

### Awards shortlist for WESC Foundation's Talking Till



Image: Young man using talking touch screen till in charity shop

A talking till developed by specialist visual impairment charity WESC Foundation has been shortlisted for a second national award.

The audible point of sale (APOS) till – which can be operated independently by users with visual impairment and other disabilities – has been recognised by the Charity Times Awards. It follows a similar recognition by NATSPEC – the voice of specialist further education colleges – earlier in the year.

APOS was developed in partnership with charity retail software specialist BMC Azurri who adapted existing electronic point of sale (EPOS) software to create a new platform that reads out the text of each button on the till to a user as they find or press it, as well as tell users when an error message appears on the screen. Funding came from the "Tech for Good Programme" organised by Comic Relief and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

The till uses hardware from Box Technologies, and is currently in use in WESC Foundation's five charity shops in Exeter and East Devon.

The winner of the award will be announced at the Charity Times Awards online event on 3rd September 2020.

WESC Foundation provides education, care and support services for children and young adults with visual impairment and complex needs. Young people from across the UK access its adult residential care centre, school, college and supported living services at the charity's campus in Exeter, Devon.

[www.wescfoundation.ac.uk](http://www.wescfoundation.ac.uk)

### Seable Holidays UK Travel Survey

Understanding what blind and partially sighted people expect is critical to Seable Holidays. The Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent restrictions placed upon the community disrupted the travel habits of our customers. It is critical therefore, that in planning to re-start activity that we get your views and opinions.

As part of this process, we are now conducting a survey on the preferred UK holiday destinations that you would like to visit once the restrictions are lifted and it's safe to travel with confidence. Please would you take no more than 2 minutes to complete our very short survey to help us understand where you would like to go on holiday in the UK.

We look forward to welcoming you back on our holidays, when it is safe to do so, with a smile, to a safe and hygienic environment and one that makes a positive impact upon your physical and mental well-being.

If you are interested, send us an email with your name and phone number to enter a prize raffle for £200 off your next UK holiday. (valid until December 2022). [info@seable.co.uk](mailto:info@seable.co.uk) Thank you!

To complete our survey please click the url link below: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/SD5PGZS>

Welcome back to Sight Village News! A lot has happened since our last issue back in April. At the beginning of June, we hosted Sight Village Virtual; our first ever online event. Whilst it wasn't quite what we had envisaged for 2020, we hope the experience provided you with an opportunity to keep up to date with the latest products, services and support available during this time. Fear not, online events will never replace Sight Village as we know it, however they are a good way to stay connected and keep informed therefore we are planning to host another virtual event towards the end of this year.

As for our roadshow events, you may have heard that the Government has given the go ahead for business events and conferences to resume from 1st October. We listened to your feedback from our last survey and understand that some of you may not feel confident enough to attend events in the coming weeks and months, however, for those of you who are looking to gain a sense of normality, we are planning a smaller event at QAC on 29th and 30th October. Visitors wishing to attend this event will be required to pre-register and timed entrance tickets will be allocated. We will provide further details about this event soon including the measures and restrictions we will have in place.

In the meantime, to keep up to date with the latest news and information, follow the Sight Village Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/SightVillage](https://www.facebook.com/SightVillage)

We hope to see you soon!

The Sight Village Team

### The Tactile Times

The Tactile Times is a newspaper by young brailleists for young brailleists.

Any young brailleists can contribute an article (roughly between 100 and 300 words) and anyone can subscribe.

You can find our website at [tactiletimes.org](http://tactiletimes.org) or contact us on [info@tactiletimes.org](mailto:info@tactiletimes.org).

### JW.ORG

#### "Always Rejoice"!

We warmly invite you to watch this year's three-day convention presented by Jehovah's Witnesses. Learn how you can find joy even when life is difficult.

Normally we would attend a Regional Convention and engage in a special campaign to invite everyone in our community. To adjust to the current Covid situation, the entire program has been pre-recorded and made available to stream live from the website [jw.org](http://jw.org) or to download in JW Library, the official app produced by Jehovah's Witnesses. This ensures that everyone can benefit from the encouragement at home during these challenging times.

The three day program was released in sessions of between an hour and an hour and a half over six weekends. This year is also a special one for us as Sight Village Exhibitors for another reason, the videos are audio described for the first time! All of the people you normally meet at our stand who are visually impaired have thoroughly enjoyed it and would highly recommend watching. The whole program is available to download for free from:

<https://www.jw.org/en/media-items/#en/categories/2020ConventionADAUDIO>

<https://www.jw.org/en/library/books/2020-convention-program/>

We are hoping that we will see you in person again soon, but in the meantime please be assured we're missing you!

# R N I B

## See differently

RNIB has recently launched an exciting new online Reading service. We are now offering free digital access to a growing number of Talking Books and eBraille titles in our Library. You can keep these titles for as long as you want. To access this new service visit [readingservices.rnib.org.uk](http://readingservices.rnib.org.uk). You will be able to sign-up and start reading downloaded titles straight away.

If you're concerned about attending your hospital eye clinic appointment during coronavirus, watch our short film. It features three Eye Clinic Liaison Officers (ECLOs) offering their tips on how to prepare, what to bring and what you might expect to happen when you arrive, along with alternatives to attending in person.

If you're worried about your sight or need more info

on your eye condition, we're here for you with our Sight Loss Advice Service on 0303 123 9999.

To find out about new product launches from RNIB sign up to our New Product Guide. If you sign up by 5 September you will receive our Christmas gift guide with new and existing products which is sent out in your preferred format on 23 September and a follow-up at the end of October.

RNIB's Braille and Mobility catalogue 2020 is now available. This catalogue brings together our popular mobility and braille products in one place. Whether you're looking for a new cane, a replacement cane tip or ways to read and write braille, our catalogue has you covered. Download or order yours from our Online shop.

Miele introduces an accessible washing machine Made by premium brand Miele and available from our Online shop, the GuideLine is a high-quality washing machine with tactile controls, audible signals and strong visual contrast, designed specifically for people with sight loss.

For further information about RNIB's response to coronavirus please visit our coronavirus news page.

## Blind Student Strongman Launches Fundraising Appeal for New Gym at RNC

Strongman competitor Chris Colbert, a student with The Royal National College for the Blind (RNC) has been using 'lockdown' to keep up his impressive weight training programme at home. Chris, who was registered blind at an early age, is determined to be ready for several strong man competitions, at least one of which has been delayed by the pandemic. The national competition, 'Britain's Disabled Strongman' should have taken place in May 2020 and is awaiting rescheduling while Chris's local competition, 'England's Most Powerful Man 2020' is hoped to go ahead on 3 October.

All of RNC's residential students returned home in March 2020 with remote support during lockdown - and Chris has used his time wisely to train in his garden using specialist weights. His current personal best (PB) is an impressive 240kg and he has been receiving one-to-one as his gym, 'Viking Power & Strength', both in Doncaster.

Chris will use his ongoing training efforts - including some interim goals/challenges - to raise funds for the vital upgrade of the RNC's on-site student gym which is specially adapted for use by VI students at the college for their general fitness as well as those studying for sports and personal trainer qualifications.

'The student gym is a vital part of the facilities here at RNC, both for teaching and general fitness for the students', explains Aaron Rees, Teacher in Charge of Sports and Recreation, 'But it requires specialist kit due to the VI needs of its student community and those training to become sports/personal trainers need access to the latest equipment that they'll be working with, once they qualify and leave RNC for new jobs.'

Chris hopes that the public will get behind his tough training schedule and donate towards the new student gym via this appeal on the RNC's Facebook or Just Giving pages. 'I am 100% committed, determined and raring to go so please donate to my appeal and this will make me work even harder', says Chris.

To help raise funds for RNC's new student gym, please head to Chris' JustGiving page: <https://justgiving.com/campaign/christrongmanchallenge>

Image: Chris pulling a truck at Doncaster's Strongest Competition 2019



Image: Chris pulling a truck at Doncaster's Strongest Competition 2019

## Got a question? Call the Retina UK Helpline

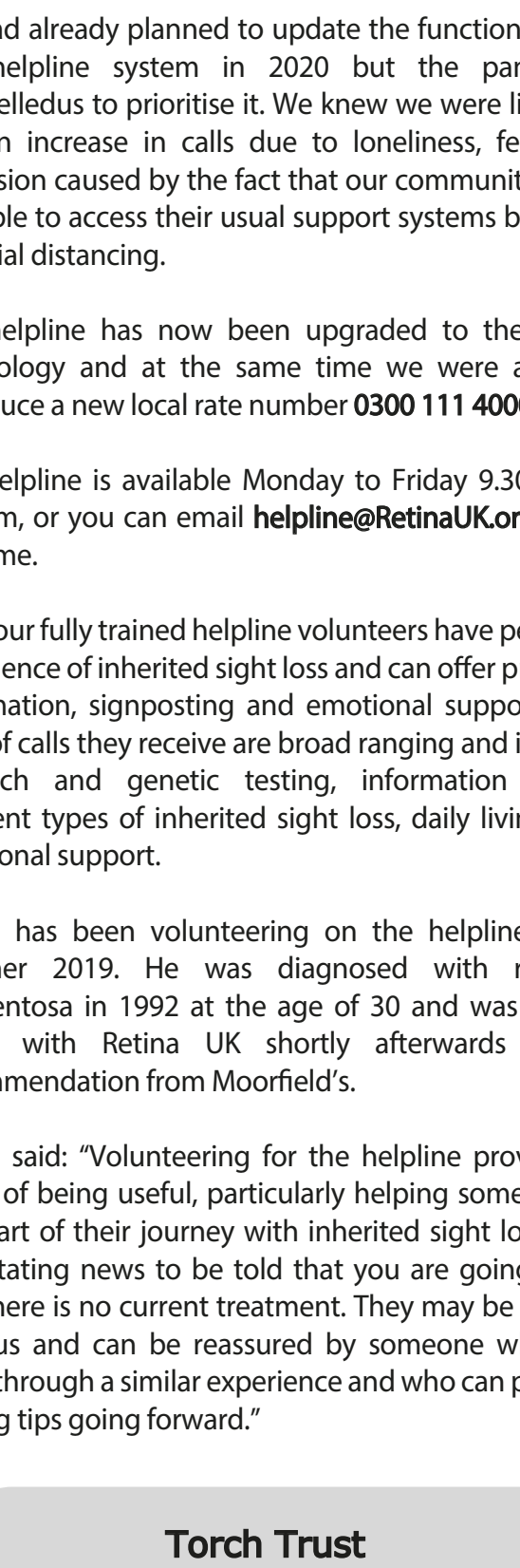


Image: Intisar holding a cane at the Retina UK conference

The Retina UK helpline has been a source of information and support for a number of years. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic it received around 1,000 calls per year.

We had already planned to update the functionality of our helpline system in 2020 but the pandemic compelled us to prioritise it. We knew we were likely to see an increase in calls due to loneliness, fear and confusion caused by the fact that our community were not able to access their usual support systems because of social distancing.

The helpline has now been upgraded to the latest technology and at the same time we were able to introduce a new local rate number 0300 111 4000.

The helpline is available Monday to Friday 9.30am to 9.30pm, or you can email [helpline@RetinaUK.org.uk](mailto:helpline@RetinaUK.org.uk) at any time.

All of our fully trained helpline volunteers have personal experience of inherited sight loss and can offer practical information, signposting and emotional support. The type of calls they receive are broad ranging and include research and genetic testing, information about different types of inherited sight loss, daily living and emotional support.

Intisar has been volunteering on the helpline since summer 2019. He was diagnosed with retinitis pigmentosa in 1992 at the age of 30 and was put in touch with Retina UK shortly afterwards via a recommendation from Moorfield's.

Intisar said: "Volunteering for the helpline provides a sense of being useful, particularly helping someone at the start of their journey with inherited sight loss. It is devastating news to be told that you are going blind and there is no current treatment. They may be feeling anxious and can be reassured by someone who has been through a similar experience and who can provide coping tips going forward."

### Torch Trust

Torch Trust continues to support their clients to be able to read accessible Christian literature. The free library is a lifeline to blind and visually impaired people who are unable to get out and about. Our supporter and client magazines along with Bible reading notes have continued to be produced and sent out from the office based in Market Harborough.

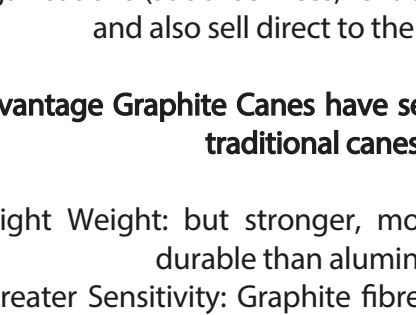
The friendly client services team have been there to assist with enquiries and offer pastoral support over the telephone. We have also been pleased to welcome new clients. Our network of sight loss friendly churches continues to grow and we have adapted our training to be delivered over Zoom. If you would like information about how we can help you or someone you know then do call 01858438260 or email [info@torchtrust.org](mailto:info@torchtrust.org)

## Product Updates

### FREE 1-to-1 introductions to the latest assistive technology from Dolphin

Join Dolphin's Dave Salisbury to discover how it's easier than ever for blind and partially sighted people to connect with friends, get online and stay independent. Book your free 1-to-1 demonstration today:

#### Reclaim your independence with GuideConnect (30 minutes)

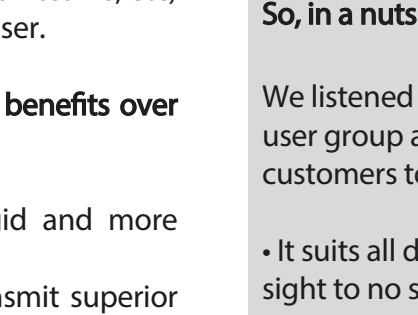


Computers, laptops and tablets empower millions of people with sight loss to get online, stay entertained and reclaim their independence. But what if you're a total beginner or just not confident? GuideConnect empowers you to do everyday things easily:

- Simple step-by-step menus walk and talk you through every task
- Text and icons as big as you need
- Friendly voices guide you at a pace that suits you
- Use a remote control, touch screen, mouse or keyboard – or add text with your voice

Meet GuideConnect – book your free introduction today

#### Make text crystal clear with SuperNova (30 minutes)

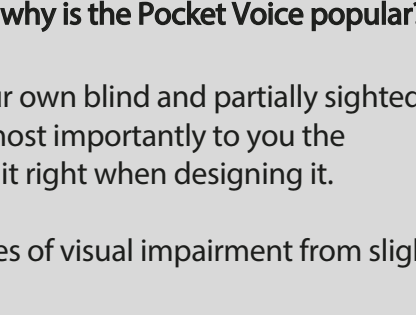


SuperNova is the World's first screen magnifier and screen reader for Windows. Learn how with SuperNova, you can:

- Make text crystal clear in Google Chrome, Microsoft Word and hundreds of other Windows applications
- Adjust the screen colours to make text easier to read
- Connect a scanner or camera to magnify and read your post
- Choose from 3 SuperNova editions to add speech or a full screen reader

Meet SuperNova – book your free introduction today

#### Read titles from RNIB Reading Services with EasyReader (30 minutes)



Enjoying the latest bestsellers from RNIB Reading Services is easier than ever with the free EasyReader app. Join Dave to learn:

- Why EasyReader is the world's most accessible reading app
- How you can find, download and read titles from RNIB Reading Services with ease
- How you can use EasyReader with VoiceOver and Talkback screen readers

Meet EasyReader – book your free introduction today

## Seeing Solutions: Making the Pocket Voice an easy and pleasant experience

As the Pocket Voice continues to grow in popularity we have added Scottish, Irish and Australian speech to the British and American English voices already used. We recognise that localising peoples experience makes it more personal and easier to use. Please continue to help us to help you.

So, in a nutshell - why is the Pocket Voice popular?

We listened to our most blind and partially sighted user group and own independently to you the customers to get it right when designing it.

- It suits all degrees of visual impairment from slight sight to no sight.
- It is a magnifier and a text-to-speech reader all-in-one.
- It is fast and doesn't need the internet to work so doesn't use your costly data.
- It has voice and touch command activation.
- Automatic focus for near and distance viewing.
- It fits in your pocket and looks professional.
- It can be used out and about as well as on a stand in the home or office,
- and most important - it costs much less than other systems.

Many people at home and at work have already benefited from this great device. As Seeing Solutions have designed this device, we will always welcome your suggestions and ideas to improve it and make it better.

For further information

Telephone: 0115 9816636  
Email: [info@seeing.solutions](mailto:info@seeing.solutions)  
Website: [seeing.solutions](http://seeing.solutions)



## Revolution - Advantage Graphite Canes

QAC is proud to be the sole importer of Revolution Advantage canes in the UK. We supply to a range of organisations (social services, rehabilitation teams, etc) and also sell direct to the end user.

Advantage Graphite Canes have several benefits over traditional canes:

- Light Weight: but stronger, more rigid and more durable than aluminium.
- Greater Sensitivity: Graphite fibres transmit superior "feel".
- Longer Life: more than twice that of aluminium canes.
- Flexibility and Rigidity: provides excellent support - but will flex and return to straight unlike aluminium which remains bent.
- Highly Reflective: be seen at night for your safety.
- Twelve Month Warranty - with proof of purchase.
- Impact absorbing shock rings at each joint for improved feel and wear.
- Best Overall Value: low cost, high quality, user friendly cane.

QAC supply the following canes:

- Collapsible Cane
- Child's Cane
- Symbol Cane
- Support Cane
- Telescopic Cane

To find out more visit our website: [www.qac.ac.uk](http://www.qac.ac.uk) or email: [enquiries@qac.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@qac.ac.uk)

## VisionAid's Post-lockdown Product Updates

We hope you're safe and well as lockdown continues to ease and the 'new normal' is established. Here at VisionAid we're able to safely offer free in-home demonstrations again with social distancing and PPE (whilst still offering online demonstrations).

In the last few months we've launched some exciting new products and updates...

Many of you might have heard about the new OrCam Read, their first handheld text-to-speech solution. Its first major update has just been released enabling new features; an automatic flash in low light conditions, voice recognition control and a visual battery level indicator.

The Clover range of magnifiers has been expanded to include a uniquely sized, lightweight and slim, 6" handheld video magnifier, the Clover 6. It features dual 4K autofocus cameras for closeup and distance magnification, tactile buttons combined with touchscreen controls and a foldout handle, making it very easy and comfortable to use.

We've also introduced the new range of 3 Clover Book transportable video magnifiers. They provide the portability of large handheld video magnifiers with the features of desktop video magnifiers. They're ideal for reading your post, medication, recipe books, completing crosswords, self grooming and watching TV, looking at birds and flowers in the garden. There's even full page text-to-speech to read your documents out-loud.

We're delighted to introduce our latest wearable solution, the AceSight VR. Ideal for watching television, seeing faces, hobbies etc. It combines superior image quality and smoothness with a large field of view for a brilliant user experience, especially for AMD users.

For further information

Call us on: 01775 711 977  
Email: [info@visionaid.co.uk](mailto:info@visionaid.co.uk)  
Website: [www.visionaid.co.uk](http://www.visionaid.co.uk)

## Keep in Touch



QAC Sight Village exhibitions are organised by Queen Alexandra College Birmingham  
A National College for People with Disabilities

Do you have a good news story you would like to include in the next edition of Sight Village News? Are you looking for advice about one of the Sight Village exhibitor products? Or are you looking for information about services in your area?

Get in touch with us:

Email: [sv@qac.ac.uk](mailto:sv@qac.ac.uk)

Phone: 0121 428 5041

[www.qacsightvillage.org.uk](http://www.qacsightvillage.org.uk)

Follow us on social media for the latest news and updates regarding Sight Village events:



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