

MERTON SPORTS & SOCIAL CLUB

BULLETIN

February 2021

http://www.mssc.org.uk/

Merton Sports and Social Club for VI People

(Charity No. 283843)

The Guardian Centre

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**CONTENTS**

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

VI SAILING WEEK 2021

MSSC ZOOM QUIZ

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

MSSC TANDEM LOAN SCHEME

MSSC TWITTER AND FACEBOOK

VOCALEYES SEEKS THREE NEW TRUSTEES

MINDFUL POETRY COURSE

KEEPING FIT AT HOME

AWARE APP HELPS VI PEOPLE ORIENTATE AND EXPLORE

FREE TICKETS TO VI SINGER’S LIVE-STREAMED SHOW

ACCESSIBLE COMMUNICATION SURVEY

SOMETHING TO MAKE YOU SMILE

**MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

Following the Prime Minister’s recent announcement of the government’s “road map” and their proposed route out of the current lockdown, we finally have good reason to feel optimistic that club activities, in some form at least, will begin again this year.

The MSSC Committee have a meeting scheduled for the end of March, and we will be discussing the implications of the so called “road map” in relation to club activities going forward. We will then hopefully have a better idea of which activities we can realistically look at restarting and when.

On an entirely different note, I would like to say a huge thank you, on behalf of all MSSC members, to the family of the late Bob Waters, who so sadly died last summer. Bob’s son, Nigel and his wife, Fiona have been in touch and have made a generous donation of £3,000 in memory of Bob, who did so much for MSSC over the best part of forty years. The committee will consider ways in which the money might be used appropriately to reflect Bob’s involvement and contribution to the club.

It will be a few weeks yet before we can all meet again in person, but until we can finally escape from the confines of lockdown, we hope you find some of the articles in this bulletin helpful in signposting you to alternative ways to keep fit, active and entertained, while you continue to stay at home for a little while longer.

For now, take care, stay safe and keep smiling!

Richard James

MSSC Chairman.

**VI SAILING WEEK 2021**

Regrettably, Blind Week 2020, scheduled to take place in Falmouth last summer, had to be cancelled for obvious reasons, but we are hopeful that the event will return this year, even if constrained by health restrictions. In anticipation, we have taken note of Government and RYA guidance, and have developed a preliminary Covid-19 strategy.

This means we are having to organise things a little differently this year and, at this stage, we are simply inviting **you to register your interest in taking part in Blind Week 2021** in Lymington

between 12th and 19th June.

At the moment, there is no guarantee that Blind Week will proceed, or if it does, exactly in what format. The final decision will need to be taken by Easter at the latest, at which

point, we will contact all those who have registered their interest. If the outlook is positive, we will accelerate the application process, as well as giving details of the event and the measures to be implemented in order to keep everyone as safe as possible. Alternatively, a postponement to dates later in the year may need to be explored.

Please register your interest as a matter of urgency (no later than 15th March). Send an email, including your name and mobile number,to mail@blindweeksailing.co.uk.

Will Bridge

Blind Week Coordinator

MSSC MARCH QUIZ

It was good to see some of you a few weeks ago at February’s virtual quiz. The next one will take place between 7.00pm and 8.00pm on Tuesday 16th March.

Why not join us for some light hearted fun and a chance to catch up with fellow MSSC members?

Support is available if you would like help to set up Zoom on your phone, tablet or computer in advance. A link to join on the evening will be sent to you by email.

Please book your place in good time by emailing membership@mssc.org.uk.

Bev Williamson

MSSC Membership Officer

**ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Many thanks to all those of you who have either renewed your membership or have joined MSSC for the first time.

In spite of the lull in activity, annual subscriptions remain a vital source of income for MSSC and will ensure that the club is primed and ready to reopen, just as soon as it is safe to do so.

However, in light of the current situation, the membership fee has not been increased and remains just £15, covering the period January to December.

If you would like to pay your subs for 2021, there are currently three ways to do so – via the Virgin Money Giving platform, by bank transfer or by cheque, for details of any of these methods, please refer to last month’s bulletin or contact me on the email address below.

Susie Meade

MSSC Secretary

Email: secretary@mssc.org.uk

**MSSC TANDEM LOAN SCHEME**

We are pleased to announce that we have now launched our Tandem Loan Scheme and have three of our tandems available to MSSC members to hire free of charge on a temporary basis.

If you are interested in finding out more about the scheme, please get in touch, via the below email address,

MSSC tandem section

Email: tandemmanagement@mssc.org.uk

**MSSC TWITTER AND FACEBOOK**

MSSC’s latest venture into social media is our very own Twitter account. Please follow us. Our Twitter handle is, @MertonMssc.

You can still keep in touch with fellow MSSC members via the Facebook group, which is a forum for members to exchange thoughts and items of interest.

You can easily join, even if you are not currently on Facebook, all you need to do is log on to the platform, click on groups, search for MSSC, and then request to join the group once you have found it.

Please note that, if you have any questions or feedback specifically for the MSSC Committee, the most effective way to communicate with us is via the email address below.

MSSC Committee

Email: committee@mssc.org.uk

**VOCALEYES SEEKS THREE NEW TRUSTEES**

VocalEyes is a charity which aims to bring theatre, museums, galleries, art and culture to life for visually impaired people through audio description.

VocalEyes is currently looking for three new trustees to join its Board and is particularly interested in people with experience in senior management in the theatre sector, as well as training/education delivery.

They are also keen to increase the diversity of their Board by maintaining their target of fifty per cent of trustees being blind or partially sighted.

More details can be found at the following link:

<https://vocaleyes.co.uk/vocaleyes-is-seeking-three-new-trustees/>

**MINDFUL POETRY COURSE**

Mindfulness is a form of meditation which is used to combat stress, anxiety and depression. Poetry has been used for centuries to convey thoughts and feelings on a particular subject.

Dr Beverley Duguid has created a mindful poetry course for visually impaired people, their friends, family and support workers, combining mindfulness and poetry. Participants will be helped to craft poems and prose. No experience is necessary. The course is taught online via Zoom and consists of a series of eight 90-minute workshops, beginning in March.

This course is bought to you by RBKC Arts Grants and is Free of charge to participants

For further details, email Beverley@insightmind.co.uk
To enrol, email:  Admin@insightmind.co.uk

**KEEPING FIT AT HOME**

A host of suggestions for keeping fit and active at home can be found on the Metro Blind Sport website at [metroblindsport.org](https://www.metroblindsport.org/) or on **Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/MetroVISports> Below are a few suggestions:

**Shape up with Spurs**
Sessions continue on Zoom on Wednesday’s at 2pm. if you wish to register interest or find out more please contact:
Adam Millar
07392091327
Adam.millar@tottenhamhotspur.com

Sense

Enjoy free inclusive activities every day of the week with Sense! All sessions are available via Zoom or by phone call. Please note that all live sessions need to be booked in advance. Register Here: <http://blindsport.uk/DanceExercise>

**Get Yourself Active Website**
There is a new section on their website, designed so that you can easily find resources to help you stay active at home. It includes a variety of resources from various organisations, from videos to toolkits <http://www.getyourselfactive.org/resources/active-home/>

**British Blind Sport**
Along with their inclusive coaches, British Blind Sport have developed audio-led workouts, covering a wide range of activities such as Yoga, Pilates, HIIT, Boxercise and Strength Training as part of their Active at Home Programme.
Find out all of the live sessions details at the below link:- <https://britishblindsport.org.uk/the-active-at-home-programme/>

They have launched their fourth and final series of videos, Becky will be showing you a variety of standing and seated strength exercises that you can do at home:-

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCitKWen44Tb0xEqGtwbVERA>

### AWARE APP HELPS VI PEOPLE EXPLORE THEIR SURROUNDINGS

Embrace the ability to explore your surroundings and new places independently at your own time and pace!

and never get lost again!

Sensible Innovations offers turn-by-turn descriptive navigation for users who can place their phone in their pocket and listen to the AWARE app announce locations as they pass them.

Users can instruct the app where they want to go, and it’ll tell them when they’ve arrived at their destination. AWARE also provides an audio description of locations, such as the layout of a store.

The AWARE app works with Sensible Innovations Electronic Stickers to provide indoor directions and descriptions crafted with a visually impaired focus. The AWARE app is built with large fonts and high contrast or a Braille display for those who prefer to read and is completely audible for non-visual users. The audible function is also handy for anyone who wants to receive locations specific information without having to look or swipe a smart phone screen.

AWARE is free for iOS and Android.

[Read more](https://coolblindtech.com/aware-app-helps-visually-impaired-explore-their-surroundings-independently/)

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**FREE TICKETS TO VI SINGER’S LIVE-STREAMED SHOW**

At **8.30pm on Saturday 6th March, v**isually impaired singer/songwriter Katriona Taylor will perform a great blend of Jazz, Latin & Soul styles in a live-streamed show.

Katriona will feature songs from her latest album, “**Blind Passion”**, which celebrates music from blind artists such as Stevie Wonder, Ray Charles, Diane Schuur and Jose Feliciano, as well as her own compositions.

To register for a free ticket please click here:

[https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/live-streamed-show-the-best-jazz-and-latin-sounds-in-london-tickets-139369286287](https://mertonvision.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=6d4937eddc044f0716dda1d63&id=61bfd398be&e=ecd7b0844c)

**ACCESSIBLE COMMUNICATION SURVEY**

Take part in this accessible communications survey and have a chance to win a shopping voucher!

The Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) is working on new guidelines for the organisation to become more accessible and inclusive. They will be making changes to their communications including their website, publications, and visual design, but before they do anything, they would like to gather some feedback from people with a visual impairment.

There are 6 questions to answer – it shouldn’t take more than five minutes, and as a thank you, everyone who completes the survey will be entered into a prize draw to win one of 10 £10 Love2Shop vouchers. The deadline for completing the survey is 5.00pm on Monday 1st March.

To complete the survey, visit [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/MCB5CKT](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/MCB5CKT). If you have any difficulties accessing it, please contact Rosie Horton, Marketing and Communications Manager, at rosie.horton@acu.ac.uk

**SOMETHING TO MAKE YOU SMILE**

A few things people have thought during Lockdown:

My “Dry January” involved drinking dry gin and dry white wine, and cutting down on water

I even look forward to putting the bins out these days.

If you are trying to impress me with your vehicle, it better be a food delivery van.

Having plans sounds like a good idea until you have to change out of your pyjamas, put on clothes and brush your hair to leave the house.

Chocolate is God’s way of telling us he likes us a little bit chubby.

We all get heavier as we get older, because there's a lot more
information in our heads. That's my story and I'm sticking to it.

All my clothes seem to have shrunk in the wash.

I see on TV people older than me mountain climbing; I feel good getting my leg through my underpants without losing my balance.

The ups and downs of a pandemic: one day you’re loving your bubble, doing work outs, baking banana bread and going for long walks, and the next you’re crying, drinking gin for breakfast and missing people you don’t even like.

Dogs are having a brilliant time - they realize their owners can’t leave the house and they have them around 24/7. Dogs are
rejoicing everywhere. Cats are contemplating suicide.

I’m getting tired of being part of a major historical event.

At what point can we just start using 2020 as profanity?   As in:
“That’s a load of 2020.”  or “What in the 2020.” or “abso-2020-lutely.”

End of bulletin (edited by Terry James, MSSC Links Officer)