

# Fundraising News

Welcome to Southend in Sight's latest edition of Fundraising News.

In this edition we would like to raise a toast to the success of our charity shop. According to our customers, we are the "best charity shop on Hamlet Court Road", and they should know!

We owe much to our trustees past and present who had the foresight to buy our current premises ten years ago with a legacy left to the charity.

Since that time, our charity shop has gone from strength to strength. You may not realise that the shop provides us with a valuable regular income stream to help us continue our work in the community. We feel safe in the knowledge that while we have our premises and our charity shop, there will always be a service for those living with sight loss in Southend.

The charity shop is manned daily by volunteers who sell, chat to the customers, sort and steam or iron donations and generally create a wonderful atmosphere to help our sales figures! We have over 40 volunteers helping in the shop alone, and we are proud to say that 5 of these are visually impaired themselves.



We are always totally overwhelmed by the quality of the donations we receive. We do our very best to maximise our income by selling items on E-bay, making up raffle prizes for our events and creating wonderful windows (a Christmas design is pictured above) to show off individual items.

Over the last two years, we have branched out into “pop-up” shops using the space in our Centre on a Saturday which have brought in valuable extra income for the charity. And even more recently, we have dipped our toe into the vintage scene by taking a stall at a local vintage fair. We had our best day’s takings ever - £525 – from beautiful old clothes and bric-a-brac.



The beauty of our set-up is that while the shop is busy selling donations from our lovely supporters, staff and volunteers are providing the advice and support next door in our Centre.

While the charity shop continues to defy local trends and smash monthly targets, we have also continued with our more traditional

fundraising methods. This includes our annual Autumn Quiz – a hotly contested affair which this year saw teams separated by only half a point!

We continue to apply for grants and have been successful with Southend Borough Council’s In Year Grant and also the Dennis and Kathleen Smith Fund from the Essex Community Foundation.

Over the Christmas period, we will be out and about collecting at Leigh Station with a local school choir once again and at the Palace Theatre following six performances of “Rent” by SODS. These are always lovely events that make us all feel very "Christmassy" and remind us of why we do what we do.

We really are grateful to all who continue to support us. Special thanks to our volunteers who turn up for our events and collections and bring along tables of family and friends. You know who you are!

## **Easy fundraising**

Many of you will shop online this Christmas with the likes of John Lewis, Argos, Amazon and Ebay. If you haven't already, please think about signing up to Easy-fundraising and choosing to donate to us! It's very simple:

**Visit**  
**[easyfundraising.org.uk](http://easyfundraising.org.uk)**

**Choose SBWO as your cause.**

**Start shopping online.**

**The retailers will make a donation to us!**

**Please also remember when shopping on Amazon to sign up to Amazon Smile and choose SBWO. Every little helps!**

To make a donation to us at any time, please visit our website:

**[www.southendinsight.org.uk](http://www.southendinsight.org.uk)**

## **Events Diary**

Thursday 6  
February, 7pm  
**Curry Night**  
at The Shagor,  
Westcliff-on-Sea.  
£16 per person.

**Coming up!**  
Thursday 19  
March, 7pm  
**Dinner and Dance**  
**at Thorpe Hall**  
**Golf Club**  
Will include a 3  
course meal and  
live entertainment.

**For further details**  
**on events or to**  
**book your place,**  
**please call**  
**Catherine on**  
**(01702) 342131.**

## **Diamond Club.**

Become a member of our Diamond Club and help Southend in Sight continue their community services.

You can join any time for just £5 a month or an annual subscription of £60.

Our monthly prize draws are 1<sup>st</sup> prize £75 and 2<sup>nd</sup> prize £50, with more at Christmas!

To join or for more information, please call our office on **01702 34 21 31**.

## **Will Writing.**

Do you have a will? Have you thought about leaving some money to charity? Bequests to charities are tax free.

You can plan your will to ensure that it is tax

efficient, to avoid your beneficiaries having to pay more inheritance tax and help a local charity at the same time.

Southend in Sight would greatly benefit from a legacy. As a small local charity with no statutory funding we rely on the goodwill of the local community to help keep our services running.

For more information, talk to your solicitor or call our office on **01702 34 21 31** for an information pack.

## **Help Needed.**

If you are a member of a club or group, don't forget to nominate Southend in Sight as your chosen charity.

If you have any fundraising ideas or want to take part in a challenge for us, please call our office for guidance.