



intouch

New Year 2010

Deafblind UK News

INSIDE

News from the regions

Find out about the work Deafblind UK is doing in Brighton and Hove.

See page 2

Volunteering opportunities

There are lots of inspiring ways to become a volunteer.

Find out more on page 4

A gift in memory of a loved one

Tony tells us about the support Deafblind UK gave his mother Elizabeth.

See page 6

Swim Lake Windermere in 2010!

More exciting fundraising events that you can take part in to raise much needed funds for Deafblind UK.

See page 7

Thank you for supporting Janice

A very big thank you to everyone who supported Janice Tillett to make her Great North Swim a big success!

See page 8

Dear Reader

Welcome to the New Year edition of In Touch.

It is hard to believe we are at the start of another year! As the new Chair of Deafblind UK I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for supporting our charity.

It seems like only yesterday that I stepped into the shoes of our former Chair, Dr Philip Gafga. Having been a Trustee of Deafblind UK for 10 years I have been privileged to work alongside such an inspirational gentleman and am excited at the prospect of working closely with the staff team at Deafblind UK who continue to achieve so much for the charity.

Find out more about the work we are doing to support deafblind people regionally with an update from Brighton and Hove on page 2 and read Millie's story from Essex on page 3.

We cannot give enough thanks to the intrepid people who undertake fundraising challenges for us, some of them very daring, particularly those who swam Lake Windermere! Find out more on pages 5, 7 and 8.

I hope you enjoy reading all the latest news from Deafblind UK. Once again, thank you very much for your continued support.

We wish you a wonderful New Year.

Best Wishes

Rosemary Sandford
Chair of Deafblind UK



Rosemary Sandford,
Chair of Deafblind UK



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Ruby and Bethany on the sea front

Regional spotlight on Brighton and Hove by Nikola Fieldhouse, Regional Development Officer

We are all very excited here about the inaugural Brighton Marathon on 18th April 2010 and thrilled that we have five Deafblind UK charity places available.

Last year I went to the London Marathon, with one of my daughters. It was an unbelievable atmosphere and I could not believe that most of the runners were still smiling!! I am sure it will be the same in Brighton. I have seen the route, 26.2 miles and it ends at the famous Brighton Pier.

Some other news in the area is that we have a new Social Group Coordinator, Helen Waite. I am so pleased to welcome her on board and for her to continue to expand and develop the two

monthly groups that we have in Brighton and Hove. We are aiming for another group up and running by March 2010.

My two daughters, Ruby and Bethany will have undertaken a challenge, by the time you read this, they have challenged each other to go into the sea for the Big Christmas Day Splash. It is a growing spectator sport for those mad enough to go in the sea in freezing cold temperatures but they seem to be very determined and want to raise some money to provide tactile games for our social groups.

I hope you have enjoyed our update and wish everyone a Happy New Year from Brighton. We look forward to you updating you again soon.



If you would like to take part in the Brighton Marathon, please contact Lorraine Densham in the Fundraising Team on **01733 358100** - we would really love your support.

Features

www.deafblind.org.uk



Millie's 101st birthday and activities

Our best wishes go to Millie Warren, from Nounsley in Essex, who celebrated her 101st birthday in style last year, with her friends at Witham Deafblind Club.

Millie was born in Edmonton, Greater London in 1908 and is the eldest of eight children. Her earliest memory is of her father going away to war in 1916; she remembers watching him walk away down the road, calling for a neighbour as he went. Tragically, like many of the men who went to war, Millie's father never came home. In 1945 Millie married James Warren, who was known as 'Jim'. Millie and Jim both retired in 1975.

Millie is a vibrant Member of the Witham

Deafblind Club, enjoying regular outings and chatting and playing games with other club members. Millie recently acted as the 'quiz master' at a club event and read out general knowledge questions to all the other Members! Sue Ryder, Project Officer for West Essex said: "In my opinion, Millie has certainly widened her social circle by attending the club. It is very important to her and she always has a smile on her face".

Millie receives the valuable support of a volunteer from Deafblind UK. They often go out for a ride in the car, to places like Maldon Park in Essex and the most important thing to Millie is getting out of the house even when it is really cold. Millie's favourite saying is: "I mustn't grumble".



Deafblind UK supports 280 deafblind people in Essex. If you would like to get involved and become a volunteer to enable people like Millie to enjoy and experience life, please contact:

Sue Campbell, East Essex on: **07932 165 719** or via email at: **sue.campbell@deafblind.org.uk**

Sue Ryder, West Essex on: **07751 657 525** or via email at: **sue.ryder@deafblind.org.uk**



101st birthday cake. ©iStockphoto.com/Diane Diederich

Features

www.deafblind.org.uk



Volunteering for Deafblind UK



Answering a vital support call from a deafblind person

There are lots of different volunteering opportunities at Deafblind UK, including tele-befrienders, home befrienders, group volunteers, drivers, fundraising volunteers and deafblind 'peer support' volunteers. So there's bound to be something for everyone!

Tele-befriending

Deafblind UK's tele-befrienders scheme aims to reduce the profound isolation and loneliness experienced by many deafblind people.

Wherever possible, volunteer tele-befrienders will be matched to a deafblind person with similar interests. The regular contact enjoyed by both parties will offer a valuable opportunity for them to build a relationship based on friendship. Telephone calls will take place on a regular basis and will typically last between 20 minutes and an hour, depending on the people involved.

Obviously, only those Members who can hear clear speech will be able to access the service at first, (but the long term aim is to include other communication methods when the scheme is firmly established). We hope that Members benefiting from this service will consider

becoming volunteers themselves, to provide peer support to other deafblind people by sharing experiences and offering advice.

Calling good listeners in the Peterborough area!

Volunteer operators are urgently needed for our Information and Advice Line. Training and ongoing support is provided for this vital and rewarding role. If you live in Peterborough and can offer a listening ear for a four hour shift each week (9.00am – 1.00pm and/or 1.00pm – 5.00pm) please contact Emma Lipton on **(01733) 358100** or **emma.lipton@deafblind.org.uk**. No experience is necessary, just the willingness to learn.



All of our volunteering roles make a real difference to the quality of deafblind people's lives. For further information about any of these opportunities, call **0800 132320** or email **info@deafblind.org.uk**

Volunteering

www.deafblind.org.uk

Peterborough United collection

On Saturday 3rd October 2009 we were fortunate to be granted a collection at Peterborough United Football Ground.

12 volunteers wearing Deafblind UK t-shirts and carrying bright red collecting buckets did battle with the cold wind and grit blowing around the stadium and raised a fantastic £567.63 in 2 hours!

Ollie Roddis (aged 7) had a great time. He came face to face with the players and was also one of the top collectors on the day. Ollie has offered to use his natural charm and cheekiness to help collect next year!

Special thanks to all our volunteers for their help and our warm wishes to those who supported Deafblind UK on the day.



Ollie Roddis – Top Collector!



Andrew and friends at the start of the Cycling Challenge (Andrew is second from right)

Last summer we were contacted, out of the blue, by businessman Andrew Lapping who said that he was planning a sponsored cycle ride from Whitehaven to Tynemouth in aid of Deafblind UK in July.

Andrew and 5 friends undertook the challenge – his friends raised money for cancer charities but Andrew wanted to help raise funds to support deafblind people and chose Deafblind UK. He had seen a television programme about

Phenomenal cycling challenge!

a deafblind person and was so moved he decided to support Deafblind UK.

Through friends, family, business contacts and local press Andrew raised a phenomenal £5,155.

He is now planning to undertake an Everest Base Camp Challenge in 2010 and has kindly agreed to support Deafblind UK again. Thanks very much Andrew for all your support.

Fundraising

www.deafblind.org.uk



A gift in memory of a loved one can transform the lives of others

explains Margaret Kirby, our Senior Trusts & Legacy Officer



Tony and family enjoying a birthday celebration with Mum, Elizabeth

Losing a loved one is very difficult. From the many letters we receive a source of comfort is achieved by supporting a cause that was close to their hearts.

Gifts in memory not only commemorate their support of Deafblind UK's work, but also what that person believed in passionately during their lifetime – helping deafblind people live more independent and fulfilling lives.

Tony wrote to us to support our work in this way. He made a donation and wrote a lovely letter about improvements Deafblind UK had helped to make to his mother Elizabeth's life. Tony has kindly agreed for us to quote from his letter in the hope that other people will consider giving a gift in this way.

Please accept our sincere condolences if you have recently lost a family member or friend.

"My mum died aged 94, very deaf from quite a young age. Her sight also deteriorated badly in her last 10 years.

We arranged a visit from you as communication was becoming very difficult. Sister Chris visited and was a great boost.

Later settled in a residential home, my mum received regular visits and always looked forward to these times immensely.

Deafblind UK did a wonderful job improving her life and we can't thank you enough."



James Gillies and Becky Smith race to the finish line



James Gillies and Becky Smith ready to start the race.

On Sunday 11th October 2009 James and Becky took part in the Great Eastern Run, a half marathon around Peterborough. James' mum, Sarah has worked for Deafblind UK for nearly four years in the HR team. Becky and James thought it would be a great opportunity to run for the charity and help to promote awareness and raise much needed funds. One of the ways James and Becky asked for sponsors was by talking to friends and teachers and asking them to imagine what it would be like to be deafblind. This led to a lot of interesting discussions and they were able to raise over £200 between them. They both enjoyed the run, completing the course in just under two hours. Watch this space for the London Marathon in the years to come.

Intrepid bankers from Clydesdale Bank support us!

A huge thank you to 'Le Credit Card Bunch' – Nick Broome, Richard Harrison, Steve Lightfoot and Craig Carter from Clydesdale bank, Peterborough for choosing to support Deafblind UK.

On 27th September these four intrepid bankers completed the Extra Mile Loire Challenge by cycling 500 miles across France and raising over £500 for Deafblind UK.

They all enjoyed the challenge and are now planning their next adventure for 2010.



Kate Coles, Regional Fundraising Co-ordinator, with the Clydesdale team

Who we are...

Deafblind UK is a national charity offering specialist services and human support to deafblind people and those who have progressive sight and hearing loss acquired throughout their lives.

Our aim is to enable people living with this unique disability to maintain their independence, quality of life, and reduce the isolation that Deafblindness creates.

What we do...

We achieve this through campaigning, education and the provision of practical and emotional support via independent living teams, personal communicator guiding and interpreting services, rehabilitation support, advice on adaptive equipment to assist with daily living, a volunteer befriending service and a free Information and Advice line providing information, advocacy and guidance.

Contact us

Deafblind UK

National Centre for Deafblindness
John and Lucille van Geest Place
Cygnet Road
Hampton
Peterborough
PE7 8FD
Tel/Textphone: 01733 358 100
Fax: 01733 358 356
email: info@deafblind.org.uk
www.deafblind.org.uk



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Completing the Great North Swim in record time!

I wanted to write and update you all on my experience at the Great North Swim. Without the support of many of you I would not have been able to attend the event with my guide swimmer, Adrian Waddy and compete in this swim as an equal.



Janice, after completing her swim

On the morning of the swim the weather was sunny but the lake was a cool 15 degrees. We stood on the start line next to famous runner Sonia O'Sullivan who was really nice – she asked me how we were going to swim this course and I explained about the touch based signalling system between me and Adrian.

Great Britain international swimmer, Liam Tancock, started our wave, which had about 150 people swimming, so we started at the back to try to enable us to have a "clear swim" in front of us. After a while we established a good stroke rate and we were on our way despite the challenges of other swimmers and Adrian's goggles filling with water!

We know that 6,000 people took part and I finished just over half way, not bad for an old timer! My thanks go to Peterborough Sports Aid Foundation and all those who sponsored me.

At the time of writing, I have raised almost £3,000 for Deafblind UK.

Great North Swim September 2010

If Janice has inspired you to take up the challenge of the Great North Swim - Deafblind UK has a number of guaranteed places at this fantastic event in 2010. All swimmers will be asked to pay a registration fee of £35 per person, and to raise a minimum of £200 in sponsorship.

There are many exciting events you can get involved in to support Deafblind UK, here are just a few of them:

23rd February

Aerobathon, Peterborough

20th March

Shark Dive, Cheshire

18th April

Brighton Marathon

11th July

British 10K Run, London

4th to 5th September

Great North Swim, Lake Windermere

21st to 27th June

Deafblind Awareness Week

Contact our fundraising team on: **01733 358 100** to find out more.