

17th December 2019

Dear Ms Ashbridge

Ref: Clavering Parish Council

Can you help us to support people in your community?

We wanted to ask if your Council would consider supporting our work in the local community. As a small local charity, it is increasingly difficult for us to support the increasing numbers of people who lose their sight each year. We rely on donations and fundraising to help to sustain our many services to support and improve the lives of those with sight loss, their families and carers. It is estimated that with an aging population in Essex that the number of people with some form of sight loss will increase by 30% by 2030!

Many unsupported people with sight loss are isolated at home, at risk of accidents or falls and struggling to cope emotionally with the impact of their sight loss.

Please consider making a donation to help our charity continue to provide home visits and other essential support to some of the most vulnerable people in your community. Any support you could provide will be greatly appreciated and make a real difference to the lives of local people in your community.

Sponsor events

Another way you could help us to support local blind and partially sighted people is to sponsor an event. We hold exhibitions, coffee mornings and social outings throughout Essex for blind and partially sighted people. Please consider sponsoring one of these events to help support these much-needed services.

Sight Loss

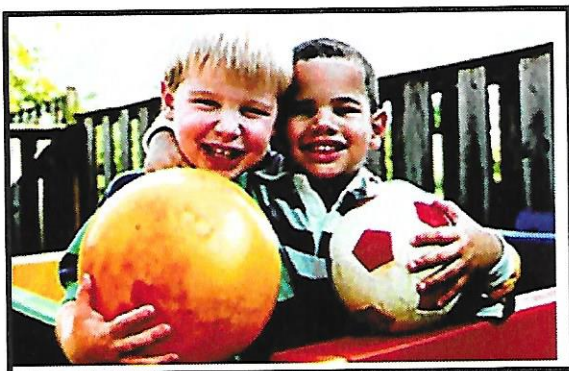
Sight loss is devastating and will affect one in 12 people of retirement age. This increases to 1 in 5 people at age 75+ and 1 in 2 at age 90+. It's hard for those of us with sight to appreciate how challenging life with sight loss is. Until, of course, it unfortunately happens to a loved one of ours, or we experience it for our self.

Please take a moment to think through your day and how different it would be if suddenly you couldn't see. Could you find clothes that colour match, prepare breakfast and find your way to work? Would you be able to carry out your daily duties once there?

Perhaps you might practically manage it, but what about the emotional stress and fear of facing everyday life and not being able to see your husband or wife's face or see your children or grandchildren growing up and be able to share in those special moments? The best way of coping is to talk to someone who understands, who has the experience and training to guide you and empower you and that's where Support 4 Sight can help.

One of our many service users:

"My name is John, I'm one of the 600,000 people in the UK who suffer from Age-related Macular Degeneration. My eyesight is deteriorating rapidly, I now have no central vision and my peripheral vision is blurred. To illustrate, there are two pictures below, the image on the right is an example of how I might see the picture on the left.



Everyday living is difficult for me; I struggle to read (even the dials on my kitchen appliances), I no longer drive, I can just about see a bus coming although I can't make out its number, and I'm constantly anxious, having had several falls in my home and in the street.

Support 4 Sight helped turn my life around when a specially trained volunteer visited me at home, offering advice, assistance and equipment such as lighting, magnifiers and daily living aids to help me live safely and independently. More important than the practical help, I was made to feel that someone understood my situation and cared about me".

Please help

There are over 51,700 in Essex who have sight loss, with 5,485 of those registered blind or partially sighted. This means the majority of people are not registered and may not be receiving the support they need. Sight is the sense people fear losing the most and coping with sight loss is extremely difficult, as it affects all aspects of a person's life.

The table below shows the estimated number and proportion of people living with sight loss by district in Essex.

District	Number of people living with sight loss	Proportion of the population living with sight loss
Basildon	5,590	3.0%
Braintree	5,180	3.4%
Brentwood	2,890	3.7%
Castle Point	3,600	4.0%
Chelmsford	5,880	3.3%
Colchester	5,620	2.9%
Epping Forest	4,630	3.5%
Harlow	2,540	2.9%
Maldon	2,490	3.9%
Rochford	3,310	3.8%
Tendring	6,890	4.7%
Uttlesford	3,070	3.5%

We want to ask if your Council would consider supporting our work in your Parish. As a small local charity, it is increasingly difficult for us to support the increasing numbers of people who lose their sight each year. We currently support local people in your area and your support will enable us to continue to offer our services.

Please consider making a small donation to help our charity conduct home visits in your parish. Each two hour visit to an elderly visually impaired person costs approx. £50; not including the equipment we leave with them to enable them to live independently at home. But anything you can spare, whether it's £100 or £500, would mean a great deal to support our work with very vulnerable local people.

All figures for sight loss in Essex were taken from the RNIB's Sight Loss Data Tool. For more information about Support 4 Sight or its services please contact us on 01799 523700 or email us at info@support4sight.org.uk.

Yours Sincerely



Gary Hyams
CEO