

Wales Council of the Blind Roundup

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Editorial.

Welcome to the latest edition of Roundup.

As we write the preparations are underway for the Paralympics in Rio. It's great to learn that Bridgend's Rachel Starritt displays her pianistic talents in the promotional video. And good luck to Welsh competitor, Jack Hodgson. Jack grew up on the RAF camp in Llantwit Major where he was able to take part in judo and ballet. He stuck with judo and last year joined the British Judo Centre of Excellence to hone his skills and become the only Welsh VI Paralympian in Rio. Good luck, Jack!

The theme this quarter is about your retail experiences, online and on the high street. We had a number of conversations with people about the difficulties posed by mainstream retailers and the support they may or may not provide. You can't legislate against ignorance, which is why we still find reports of people being refused entry to shops because guide dogs are mistaken as pets by shop staff.

WCB has two new workers, Mared Jarman and Megan John, who, in partnership with UCAN Productions, shall be building a network of young people with sight loss to feed into WCB's *Your Voice: A Shared Vision* project. They've named it *Ein Llais Ein Storm* or *Our Voice Our Storm*, which gives, we hope, a flavour of the passion fuelling the views of young people with sight loss.

Finally, we would like to hear from our readers. We would like to run a letters page so if you have any comments, opinions or experiences that you would like to air in these pages, do get in touch. Email richard@wcb-ccd.org.uk or write to Richard Bowers, Wales Council of the Blind, 2nd Floor, Hallinans House, 22 Newport Road, Cardiff CF24 0DB. Tel: 029 20 473954.

Richard Bowers.

WCB Roundup is published quarterly by **Wales Council of the Blind**, 2nd Floor, Hallinans House, 22 Newport Road, Cardiff CF24 0DB. Tel: 029 20 473954. Email: richard@wcb-ccd.org.uk.

Further copies, in audio CD or large print formats, are available. All editions are online at

<http://www.wcb-ccd.org.uk/roundup.php>

with audio at

<https://soundcloud.com/wales-council-blind>

Our next edition will look at services to support people in housing. Please send articles and notices to richard@wcb-ccd.org.uk

Advertise in WCB Roundup

WCB Roundup is sent to more than 1200 people, in a variety of formats. We are a not-for-profit organisation that hopes to recoup its costs. We seek advertisers for our newsletter so that we can continue to produce this valued journal. Advertisers will reach a readership of individuals with sight loss, optometrists, ophthalmologists, rehabilitation officers, social workers, and organisations working for blind, partially sighted and disabled people.

Our rates are (per edition):

Full A4 page: £150 (black and white) £250 (colour)

1/2 A4 page: £100 (black and white)

Enclosures: single sheet A4 750 copies, supplied in a ready-to-go format: £200.

Larger enclosures (such as booklets): please ask for quote.

To advertise in many editions, please contact us for discounts. Contact Ann via ann@wcb-ccd.org.uk or telephone 02920 473954.

WCB membership.

If you are a person with sight loss living in Wales you are entitled to become a lifetime member of Wales Council of the Blind for a token one-off fee of £1.

Individual Members will have a voice and we want to hear it. You can do this through the Regional Forum of your choice or by contacting WCB directly.

Individual Members will benefit from:

- Involvement with WCB's Regional Groups.
- Advice and information by email or phone.
- An opportunity to become a WCB Director (through election via your Regional Group).
- Help with identifying or setting up a group in your area.

Wales Council of the Blind works with local and regional clubs, societies and individuals to establish informal meetings that enable us to share your views so that we can influence the people who make decisions about the services you receive.

Regional Groups cover the following areas:

West Wales: Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, Mid-Powys.

South East: Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport, Torfaen, South Powys.

South Central: Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, NPT, RCT, Swansea, Vale of Glamorgan.

North: Anglesey, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Wrexham, North Powys.

Contact Rebecca on 029 20 473954 or email bec@wcb-ccd.org.uk.

WCB News.

Wales Eyecare Conference

Bookings are now open for the Wales Eyecare Conference on Friday 16th September at the Cardiff School of Optometry and Vision Science. The event is free, and this year's theme is 'Innovation in Eye Services, Moving Forward'.

The outline programme is:

- opening address from Rebecca Evans AM, Minister for Social Services and Public Health;
- discussions around health and social services including the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act;
- innovation in eye services – reports from the LHBs;
- what matters to the patient;
- performances by UCAN members;
- breakout sessions on the priorities for the Eyecare Delivery Plan.
- An update on the work of the All-Wales Standards of Communication and Information for People with Sensory Loss

The full programme will be confirmed shortly. In the meantime, you can book your place. We recommend you book early as half of the places have been filled. Visit the Eyecare Conference website, <http://www.wcb-ccd.org.uk/conference/conference.php>. If you prefer to book over the phone, ring WCB on 029 2047 3954.

Your Voice: a Shared Vision

Update on service changes in Newport.

In March this year, WCB received news that Newport City Council would not be renewing their contract with Sight Cymru to provide services for people who are vision impaired. Residents in Newport reported their concerns that this would affect the support they receive from their Rehabilitation Officer.

WCB convened a meeting comprising 25 people with sight loss to discuss changes to the service as we understood them and to dispel any myths about it. As a result of the meeting WCB wrote to the Council citing the experiences of the group and the invaluable support provided by the ROVI. We heard how one client was able to prepare and cook a meal in their own home safely in the time since their sight loss; how one was able, after receiving mobility training, to leave their home with confidence for the first time; one reported that she could deal with her correspondence unaided and was taught how to use an accessible phone so that she could stay in contact with friends and family.

The Council has since re-tendered for a generic service, which will be provided by a consortium headed by REACH who have pan-disability experience. REACH will be providing an information and advice service from September 2016. Following meetings with the council, WCB has been told that discussions around provision of a Rehabilitation Officer are continuing and we hope to hear the result of those discussions by the end of the year.

WCB believes that people with sight loss in Newport are waiting too long for support. We are pleased that the Council

recognises the need to reduce the time people are on waiting lists and have urged the Council to look to increase the number of officers within Newport. We will continue to update residents of Newport on news, as and when we receive it.

Ein Llais Ein Storm

Mae 2016 yn cynnig cyfle arbennig i bobol ifanc ac oedolion gyda nam golwg ar draws y wlad i ddod at eu gilydd er mwyn rhannu syniadau, ceisio datrus problemau a mynegu'u barn am wasanaethau i'r rhai â nam golwg yng Nghymru. Dros y tair mlynedd nesaf bydd Ucan Productions yn gweithio mewn partneriaeth gyda Cyngor Cymraeg y Deillion gyda Grant Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Cynialadwy. Ein nôd o fewn y prosiect yw i greu llwyfan i oedolion ifanc ar draws y wlad er mwyn caniatau bod pawb yn cael deud eu barn.

Cyn i ni esbonio y cam nesaf gadewch i ni gyflwyno ein hunain... Mared Jarman a Megan John; dwy ferch ifanc gyda nam golwg sy'n teimlo'n angerddol dros y pwnc uchod. Rydym ynghlwm o fewn y 'byd nam golwg' gan ein bod ni'n derbyn gwasanaethau gan ein llywodraeth ac yn gweithio o fewn sefydliad celfyddydol o'r enw UCAN Productions. Sefydlwyd UCAN yn ôl yn 2005 gan Jane a Bernie Latham gyda'r nôd i ddatblygu hyder lleisiol a chorfforol ym mhlant a pobol ifanc gyda nam golwg yng Nghymru trwy ddrama, theatr a phôb math o hwyl! Dechreuom ni fel aelodau o UCAN dros ddeng mlynedd yn ôl ac erbyn hyn rydym yn gweithio fel rhan o'r tîm ar sawl prosiect. Os hoffech chi ddysgu mwy am UCAN cliciwch ar y link isod i ymweld a'r gwefan. <http://ucanproductions.org>

Felly, y cam nesaf yw i ni ffurfio grwpiau rhanbarthol o oedolion ifanc sy'n rhannu ein angerdd am y nôd. Hoffwn ddarganfod faint o wybodaeth mae pobol yn gwybod am y gwasanaethau lleol sydd ar gael a darganfod ffyrdd newydd, mwy effeithiol o

rannu'r ffynhonnellau yma. Yn ogystal a hyn hoffwn ddefnyddio cyfryngau cymdeithasol i greu cymuned ar-lein lle gallwn drafod yn agored, rhannu ein meddyliau a chadw mewn cysylltiad. Yn olaf, hoffwn wneud gwahaniaeth trwy geisio creu'r un cyfleuoedd a gwasanaethau i bob unigolyn ar draws y wlad. Os oes gan unrhywun diddordeb mewn ymuno â ni wrth i ni geisio greu llais i bobol ifanc â nam golwg yng Nghymru cysylltwch â ni ar 029 20 473 954.

E-bostiwrch

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Twitter: @StormWCB.

Facebook: Einllaiseinstorm - Ourvoiceourstorm

Our Voice Our Storm

A new opportunity is emerging for young adults with sight loss across Wales to have their voices heard. We are looking to discover all the services provided locally and nationally that could benefit you.

Before we explain this more, let us introduce ourselves we are Mared Jarman and Megan John, two young women from Cardiff. We're both Severely Sight Impaired and between us we have a cocktail of eye conditions. We've both been fortunate enough to be founder members of UCAN Productions. UCAN Productions is an arts organization working across Wales to develop vocal and physical confidence in young blind and visually impaired people. For more information about UCAN visit <http://ucanproductions.org>. We both work for UCAN on a variety of projects and are very much involved in the sight loss community.

We now have a new role within UCAN. In partnership with Wales Council of the Blind (as a part of the 3 year Welsh

Government Sustainable Social Services Grant) we will be working specifically around Young Adults. We aim to give all young adults across Wales the opportunity to have their voices and opinions heard. Through setting up regional groups we hope to get everyone involved in helping us create better signposting for local services, shaping and advising on the services that are needed and ensuring that every individual has access to the same services. We will also be utilising social media to share our thoughts and open discussions, create an online community and to promote services.

So we need your help, we want your voice to be heard. We want anyone who has an interest in getting involved and telling us what they think about the services they use and the information that shared. Please get in touch at 029 20 473 954 or email megan@wcb-ccd.org.uk or mared@wcb-ccd.org.uk and join the discussion.

Twitter: [@StormWCB](https://twitter.com/StormWCB).

Facebook: Search for Einllaiseinstorm - Ourvoiceourstorm

West Wales and SE Wales Regional Groups

A meeting is being scheduled for September in Carmarthen and September/early October in Newport. Dates, times and venues to be confirmed. Contact Rebecca at Wales Council of the Blind on 029 20 473954 or email bec@wcb-ccd.org.uk for further information.

We are also looking forward to working with North Wales Society for the Blind and Vision Support in North Wales. More about this soon.

Accessible Shopping.

Your rights.

This information is adapted Equality and Human Rights Commission (<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com>) guidance applies to disabled people when using businesses that offer goods, facilities and services to the public. Disability is one of the 'protected characteristics' covered by the act.

Equality law applies to any business, large or small, that is selling goods. It doesn't matter whether a service is free.

Unlawful discrimination can take a number of forms:

Direct discrimination is when a business treats you worse because of your disability.

Indirect discrimination is when a business does something that has (or would have) a worse impact on you and on other people who share a particular protected characteristic than it has on other people.

Discrimination arising from disability is when a business treats you unfavourably because of something connected to your disability where they cannot show that what they are doing is objectively justified. An example of this could be where a shop bars a disabled person who uses an assistance dog, not because of their disability but because they have a dog with them. (Read 'This blind woman was refused entry into a Cardiff supermarket - because she had a guide dog' at www.walesonline.co.uk)

There are other forms of discrimination such as by being associated with a disabled person such as a companion and you are discriminated against because of this association.

You should not be victimised for complaining about discrimination or for helping someone else to complain. Nor should you be harassed.

In addition, to make sure that, if you are a disabled person, you can use the services of a business as far as is reasonable to the same standard as non-disabled people, the business must make **reasonable adjustments**. The business is not allowed to wait until a disabled person wants to use its services, but must think in advance about what people with a range of impairments might reasonably need.

If you think you might have been treated unfairly and want further advice, you can contact the Equality Advisory Support Service (<https://www.equalityadvisoryservice.com/>) on Freephone 0808 800, or write to them at Freepost, Equality Advisory Support Service, FPN4431.

Your retail experiences

You gave us your experiences of using high street shops, cafes, supermarkets and on-line. There seems to be a greater awareness of the existence of the rights of disabled people, but the remains an onus on the individual to adopt their own strategies to gain access to goods and services. Thanks to everyone who contacted us.

Supermarkets

One individual in Mid Wales finds smaller grocers to be more helpful than larger supermarkets:

‘I am fortunate that a Spar shop owner/manager and ALL his staff do really go out of their way to help you achieve a pleasant shopping experience, but, without ‘doing it all for you’. On the other hand if I wanted total help I only have to ask. As soon as I enter the shop, which is rather small, someone is soon there offering to find something for me.’

This contrasts with his experience in larger stores such as Tesco, where it can be difficult to find where to go for help. Staff prefer to ask you what you want and fetch it for you while you wait. Although this sort of help is fine for some, he feels that most vision impaired people prefer to be shown where the item can be found and be given options if the exact item is not available.

‘This quick approach is the preferred method of most large companies because it offers a faster turnaround of customer to staff time. The shops should be offering you the chance to accompany them to the source of the goods, as opposed to the feeble offer often shown because you will slow the process. If you can see it for yourself there is a chance you will find it for yourself the next time.’

However, larger supermarkets are popular with some. One woman from Cardiff cannot speak too highly of the support provided at ASDA’s Coryton store. She has been a customer there for several years, and has established good relations with many of the staff. They are all very good, but one particular staff member is rated particularly highly. She goes beyond expectations by pointing out special offers which she thinks will be of interest. This customer also buys non-food items, such as

clothes, from ASDA, and the staff member has got to know her preferences, and provides valuable advice in this area. She uses local community transport to visit the store, and has been told by the driver that ASDA generally has a good reputation for its service to disabled customers.

This customer feels that 'being nice to people' helps her to get good service in return, and regularly thanks the ASDA staff for their help. She also makes the general recommendation that you ring a store the day before your visit to ensure that someone is available to help. When doing this with Waitrose in Pontrennau, they were able to suggest times when the store would be less busy.

David from Cardiff reports good support from his Sainsbury's Local store, but only if staff are available. "There's a large number of staff in Sainsbury's but I find that there are certain staff who know me and my choices, so I go straight to the manned checkouts where it's likely that they'll ask me if I need help. I've noticed that at certain times of the day there are fewer staff around because they are on a break. Even then, there is usually somebody on hand to help but there have been a couple of occasions however when no-one could help. The one person who was on the checkout did apologise for the inconvenience. Seeing as I was only after a couple of items, it wasn't a major issue although had I been in need of quite a few things there and then, having no-one on hand would have been a bigger problem."

Iceland gets a good report from a guide dog user in Newport:

'I now only have to step through the door and someone tells me they will be with me. Once I have an assistant, which even when they are busy never takes more than a few minutes, I am asked what I want and nothing is too much trouble. I am quite often

then taken to their till when I am finished and they put my shopping through for me. If not then they will wait with me in the queue until the cashier takes over.'

A Carmarthen shopper felt that the customer service provided in budget supermarkets such as Aldi and Lidl, was poor – probably because they employ minimal numbers of staff to keep costs low, and compete with other stores on price rather than service.

High Street Stores

Signage and labelling is a problem reported by many people. Issues include signage within stores, which is often too small, hung too high or unreadable due to the colour scheme used. One shopper expressed a preference for large black print, in a non-italic font – and felt that many older people would prefer this.

Labels were often a problem as they have very small print, and one person commented that labels on clothes in Next did not specify the colour. Marks and Spencer in Carmarthen was commended for its very helpful staff by two people who responded, and we also received good reports of service in John Lewis. Many larger stores provide a Personal Shopper service, which can be very useful for vision impaired people. However, buying, and trying on, clothes can present challenges, as the article by Andrea Gordon later in this issue shows.

A Cardiff woman told us that she had recently discovered that Primark has a disabled till point on every level, where you don't need to queue.

David feels that familiarity with staff is key: "I use Boots at Capital Centre, Cardiff to buy toiletries and medicines about once a fortnight. I go straight to the checkout and a member of staff asks what can they help me with today. They even know

my preferred brands as I'm a regular there and I'll walk around the store with them to collect the items and check the prices. They also tell me if items are part of an offer and when that offer is due to expire, which is helpful. The staff are polite and friendly and are always happy to help me when I go in.”

David finds he uses a mixed approach to gaining access when buying birthday and Christmas cards. No access to the printed word makes this difficult without the help of someone reading and describing them. “I tend to first look through the card ranges online at scribbler.com. The text on the card is provided on the website, so I can access these. The trouble is, not all of them are described. In this scenario, I will e-mail the customer service team. They are really good at giving a description of the cards to me and are always happy to help further if needs be. If I find a card I want, I'm able to buy it through the site although the option to add text inside is not an accessible function for me, so I have to rely on someone writing the text for me when the card arrives or I have asked the customer service team to create the card for me. Failing doing it online, I'll go into the Cardiff store where the staff are great, some of them know me as I'm a regular and they are not fazed by having to read the captions to me despite many of the cards being quite rude!”

Cafés and bars

Many people enjoy visiting a café for a break when they are out shopping – but this can be stressful for vision impaired people. The availability of large print menus was a problem for many. Although staff are prepared to read out the menu, it is all too easy to forget items, and embarrassing to ask for them to be repeated. This problem could easily be avoided if a large print version was available.

Smartphone and tablet users may be interested to know that there is an app called ‘Good Food Talks’ which has been

designed to address this problem. Using the accessibility features on your device, you can control the font size, change the colours, or have our menus spoken out loud. The app can be used in participating restaurants, including chains such as Pret a Manger, TGI Fridays and Carluccio's. You can find out more on the website <http://goodfoodtalks.com/>.

One person felt that locally run, independent cafés provided the best service, particularly to regular customers, possibly because they had a stronger motivation to encourage repeat customers. This view was supported by another respondent. He felt that the low levels of lighting, a common feature of cafés, made the well-known chains inaccessible, but were less problematic in independent places, where the staff would volunteer help. The staff at the three branches of Waterloo Tea were commended by this person. A guide dog user from Newport described the service at Drago Lounge as 'dog friendly', and also recommended Cupcakes and Cocktails as a place to visit when out on her own.

On nights out, David finds he has to take care to make the experience a good one. "When going out for drinks with friends, I tend to stick to places that I know and am familiar with. This is so I don't have to rely on my friends to guide me to the bar and toilets. One such place is Buffalo Bar in Cardiff. I find that the bar staff are kind and friendly, they're happy to bring drinks to my table as well as reading what's on the menu."

But even this familiar environment can be problematic. "The layout of the tables and chairs inside is pretty good, there is a clear path from the bar out to the beer garden, although when it gets a bit crowded inside, then the path can sometimes become obstructed when people move tables and chairs around. This can be more problematic when coming back inside from the garden to the bar or toilets."

One respondent with nystagmus reported “My sight condition makes it extremely difficult, especially in poor lighting, to read menus in restaurants. Now, when you are with family and friends it isn’t a problem as you can just ask them to read it. However, when you are meeting someone for the first time you don’t always want to explain why you can’t read the menu and getting your magnifying glass out will only lead to a string of questions or an awkward moment. In the past, this has led me to ordering the same lunch or meal as the person I am with, saying things like, ‘that sounds nice, I think I’ll have the same’. This is no longer the case. With most restaurants displaying their menu on-line I can now use my iPhone to zoom-in and decide what to eat before I arrive. It just means that I need to be more organised in relation to where we should eat.”

Guide Dogs Cymru have told us that any guide dog user experiencing access problems in shops or cafés should get in touch with them in the first instance. Telephone 0118 983 5555.

Online shopping

Most of the feedback we received related to visiting shops. One member of Cardiff Institute for the Blind told us that she only shopped online when she was at the CIB offices, where people whom she trusted were available to help.

The Ebay app on a smartphone was recommended by one person, who had used this site to purchase everything he needed for his baby daughter.

Much depends on the accessibility of the website*, with Next being cited as an example of a particularly difficult site to use. David uses a betting website and has experienced a mix of access problems there.

“I’ve always use SkyBet on my iPhone. I’ve had an account with them for a number of years. In the old days you could place bets over the phone as well as online. At that time I found the online platform was accessible to me through Voice-Over on my iPhone but they made alterations to the site and it seemed less accessible.”

David explained the difficulty to SkyBet staff and they made a ‘reasonable adjustment’ by adding a note to his account so that they could allow him to place bets over the phone.

“I preferred it when I could place bets myself on my iPhone because I could skim through at any given time.”

David wanted to regain the convenience of not having to phone his bets in so he sought another solution.

“I inquired about placing bets through their live online chat and I was told this would be possible but that odds can fluctuate so any delays could possibly hinder getting the odds I was after. I did it once but there was indeed quite a delay between asking to place the bet and it actually happening. On that occasion the delay didn’t have any impact on the odds, but it highlighted the problem that would arise when the betting market is more frantic.”

*** Editor’s note:** Some supermarkets offer the option to order over the phone if the website home delivery service is not easy to use. Sainsburys customers can order over the phone by calling 0800 328 1700 then select option 1 followed by option 3. Waitrose customers can order by phone by calling 0800 188 884 and choosing option 4.

The blind girl's guide to ... bra shopping!

Andrea Gordon tells us her tale of retail hell.

I imagine that even for sighted women, shopping for a bra can be frustrating and embarrassing, and being blind means you can't experience it alone!

"I don't want black."

"Why not?" my husband asks. "You'll wear it won't you?" Well the answer is yes of course. Only a sighted man could underestimate the time it takes to check which colour undies you've haplessly pulled out of your over stuffed knicker draw. They're, in my case, accompanied by strings of lace which in an impetuous moment I bought to tantalise but, on the average morning, office bound, tired and in a rush, just complicate matters. In the absence of anyone to tantalise, they go uncelebrated and the good old reliables get another outing. Sadly, black bras - no, darling, I'll stick to white or nude.

Now *there's* another phenomenon for us blind girls to tackle - what is nude? Having never seen colour, my deprived mind will offer me a tactile alternative for a concept it can't even conceive of, and horribly, in the case of nude, I get the sensation of naked flesh flashing before my fingertips! it's not the hardened muscle of a well toned body, rather the last naked flesh I touched, predictably it's my own.

So, here we are in Debenhams with me imagining a nude bra looking like what my upper thigh feels like whilst my other half is groping through racks of bras. Suspended in a typically

inaccessible way from over-loaded racks, they require us to kneel down to examine them on our knees, no help in sight, until *he* finds one, in my size, and *not* in black.

“Better take a few.”

“Why? Aren’t they all the same?” he asks, not unreasonably. Being a man, he hasn’t experienced the propensity of bras to lie, and the ability of boobs, or bosoms, or whatever you call them, to insult you about their size, like all their kind, prone to changing their minds about just what fits.

“I’ll take a size bigger and a size smaller, in both types and don’t tell me which size is which!” I suspect that to any women reading this, it makes perfect sense, but perhaps not to men? So my poor husband, on his knees and surrounded by plungers and balconies, uplifts and gel inserts, begins once more to manipulate the tangled mess of straps and wires across the rails.

“Can you guide me please?” I ask the silent body which I believe is located roughly two feet away somewhere to the North West.

“I’d like to try these on.” The body extends a bit of itself towards me, hooks on to the bra hangers and commences a sort of extended shunting motion to suggest I should follow.

“You can have this one,” she says, sliding what sounds like a curtain across which I take to be a doorway.

“I would prefer a room with something to hang all these on, otherwise I’ll get very mixed up.” It’s a while before I realise that they’ve gone, leaving the curtain open. In the absence of a door, or hooks, or in fact any idea of how I’m going to do this, I stand, bras akimbo, waving my cane and listening. I’m just about to

rush the exit, or where I think it is, when a voice says “Are you ok?”

“No, I’d like a room with hooks; shall I go somewhere else in the store to try these on?”

“There’s one free now,” she says.

And now begins the real work: getting bras off hangers is a skill much under rated. What man would waste time pulling elastic through tiny slits in plastic hangers?

I create a system for locating which ones fit and which don’t. Using the indispensable hooks, I narrow it down to two, but decide that neither of them is quite right. As I reach for my own familiar friend discarded on the changing room stool... or so I thought, I realise that she isn’t there. You should forgive the allocation of a gender to a bra but there is absolutely no doubt that they are female. The same strict rule cannot be applied to knickers which have some asexual qualities, and those dreadful control pants - what woman in her right mind would subject her beautiful curves to such an instrument of torture?

I begin the random search of the floor with hands that must not stray under the partition to next door. The importance of this is linked to the possibility of provoking a scream from the occupants, but equally to the risk of swiping my good old bra across the tiles to no man’s land or no woman’s land where she will be forever lost to me. I continue with a careful tactile sweep through dust, dirt and discarded labels until, joyfully, I find her.

In the end, I still don’t have a new bra. Clasping the gathered fripperies in one hand, and extending my long cane in the other, I step carefully out of the cubicle. An animated conversation about chicken fillets is dead ahead, but as I infiltrate myself into

its midst, the story of the fillet which fell out on the dance floor, stops.

“Are you ok?” says a voice.

“Can you take these from me please, none of them fit,” I say, anxious now to get out.

“Just leave them on the rail by the door,”

“No!” My patience is definitely at its end. “Can you take them, it’s quite difficult to find my way and carry these as well”

“Oh, are you blind? I’m so sorry,” she says, but clearly it’s far too late.

I know what you’re thinking, but don’t remind me about the Personal Shopper, or the bra fitter. I prefer to embark on intimate tasks like choosing a bra alone. Fitters never warm their hands, and I can’t tell what they’re looking at in the mirror. I admit to being a control freak, but they’re *my* breasts and it’s *my* money, that old story about the number of women who wear poorly fitting bras is a commercial incentive to make you dump all those lovely comfortable bras and go shopping for ones that cut off the blood supply to your brain. Men, of course, would firmly and robustly reject any assertion that they are wearing the wrong pants, whether or not it affects the appearance of the contents. Sadly, us girls are prone to insecurity about our womanly charms, and those of us without sight are no different. My plea in the “blind girl’s guide” is to always find a changing room with hooks, have fun choosing your bra and enjoy being free from the tyranny of your own reflection. Seeing yourself only seems, in sighted sisters, to provoke dissatisfaction and insecurity, so, if I can use that much under-exploited adage, “love the skin you’re in!”

Reviews.

UCAN Annual Festival – double review

Ben Richards reports on his experience of the UCAN Annual Festival.

The UCAN festival, held in the Millennium Centre Wales last month, was a fantastic all-inclusive event aimed at engaging with young vision impaired people through the use and structure of the arts and drama. The day consisted of three rotating workshops which all had different activities based around various aspects of the arts, the first being a sound production workshop which gave individuals the opportunity to explore how sound production is used and implemented within theatre and media through sound effects and music.

The second workshop was a circus-based workshop giving every one the opportunity to try new activities such as plate spinning, juggling and hula-hoop. This gave many people, including me, an opportunity to try something completely different and for me especially to step outside my comfort zone and try something new.

The third workshop was music based, although the focus was to learn and play a unique instrument called the ukelele, everybody was assisted in learning basic chords and a chorus so that we could all play in sync with one another to a song which was a fantastic laugh – it was something I thought I would never be able to do but was actually pretty good! These workshops were rotated throughout the day so that the three groups we were separated into all had an equal time and opportunity at each workshop.

These workshops were then concluded with a performance at the latter stages of the day, performances from various people some who had learnt new talents and some who wanted to show their existing talents - it was incredible! All the performances blew me away from the sublime performance on the piano by Rachel - which was definitely a top highlight for me - to the outstanding vocal performances by all! The show really was the icing on the cake of what was a magnificent day.

Last but not least though was an additional project called UCAN create. This was an installation piece that ran through out the festival where individuals could book a time slot, and then would have a ten-minute slot to indulge in the interactive experience. I must say hats off! This was a thrilling, fascinating experience which was not only accessible but unique, in which different stories or scenarios are played out through a well developed set up. All in all it was an incredible day which allowed me to get stuck into new things, meet new people and most importantly have buckets of fun. I cannot say enough what a pleasure it was to be part of such a memorable day.

And this from Jake Sawyers ...

Every summer visually impaired and blind young people of Wales are invited to take over the Wales Millennium Centre to take part in the annual UCAN Productions performance festival. The festival is the highlight of the UCAN calendar, it is a celebration of diversity, achievement and friendship.

UCAN's mission is to help improve the vocal and physical confidence of VI and blind young people and this yearly event is a fantastic showcase of the talents of their membership. The afternoon is where this is really demonstrated. Members are given the chance to perform on the Glanfa stage. This is a public performance space that visitors and passers-by can attend.

Last year UCAN celebrated their tenth anniversary. I have been a member for nearly seven years. The thing I love most about the performance festival is seeing how my friends have all grown as performers. As an actor myself, it is rare that you get to work with the same people for this long period of time. I feel so lucky that I can say (and my friends at UCAN would agree) that we are the product of UCAN's mission. Working with Bernard and Jane Latham and all of the UCAN trainers over the years has dramatically improved my confidence.

The performances this year on the public stage felt very refined and professional. As compere, members of the public approached me on a number of occasions with questions like "Is that person actually visually impaired". I felt very proud to reply with a big yes! Every year we take over the WMC to showcase our music and performance skills. Another thing we do is change perceptions of what VI and blind people can achieve.

www.jakesawyers.com

Across the Sector.

Visionary Conference

Registration has now opened for the Visionary Conference 2016. 'Free place' and 'early bird' offers are available until Monday 22nd August. The event takes place at Aston Conference Centre, Birmingham on 20th and 21st October.

The conference will cover a range of topics including fundraising; children and young people; rehabilitation; sight loss and dementia; technology; information, advice and guidance. Contact the conference team via conference@visionary.org.uk or telephone 07568 108117.

Guide Dogs merging with Blind Children UK

“You may remember that in 2013 Blind Children UK became part of the Guide Dogs family. After careful consideration, our trustees and directors have now decided to integrate Guide Dogs and Blind Children UK so that we will be one charity from January 2017.

“We will provide all of the current Blind Children UK services under the Guide Dogs name and these will continue to run as they do now. The life-changing guide dog service remains at the heart of Guide Dogs' mission and purpose and will not be affected by this change.

“Becoming a single charity will mean we can provide support for people with sight loss throughout their lives for as long as they

need it. It will also allow us to support more children and young people in future.

“Over the past three years we have tripled the number of children and families supported, built good relationships with partners, commissioners and professionals. We have seen significant success in our campaigns across the UK. We have also doubled Blind Children UK’s fundraising income, however, we have not achieved the levels of fundraising needed to independently support the charity and the continued growth in services.

“We strongly believe that integrating the two charities is the best and most responsible way for us to build on Blind Children UK’s strengths and continue to provide high quality, crucial services for children and young people with sight loss.”

Glaucoma to be treated closer to home in Gwent

Following the Welsh Government's decision that people with suspected glaucoma will receive follow-up treatment and checks at their local optometrists instead of in hospital, the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board has announced that three high street opticians have been chosen to deliver the new service in Gwent.

The eye care centres being delivered by Specsavers (Friars, Newport), Julian Davies Opticians (Newport) and Phillips Opticians (Blaenavon, Torfaen), are intended to reduce waiting times for outpatient assessments, as patients will be able to access specialist eye care close to their homes, without having to travel to hospitals. The Health Board is expecting to refer more than 4,000 patients per year to the new community eye centres, reducing waiting time for treatment.

What's happening in Powys.

Visual Impairment Breconshire

VIB became a registered charity in 2004. It provides a voice for people with sight loss in Breconshire. Its services are available to anyone with permanent and uncorrectable sight loss.

Membership is open to anyone who supports their aims but it is not necessary to be a member to benefit from their services.

They provide:

- Grants to individuals and organisations in south Powys
- Friendly Phone Service - twice a month vision impaired volunteers call others who perhaps live alone or in isolated areas. This service operates from the School Room of the Watton Presbyterian Chapel in Brecon. VIB welcomes anyone to stop by between 1.30 and 3.00 on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month for a cup of tea, a biscuit and a chat. They also have a large collection of audio books in the Chapel (mostly on tape cassette) available.

For more information, visit www.vibreconshire.uk.

Radnorshire Association for the Blind

Radnorshire Association for the Blind is a society of blind and partially sighted people and of people challenged by failing sight. The group is open to all visually impaired Radnorshire residents. Membership of RAB offers people with vision impairment social outings, support and contact throughout the Radnorshire area.

They provide:

- contact to everyone who registers with them
- free advice to clients about services in the area

- a Christmas dinner with entertainment to all members
- a free summer trip to members
- a Spring and Autumn Tea Party
- hardship grants to help towards the cost of equipment to help people with visual impairment

For more information, visit www.radnorblind.co.uk.

Welshpool and District VI Group

Meetings are held at the Catholic Church, Mount Street, Welshpool on alternate Tuesdays between 2pm-4pm from March to December. Guest speakers are a regular feature. For further information, contact Rebecca at WCB on 029 20 473954.

Bell Bank Club

The Club, which is based in Hay on Wye, has been running for 24 years, providing a place for vision impaired people to get together. The group meet at the Conservative Club in Hay-on-Wye every Thursday between 2pm-4pm.

The group has a programme of activities that include a monthly exercise class, speakers, games, quizzes, an outing once a month and much more.

If you are registered blind, have uncorrectable sight loss or if you are looking for a volunteering opportunity, they would be pleased to hear from you. For further information, contact Eileen Bufton on 01497 820897.

RNIB Powys ECLO

The Powys Eye Care Liaison Officer (ECLO) offers information and guidance to those living with sight loss and their families. ECLOs ensure that those affected by sight loss are aware of and can access all of the practical, social and emotional support and information that they may need.

The ECLO for Powys is Keira Brooks. Keira currently attends the Ophthalmology clinics held at the community hospitals at Llandrindod Wells, Brecon, Ystradgynlais and Llanidloes. She also provides an outreach service on Tuesdays at Hereford County Hospital. The ECLO service is completely free and can be accessed by anyone regardless of whether they are a patient or not. Keira can be contacted in person at any of the above clinics or by using the following details;

Mobile: 07701 295138

Email: keira.brooks@rnib.org.uk

Address: Glan Irfon Health & Social Care, Love Lane, Builth Wells LD2 3DG.

What sort of help is provided by Powys Social Services?

Powys Social Services employs fully qualified Rehabilitation Officers who can assess your needs. You can be referred by:

- An optician
- An ophthalmologist
- Your doctor
- Another professional or support worker
- Yourself via 01597 827666

The assessment will identify the problems that your reduced vision is causing you on a day-to-day basis. The Rehabilitation Officer will work with you to put together a rehabilitation plan that will list the help you need to live independently. This may range from simple things like putting tactile markers on your cooker and teaching your carer to guide you safely, to more complex support like teaching independent outdoor mobility using a cane. You will be able to work through your rehabilitation plan at your own speed.

Have Your Say!

Hold government to account on its record on disabled people's rights.

In 2017 the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities will be examining the UK's compliance with the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (UNCPRD). This is an opportunity for disabled people in the UK to let the committee know the big human rights issues that we face – and for the Committee to learn whether, for instance, disabled people are enjoying the right to be included in the community, the right to education, to work, to justice and more.

The committee will receive a report from the UK's civil society organisations – led by organisations of disabled people. Disability Wales is working with Disability Rights UK to produce the report from England and Wales.

You can get involved by attending events. They shall be advertised on the DW website at <http://www.disabilitywales.org/> or contact jason.jaspal@disabilityrightsuk.org

DWP reviews PIP assessments

The Department of Work and Pensions is carrying out a second review of how Personal Independence Payment (PIP) assessments are working, and the reviewer has issued a call for evidence. The review includes all stages of the PIP process, with a

particular focus on the use of further evidence in the claim process, data sharing and the claimant experience.

The views of organisations and individuals who have information about how all aspects of the PIP process and assessment are operating are welcomed. To find out more, and submit your response, visit the UK Government website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/personal-independence-payment-pip-assessment-second-independent-review-call-for-evidence>. To obtain documents in alternative formats, send an email to pip.independentreview@dwp.gsi.gov.uk. The closing date for responses is 16th September 2016.

Welsh Government Consultations

Details of all WG consultations can be found on their website, <http://wales.gov.uk/consultations>. The following may be of particular interest:

- Consultation on phase 1 implementation of the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (closes 20 September)
- A future demand-led fuel poverty scheme to succeed Welsh Government Warm Homes - Nest (closes 19 October)

If you would like a consultation document in a different format, email the document title and the preferred format to CustomerHelp@wales.gsi.gov.uk or call 029 2082 3683.

Opportunities.

Welsh Blind Drive brought to you by Speed Of Sight

Do you know someone who is blind or disabled, who would love to drive but can't?

Well now they can! Speed Of Sight charity are bringing their specially adapted dual controlled track cars which can be driven by disabled children or adults alongside a qualified instructor.

15th September 2016 at Llandow Circuit, Llandow, Cowbridge, Vale of Glamorgan, CF71 7PB.

A Speed Of Sight driving experience is a day to remember...

If you are interested booking for the Wales Blind Drive please register your interest by calling 0161 714 4567 or visit www.speedofsight.org/events

Scarborough holiday flat

Do you and your family love the seaside? Would you like an inexpensive break at any time of the year just two minutes from the sea? LOOK, the National Federation of Families with Visually Impaired Children, has a holiday flat in the lovely

seaside town of Scarborough, a traditional Victorian town and the largest holiday resort on the North Yorkshire Coast.

The flat is accessible with two bedrooms, one double (with space for a cot, and one with bunk beds plus an extra single bed. The LOOK flat provides an opportunity for every family with a visually impaired child to enjoy a seaside break and can be booked for both long and short breaks at very reasonable rates (currently £45 per night or £300 per week).

For more information or to book call 01432 376314 or email information@look-uk.org. To find out about LOOK, visit their website, <http://www.look-uk.org/>.

Skype chat groups

LOOK, the organisation supporting vision impaired children, young people and their families, is launching Skype chat groups aimed at young people with a vision impairment.

- Are you aged between 11 and 29?
- Do you want to join one of LOOK's Skype groups and meet other vision impaired people of your age?

Or, if you're over 18, why not become one of LOOK's Skype group leaders. You'll get lots of training and guidance all which will look great on your CV, and it will be fun. You could join one of the following groups:

- 11 years old to 14
- 14 years old to 16
- 16 years old to 18
- 18 years and over or further and higher education students

This is part of a new mentoring project to be launched later this summer. If you are interested, please contact: information@look-uk.org.

Transitions workshop

Blind Children UK Cymru is running a workshop on behalf of RNIB for parents of transition aged children (14 years +) with a visual impairment to help them gain confidence and practical skills to support their child's preparation for the transition to living independently.

The workshop is composed of two parts:

1. Learn what 'transition' means and the importance of your child's:
 - Leisure and socialisation skills
 - Problem solving & self-advocacy skills
 - Understanding of career options and sourcing information
 - Acceptance of current skills
 - Mobility skills & Independence skills
2. Learn ways to 'step back' including:
 - Giving your child more opportunities to learn
 - Giving your child time to undertake tasks around the home without impacting upon family routine
 - Acknowledging your own needs within the relationship you have with your child
 - Assigning tasks to your child that encourage independence yet help the family unit
 - Understand the importance of communicating across the family regarding the need to step back

This free event lasts for three hours and will be held in the South Wales area during August. The date and location will be confirmed later, depending upon demand.

For full details, call Adrian Linney on 0845 372 7405 / 07795 611 467, or send an email to adrian.linney@guidedogs.org.uk.

Festival of VI Sport

The British Blind Sport National Visually Impaired (VI) Festival of Sport is taking place on **Saturday 22nd October**.

If you are blind or partially sighted and aged 5+ and have ever wanted to have a go at Paralympic Sports such as goalball and judo or non-traditional sports such as zumba, yoga and rock climbing then why not come along to this **FREE** event, which has been generously sponsored by the Rotary Club of Coventry Phoenix.

When & Where:

Date: Saturday 22nd October 2016 from 10:00 – 16:30pm.

Venue: Bablake School, Coundon Rd, Coventry, CV1 4AU.

Transport:

The closest train station is Coventry.

A free mini-bus meet & greet service is available for participants throughout the day at Coventry Train Station

Get involved

To receive additional information or to register for this fantastic event please contact Lauren Impey:

Email: participation@britishblindsport.org.uk

Telephone: 07929 356428

Publications & resources.

VI guide for parents

RNIB has produced an updated version of 'Information about vision impairment: Guide for parents'. This is a comprehensive guide to all aspects of bringing up a vision impaired child, and takes account of feedback from parents.

Topics covered include:

- General information on vision impairment, such as the development of vision, how it is measured, what your child can see and the role of the various professionals.
- The early years, such as how to communicate, choosing toys, safety and playing with other children.
- The school years, including choosing schools, methods of learning and socialising.

There is also a glossary, and list of useful contact points. You can download the guide here:

<http://www.rnib.org.uk/information-everyday-living-family-friends-and-carers/resources-parents-blind-or-partially-sighted>

Eye drops fact sheet

Problems with putting in eye drops is one of the most common reasons for people defaulting from their glaucoma treatment, and can lead to further damage and sight loss. Now, the International Glaucoma Association and Seeability have produced an easy to read factsheet which explains how it's done. It will be useful for anyone who users eye drops, and for those who care for them.

You can download the factsheet from

https://www.seeability.org/uploads/files/PDFs_Books_Easy_Read_/Eye-drops.pdf.

10 principles of good practice in vision rehabilitation

This new guide from RNIB tells people what they can expect from vision rehabilitation services in ten straightforward steps. Although primarily designed for people in England with reference to the Care Act, most of the information is equally applicable in Wales.

You can download the guide here:

<http://www.rnib.org.uk/services-we-offer-advice-professionals-social-care-professionals/resources-rehabilitation-workers>

Employment skills guide

Disability Rights UK has produced a new guide for people with newly acquired disabilities or health conditions. 'Get back to

where we do belong' includes information on what to expect from employers; advice and signposting on careers, education, training opportunities and welfare benefits; coping strategies and resilience. To download a copy, go to <http://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/> and search on the guide's title.

Links to all of the above documents are currently also available from WCB's bulletin at www.wcb-ccd.org.uk/news.php

A better future for blind children in Wales?

Blind Children UK Cymru has recently carried out research on habilitation services for vision impaired children and young people (CYP) with Local Authorities in Wales. The survey was a full census of the 22 local authorities in Wales and an exceptional response rate of 100 per cent was achieved.

The research has revealed many problems with the existing services, and Blind Children UK Cymru has called for:

- Local authorities to raise the importance of habilitation services for children and young people with a visual impairment, and be reminded of their responsibilities in relation to Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act.
- Joined up working between health, education and social services teams to ensure a prompt and effective referral pathway to habilitation services.
- All local authorities to have access to at least one full time habilitation specialist.
- All local authorities to use the NatSIP Eligibility Criteria for Scoring Support Levels when delivering services to children

and young people with a visual impairment and their families.

Copies of the full research report are available in PDF and accessible Word formats on request from Cymru@blindchildrenuk.org.

Access2books – children’s stories made accessible

Roundup invited Eileen Finch to tell you about a project in Merthyr and Rhondda, where 100 books were given to people in the community.

I’m a grandmother from Bedfordshire with little central vision – later stages of junior Stargardts disease. I was diagnosed at 30 and I’m now 62. I’ve lost out over the years, such as not recognising my daughter at her school sports day. I’ve also learnt a lot about how people - including me before I had Stargardts - make such massive assumptions about those of us who have different conditions. People think it's awful that we can't see, when in fact most of us can see, and those who can't don't spend their lives thinking about it. Instead we get on with living: sharing books, for example, with the children in our families - if we can find these books that is!

In 2011 I was struck by the lack of consideration for people who didn't have books provided for them in an accessible format, like myself. I couldn't help my grandson to read a simple early reading book called Penguin and I was really annoyed and sad.

So my partner Mike and I decided to make children's storybooks to include as many disabled people as possible and for everyone to share. From this Access2books was born. We

chose 75 point print (massive), with braille for text, picture descriptions, and enhancing the illustrations as best we can. I found out the largest font RNIB library had available was 26 point and I know many people who can't use this.

After making our first book we learnt how and what we needed to do to make it beautiful. We spent a good while getting the book design right. My local librarian took a draft book to a big book distributor in Birmingham and then we were on our way getting books to schools and libraries.

We scan each book and place text and illustration across each double page. We improve each illustration to make it easier to see. The braille file is made for text and illustration description at the bottom of each page. They are beautiful just like those made for people who read standard publications.

Our intention is to get these books known throughout the UK and beyond by those who need them and by mainstream book providers. 6,000 books are currently on library and school shelves and we want to see them in bookshops in the future.

Wrexham, Merthyr and Rhondda have been our great supporters and you will also find our books today in Carmarthenshire, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, Abergavenny, Newport, Monmouthshire and Aberystwyth.

If you can't read print or you know a child or adult in the same situation, then tell us and we can send you a loan book. Take it to your library and ask them to stock some for others to use. Let us know what they say, and spread the word!

Call Eileen on 01525 853825 or 07976 666958 or email efinch@access2books.org. Look at their website and buy a book. www.access2books.org

Power for Life

Western Power Distribution (WPD) operates the electricity distribution network in the Midlands, South Wales and the South West. Put simply, our role is to ensure the power network of poles and pylons, cables, wires and substations – the infrastructure that we all rely upon to live our lives to the full – delivers electricity to our homes and businesses around the clock.

Power cut? Call our emergency number 0800 6783 105

Sometimes power cuts can happen for reasons beyond our control. During a power cut we are able to help.

We know it can be particularly worrying if you rely on electricity for medical equipment or if you are elderly, very ill or disabled. If you depend on electricity for a reason such as using a nebuliser, a kidney dialysis machine, an oxygen machine, a ventilator – or any other reason – you should register with us.

WPD provides a FREE Priority Service Register, which helps us to identify customers who may need a little extra help during a power cut.

If you join our FREE Priority Service Register we can:

- Give you a direct number to call in the event of a power cut so you can get straight through to us.
- Agree a password with you before we visit you, so you feel safe
- Provide special help, if needed, through the RVS (Royal Voluntary Service) or British Red Cross.
- Ring and tell you about planned interruptions to your electricity supply.
- Keep you as informed as possible in the event of an unplanned power cut.

To join, call **0800 9177 953**, or visit our website
www.westernpower.co.uk

Events.

Does that include us?

Cardiff-based art gallery g39 presents a series of workshops and performances throughout August based around the themes of access and inclusion. Events include UCAN Create's immersive installation '1FootSq' and 'Inclusion by Design' (more below). There's a lot more besides. Contact Gail Howard at g39 via gail@g39.org or 07930 397982 and visit www.g39.org for the full programme. We hope to feature a review here in the next edition.

Creativity vs Accessibility

Mared Jarman and Megan John are founder members of UCAN Productions will be running a workshop around the theme of inclusive by design. As young visually impaired women they believe in creatively embedding accessibility into the core right from the very beginning and therefore making it mainstream.

During the workshop Mared and Megan will be exploring new and fun ways of making accessibility sexy and interesting. It doesn't always have to be an expensive and annoying last-minute add-on.

g39, City Road, Cardiff.
Friday 5th of August
3pm - 5pm

North Wales Mobile Information Unit

The schedule for August 2016 is:

- Friday 5th, Blaenau Ffestiniog Diffwys Sq, 10:30am – 3:00 pm
- Monday 15th, Morrisons Holyhead, 10:30 am - 3:00 pm
- Tuesday 30th, Prestatyn Retail Park, 9:30 am – 3:30 pm

Please check Vision Support's website

<http://www.visionsupport.org.uk/> for further details. It is recommended that you ring 01745 338914 to confirm details before travelling.

RNIB's Online Today events

Online Today, RNIB's lottery funded technology project, is coming to libraries and community hubs across Wales in the next few months. The team can give help with Smartphones, Tablets, Laptop and E-readers of all descriptions. Dates and venues are as follows:

August

- Thursday 4th, Llanelli Library
- Monday 8th, Ely and Caerau Community Hub
- Tuesday 9th, Carmarthen Library
- Friday 12th, Pembroke Dock Library
- Monday 22nd, Fairwater Hub
- Thursday 25th, Ammanford Library
- Tuesday 30th, Fishguard Library

September

- Monday 5th, Tenby Library
- Tuesday 6th, Llanelli Library
- Thursday 15th, Pembroke Dock Library
- Tuesday 20th, Fishguard Library
- Thursday 29th, Ammanford Library

Booking is not essential. For more information, please call RNIB Cymru on 029 2082 8518, or check the website, <http://www.rnib.org.uk/online-today-event-search>.

Fundraising concert

There's a Grand Concert/Cyngerdd Mawreddog on Saturday 3rd September to raise funds for Llyfrau Llafar Cymru/Talking Books Wales. It will be performed by Charlie Lovell Jones and family at Neuadd Pontyberem/Pontyberem Hall in Llanelli at 7.30pm. Tickets/Tocynnau £12 from 01269 871075 or 01267 238225.

Turn2us workshops

Turn2us, the national charity that helps people in financial hardship gain access to welfare benefits, charitable grants and support services, is running two free workshops in Wales this autumn. They are intended for staff and volunteers at charities and local community groups, and will show them how to use Turn2us' online tools (including the benefits calculator and grants search) to help people in their area. The workshops are:

20th Sept: St Davids House, Colwyn Bay, Conwy, LL28 5HB

2nd Nov: Coast Rd, Mostyn, Holywell, Flintshire, CH8 9DZ.

For more information and to book a place, visit www.turn2us.org.uk and look under 'Charities and intermediaries', or contact Michelle Brookes on training@turn2us.org.uk.

Wobbly Wednesday

Wobbly Wednesday, the event which raises awareness of nystagmus, will be take place on 2nd November. This year's theme is 'What will you wobble?', with people encouraged to post a photo of something wobbly on social media, and make a donation to the charity.

New College Worcester

New College Worcester (NCW), the residential school and college for young people aged 11 to 19 who are blind or vision impaired, is running several events during the autumn.

- 6th October 'Supporting students with a vision impairment' for teaching assistants working with vi students in a mainstream school.
- 15th October 'Family Fun Day' for vision impaired children and their families.
- 8th November 'Outreach Open Day' for education professionals. This free event will give you a taste of how the College teaches visually impaired students, the opportunity to meet subject teachers, and offers practical support and advice on specific curriculum areas.

Website: <http://www.newcollegeworcester.co.uk/events>

Telephone the College: 01905 763933.

Smell gas?

Staying safe in six easy steps

If you smell gas in your home or business, we're here to help. Here's what to do.

- 1 Call us immediately on Freephone 0800 111 999. We're available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and will send out an engineer to make your property safe.
- 2 Turn off all your gas appliances and, if possible, switch off the gas at the meter (unless the meter is in the cellar or basement, in which case don't go in).
- 3 Open windows and doors.
- 4 Don't use any electrical appliances or switch lights on or off.
- 5 Don't smoke or use naked flames.
- 6 If there's a smell of gas in the cellar or basement, please wait outside or with a neighbour.



YOUR GAS EMERGENCY
AND PIPELINE SERVICE



WALES & WEST
UTILITIES