

Borders Visually Impaired Network (BVIN)

Helping blind and partially sighted people in the Borders.

BVIN is a small informal network of people across the borders who suffer from sight loss. Members meet monthly to share experiences, tips and ideas. We also lobby for changes to regulations in matters which affect us, such as pedestrian crossings, or where local public services ignore the needs of people with sight loss. .

Loss of vision can lead to loss of confidence and independence, difficulty in dealing with correspondence; financial affairs; keeping in touch and isolation arising from transport difficulties.

Computers can open up a world of opportunities, and recently BVIN held a very successful Computer Drop-in-Day. Over 150 people came to see an exhibition of equipment and Guide computer software which is particularly suitable for people with sensory impairment. The primary purpose was to show that Guide is so easy-to-learn that even those who have never used a computer before can quickly e-mail , Skype, use BBC Listen again, keep track of personal finance, and generally dip into a whole new world of interest and enjoyment.

The Guide system is so helpful for both partially sighted and those with no computer experience that we are lobbying to have it available on library computers and we would be very grateful for support to achieve this by asking about it the next time you visit the library.

BVIN wants to expand and revitalise and increase the membership, in the social and fellowship areas, establish and maintain contact with other groups in the Borders, revive the theatre group, revive the walking group, revive the visiting service, provide computer training and facilities for the blind and partially sighted, establish a counselling service, and more generally to create a friendly social support group open to both sighted and partially sighted people.

All of these activities require the help of volunteers - drivers, guides, escorts, organisers, and communicators - there is a place for anyone willing to provide a few hours of their time.

If you are interested, or can help please contact

Olive Fuller on Tel 01573 226962 or

Evan Davies Project Worker, BDF Roxburgh House Court, Roxburgh Street, Galashiels, TD1 1NY. Tel 01896 668578