

Volunteer newsletter July 2021

Jackie Murrall - Volunteer Co-ordinator

We are really looking forward to seeing as many of our volunteers as possible at our cream tea on Saturday 4th September. It has been such a long time since we have been able to get together so do let us know if you are able to come along. Many new volunteers have joined us during the pandemic, and it will be great for you all to meet each other (and us!) at last. Full details on the attached/enclosed invitation.

Even though most government restrictions have been lifted, we will be proceeding with caution as it is important that we ensure the safety of all clients, volunteers, and staff at Sight Concern Worcestershire. Below you will find guidelines for befrienders making home visits – please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

We will shortly have a new member of staff joining the team as Connections Sight Loss Adviser who will be responsible for group activity. It is a good opportunity to take a fresh look at how they are organised, and we will keep in touch with our group volunteers with information and updates. We will also be appointing a Technology Coordinator. These new posts will really help to address some of the challenges which people with sight loss have faced during the pandemic, such as isolation and a growing need to use technology, and will really complement our existing team to support people through this next phase

Risk minimisation guidelines relating specifically to Covid-19

When planning a home visit or outing it is important that the volunteer follows safe practices. Hand hygiene is key, and you should carry your own hand sanitiser and wipes. As a courtesy you should also factor in the personal preference of the client

Sight Concern Worcestershire – The Bradbury Centre – 2 Sansome walk
– Worcester – WR1 4LG – 01905 723245 – info@sightconcern.co.uk

e.g., the client may prefer to continue to wear a face covering even though that requirement has been lifted, the points below should be followed to ensure the personal safety of you both.

- Check with the client to confirm that the situation remains the same and remind them of the guidelines
- Ask the client to stand back from the door to allow you to enter on arrival
- Ask the client to open windows before arrival to ensure ventilation
- Ask the client to keep internal doors open, if possible, to support ventilation and minimise touch points
- Minimise time spent in hallways and other shared narrow spaces
- Ask the client and any other people who will be present to wash their hands prior to your arrival
- Wash hands thoroughly before leaving to go to on visit and use sanitising hand gel before entering property and when you leave
- Wear a face-covering when moving around unless medically exempt and ask others present to do the same. Medical exemption covers difficulty with communication ("if you are speaking to or providing assistance to someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expressions to communicate")
- Avoid touching your face, nose, and eyes
- Maintain two metres distance as far as possible and if under two metres, sit side by side rather than face to face
- If travelling together in a car, if possible, ask the client to sit in the back left-hand seat and wear face coverings throughout the journey.