

TEAM TALK

Spring 2022



The Newsletter for Chichester Area Talking News Volunteers

Update from our Chairman, Dick Bunker

Welcome to the Spring edition of Team Talk. This issue contains: tributes to John Holloway, an article by 4Sight Vision Support, more details about our website and media activity from Bob Money, and much else besides.

New Trustees:

The Committee has appointed two new trustees: Ken Pritchard as Vice-Chairman, who is introduced later in the newsletter, and Michael Bevis. Michael is not really a 'new' trustee since he will already be known to many of you as one of the early members of Talking News who has done a great deal for us in the past. More recently Michael has been fully occupied master-minding the transfer of St Wilfrid's Hospice to its new site in Bosham. Welcome back, Michael, your legal knowledge, familiarity with charitable trusts and your background with Talking News will be invaluable.

Other News:

John Holloway's death was a great shock to us all and has left a large gap in our organisation. We are very grateful to David Bathurst for agreeing to take on the role of Head of Production. John wrote a lot of material himself and David and Alicia Denny would be grateful if we could look out for additional material to be added to our collection for our bonus tracks and the Insight magazine. Please let them know of any ideas you have.

We are planning a get-together for all members of the Production Teams to discuss what we are doing at present and any suggestions for the future. This will be on Wednesday 4th May from 2 to 4.30 pm at the South Downs Planetarium and Science Centre in Chichester, beginning with a discussion forum, followed by a show in the auditorium and concluding with tea, coffee and cakes. David is informing the teams about this and we hope it will be an interesting, useful and enjoyable occasion.

Yuriko Luc, widow of the blind piano tuner Anva Luc, who was a listener for many years, has arranged a showing of the film of his amazing life at the Chichester New Park Road cinema on Sunday 27th March, with their three very talented musician children performing live. She has very kindly offered the net income from the sale of tickets to CaTN. We are very grateful for this.

John Holloway

John Holloway, our Head of Production at CaTN, died very suddenly on 16th January 2022, a great shock to everyone and we miss him. He was a key figure in our organisation, highly regarded for his professionalism, setting very high standards, and with a great sense of humour. He was a good friend to everyone, a joy to work with, and inspired us all.

Among the many tributes to him are the following: *From Tony Mustard, our Sports Reporter:*

“Many of us can look back fondly on an inspirational teacher. John Holloway was an inspirational man of radio.

When I began to compile and read sports reports for Talking News I was horribly nervous of the microphone and I felt my voice was inadequate. Several times I asked John if my reports should be read by someone else

“No, no,” he said, “that’s fine, keep going.”

Gradually, I know I improved a little and actually began to look forward to my visits to the microphone. Thank you, John.”

From Geoff Farrell, who worked closely with John:

“Because of his long career in the business, he created a level of professionalism that inspired us ordinary folk as well as his fellow professionals.

I felt that he valued my company, and I valued his. He was a friend. It mattered to me what he thought. He encouraged me to write and record my tales.”

Geoff sent the following professional tribute to John, and also to CaTN, from Roger Green, the former Editor of the Littlehampton Gazette:

“What sad news, Geoff. John was indeed a lovely man, very encouraging and inspirational, a wonderful example of someone with a great set of skills and vast experience in his working life then applying them with so much generosity to his community in retirement, but with no less care and attention to detail.

I was thinking of him only the other day, particularly one afternoon when he and I sat in the studio for a good couple of hours editing down an interview I did with an Arun engineer about a new flood defence scheme for Pagham, I learned such a lot about what could be left out, how to cut out the *ers* and *ahs*, the deep breaths, etc.

I always thought the standard at CaTN was very high and John set the bar to aim for. I was in all honesty in awe of people like yourself with such wonderful voices but enjoyed my visits to the studio and all the interviews and the magazine slots I presented, knowing what a good, professional package would be made of it.”





Publicity, Website and Social Media – a report from Bob Money

Like most Talking News organisations, we struggle to find new Listeners. But whenever we have an opportunity to tell people what we do – whether it's with a standing banner in the local library, or a pop-up display in a crowded shopping centre, or a talk to a local WI – we are almost invariably asked for more information to be passed on to someone who might like to hear our news recordings. We greatly value our '300 or so' Listeners but there could be many more.

Looking at the figures, an RNIB survey quotes 40,700 people living in Sussex with sight loss of one form or another. More specifically, the NHS Coastal West Sussex Clinical Commissioning Group has 14,190 blind or partially sighted patients, or 2.8% of their patient population. This percentage is much higher than the UK average, probably because West Sussex has a higher proportion of older people. Increased age unfortunately brings an increased rate of sight loss: 1 in 5 over 75s will have some form of sight loss and 1 in 2 of the over 90s. Women are twice as likely as men to have sight issues: mainly age-related macular degeneration, glaucoma, cataracts and diabetic retinopathy. Given these numbers, it's not hard to see that we could recruit many more Listeners.

But how do we find them? The best way is almost certainly word of mouth. A personal recommendation from someone who knows about our excellent free service – whether as a Listener, a Listener's family, friends and neighbours or as a Volunteer – has the greatest impact. I'm sure you do it already, but we really do need to keep up our efforts to find new Listeners.

Publicity. Whether it's a newspaper story about what we are doing, or a paid advertisement, or promotional material like our leaflets and banners, the more we appear in the public eye the better the chances of attracting someone who would like to hear our recordings. Social media such as Facebook also helps – maybe not for the visually impaired themselves but certainly for their friends and family.

Our much-improved website helps, too. Visitor numbers are increasing: 453 in December 2021, 473 this January and 545 in February. The visits are mostly of short duration – just a few pages taking a minute or two, perhaps to check something, but it's all worthwhile. Most visitors (87%) arrive by typing in catn.org.uk, 9% use a search engine like Google and a few come via another website. Last month we had visitors from 4Sight, Facebook and the West Sussex County Council website (there's a page on 'resources for care homes' in which we feature). Have you looked at the website recently? The more people who click on our website, the higher our ranking will go on Google – so it's definitely a good thing!

Please remember, we Volunteers are the best ambassadors for Chichester Area Talking News. Do, please, make every effort to spread the word as widely as possible to find some new Listeners who will enjoy the very best proper local news brought to them by CaTN.

Ken Pritchard, CaTN Vice-Chairman



I am delighted that the Committee has appointed Ken Pritchard to be our Vice-Chairman. He and I have been friends for many years and we worked closely together for West Sussex County Council when I was Director of Education for the County and Ken was Chief Education Adviser and subsequently Deputy Director of Education. He played a key part in achieving the “Outstanding” Ofsted grade we obtained for the County’s service in 2001. He was awarded the OBE by the Queen in 2000.

Ken was very well liked and highly respected by everyone. He has great interpersonal skills and believes very strongly in teamwork. He has continued to be a school governor since retirement and is already helping to introduce young people to CaTN. Working with a group of sixth formers from the Regis Academy, he is encouraging them to learn the skills of writing and reading material for broadcasts and to gain an understanding of recording and production. This will help them in their careers and also be beneficial for the future **development** of our organisation. We hope we can involve other schools in due course.

Dick Bunker - Chairman

Celia Harper: PROFILE

"And what do you do?" enquired the elderly lady at the Talking News AGM.

"Oh, I'm a presenter," I replied.

"Been here long?" she asked.

"Just over twenty years," I said, nonchalantly. She looked at me and raised a quizzical eyebrow; and then we both burst out laughing.

Well, I'm used to that sort of thing: when you sit behind a 'mic', you become invisible. In fact, the only time you get noticed is when you say something wrong. So, how did I get here, then? Well, after a period of study, beginning with school, college and then life itself, I returned to England in 1993 after working in Spain. Five years away gave me time to see how another country functions, how it looks at its own priorities compared with ours. At that time, we liked clean loos and kitchens; they liked good food. We've all moved on and we've all learnt new ways.

I learnt Spanish. Having already studied Latin, French and German from books, I decided this time to try and understand Spanish from listening. My first lesson was from Radio Dos, their Radio Two, where I suddenly heard the word 'Mathreeth' - it was Madrid. And I was on my way, as it were.

On my return to Sussex, I had to catch up with life here and I enrolled at Chichester College for a media studies course. They're often maligned now, but this one gave me a good grounding in radio, and I was able to join an RSL - a Restricted Service Licence - broadcast from the College. This gave me an opportunity over a whole month to write and live-broadcast the local news. I also headed into Chichester to interview people in the street, in other words vox pops, to find out the opinions of the day during the summer festivities.

Having done that, I was able to help kick-start Spirit FM, our new West Sussex radio station, in the mid-nineties. For eight years, the radio licence required Spirit FM to provide local programming, so a small group of us did just that, from country music to jazz, poems, stories and short plays.

I joined 4Sight, which organisation many of you will know, to edit and read their Information Desk. And then I approached CaTN and was interviewed by the late Jane Windsor, whom many of you will remember and with fondness. She kindly allowed me to come and read at Talking News and I was then booted up to be presenter - and here, after 22 years, I still am.





We welcome Jodie Pedder, a young severely visually impaired person who has just joined our CaTN team and who will help encourage more young people to sign up as listeners to our programmes. Jodie has a degree in Childhood Studies from Chichester University and is a keen rock climber and member of a walking group.

This is a very moving article she has written about her experience in coping with her disability.

My cane and eye.

Hello my name is Jodie and in this article I would like to share with you my journey of becoming a cane user, drawing upon how I felt when I did not use a cane, the day that changed my whole outlook about using a cane, and finally the impact it has had on my life today.

Growing up I remember not wanting to be seen as different to those around me, I would always ask my teachers If I could join in with whatever the other children were doing, whether I found it a challenge or not. I guess this is one of the reasons why I was so reluctant to use any aids that would make me stand out. I just wanted to be treated as an equal.

If I'm honest as a child I found it hard to accept the fact that I could not see that well, and that if I gave in to the idea of using a cane then it was like admitting that I was different to everyone else. I felt scared, angry, sad all sorts of different emotions. In my mind I was a failure. I had been bullied throughout school and college, surely this would give the bullies more of a reason to target me, how wrong I was! One incident that sticks in my mind was on winter's evening whilst walking to my Gran's as I did often. I somehow lost my bearings and ending up falling over someone's garden fence losing my shopping in the process. Even this did not phase me and make me reconsider using a cane; all I was concerned about was my lost shopping (which I never did find).

The turning point for me was when I was out shopping in my local town with a good friend of mine. All was going well until I accidentally walked into a young mother pushing a pushchair, as I did not see her coming towards me. I immediately apologized and explained to her that I was visually impaired and registered blind. Unfortunately, her reaction was to become aggravated and she began shouting and hurling abuse at me.

At this point my friend stepped in and said, “Look, there is no need to treat her like that, she told you why it had happened.” The woman then turned on my friend, grabbing hold of her, pushing her into a shop window and winding her. I felt awful that this had happened to her because of something I had done. That was the day my whole attitude changed. I needed something to make others around me aware of my visual impairment, so I began my journey of becoming a cane user.

Initially I was apprehensive about getting a cane, but after a little bit of training my confidence grew and for the first time ever I did not feel scared about going out, most importantly I did not care about what others thought of me. On a personal level the impact of using a cane has been life-changing, it has given me even more independence and I can honestly say that if I did not have it I would feel totally lost and extremely vulnerable without it. My friends call me speedy Gonzales as they struggle to keep up with me.

Like most things using a cane does have its downfalls, one day whilst out a member of the public ran over my cane with her mobility aid which resulted in her ripping off the roller ball completely breaking the whole cane. Also with my miles of walking, I like to do I have a tendency to wear out the roller balls meaning they have to be replaced regularly. This process can sometimes be lengthy, leaving me for periods of time without a fully functioning cane. I have now invested in a higher milage ball but even this is wearing thin now. The overall outcome is that the positives heavily outweigh the negatives. So my message for anyone who is unsure whether or not using a white cane will help them, just go for it! It is one of the best decisions I ever made. My late gran's motto was always say I can instead of I can't and this is something I live by.

Alex and Sheila Forsyth

Alex and Sheila Forsyth, who have been joint area helpers for Witterings and Birdham have decided it is time to retire from that role. They will be very much missed as Alex was especially good at sorting out USB players. Sheila originally took over from Trish Salmon and when we made the switch to USB players Alex joined her.

We are grateful for all their hard work and delighted that Sheila will continue to organise our raffles which raise much needed funds from our events and listeners.

This does leave us with a vacancy for an Area Helper in the Witterings area. Do any of you live in that region or do you have friends or family living there? If so, and if you would be interested in working directly with our listeners by visiting them in their homes, please contact Listeners Admin Team at the Studio for more information. It is a very worthwhile role and provides a vital link to our listeners.

An Update From 4Sight Vision Support



4Sight Vision Support (4SVS) provides free advice, support, and specialist information to blind and sight-impaired residents throughout West Sussex. The independent Charity, which is currently celebrating its 100th anniversary, relies on support from volunteers, fundraising events, donations, and grants to fund its vital services. Can you spot Jodie, Jan, and her dog Bobbi in the photo?

Last year 4Sight was awarded the prestigious Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, and also appointed Kirstie Thomas as its new Chief Executive Officer. Sight-impaired Kirstie was initially supported by 4SVS when she was diagnosed with Stargardt Disease, a genetic form of macular degeneration, over 23 years ago at the age of 20. Impressed by the services provided, she firstly volunteered on the Shoreham Fundraising Area Committee and in 2009 was employed initially as a Volunteer Coordinator. She increasingly grew her role, gaining invaluable experience and knowledge of the wider sight loss sector, low vision, and the complex needs of blind and sight-impaired people.

Kirstie comments, "I feel extremely proud and privileged to have been offered this opportunity and to work with the incredible team here at 4Sight Vision Support, to provide the very best standard of tailored support for blind and sight-impaired people."

Kirstie is looking forward to working with CaTN to spread the message of how our two organisations can work more closely together to support blind and sight-impaired residents across the District and beyond. She adds, "As well as a wide range of services to assist with everyday living, we run many interest groups and fun events during the year to keep people connected and promote wellbeing, to enable our members to lead a life without limits."

