# E-Newsletter - January 2021

A message to our community from our Chief Executive, Tina Houlihan. This can also be viewed by following this link: [**https://youtu.be/Zj6w3Tzoxho**](https://youtu.be/Zj6w3Tzoxho). A copy of the [**transcript can be downloaded here**](https://mcusercontent.com/bfa66697494e06264cf5b6738/files/f41b36fd-c56e-43af-9396-51fc415d67ed/Transcript_of_video_message_from_Tina_Houlihan.pdf).

## Useful links: Covid-19

The useful links on our website are regularly updated with a variety of information from vaccines to protecting your mental health. You can find them here: [**www.RetinaUK.org.uk/general-news/useful-links-during-covid-19-pandemic/**](https://retinauk.org.uk/general-news/useful-links-during-covid-19-pandemic/)

## Annual Conference & AGM

Registration for our online Annual Conference and AGM on Saturday 17 April is now open: [**www.RetinaUK.org.uk/annual-conference**](https://retinauk.org.uk/information-support/retina-uk-events/annual-conference/). We do hope you will join us from the comfort of your own home.  
  
The next edition of Look Forward will include more details, including voting instructions (for those of you who have voting rights). It is due to arrive at the end of February.  
  
We are incredibly excited to be launching our new '**Unlock Genetics**' resource at the Conference. It aims to increase awareness of genetic testing and genetic counselling amongst people living with inherited retinal dystrophies, empowering you to make fully informed decisions about your lives, healthcare and family planning.

### Research at Risk campaign

Those of you who follow us on social media may have already seen the recent campaign #ResearchAt Risk which Retina UK is supporting. The pandemic has put charity-funded research at risk and we are asking for your help in calling for the Prime Minister to protect it. Just click on this link [**https://supportmedicalresearch.e-activist.com/page/73363/-/1**](https://supportmedicalresearch.e-activist.com/page/73363/-/1?fbclid=IwAR1i70EcX9ZF1GAyHnzvf6Sa9YkTRt_60B1FEosUBw7Lj1LzDyG3UgrQkfA) and fill in your email address to send a ready-drafted email to the Prime Minister.

## Challenge yourself in 2021

Take on a challenge and reach your 2021 goal with team Retina UK.

You’ll help support people affected by inherited sight loss lead better lives today and accelerate the search for treatments for the future.

Whether you’re a first time runner or seasoned pro, we’ve got the race for you! From well-known runs such as the London Marathon, local events in your community to virtual challenges for your neighbourhood there’s a race for everyone.

Visit [**www.RetinaUK.org.uk/run**](https://retinauk.org.uk/get-involved/fundraising-overview/take-part-in-an-event/run-for-retina-uk/) to get your place.

Go the distance with an Ultra Challenge sponsored trek. From coastal scenery to National Parks there’s plenty of locations to pick. Sign up for a charity sponsorship place before 31 January and get your registration for just £1!

Visit [**www.RetinaUK.org.uk/trek**](https://retinauk.org.uk/get-involved/fundraising-overview/take-part-in-an-event/walks-and-treks/)

## Local group meetings

Many of you are enjoying connecting with each other online, or by phone, by attending our local peer support group meetings. More than 130 people have attended our groups in the last three months.     
  
The next (virtual) local group meeting is for the East of Scotland and will take place on Wednesday 3 February between 2.00pm and 3.00pm. This will be online via Zoom.

Please register on our website: [**www.RetinaUK.org.uk/groups#scotland**](https://retinauk.org.uk/information-support/retina-uk-local-peer-support-groups/#scotland) or email [**services@RetinaUK.org.uk**](mailto:services@RetinaUK.org.uk?subject=East%20of%20Scotland%20local%20group%20meeting) and instructions on how to join via your smart device, computer or telephone will be sent to you.

“Thanks so much for hosting the London group meeting today! It was fantastic to come together and share experiences, now so more than ever given how the restrictions have made travelling and socialising harder. I’m very interested in participating again and I hope that these kinds of easy-to-attend virtual events become a feature of Retina UK outreach and community events, even after restrictions have lifted.”

Joe, a London local group member

## Tell us about your favourite book

Reading is a joy which we know that many of our community enjoy, particularly at the moment; while we are unable to go out, other than for essentials. Whether you listen to audio books, read large print or use an electronic device such as a Kindle, there are so many different types of books to enjoy. They can be bought or borrowed from a variety of sources. Calibre offer a free service to anyone who has a print disability ([**www.calibreaudio.org.uk**](https://www.calibreaudio.org.uk/)). Your local library may also offer digital and audio books to borrow for free.

We would love to compile a list of book recommendations from our community, for our community. If you have a favourite book you’d be willing to share with us, please complete this form on our website: [**www.RetinaUK.org.uk/general-news/tell-us-about-your-favourite-book/**](https://retinauk.org.uk/general-news/tell-us-about-your-favourite-book/). We’re so looking forward to hearing what you enjoy. It doesn’t have to be a novel. All nominations are welcome and encouraged.