help and quickly I joined the volunteer team, eight years on I am still here.

My main role is a receptionist, but I have also helped look after the gardens, been a voice for Noise magazine and I am now involved with the Low Vision advice service.

When I first joined NCBA my confidence needed a boost, suddenly having a visual impairment is hard to come to terms with and NCBA offers an environment of friendly support and understanding.

My involvement with the Low Vision advice service has given me the opportunity to learn new skills and advance my knowledge with training and personal development.

During the pandemic lockdown I became a Client Connect Volunteer and supported people with weekly telephone calls. I found this very rewarding and have made a few friends from the service.

At NCBA I have made lasting friendships and look forward to my volunteering days.

### **Northumberland County Blind Association AGM.**

**The Board of trustees, wish to give notice to our membership that our Annual General Meeting will be held at Reiver House on Tuesday October 26<sup>th</sup> at 10.30am.**

## It's not too late to sponsor Barry's Marathon attempt....

Our very own Barry Frost completed the recent London Marathon for NCBA. Thank you to everyone who sponsored him. You can still donate to support us.

We are a small charity who do our best to support our clients. Please help support us through donations however large or small

You can do this in a number of ways,

- By Cheque (payable to NCBA)
- Bank Transfer (77-20-37 03625260)
- Via the KINDLINK on our website



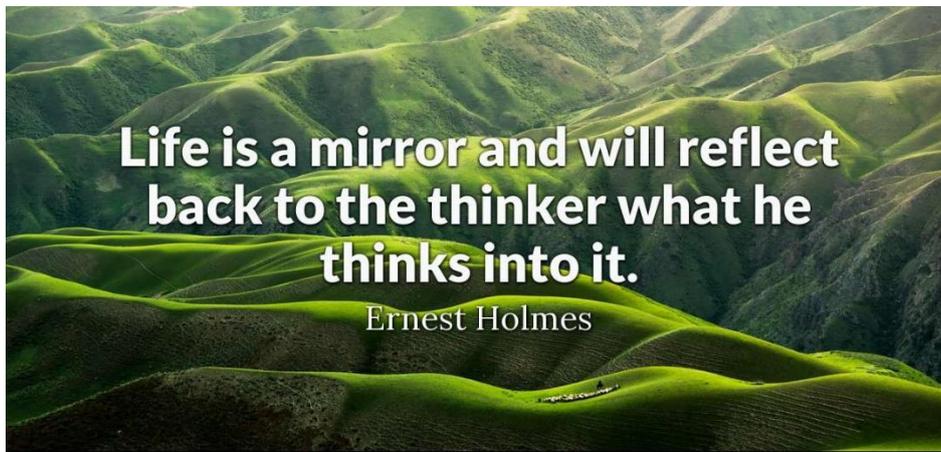
Go Barry Go!

You can contact Barry at: [barry.frost@ncba.org.uk](mailto:barry.frost@ncba.org.uk)

## Organisation Name

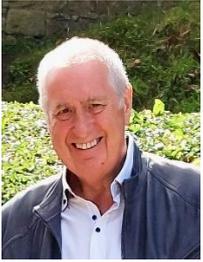
As you now know we have changed our newsletter name to InSight and we are also considering changing the organisations name to reflect the work we do.

We would love to hear your opinions and suggestions so please contact us.



## New Staff

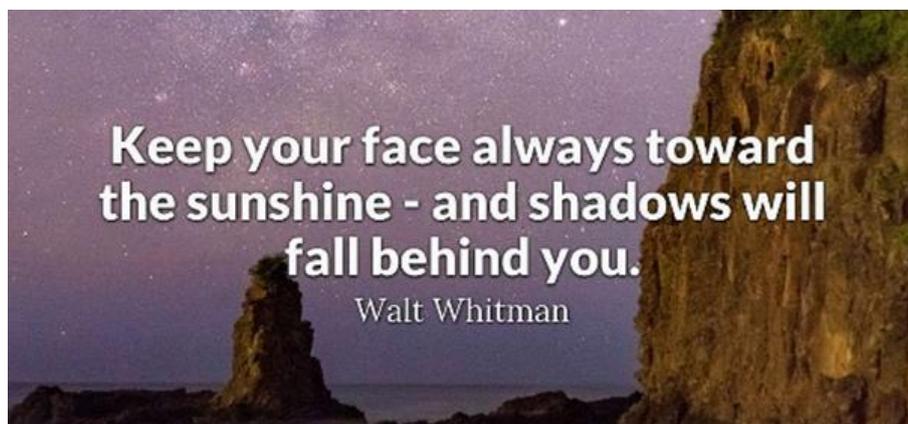
Welcome to Michael, Caroline and Dan.



Michael Rickwood is the new project coordinator (picture) Tasked with coordinating Volunteer car service, assisting the visual impaired people to access services within the community, the recruitment of volunteers, establishing and supporting clubs and establishing links to other agencies in Northumberland with a focus upon the Berwick Area.



Caroline Armstrong and Dan English are the new Project Co-ordinators on the Energy and IT projects. Tasked with increasing client's knowledge of energy saving measures working along Citizens Advice Northumberland. Helping clients to become more confident with technology and demonstrating the equipment available to assist them with reading energy meters and monitoring energy usage. Demonstrating the use of magnifiers and other equipment to read meters and energy bills.



## **Goodbye to Edna Charlton – NCBA’s Longest Serving Volunteer**

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of our longest serving volunteer, Edna Charlton. Edna had been involved with NCBA for many years – running the Blyth Blind and Partially Sighted Club alongside her mother since 1947. We send our heartfelt condolences to her family and friends.

“What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us: what we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal” - Albert Pike

**A Big Thank you!!!!**

Thank You 

Northumberland County Blind Association would like to say a heartfelt thank you to Alan Klottrup and for his generous donation of £100. Your commitment to helping people with a visual impairment living in Northumberland is sincerely appreciated Alan.

A huge thank you also goes to the following organisations who have continued to support us with counter collection boxes:

Celebrations (Blyth)  
Glentons Bakery (Ashington)  
Specsavers (Hexham)  
Newton Butchers (Ponteland)

If you would like to know more about how you can help please contact. Ruth Speirs on 01670 514316.



## Congratulations to our 100 Club Winners

MONTH	1 <sup>ST</sup>	2 <sup>ND</sup>	3 <sup>RD</sup>
<b>April</b>	Mrs M A Black - 174	Mrs J Cummings - 23	T Friar - 202
<b>May</b>	Tom Ridley - 228	Mrs J Anderson - 161	Mrs E Stokes - 18
<b>June</b>	Mike Bridges - 221	Mary Brannigan - 32	J A Currie - 165
<b>July</b>	Mrs K Downey - 73	Mrs D Savage - 115	Mrs J P Davison - 3
<b>August</b>	Mrs E Henderson - 156	Mr B Soulsby - 184	Ms J Hoult - 190
<b>September</b>	Mrs M Brannigan - 28	Mr J Coulthard -45	Mr G Lyons - 104

100 Club is a great way to donate money to the NCBA whilst at the same time entering a draw with cash prizes for 3 lucky winners every month. Shares in the Club are only £12 and 50% of Club funds will be distributed as prize money.

If you wish to participate, please fill out the application form and return, along with a cheque / postal order for your 100 Club

shares to our address above. You can also make a bank transfer using the details on the form.

## **NCBA - SUPPORTING VISUALLY IMPAIRED PEOPLE IN NORTHUMBERLAND**

Northumberland County Blind Association is a registered charity based in Morpeth covering the whole of Northumberland providing advice and support.



We deliver many services including:

### **CLIENT CONNECT TELEPHONE SUPPORT SERVICE**

- Telephone befriending is offered to all clients, many of whom are isolated or coming to terms with the impact and practicalities of sight loss.
- Befrienders are volunteers who can help provide emotional support, a social contact, a listening ear, and also pass on valuable hints and information.

### **LOW VISION SUPPORT SERVICE**

- Low Vision Support Service helps identify and demonstrate suitable equipment such as magnifiers, lighting and household aids to help those with a visual impairment. If you would like an assessment and demonstration, please phone the centre to make an appointment.

### **CLUBS AND SUPPORT GROUPS**

- The aim of our groups is to provide social opportunities and support for visually impaired people (whether registered or not) to meet socially with others from their own community. Carers, friends and relatives are also welcome to attend.

- Groups cover areas in and around Ashington, Cramlington, Morpeth, Alnwick, Bedlington, Hexham, Blyth, and Ponteland. We hope to start groups in other areas soon.

## **FUEL ENERGY PROJECT**



- Our Fuel Energy project
- (Partnering with Citizens Advice Northumberland) helps people with or without visual impairment become more energy savvy.
- Free impartial energy information, with of course no selling!
- In-home one to one support, tailored energy tips designed to help you save money and not waste energy. Practical help to guide you on how to switch suppliers, reading meters, including demystifying reading energy bills. We demonstrate useful technology and equipment for those who are visually impaired that help with seeing and reading bills and meters.

## **TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT**

- Our Tech service in-home or in our office, aids ease of using phones and computers, such as simple actions like how to change size of font on phones and zoom and magnification features. We are starting community IT pop-ups soon.

## **VOLUNTEERING**

- We are always looking for volunteers so if you would like to get involved with our charity, please contact us.

## **Energy bills giving you sleepless nights.**



Are you worried about the increase in your Energy prices? Do you struggle to pay? Would you be interested in help and support to any questions that you have?

We are working in Partnership with Citizens Advice Northumberland, and we can help.

In the first instance you can ring Citizens Advice on Tel.01670 33 99 60.

If you have any queries about help to manage your heating controls we can give you free bump -ons and a magnifier to help you read your meters and to control your thermostat, interested? then please call us direct on 01670514316

Don't struggle we are here to help

## **Booker Prize shortlist.**

In partnership with the Booker Prize Foundation, RNIB are offering blind and partially sighted book lovers free accessible versions of the 2021 Booker Prize shortlist.

Yesterday the shortlist was announced which comprised of:

- The Promise by Damon Galgut
- A Passage North by Anuk Arudpragasam
- No One Is Talking About This by Patricia Lockwood

- The Fortune Men by Nadifa Mohamed
- Bewilderment by Richard Powers
- Great Circle by Maggie Shipstead

People can sign up to our RNIB's online library by visiting:  
<https://readingservices.rnib.org.uk/>.

## Meeting Room and Office Hire at Reiver House, Morpeth

### Meeting Room Hire

A 20sqm room seating up to 25 people with kitchenette including tea and coffee making facilities in a fully accessible building with induction loop.

£80 for a full day or £15 per hour (or part thereof).



### Office Hire

A 6.4sqm modern office with access to Wi-Fi, photocopying equipment, staff kitchen, WC's, free onsite parking and sensory gardens.

**For further details please contact Ruth on**

## Queens Award for Voluntary Service:



We want to celebrate our QAVS award with all our Volunteers as the award was only given to us for the work that they do, as soon as we feel it's safe, we will be holding a Celebration Party and all volunteers will be invited. We will keep you updated.

Till next time keep safe and remember keep smiling, keep the boss wondering what they have missed.

If you would like to discuss any of our services, please contact:

**Tel:** 01670 514316 **Email:** [info@ncba.org.uk](mailto:info@ncba.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.ncba.org.uk](http://www.ncba.org.uk)

**Northumberland County Blind Association**

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Reiver House, Staithes Lane, Morpeth NE61 1TD

From the Team at NCBA,

***“Never a problem only a solution”***