



York Blind and Partially Sighted Society



Eddie and Elizabeth with their skydive certificates

Newsletter

August, September and October 2015

**York Blind and Partially Sighted Society, Rougier House, 5
Rougier Street, York, YO1 6HZ (Charity Number 1159188).**

**Equipment and Information Centre open Monday
to Friday 10am to 3pm**

Telephone 01904 636269

**This newsletter is available in 16 point bold print, on tape, CD,
in Braille, via e-mail or on our website: www.ybpss.org**

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News Update from Diane Roworth, Chief Officer

Hello and welcome to our latest newsletter, which it seems strange to call the Autumn edition, because it is only August and we don't seem to have had much summer yet.

There is a lot happening here at YBPSS and in the community, thanks to our Optimeyes project taking off, and new national initiatives coming on stream. That coupled with some extraordinary fundraising activities and news of our AGM means that this newsletter has reached 24 pages, rather than the usual 20. I do hope that doesn't put you off reading it all.

On perhaps two of the sunniest days of the year, 1st and 2nd of August, several members of YBPSS took part in personal challenges to raise money for us. 87 year old Elizabeth jumped out of a plane on a daring tandem skydive, as did Eddie from Scarborough and three brave volunteers from Santander Bank.

Anne, Glynis, Chris with her guide dog Quinta and myself all did the Run-for-All-10k in York on the Sunday, together with our sighted guides from Garbutt and Elliott. Altogether we think that £2,000 will have been raised thanks to support of our members and the generosity of their sponsors. Further fundraising news is on page 22.

September 10th is the most important event of the year, our Summer Lunch and AGM. Last year's event was extremely successful and we are continuing with our quest to make each AGM a little bit different.

This year will be our first AGM as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and the first time we will be holding it in one of York's historic buildings, Bedern Hall, which is a little known medieval building tucked away in the heart of the city between Goodramgate and Kings Square. The article on page 4 gives information about the AGM, and the article on page 5 tells you a little of the history of Bedern Hall. Do come and join us for this unique AGM.

Our Optimeyes project is now in full swing with many events planned at YBPSS and further afield.

There will be a particular focus on Eye Health Week, September 21-27, where we will be promoting the importance of regular eye health checks. RNIB estimate that 50% of sight

loss is avoidable, simply by having regular eye health checks, so we want to ensure that as many people as possible get that message.

Everyone should have an eye health check (sight test) every two years, or every year if over 70. Please make sure you have your eyes checked, and ask everyone you know to do the same – we don't want any more customers if we can avoid it!

Our Autumn programme of activities includes an On-line Today workshop, a 2-day Finding Your Feet Course, a workshop on audio description including a visit by Northern Ballet, microwave cookery, plus lots more.

There has been a lack of new equipment from suppliers over the summer, so Deborah and Deb have come up with some no cost and low cost ways round everyday difficulties which you will find on page 7. Last but not least, there has been great controversy in York about the opening of

York Art Gallery after its £8 million refurbishment combined with its new policy of charging for entrance. See page 18 for the cheapest way to get into the gallery.

I hope you enjoy the variety of articles in this edition, and that you will be tempted to come to the AGM on 10th September. As usual your feedback is welcome, please contact me on 01904 731121 or diane.roworth@ybps.org

**Summer Lunch and
Annual General Meeting
10th September 2015
10.30 to 2.30**

Come and join us for a late Summer Lunch in the lovely surroundings of Bedern Hall.

You can meet trustees, staff, volunteers, and other members to celebrate what we have achieved during the year, and what we hope to achieve this year.

As we are in Bedern Hall, we will have a talk about the wonderfully vibrant history

of the Hall, and there will be a chance to explore during and after lunch.

As this will also be our Annual General Meeting, members present will elect the Trustees of YBPSS for the coming year.

The following Trustees have agreed to stand for a further year:

Officers

John Wilson, Chair
Richard Shaw, Vice Chair
Jean Hayward, Hon Secretary
Jim Wallace, Hon Treasurer, (taking over from Jean Weston)

Trustees

Danielle Walker Palmour
Bob Shead
Evelyn Shead
Anne Smith
Eleanor Tew
Jean Weston

Co-opted trustees seeking election as full trustees

Mike Melling (a former trustee, rejoining now we are a CIO. Mike is Chair of our Fundraising Committee)

Kristian Kavanagh is a Solicitor Advocate and was co-opted to the committee in June this year.

We thank Jean Weston for her contribution as Hon. Treasurer. She will remain on the Executive and be part of our Fundraising Committee.

If the above people are elected, then we will have 12 Trustees, 6 of whom have personal experience of sight loss.

This will be our first AGM as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, and our first AGM in one of York's historic buildings, so we really hope you will come and join us for our Summer Lunch and AGM.

The event is free. However, if you would like to make a £5 donation towards lunch that would be most welcome – but there is no obligation.

Please contact us on 636269 to book your place, and please let us know if you need transport, have dietary requirements for

lunch, or would need assistance to find the venue.

We all look forward to seeing you.

About Bedern Hall, Bartle Garth, St Andrewgate, York

Bedern Hall represents a fine example of a rectangular medieval hall, and has a chequered history. In 1983 its historical significance was recognised when it became a Grade II listed building.

It was originally part of the College of the Vicars Choral which occupied the area between Goodramgate, St Andrewgate and Aldwark. The hall was the refectory (or dining hall) for the college from the 1390s until the middle of the 17th century when it passed into private hands. The hall, chapel and gatehouse are all that remain of the college.

The name Bedern is first mentioned around the year 1270 in documents relating

to the college, although the word is Anglo Saxon meaning 'house of prayer'. In the early 20th century it was owned by a local bakery. The Barton bakery had a flour store on the first floor, with a joiner's workshop and coach house below.

In the 1950s, the Hall and neighbouring properties were bought by Wright's, the pork butchers. The Hall formed part of the curing department.

Following its restoration in the 1970's, a suitable use needed to be found for the Hall, and after centuries of neglect it was important to protect this historic building for the future. In 1980, a steering group was formed by members of some of York's surviving guilds to discuss the possibility of using the building as a new guild hall.

The Company of Cordwainers, the Guild of Freemen and the York Guild of Building formed the Bedern Hall Company which raised the funds to add further facilities to

complement the Hall, and a modern annexe was added to ensure that the building was equipped for the needs of future generations.

Among the most striking of the modern additions are the stained glass panels commemorating Guild members.

To find Bedern Hall

Cars can drive into St Andrewgate from Goodramgate, Aldwark, or St Saviour's Place. There is no parking, but as it is a very quiet area, it is easy to drop off and pick up. If you have a blue badge, you can park outside.

If you are walking, we will have staff and volunteers stationed in Kings Square, Goodramgate (near Oxfam) and Bedern (a small lane opposite the National Trust Shop) and outside the Hall itself.

Ask for help with transport if you are worried about finding the hall and unable to get to the AGM otherwise.

Please call Barbara, Deb or Deborah if you would like to book your place at the AGM and let us know

- 1) If you have any dietary requirements
- 2) If you need transport

See you there!

Low Cost and No Cost solutions from the Equipment and Information Centre By Deb and Deborah

Difficulty – writing in the right place

Solutions – Black plastic signature guide with window so you can sign your name in the right place. Low Cost 99p.

Envelope Guide Black plastic frame with 5 rigid lines so you can write an address on an envelope or message inside a card, Low Cost £1.39.

Cheque book template fits over your cheque with apertures that match the spaces you need to complete, such as date, payee etc. FREE from your bank.

Difficulty - Keeping track of your money

Solutions - Signature guide and note checker to make distinguishing bank notes easier, in sterling or euros. Low cost - £1.99.

The “Arthur Pearson Method” – FREE

Slide the bank note between the first and second finger. The £10 will be the same length as the first finger, the £5 shorter, and the £20 longer. Of course we do not all have the same length fingers but with a little experimentation you can find where the note finishes in relation to your fingers.

Separate out your £1 Coins into a coin holder. Also holds euros coins. Low cost £1.99.

No Cost Tips:

Sort your coins before leaving home, so you're not under pressure at the counter.

Take the coins you find most comfortable handling, and leave the rest at home.

Practice identifying coins by touch, 50p and 20p have edges, £1 is thick.

Remove unused store and loyalty cards from your wallet, keeping only those you use regularly.

Large print, audio or braille bank statements make it easier to keep your affairs in order – FREE from your bank, building society or utility company.

Difficulty – identifying objects

Solutions - Elastic bands around bottles can make it quick to distinguish one bottle from another, so can shapes and colours. For example, 1 elastic band might mean shampoo, a bottle with a different shape could be shower gel - Low Cost.

A fluorescent yellow or pink ping pong ball in your bath can help you know where the level of the water is - Low Cost.

Bump-ons are self-adhesive raised markers in various sizes, shapes and

colours. Use them to mark settings on cookers and washing machines, on/off switches, telephones, TV remotes, keys, cookers and microwaves, the list is endless! Low Cost 10p each.

Difficulty – finding a telephone number

Solution – Register for 195, Free Directory Enquiries.

If you cannot read or hold a telephone directory, you can register to use the 195 service. When you need a number, dial 195, quote your PIN and the operator will give you the number you require. If you have difficulty dialling it, or writing it down, they can also connect you free of charge. Contact Deb or Deborah on 636269.

Low Cost solutions in the Kitchen - under £10

The most popular item is probably the Liquid Level Indicator (£8.99 from RNIB). This is a simple device designed to help prevent spills and scalds and give you confidence when

making hot drinks. It sits on the rim of your cup or glass with three prongs that project downwards into the cup. When the liquid level reaches the lowest prongs, you will hear an intermittent beep, and/or feel a vibration, warning you the liquid is nearing the top.

When the liquid level reaches the shortest prong the beep will become much faster, warning you to stop pouring immediately.

Difficulty gripping crockery or anxious about it slipping or sliding can be a problem for some people. Dycem products can help. Dycem is a non-toxic, latex free, washable material that grips on both sides to prevent unwanted movement. Products include circular place mats (£8.99), bottle openers (£4.79), jar openers (£5.99) and cup holders (£5.39), or a roll to cut into your own size pieces is £11.95 All these products come in bright blue, yellow or red which gives a good level of contrast whatever the colour of your worktop or crockery.

Standard kitchen timers are often difficult to use, so we have a battery-operated talking clock/timer (£9.95 from RNIB) that will either count up from zero or down to a set time limit up to a maximum of 23 hours, 59 minutes and 59 seconds. When not being used as a timer it also functions as a talking clock. Unfortunately the control buttons are rather small, so it may not suit everyone.

Finally, a small product that may be of use either in the kitchen or elsewhere in the home is the Glowmat (£5.99 from RNIB). This is a 5 inch square greenish-yellow coloured mat that glows in the dark. It recharges in daylight or artificial light, and once charged gives out a soft glow that lasts several hours. It can be useful for placing underneath objects you want to locate in the dark, such as watches, glasses, keys, etc.

Paying for purchases in the E&I Centre

We are pleased to say that, from mid-September we will

be able to take payment for purchases in the Equipment and Information Centre by credit or debit card as well as cash or cheque. To help us cover the cost of providing this facility (the card machine has to be rented), there will be a small charge of 50p per card transaction, which we hope you will understand.

Christmas Cards

Yes I know it's only August but we will shortly have three new designs of Christmas Cards for sale in the E&I Centre.

These have been designed by Louisa Creed and Ruby Holding, both members of the Society and we are very grateful to them both for providing such lovely pictures.

YBPSS Activities
Healthy eating and microwave cooking
Singing for Fun
Audio Description
Finding Your Feet
On-line Today

Healthy eating & Microwave cooking

Monthly for four Mondays starting September 21st.

Come and share cooking tips and ideas. Find out more about healthy eating. Try some microwave recipes. Use equipment like a talking microwave, talking scales, tactile measuring jug and automatic can opener. We'll cook dishes for breakfast, lunch, supper and pudding, and then eat them.

Cost: £2 a session. Please bring an apron.

Please let us know if you'd like to be part of the group by ringing Ann on 01904 731123 (leave a message if necessary).

Singing for Fun

Tuesday September 22nd at 10.30am and then monthly.

If you enjoy singing, however good you think your voice, why not come and join our lively group. We sing a wide variety of music to keyboard accompaniment, including Cole Porter and Irving Berlin songs, musicals such as South Pacific and

Carousel, calypsos and Abba favourites. Afterwards we enjoy tea or coffee and cakes or biscuits and a chat.

Just turn up, or call me, Ann, (731123) if you need further information.

**Audio Description, what is it and how to get it and how do Northern Ballet use it to make dance come alive?
October 27th**

We publish details of audio described performances at York Theatres in each of our newsletters, but audio description is also available in your own home, via your TV or on DVD.

Most modern TV's have audio description facilities built in, and all pay to view services such as Virgin, Sky and BTVision make it easy for you to use audio description.

For example, if you have BT Vision, you can turn audio description on, from the settings menu. Once turned on, every time a programme

is broadcast with audio description, you will hear it. If you don't want it on for that programme, use your handset to quickly turn it off by pressing the * button. If you have a problem doing this contact your TV provider and they can talk you through it over the phone.

Some TVs have the same options on their settings menu.

To learn more about the benefits of audio description, come to our free interactive session on 27th October, which will include a session with Northern Ballet.

Northern Ballet comes to YBPSS

Northern Ballet want everyone to enjoy their performances, including visually impaired people. They provide workshops and touch tours, plus audio description for each of their ballets.

In November, their ballet Wuthering Heights will be audio described, and we

will be organising a visit to Bradford to use the services.

Come along to our workshop on 27th October to hear about audio description at Northern Ballet, see some costumes and props, and find out about the next performance and our trip to see Wuthering Heights.

The workshop is free, but there will be a charge for the trip to see Wuthering Heights.

Spaces are limited are so please ring us on 636269 to book you place.

Finding Your Feet 21st and 28th October

Finding Your Feet is a 2-day course for anyone who wants to know more about living successfully with sight loss.

There is an enormous amount of information, services, advice and guidance for people with sight loss, but finding the right thing, at the right time is not always easy.

The 2-day course brings together a small group of visually impaired people and their supporters to find out about things like:
**Benefits and entitlements,
Gadgets and technology to make life easier
How to get out and about safely
Tips and techniques others people use
Looking after yourself**

There will be a variety of guest speakers and lunch will be provided on both days.

It will be a friendly and supportive experience, facilitated by staff from YBPSS and Action for Blind People, and is free.

Contact Caroline or Deb if you would like to come to Finding Your Feet.

On-line Today with Optimeyes project and Action for Blind People

Getting on-line is a phrase we hear nearly every day, and YBPSS Optimeyes project took that a step closer for visually impaired

people in July. Glen Sheader from Action for Blind People came to YBPSS to offer people the chance to try mobile devices such as the iPhone, Kindle, iPad and Android tablet, words we all began to understand as Glen shared his knowledge and experience of the products.

The group was made of individuals with very differing knowledge, needs and interests. Everyone had the opportunity of hands on experience of the products and with Glen's guidance, could familiarise themselves with the gestures required to get the product to respond. Swiping and tapping the screen is quite different from the normal pressing of buttons.

Even those more technically minded were still impressed with many of the features that Glen revealed, such as the ability to magnify or become an OCR (Optical Character Recognition for those of you like myself who didn't know what this was) OCR

scans the text and then reads it back to you.

There was no promotion of any individual product, but the amazing thing about them all was that you can buy them off the shelf, with the magnification applications and voice activations already built in. I learnt a great deal from sitting in on this session but what was also fabulous were the immediate connections between everyone attending. There was a great sharing of experiences, discussions about mobile devices people use, how individuals manage with current phones, even where you can get good customer service if you want to change your phone.

The only person maybe not impressed by the whole event was a guide dog who sat very patiently under the table. Even the arrival of the Optimeyes Healthy Lunch didn't entice him out. One of Optimeyes Project aims is to promote good eye health, and nutrition is an important element of eye health. So with this in mind

and to bring the morning and the afternoon group together a lunch was provided.

The next On-line today session will be on Friday 11th September at 10-12 and 1-3. Please ring Caroline on 731124 to book you place.

My Computer My Way Making an existing computer easier to use

If you want to stick with your existing computer, rather than change to a smartphone or tablet, there are lots of things you can do to make it easier to use.

Make the keyboard easier to see by using large print stickers. These come in black on yellow or white and white on black and cost £7.99 a sheet, for laptop or standard keyboard, available in our Equipment Centre.

Use short cut keys rather than having to use the mouse pointer. For example Ctrl and p will print, ctrl and a will select all, ctrl and n will open a

new document. Some of these keystrokes also work in email. If you can master these keystrokes, you will find you can work quicker than when trying to use a mouse.

You can change the size and colour of the mouse pointer, the colour of the text on screen, the size and font of the text on screen and use the magnifier function built into Windows.

Most of the tools you can use are located in the Ease of Access Centre, or Accessibility Options on Windows computers.

If you want to have a go at making your own computer easier to use, visit the AbilityNet website and look at the My Computer My Way section which can guide you through the steps you need to make.

AbilityNet can provide advice by telephone on this and other related issues such as how to get the equipment you might need at work, if you have difficulties using your employer's computers.

www.abilitynet.org.uk
enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk
Telephone number 0800 269
545 Monday to Friday.

Ways to Enjoy Art Tips on painting and York Art Gallery opens

Painting from another perspective

Art need not be out of reach if you have sight loss.

There are ways and means by which you can explore your own personal creativity, as well of that of others.

Below you will find information about the newly opened York Art Gallery, Dawn's tips and techniques for painting and how she achieves work she is proud of with only a very small level of sight, and ways of exploring artworks online.

The following information was taken from the RNIB website, www.rnib.org.uk.

A visually impaired artists perspective.

Dawn is registered blind and started losing her sight when she was just three years old. She's now totally blind in her right eye, and can only see the world in 10p-size pieces using her left eye.

By experimenting with different methods, Dawn has found new ways of painting. We've shared some of these below.

“Painting is a challenge and gives you the courage to say: 'If I can do this, I can do anything' ” – Dawn

Use light, and your imagination!

Often starting as early as 5.30am, Dawn paints close to the window, making full use of natural sunlight. Having no concept of what some items, particularly trees, might look like in full, Dawn relies strongly on her imagination: She says, “If you're blind, you need to have a good imagination.”

Precise measurements

Using a monocular (a kind of small telescope), Dawn

marks out a series of tiny grids; starting from the top left corner and working across in rows she gradually builds up a full image.

Dawn also makes use of her RNIB ruler which has designed notches and dots to help track her position on the canvas.

Patience always pays off

Despite some of her paintings taking up to two years to finish, Dawn enjoys every moment and often has two on the go!

Currently she is working on a piece based on Alkham Valley in Kent, which she admits is very complicated, but she's enjoying the challenge.

For those who have recently lost their sight, and would like to get involved with arts and craft, Dawn's advice is simple: Have a go...you'll eventually get there...Enjoy every day.

Visit RNIB website for more information about arts and crafts.

iMap: Creative Access from Tate

i-Map is an online art resource designed primarily for visually impaired people with a general interest in art, art teachers and their visually impaired pupils.

iMap: The Everyday Transformed focuses on six twentieth century artists who all share an interest in the material reality of everyday life. Their art engages with traditional subject matter such as landscapes, still lives, interiors and portraits. So even when their subjects are abstracted, the viewer never loses a sense of emotional or physical recognition.

Each iMap painting features the artwork on screen, together with an animated tour of the canvas which you can use at your own pace. The audible tour examines sections of the painting at a time, gradually building up a picture of the work as a whole. There are further notes about the artist and the background to the work

Or if you want to find out about disabled artists work, look up Disability Arts Online. Here you will find links to disabled artists' sites. A number of these artists are blind or partially sighted, and the site covers visual arts, writing and performing.

York Art Gallery re-opens
After an £8 million pound refit, York Art Gallery opened its doors to the public in August. It now houses permanent and temporary exhibitions and CoCA, the Centre of Ceramic Art, which is the largest collection of ceramics in the country.

A new feature of the gallery, to be opened later in Autumn is a large first floor balcony overlooking parts of the Museum Gardens not previously open to the general public.

The Art Gallery has several new facilities, which may help visually impaired visitors, and offer great potential to be expanded in future.

If you have a smartphone or tablet, you can download an app on entering the gallery, which will describe 30 of the most famous pieces in the gallery.

In different parts of the gallery there are stations where you can pick up a handset and listen to commentaries relevant to the exhibits, such as conservation of artworks.

On the first floor there are 4 sculptures which can be explored by touch.

In the ceramics gallery there is a corner set aside with a sofa and chair, and many small ceramic objects to be handled.

A specially commissioned rainbow wall plaque echoes the rainbow wall of ceramic pots, grouped together by their colour. In front of the ceramic wall, are 3 touchscreens showing each of the 4 shelves of ceramics, and the labels are on the screen pictures, rather than on the exhibits themselves which makes them much easier to read.

The staff are very friendly and willing to help in whatever way they can to make your visit enjoyable.

In future, we hope there will be group sessions organised by curators of the gallery – if you would like to be involved with York Art gallery initiatives, please get in touch with Diane Roworth, Chief Officer on 731121

Entrance Fees.

The gallery is no longer free, however, York residents can buy a YMT (York Museums Trust) card for £10 which allows unlimited access to York Art Gallery, the Yorkshire Museum and the Castle Museum for a whole year. If you are visually impaired and need to have a guide with you, then that guide goes free of charge.

People in receipt of an income or disability related benefit (such as Pension Credit or DLA/PIP) can also buy the YMT card for half price (£5), and still take a carer or guide with them free of charge.

Members Column Melrose Club Thursday Club Social Inclusion Group

The Melrose club was started in 1913 with money from James Melrose. Mr Melrose was once Lord Mayor of York, and Melrosegate in York, was named after him. He was a prominent person in York and sat on the board of Governors of the Yorkshire School for the Blind when it was at Kings Manor.

In the early days the club operated under the banner of 'blind welfare', but with the reorganisation of Social Services, it was decided that it would continue as a social club. It met once a month, and there was always entertainment provided together with tea and cake.

The club was a very popular event, we enjoyed running it and made lots of friends over the years.

But times have changed, and I am sorry to tell you that we have now closed

the Melrose club after over 100 years of operation. The charity commission have stated that the remaining funds must go to a like-minded charity. So we decided to give the money to York Blind and Partially Sighted Society, to be spent on activities, social events and transport.

It has been a pleasure for me and my husband Brian to be associated with the Melrose Club, and I would like to thank everyone who has ever helped in any way.
Anne Smith

The Thursday club meets every fortnight at City Mills Skeldergate from 2 o'clock until 3.30.

It is a club run by visually impaired people, for visually impaired people. Sadly we have lost a few members recently through ill health, so have space to welcome new members.

I, Anne Smith, am one of the organisers, and you can call me on 700294 if you are interested to know more about us. Or you can just come along and have a cup

of tea, listen to speakers on various topics and of course have a natter. Sadly we cannot provide transport, but I hope that doesn't put you off coming. I hope to hear from you –
Anne Smith.

Social Inclusion, and Campaigning at YBPSS

The Social Inclusion Group, which meets at YBPSS, includes blind and partially sighted individuals, members of YBPSS staff and representatives from RNIB, Guide Dogs and the Wilberforce Trust. It campaigns on a variety of issues which affect the ability of blind and partially sighted people to get out and about and enjoy the facilities of York. We are interested in things such as 'A' boards and other obstructions on pavements, controlled crossings, audiovisual displays on buses, visual awareness training for bus drivers and others and facilities for blind and partially sighted people in museums and galleries. Some of our campaigns are local, but

many are part of bigger national campaigns.

Progress is often slow, particularly now that the Council is under so much financial pressure, but if we press hard and long enough we can hope to get at least some of what we want. With a new MP for York Central and several new councillors this is a particularly good time to press home our messages, and the more of us who are involved, the greater our chance of success.

So, if you are troubled by parked cars on pavements, crossings you cannot use, inaccessible visitor attractions or the like, please come along and find out more about the Group.

For more information contact Diane Roworth, tel: 731121, email: Diane.Roworth@ybps.org

Stop unwanted telephone calls and mail

It is probably impossible to stop every unwanted telephone call, and every

unwanted piece of mail, but it is possible to reduce the number you get, by registering for these free services:-

The Telephone Preference Service (TPS) is the official register on which you can record your preference not to receive unsolicited sales or marketing calls.

It is a legal requirement that all organisations (including charities and political parties) do not make calls to numbers registered on the TPS unless they have your consent to do so. You may still receive unsolicited calls from genuine market research companies and organisations you have an on-going relationship with.

The TPS can accept the registration of mobile telephone numbers; however, this will not affect SMS (Text) messages. To stop these you need to send an 'opt-out' request.

Register by phone on 0845 070 0707 or visit <http://www.tpsonline.org.uk/tps/index.html>

The Mailing Preference Service (MPS) was set up 20 years ago and is funded by the direct mail industry to enable consumers to have their name and address removed from lists used by the industry.

Registering for the MPS will not stop mail from overseas, un-addressed material or mail addressed to The Occupier. You will still receive mailings from companies with whom you have done business in the past.

Once registered, it will take up to 4 months for the Service to have full effect although you should notice a reduction straight away.

To register with MPS call 0845 703 4599 or visit <http://www.mpsonline.org.uk/mpsr/what/>

If you would like us to register you for these services, please call Deb or Deborah on 636269.

Information in large print, audio or braille for York Hospital patients

If you are attending hospital, and are given information in a format you cannot read, ask the person you are dealing with to get you large print, audio or braille information.

We produce most of this information for York Hospital, so if you have any difficulties, please ask the staff member you are dealing with to contact Barbara Fairs or Deb Wheller at York Blind and Partially Sighted Society, or contact us on 636269.

If you are concerned that you may experience difficulties due to your sight loss, when using York Hospital, please talk to Deborah at YBPSS or Vanessa, our ECLO at York Hospital. Both will be able to talk to you about what can be done to make your stay in hospital as easy as possible. Don't be shy about asking for what you need to make your stay or treatment as successful as

possible, and if you need support to do that – we can help.

Fundraising successes, and coming events

We are so grateful to our team of skydivers who celebrated Yorkshire Day on 1st August by doing a tandem skydive. 87 year old Elizabeth from York, Eddie from Scarborough who are both visually impaired, joined Janine, Ryan and Jason from Santander for the experience of a lifetime. We think around £1,500 was raised, which is wonderful, and Elizabeth will be writing about her experience in our next newsletter. Thank you to everyone who participated or sponsored them – we really appreciate your efforts.

Chris and her guide dog Quinta, Anne, Glynis and I (Diane) all took part in the Run for All 10k on 2nd August. We had sighted guides provided by Garbutt and Elliott who helped us get round safe and sound. We had great fun and raised around £500.

Our bumper jumble sale at Sheriff Hutton was a roaring success. An enormous amount of jumble was collected, raffle and tombola prizes donated and cakes baked – all of which contributed to us raising over £1500 on the day. The Sheriff Hutton Jumblies took charge on the day, and our staff and volunteers did a great job – and it was all over with in 2 hours. Thanks to everyone, particularly Sheriff Hutton Jumblies!

Our next event will be St Crux on 30th September. If you are able to help set up, run the bric-a-brac stall, serve in the café, bake cakes or man the till – please get in touch. Donations of good quality bric-a-brac will be welcome the week before the event.

Finally, we are grateful to the friends and family of Ruth Young who gave us £125 in her memory and to all our collectors who empty pink elephant boxes or help us do street or store collections. This type of fundraising gives us a steady drip-drip of income,

and we would warmly welcome anyone who would like to give it a go. Call Diane Roworth, Chief Officer on 731121 to volunteer. Thank you.

Audio Description at York Theatres

The following performances are audio described. Please book headsets and touch tours 48 hours in advance. Ticket prices vary, if you ask for the blind concession, you will usually get a reduced price ticket for yourself and your guide.

York Theatre Royal Booking Office 623568

During 2015 York Theatre Royal will be closing for major refurbishment, and during this period the National Railway Museum will house a purpose-built, 1,000 seat tent to show theatre productions.

The Railway Children. This stunning adaptation of E. Nesbit's classic novel returns this Summer, housed in the new purpose built theatre at the Railway

Museum. Audio described on Saturday 29th August at 2.30 and 7.00pm.

Dick Whittington and His Meerkat. This year's pantomime will take place at the Railway Museum but will be the usual mix of dazzling costumes, toe-tapping tunes and laughter. Audio Description is on Thursday 21st January at 7.30 and Saturday 23rd January at 2.30pm.

Grand Opera House
Booking office (Access tickets) 678703

Avenue Q. A hugely entertaining show featuring terrific songs, talented performers and hilarious puppets – this is a musical like no other. A.D Saturday 19th September at 2.30pm.

Jesus Christ Superstar. The classic rock opera telling the story of the last 7 days in the life of Jesus, featuring songs such as "I Don't Know How to Love Him" and "Superstar." A.D. Saturday 17th October at 2.30pm.

Diary Dates

Y indicates event takes place at YBPSS offices

<u>August</u>		
26	Y	Games Group 10-12 then monthly
27	Y	Exercise Group 10-12 then weekly
29		Railway Children, NRM, 2.30 and 7.00
31		YBPSS Closed for Bank Holiday
<u>September</u>		
1		YBPSS Closed for Bank Holiday
8	Y	Book Group 10-12 then monthly
9	Y	Optimeyes Coffee and Information 1-3
10		AGM at Bedern Hall 10.30-2.30
11	Y	Online Today 10-12 and 1-3
15	Y	Focus Day Optelec 10-2
16	Y	Social Inclusion Group 10.30
19		Avenue Q, Grand Opera House, 2.30
21-27	Y	National Eye Health Week
21	Y	Cooking Group 10-12.30
22		Singing Group 10-12 then monthly
30		St Crux
<u>October</u>		
12	Y	MD Group Meeting 10-12
16	Y	Optimeyes Coffee and Information 1-3
17		Bag Packing at Morrisons
17		Jesus Christ, Superstar, GOH, 2.30
21	Y	Optimeyes Confidence Building
27	Y	Northern Ballet Audio Description Talk 1.30-3
28	Y	Finding Your Feet
29	Y	Social Inclusion Group 10.30