



**Galloways**  
Support through sight loss

# Bring me Sunshine

Galloways Magazine - 4th Edition - Summer 2025



**Scan to read  
Dan's story!**

## What's inside...



**Water Park  
2025**



**Our support  
services**



**James' 18 years of  
Galloways**



# A welcome from the CEO

It has been a busy few months in the Galloways engine room. After 158 years, the charity changed its legal structure and is now a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, or "CIO" for short. The process took many months to complete but was certainly worth the time and effort.

In parallel, Galloways forged closer links with Accrington and District Blind Society. By working together, we aim to sustain services in East Lancashire and to reach more people. Which is very exciting and a positive development for all concerned.

Galloways has also undertaken a series of consultations to inform the creation of a new Children and Young People's service. The charity is currently finalising its delivery model and funding plans, with the ultimate aim of improving the lives of visually impaired children, their parents and carers across Lancashire and Sefton. As the saying goes, "watch this space" for further exciting updates.

It gives me great pleasure to report that our social enterprise café, Brew Me Sunshine continues to go from strength to strength having received a five star food hygiene rating whilst also holding the title of Morecambe's #1 café on Trip Advisor!

There are many positive things to report and I hope that by reading the newsletter, you are inspired to volunteer, donate, fundraise or leave a legacy in your Will so that future generations may benefit from the services offered by Galloways.

**On behalf of the entire Galloways community, thank you for reading our newsletter and for your continued support of blind and visually impaired people!**

**Iain Pearson,  
Chief Executive Officer**

# Our Board of Trustees



**Simon Booth**



**Joanna Solanki**



**Ruth Cuthbert**



**John Bretherton**



**John Ward OBE**



**Tony Kimpton**



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**Denise Wilkinson**

Our trustees, led by Chairman Simon Booth, generously volunteer their time to provide strong governance and ensure that Galloways operates effectively and always in the best interests of our service users.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the organisation, making key decisions, and overseeing our operations.

We are proud that our Board includes members with lived experience of sight loss, bringing valuable insight and perspective to our work.

# Some numbers...

**466** patients were supported through our **Eye Clinic Liaison Officers** in local hospitals with **1,636** interactions with service users, carers, family members, and healthcare professionals.

**Community Sight Loss Advisors** supported **945** people with **1,573** interactions with service users, professionals, carers, family members etc.

The team had **2,113** interactions with our **community**.

Galloways supported **687** **new individuals** over the year.

**515** assessments completed as part of our **Low Vision Service**.

**Engagement activities** such as Brews Up benefitted **311** people living with sight loss, combatting social isolation.

Delivered **technology solution** sessions to **383** people covering topics like communications, the internet and smart home devices.

**100** people attended **Get Active** sessions, participating in adapted sports such as tennis, cricket, curling, walking, climbing and events including scuba diving, driving day and Water Park.

**The majority of this was only possible thanks to individuals, groups and businesses supporting us by donating, fundraising and leaving gifts in Wills.**

**Thank you!**

# Suraj's journey of overcoming the challenges of Glaucoma

Suraj's life changed dramatically when diagnosed with glaucoma at a young age. Multiple prescription updates led to an optometrist discovering high eye pressure, leading to the diagnosis.

Initially, he dealt with the condition with medication but ended up needing surgery.

**"I am a little bit like a lone wolf, where I will just soldier on, but there was a nurse who mentioned the Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO) from Galloways who was stationed at the hospital."**

After a period of time, Suraj's mother was the one who encouraged him to reach out to Galloways.

Suraj found the **Get Active** programme and tennis particularly beneficial, as it helps him stay physically active and focused. **This image shows Suraj (leftmost) and 5 other people holding tennis rackets on a court.**



He also volunteers at Galloways events which give him a sense of community and purpose. The flexible volunteering schedule allows him to engage on his own terms, significantly benefiting his mental health and social life.

Suraj's journey highlights the importance of support networks like Galloways in fostering independence, confidence, and social connection. He encourages others facing similar challenges to reach out for help and explore volunteering opportunities for a fulfilling, flexible experience.





# Spotlight on

## Hospital Support



“As an Eye Care Liaison Officer (ECLOs) I am dedicated to helping you navigate the challenges of sight loss. Based at the hospital, ECLO’s have a deep understanding of eye conditions and we can connect you with the necessary support. We provide both practical and emotional assistance for people diagnosed with eye conditions.

I also have lived experience of sight loss and understand the challenges faced by our community.”

**Paula Houghton from Lancashire Eye Hospital in Chorley**

## Low Vision Assessments

A low vision assessment is a specialist session to help individuals make the most of their remaining sight.

Unlike a standard eye test, this assessment focuses on how vision affects daily life. A trained professional will:

- **Test your vision using magnifiers and other aids**
- **Discuss your everyday challenges**
- **Explore better lighting options**
- **Recommend suitable equipment**

Common aids include handheld magnifiers (pictured) stand magnifiers, task lighting, and high-powered reading glasses — tools that promote greater independence. We work closely with eye care professionals to ensure joined-up support.



# SERVICES



## ROVI Service

"As a Rehabilitation Officer for Visual Impairment (ROVI) with Sefton Council Adult Services, my role is to help people with sight loss regain confidence and independence.

I conduct Visual Impairment (VI) Assessments in people's homes, providing tailored support such as equipment, advice on colour contrast, and training in daily living skills like food preparation and safe cooking.

Mobility training is crucial, too — I teach clients how to use symbol and long canes, navigate public transport, and safely cross roads. Beyond mobility, I support community integration by referring people to local activities, such as those at Galloways, to reduce isolation.

Ultimately, my goal is to equip people with skills and strategies to live independently. Helping people adjust and regain confidence after sight loss is not just a job — it's incredibly rewarding."

**Amanda Needham, ROVI**



### Did you know?

**It costs around £45 for a member of our team to deliver a life-changing sight loss advice assessment — offering not just practical support, but a compassionate hand to help someone navigate the emotional and everyday challenges of losing their sight, and discover new ways to live independently and with confidence.**

# A HUB of activity



ERIC WRIGHT  
CHARITABLE TRUST

**Learning opportunities at your fingertips!**

Our Digital Hub provides a wealth of resources to help you on your journey with sight loss.

Search The Digital Hub



**Knowledge**

[View Resources](#)



**Connect**

[View Resources](#)



**Thrive**

[View Resources](#)

Scan the QR code to access or visit [galloways.org.uk/digital-hub](http://galloways.org.uk/digital-hub)

**This resource has been made possible thanks to the ongoing support of The Eric Wright Charitable Trust.**



## Cancer Information made accessible

Thanks to a grant from Spring North, Galloways have been able to produce information on the most common cancers, their symptoms and screening processes that is accessible for people with a range of visual impairments.

The Cancer Screening Information booklet has been produced in large print, as well as being available in Braille, audio and digitally. Part of this project has also been holding discussions with our community to ensure everyone is educated and informed about their health when it comes to cancer.



**Order your free copy by scanning the QR code.**

# We're having a

# BALL



After the success of the 2024 inaugural charity ball, we knew we had to schedule another immediately.

Not only was the evening an occasion of glamour and entertainment, but it became a night of kindness, giving, and philanthropy. The event was made possible thanks to the generosity of local businesses and people, who donated prestige auction and raffle prizes throughout the year, generating thousands in income.

This year, we aim to make the event an even bigger celebration of the people we support and their achievements, all while providing a **magical** backdrop for a stunning spectacle for our guests. (Just a tease for what we have in store this year!)

With over £14,000 raised through donations, a prestige raffle, and an auction, guests amazed the team with their generosity. However, the evening took an unexpected and heartwarming turn when five guests, inspired by a service user's story, kindly funded five places at our 2025 Waterpark event!

This incredible act of kindness embodies the spirit of the charity ball—bringing people together to support those in need while enjoying an unforgettable night.

**We cannot wait to see what this year's event has in store! We would love for you to join us on 9th November 2025 at Ribby Hall Hotel, Wrea Green, Preston.**



**Could you donate a bottle, gift or voucher for our ball? Let us know!**

# Up the M65 we go!



Image of a group of people around a table discussing our large print Cancer Screening Information booklet at the Accrington centre.

In October 2024, Galloways began a joint venture with Accrington and District Blind Society (ADBS). By working together, the charities aim to sustain services across East Lancashire for blind and visually impaired people and to build on the fantastic legacy forged across the East of the County, spanning 150 years.

The two charities agreed that by working together it will make services stronger and more sustainable and that ultimately, it will ensure people across Lancashire get the same level of support.

Galloways now deliver services across East Lancashire on behalf of ADBS, including sight loss advice, low vision assessments and help with support groups, leisure activities and social connections.

New premises have also been secured in Accrington to host the local support group and to deliver low vision assessments, ensuring essential services remain accessible to those who rely on them.

Looking ahead, Galloways is excited to continue the journey alongside colleagues at ADBS, offering support to visually impaired people in East Lancashire. We welcome more people to connect with us, learn about our services, and become part of our community.

**If you have any queries about services within East Lancashire, please contact Galloways on our website or 01772 744148.**



**Accrington  
& District  
Blind  
Society**

**If you or someone you know is living with sight loss, our team is here to help. No matter where you are in your journey or where you live in Lancashire or Sefton, Galloways is ready to support you.**

# 18 years of impact

## James' Inspiring Journey with Galloways

**2025 marks an incredible milestone for James Coulton — 18 years of dedicated service with Galloways, a journey defined by resilience, community, and transformation.**

James' story began long before his career at Galloways. At just 17, cataracts disrupted his vision, and by 2000, a retinal detachment left him completely blind in one eye.

In 2003, he was registered as severely sight impaired. That same year, James connected with Galloways as a service user, beginning a relationship that would not only change his life but inspire countless others.

During a residential trip in 2003, James recalls watching a man born completely blind scale a climbing wall. **"If he can do that, I've got no excuse,"** James said. That transformed his mindset and launched a new chapter.



Over the years, James moved from service user to staff member, helping run the Talking Newspaper — now fully digital — and leading countless outdoor activities.

Through walking groups, archery, cricket, and even challenging treks like hiking in Peru, James has consistently pushed boundaries and supported others to do the same.

His Get Active sessions are about more than exercise — they're about connection. **"We put on activities to bring people together. They help each other grow, just like I did,"** he shares.

James' positivity and hands-on support have inspired hundreds across Lancashire and Sefton. "If I can give back even a little of what I've gained, that's what I'm here for."

Eighteen years on, his impact is undeniable — and the journey's far from over.

**James stood up on a paddleboard at Water Park.**

(Top right image) a portrait image of James in a black Galloways jacket.

# WaterPark 2025



**In April, 28 people who are registered blind or partially sighted attended a 4-day water sports and team-building excursion at Lake Coniston, taking part in activities like paddleboarding, sailing, ghyll scrambling, and kayaking.**

While the activity week is subsidised, it can still be a financial stretch for some.

Thanks to the generosity of five donors at our Ball, four places were offered to individuals who could benefit most. In addition, another compassionate supporter has pledged to fund two places annually. These gifts go far beyond covering costs — they unlock life-changing opportunities where individuals grow in confidence, build resilience, and rediscover self-esteem in a supportive, empowering environment.

One of those funded places was allocated to David Bromilow, who extends his thanks to the generous donors after a fantastic week of extreme water sports.

**“Having the opportunity to attend Water Park funded is amazing! From hearing stories from people who have been to it before, it’s been an opportunity I have been wanting to do for a while. To spend a few days doing activities that I may not normally get involved in, with similar minded people is exciting! Due to the financial cost of moving recently, I was nearly not going. The impact that this funding has made is empowering and has created an opportunity that may not have been there.”**



**David enjoying Water Park in April 2025.**

# Rediscovering adventure

**At 69, Maureen Austin thought her adventurous days were behind her. But thanks to Galloways she's rediscovering the joy in trying new things and reconnecting with old passions.**

In 2025 Maureen began engaging with Galloways, including attending a vibrant social gathering at Chorley Football Club, where she enthusiastically joined in a game of Boccia. "I didn't know we could be so competitive!" she laughs. Soon Maureen found herself saying yes to unexpected opportunities — including a Water Park trip kindly funded by a generous donor. "I was astounded to be invited," she says. "I've never been kayaking before, but I'll give it a go!"

A game-changer for Maureen was a tech session. Living alone, she had been struggling with her laptop and visibility issues.

## Did you know?

**£40 could pay for a technology support assessment to identify what changes can be implemented for someone like Maureen's digital inclusion.**

**Maureen's first time sailing at Water Park in April 2025.**

With expert help, she now uses an Alexa device, and an enlarged cursor and enhanced laptop screen settings. "It's fabulous — I don't lose the cursor anymore!" she beams. An additional session introduced her a new magnifier with a built-in light, making everyday tasks like reading and sewing again not only possible again but enjoyable.

Perhaps most transformative has been her experience with Qigong. "The slow, rhythmic movements and breath work are incredibly calming. And Mark describes everything so well — it's perfect for people with sight loss."

Maureen's journey with Galloways has been one of rediscovery and resilience. "It's marvellous how much broader life can be with the right support," she says.

**"It's not about what I can't do anymore — it's about all the things I can still enjoy."**



# Vincents Solicitors



Jemma Lloyd (pictured handling a snake) is a Chartered Legal Executive Fellow at Vincent's Solicitors who are prolific in supporting Galloways as one of our 1867 Corporate Club members. Jemma herself has taken on a wide range of activities and challenges to raise money through her workplace for Galloways, and shares her motivations for supporting us.

"We are proud to partner with Galloways, a charity that does so much for our local community here in Penwortham and beyond. Their dedication to supporting people with visual impairments and empowering people to live independently resonates with our values at Vincents Solicitors. As a firm rooted in this area, we understand the importance of local partnerships that make a real difference in the lives of our neighbours."

## Corporate Connections



"Galloways provide invaluable services to those who need them most, and we are honoured to play a small part in supporting their vital work. We are also pleased to encourage our community to consider leaving a gift in their Will to Galloways. **A legacy gift ensures that the charity's life-changing work continues to benefit local individuals and families for many years to come.**"

# Electricity North West



We are delighted to partner with Galloway. Together, we are committed to encouraging the sight loss community and those who may face additional challenges during a power cut to sign up for the Electricity North West Extra Care register. Our initiative aims to ensure that households receive the necessary support and resources to stay safe and well-supported during power outages.

We look forward to collaborating closely to make a positive and lasting impact across the Galloway community.

## Extra Care Register



Bringing energy to your door

This support service is for households who may need a little extra help and support during a power cut. To join call 0800 195 41 41 or visit [www.enwl.co.uk/forms/ecr-form/](http://www.enwl.co.uk/forms/ecr-form/)

## The Retina Clinic

"We believe that preserving sight goes hand in hand with preserving independence and dignity. That's why we're honoured to support Galloway as a Gold Corporate Partner. Galloway plays a vital role in the North West by supporting people living with sight loss, and together, we aim to ensure that people have access not only to essential daily support, but also to the most advanced treatments and innovations in eye care.

Through this partnership, we're committed to raising awareness about clinical trials and pioneering therapies, while working hand in hand with local optometrists and eyecare professionals. Our goal is to ensure that every individual, no matter where they are on their journey, receives the guidance, reassurance, and options they need to protect their vision and their quality of life."

**Professor Paulo-Eduardo Stanga,  
Founder & Chief Medical Officer, The Retina Clinic**



Here comes the sun, for....

# MORECAMBE BAY WALK 2025

Saturday  
19 July 2025



Registered with  
FUNDRAISING  
REGULATOR



**LIMITED  
TICKETS!**

By taking part in this event, you will be helping us to support blind and partially sighted people in Lancashire & Sefton.



[galloways.org.uk/morecambe-bay-walk-2025](https://galloways.org.uk/morecambe-bay-walk-2025)