# E-Newsletter - September 2020

We may be living in unusual times but, thanks to your ongoing support, we continue to provide our information and support services in new ways, and to fund vital research into inherited sight loss conditions.

Our BBC Lifeline appeal was a great success. The response was incredible and it really helped to raise awareness of inherited sight loss conditions as well as valuable funds to support our work. Presenter Amar Latif has recorded a short thank you video (<https://youtu.be/ZtvblFmuT-0>). There is a lot of love for that man!

## Virtual local group meetings

We are pleased to be organising three online (or telephone) local support group meetings in September:

* East of Scotland: Tuesday 15 September between 2.00pm and 3.00pm
* London: Saturday 19 September between 11.00am and 1.00pm
* Somerset (with Somerset Sight): Tuesday 22 September between 6.30pm and 7.30pm

If you live in one of these areas and would like to join us, please email services@RetinaUK.org.uk and instructions on how to join via your smart device, computer or telephone will be sent to you. If you have any questions about the meeting please call Jacqui, at Retina UK, on 07841 486008.

We plan to arrange more of these virtual meetings over the next few months - we'll share more information as soon as we have it.

## Research funding

Many of our research projects were disrupted by the pandemic lockdown: labs were forced to close for several months and, in some cases, work was lost because there was no way to preserve cell cultures at short notice.

Retina UK is committed to supporting all of the fantastic researchers we currently fund so that they can complete their projects and achieve their original aims. We will adjust our funding schedules to accommodate delays so that all of the work we have already invested in can be seen through to completion. More information about the research we fund is available at: <https://retinauk.org.uk/research/research-we-fund/>.

## Royal Parks Half Marathon

Look ahead to 2021 and grab yourself a place in the Royal Parks Half Marathon! Join our team for this stunning race and take in some of the capital’s world-famous landmarks on closed roads including four of London’s Royal Parks.

You can pick from the April and October races and by taking on the 13.1miles you’ll get a finisher’s t-shirt and medal, Retina UK running vest, invitation to join our brand new Strava Running Club and much more!

Secure your place for free and pledge to raise £500. Find out more: <https://retinauk.org.uk/get-involved/fundraising-overview/fundraise-for-us/take-part-in-an-event/royal-parks-half-marathon-2/>)

## Volunteers needed to test new app

A team of Moorfields ophthalmologists and digital developers is looking for people with inherited sight loss to help them test an exciting new app.

The app, known as MyEyeSite, will allow people living with rare eye conditions to store all of their own medical information, including scan images and referral letters, and share it with doctors and researchers as they wish.

If you would like to get involved with testing, or would simply like to be kept up to date with developments and information about MyEyeSite, please visit <https://myeyesite.health/register>.

## Christmas raffle

Our popular Christmas raffle will be hitting doorsteps in October – so look out for your tickets and take part if you can. In addition to contributing to Retina UK’s research and information and support services, you could win one of several fantastic prizes!

Find out more (<https://retinauk.org.uk/get-involved/fundraising-overview/christmas-raffle/>)

## Audio material

We have been told by many members of our community that they no longer have a CD player and that the devices they now use have a USB slot for a memory stick.

Thanks to sponsorship from Janssen, we will be piloting the distribution of Look Forward on memory stick (instead of CD) this November. The first group will be relatively small; a maximum of 25 people.

The plan is to send out the memory stick with the latest edition of Look Forward loaded onto it in a reusable pouch. When you have finished listening, simply return the stick to the pouch and return it to us. For those familiar with Calibre Audio Library's system, this will be very similar.

If you are interested in joining the pilot group, please email jane.russell@RetinaUK.org.uk. Please note, the returnable memory sticks are only available via the Articles for the Blind service so if we don't already have it, we do need your permission to send post to you marked in this way.

If you are able to access the Internet, you may be interested to know that back issues of Look Forward are available on our Podcast channel: <https://anchor.fm/retina-uk>. It is available on Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Spotify and more.

## Feedback

If you have any suggestions or requests for content on a particular subject in our Newsletter, we'd love to hear from you. Please call Jane on 07719 967368 or email jane.russell@RetinaUK.org.uk. Alternatively you can call the office number and leave a message on the answerphone and we'll call you back. The office number is 01280 821334.