



A WORLD WHERE EVERYONE HAS EQUAL ACCESS TO ADVENTURE

A Newsletter brought to you from Vision of Adventure

TOP STORY THIS MONTH

We had a vision and got 'Back to Adventure'



This photograph is from the October canoe course and shows five canoes with their crews. The Saturday was challenging with wind and rain, but on Sunday we enjoyed the sunshine on Lake Windermere and even an ice-cream in Bowness.

What a year it's been so far! With so much cancelled, we were wondering if we would ever get to do anything this year. We were very relieved when restrictions were relaxed and a window of opportunity was spotted. Fortunately for us Bendrigg Trust's annex, Acorn House became available to hire. We jumped at the opportunity and quickly put in place five residential courses to run during September and October. They proved very popular and filled up quickly with everyone who came along making the most of the freedom and fresh air. We were also delighted to welcome new people along to some of these courses. Thanks to everyone for helping to spread the word. We also ran several day courses and a couple of privately booked courses.

NEW TECHNIQUES

During the Covid pandemic people have become creative to allow them to continue exercising. Katy used a 2 metre long stick and ran behind her guide instead of alongside. Jill used a similar technique for swimming, with the visually impaired

swimmer attached with a longer line and the guide swimming in front. Both techniques working very well.

Embracing technology, we have trialled some bone conduction headphones and radios for climbing. These enable the guide to speak directly to the climber without having to shout. Agata was first to try these and said they were great although it was a bit alarming to start with, having Jill's voice "inside her head"! The equipment is also waterproof and will allow swimmers an unprecedented amount of freedom in the water as they will be able to do some swimming untethered and can receive instructions from the shore or a safety boat. We are also hoping they will be good for caving so we can communicate even when folk are abseiling down a noisy waterfall! We are grateful to Chichester Lions Club who have agreed to fund 3 sets, so it will be exciting to try these with everyone next year.

STAYING CONNECTED

From an early point in this pandemic it was evident that being able to communicate was going to be very important. With people having to shield or stay isolated for weeks at a time, sometimes with little or no human contact. To try and do our bit we added WhatsApp to our social media portfolio. The WhatsApp group is a bit like our closed Facebook Group in that it's only for really meant for VI's and guides who have previously come or are about to come on one of our courses. Just for fun we've joined Twitter as well, to involve the whole world in what we do. You can find us here <https://twitter.com/VisionofAdvent1> Chat doesn't have to be restricted to VoA stuff and you can chat about anything, which folk do. If you would like to join either of the two private groups drop Chris an email on admin@visionofadventure.org and he will get you involved.

We've also got our main Facebook page where all sorts of information is shared. As ever, people can also write to us via email or even ring us.

STAYING FIT

We know lots of people are worried about losing fitness in these times when it is difficult to get out and train. To help with this, Chris is working on a series of exercise podcasts which are designed to help with core fitness, vital for all our activities. The series will begin soon in the Facebook group so look out for them and make a commitment to get or stay fit and strong for next season. Jill and Dave have been trying them out and can safely say – its not like anything we have done before!

FUNDING AND FUNDRAISING

We are grateful to all the trusts and grant giving bodies who have supported us this year. We are delighted that we have been allowed to carry over to next year the funding which had been spent due to courses being cancelled. We have also been successful in securing core funding to help cover day to day running costs and salaries.

We have been supported by 2 sponsored events this year.

Stephen Elliot completed the gruelling Helvellyn Triathlon. This included a 1 mile swim in Ullswater, 38 mile cycle including Kirkstone Pass and is rounded off with a 9 mile run up Helvellyn. Stephen didn't win, that honour went to Alistair Brownlee, but he came in in a very respectable 5 hours 45min and raised £1800. Stephen was aiming to raise enough to fund a safety craft for open water swimming but smashed his target leaving a good amount to allow us to buy other swim, cycle, run related kit.

Graham Dore and Steve Bateman completed a massive tandem journey visiting the 4 extreme points of the UK mainland (North, South, East and West). They cycled 3814 km including 40314 metres of ascent and raised around £1900. You can read the full story at the following link <https://sandgnsew.blogspot.com>

In the absence of a big group physical event like last year's London to Brighton our big fundraising push this year is "The Big Give's Christmas Challenge". This challenge runs from 1st to 8th December. All donations made between these dates, on their website, will be doubled from a fund created by a very generous supporter of ours and a charity champion, The Monday Charitable Trust. Starting on 1st December, the link to our campaign is

<https://donate.thebiggive.org.uk/campaign/a051r00001ef7lmAAI>



The great thing about this campaign is that even small donations will have a big impact. If all our supporters were to forgo a single pint of beer (not difficult in the current circumstances!) and donate the money we would be well on the way there!

As we approach the campaign week we will send out further details and re-share the link to Facebook and our WhatsApp group. It will also be on the website.

There are also two ways to raise funds for us when you are doing your online shopping in the run up to Christmas. Neither will cost you anything.

You can make us your preferred charity with Amazon Smile or sign up to Give as you Live (more details of both are at the end of this newsletter).

Finally in fundraising, we are hoping to win a £1000 donation from Movement for Good's Christmas 12 Days of Giving. It's a random draw for the 120 £1000 donations and the more nominations we have the more chance we have of winning, you can nominate us at this link:

<https://www.movementforgood.com/12days/index.php?cn=1180451&ct=disability>

AND SO TO 2021

We would love to be able to tell you when, where and what courses we are going to run next year, but we are sure you can appreciate it's not currently practical. If possible, we intend to run our normal residential courses, as well as more of the one and two day non-residential courses. We are also investing in some additional cycle touring equipment with the hope there may be one or two longer trips.

However, one of our big aims for 2021 is to support more VI inspired and led trips. If you have ideas or plans then please get in touch.

STAFF AND TRUSTEES

With the help of Government funding Chris has now been full time since October. He has worked hard to secure the 'We're Good to Go' accreditation to ensure we could run the Back to Adventure courses. Together with his wife Grazia, he has provided the catering and the Covid compliance on the courses we ran throughout the autumn.

We were also delighted to welcome a new Trustee in March. Francesca Higgins, has worked for many years for the Outward Bound Trust in their Human Resources department and brings much needed HR experience to our team. Fran is a keen runner and is passionate about the outdoors and is herself visually impaired.

The Trustees would like to recruit a further trustee from within our group of visually impaired participants. Ideally, we are looking for someone who has been involved for several years and has taken part in a range of courses and activities. One thing that the Covid crisis has taught us is that we can have meetings remotely via Zoom and it wouldn't be necessary to attend them in Cumbria. We are inviting expressions of interest for this voluntary position. Get in touch!

More on Free Fundraising

Using Amazon Smile. If you buy items through www.Amazon.co.uk then try using www.smile.amazon.co.uk instead.

The first time you visit this site you'll be asked to log into your existing Amazon account and then select a charity of your choice – preferably us! Simply search for Vision of Adventure and link it to your account. Even easier, if you visit this next link the search is done for you! www.smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/1180451-0.

When you buy things from Amazon they will donate a small percentage to us. It's a bit less than half of one percent, but as Tesco say, "Every little Helps". Subsequently always remember to visit www.smile.amazon.co.uk - a good tip is to bookmark it and you will always return to it.

Using GIVE AS YOU LIVE. Instead of tying your purchases to a single site like Amazon this method allows you to buy things from virtually any site on the internet and the organisation GIVE AS YOU LIVE collects a small percentage (slightly more than Amazon!) and sends it on to Vision of Adventure. It works a bit like Quid Co if you know how that operates.

How it works:

- You sign up on Give as You Live and nominate Vision of Adventure as your chosen charity.
- During this process you are also asked to add a small piece of code (called an extension) to your web browser (unfortunately not all browsers!).
- Every time you visit one of the web sites that are part of the 'Give as you Live' scheme this extension causes a window to pop up and reminds you that your visit can raise funds for Vision of Adventure. If you confirm that you are okay with this, then the purchase website is routed to and any purchase you make at that visit will raise money for Vision of Adventure.
- You don't have to do anything more—the money is collected and sent to Vision of Adventure automatically.
- You don't always have to raise money every time you visit a website in the scheme. (And similarly, if you delete the extension then you'll no longer generate the pop-up window).

It works on over 3800 web sites from holidays, insurance, train tickets, B&Q etc.

What have you got to lose? Nothing! What do we gain? Lots!

Find out more or Sign up on the Give as You Live scheme by visiting this link:

<https://www.giveasyoulive.com/join/vision-of-adventure>

The link is also shown on the Vision of Adventure's website.

Thankyou!