

OUTLOOK

WINTER 2016/17

www.readingassociationfortheblind.org

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Charity Number: 1062433



**Members enjoying the Christmas Party on
20th December 2016**

What's in your Winter 2016/17 Newsletter

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Happy New Year!

Firstly I would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year and I hope that 2017 will be a happy and healthy year for you all.

I am so sorry that this newsletter will be hitting your doors later than intended, but we have had an incredibly busy year at Reading Association for the Blind, with lots of staff changes and new staff!

Running up to Christmas we were very busy with a number of events as there were parties galore and of course the Christmas fair which always takes a lot of work. It was lovely to see so many people attending.

Marion is working extremely hard on our behalf and we have had some amazing media coverage which has come about from fundraising events, which is really raising Reading Association for the Blind's profile within the community. People are now much more aware of who we are and what we do!

We also have two new Visiting Officers, which has swelled our number to 4! Becky joined us in October and Denise joined us in September 2016 and they are just getting to know everyone. We were very fortunate to receive a grant from a Trust which has funded one of the positions for 3 years, so we are hoping to expand the work we do within the community.

As always we are still in need of volunteers, so if you know of anyone who would like to come in and support us we would love to hear from them.

I would just like to remind everyone that if you wish to continue to receive the Newsletters you need to renew your membership. A membership form is included at the end of this newsletter. The cost remains at £5 per annum, which hopefully you will agree constitutes excellent value for money to take advantage of our wide-ranging services. We would encourage you all to become members as in doing so you are supporting the services we provide.

I would personally like to say thank you to all of the wonderful staff team and volunteers at RAB, who work so hard for our members to make this a bright and vibrant charity. Without their help we would not be able to offer the services we provide and we are forever grateful for your help and support.

We are looking forward to a prosperous 2017 and are planning many adventures throughout the year. Do come and join us!

Ginny
Manager

SPOTLIGHT ON **Becky Arnold**



I joined Reading Association for the Blind mid-October 2016 and it has been non-stop busy ever since. Kathy has been mentoring me and I have met many lovely friendly people in my first few months. It was a good time of year to join as there has been great fun with the Christmas Fair and Party as well as fundraising events like the Santa Run and fundraising at Tesco.

My name is Rebecca, but most people call me Becky. I was born, and have never moved far, from Thatcham and currently live in Newbury. I am one of seven children and we are all very close and see each other as often as we can. I have one son, Harry, who is almost 19. Harry started at Plymouth University in September and is enjoying himself to the extent that I am not sure he is doing much work. I have three cats who each have very distinct personalities and provide endless entertainment and also relaxing company.

For the last 9 years I have worked for the pharmaceutical company Bayer as a PA to the Head of Communications for the UK. This was a very busy role but as I like working under pressure I enjoyed it. In my spare time I enjoy music, films and cross stitch and I do try to walk and swim in an attempt to compensate for my love of eating.

But for now I am going to concentrate on learning all the new things I need to know for my job as a visiting officer and enjoy getting to meet and know lots more people.

SPOTLIGHT ONDenise Williams

I have been working for Reading Association for the Blind since September 2016 as a Visiting Officer and have been doing joint visits with Kathy Porat, the senior visiting officer. I now have my DBS check through so can go it alone, so will be carrying out visits on my own!

I was born in Wallasey, Cheshire but moved to Newbury when I was very small, however I still hold on to my Northern roots. I have previously worked for numerous companies the last being 15 years in the area of mental health. I was made redundant in 2010 and after being at home, made a decision that I needed to get back into the workplace.

I live locally and have the enjoyment of a large park behind my home so I can go for a walk. I enjoy relaxing at home and my garden is a big time consumer when the weather is fine. I love cooking for a crowd or watching a good movie. I love children and spend a lot of time babysitting for my family and friends. It would appear anyone who needs some childcare knows who to ask! I go to the horse races at Newbury and love a game of bingo, where I am generally quite lucky.

I am slowly getting around the hall meeting people and have now met many new people in the community and I hope that my time with RAB will benefit you all, whether it's at the hall or out on home visits.

NEWS FROM READING ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND

As always, there is lots going on at Reading Association for the Blind. For starters we would like to introduce you to Kerry Haynes who is running the Reading Half Marathon for us.

Kerry Haynes is running the Reading Half Marathon for RAB!

Kerry Haynes is running the Reading Half Marathon and is currently in training. She has set up a JustGiving page (www.justgiving.com/fundraising/KERRY-HAYNES) to raise money for us and this is what she has to say about why she wants to raise money for us.

'I have recently been made aware of Reading Association for the Blind, whose objective is to enable sight impaired people to lead full and active lives by providing the opportunity to take part in activities they may otherwise not be able to.

I have been fortunate enough to see the great work the staff and volunteers do for its service users, having recently attended the Reading Santa Run and Christmas Fair organised by the team. I wanted to give something back and to provide support for the charity to continue its great work, which clearly enriches the lives of all around.



Donating through JustGiving is simple, fast and totally secure. Your details are safe with JustGiving – they'll never sell them on or send unwanted emails. Once you have donated, they'll send your money directly to the

charity. So it's the most efficient way to donate, saving time and cutting costs for the charity.

Thanks for taking the time to visit my JustGiving page. I'm excited about the Reading Half and to hitting that target (monetary and a new personal best!!!)

Kerry

Jigsaw Puzzles

The Visiting Officers have a number of large jigsaw puzzles in their office should anyone wish to borrow them. Please see Kathy, Wendy, Becky or Denise in the hall or telephone 0118 9572960.

Questionnaires!

As you may know, we receive funding from Reading Borough Council, and as part of the funding agreement, we are required to produce quarterly reports on feedback from our Members.

This is where we would like your help! In order to do this, we have produced a questionnaire, which some of you may have already kindly completed. However, this is an ongoing annual requirement; so even if you have already completed one, please do so again if you are able to, or ask a family member or your Visiting Officer to assist you. A free post envelope has been included for your use, or alternatively bring the completed questionnaire to the Hall, if you visit on a Tuesday or Thursday.

Your help with this will be greatly appreciated and will help us to maintain our funding from Reading Borough Council.

Plea for Volunteers

We are always on the lookout for more volunteers, so if you have any friends or relatives who would like to help us please ask them to contact Ginny and we can discuss how they could help.

We currently have vacancies for volunteer drivers, admin, craft helpers, a volunteer to help out with social club and Sarah would also like some help organising the Young at Heart programme of events.

All the roles offer variety in a lovely friendly environment so if you, or someone you know, has some spare time please contact Ginny in the office.

What format is best for you?

Are you happy to receive the newsletter in hard copy or would you rather receive it via email. If you would prefer this format please let us know in the office and we can arrange to send the newsletter direct to your inbox!

Ginny & the Team

Craft Club 2016

This year's craft programme has been full and varied; as a result members have had the opportunity to try many different crafts. We have been knitting blankets for other

organisations such as a charity in Africa which helps young mums to have warm blankets to wrap their babies, we've also helped a nursery in Manchester that needed some blankets for their dolls in their 'home corner'.

The 'Reading Room' now has a series of wall hangings which change with the seasons. A member designed the autumn wall hanging, basing the fabric painting on a photo he took whilst walking by the River Thames. In the spring we sowed seeds which were grown on and then planted out in the garden later in the year. Members helped with the gardening by weeding and dead-heading. We painted large pebbles to put on top of the planters, which have added more colour which helps when there are fewer flowers in bloom.



As part of the Garden Project we created a large mosaic to make the garden walls more interesting. Over a number of weeks, members painted the base-board, created a design, glued tiles, shells, marbles, pebbles, keys, stones and then grouted and polished the finished mosaic.

This was a super project which many different people were able to engage in and the finished mosaic makes a lovely splash of colour on an otherwise mundane wall!

We had an Easter Bonnet parade, decorating colourful hats and making facecloth Easter bunnies (which held chocolate eggs).

The summer was very busy! We had a load of bunting to make for our 90th Anniversary and the Queen's 90th

birthday celebration. Red, white and blue fabric; with matching red, white and blue pompoms.

Some members were brave enough to try 'needle felting' for the first time. The flowers they made were incorporated into the design on the summer wall hanging in the Reading Room.

Insect Hotels (or Bug Boxes) met a mixed welcome! In an attempt to encourage wildlife and add some diversity to the items we sell, volunteers made the shell of the insect hotel from reclaimed wood. Members sanded down and painted the box and filled it with items such as fir cones, bamboo, beech mast and straw. The finished 'Insect Hotels' are a popular item with members of the public and have brought some income for little expenditure. Our thanks to all the volunteers who helped to make the shells of the insect hotels from their stash of wood off-cuts!



Henley had its regatta in July and so did RAB! Everyone was encouraged to make their own boat and then enter it into a sailing competition in heats. The competition was fierce

but good fun.

We have re-introduced basket making into the programme. Christine Brewster from 'Stripey Basket' kindly led a couple of workshops to get us going and we continued into the autumn. A number of members enjoyed the chance to make baskets again and we intend to occasionally include basket



making in the programme in 2017. However, we have found that this activity requires a high level of one-to-one staffing, which is not always possible if there are no volunteers to help. This is the reason we are unable to offer basket making all year round.

Our thanks go to Peter Canham, a willing volunteer, who continues to provide us with wooden trugs and planters for members to assemble.

In the autumn we held a mini harvest festival, making vegetable soup and bread rolls for lunch, from scratch. A couple of gentlemen wanted to make sure their wives wouldn't find out they'd been cooking in case they were roped in to help at home! The tins of food donated were taken to



Reading Food Bank.

Other crafts that members have tried are silk painting, weaving, pom-pom making and fabric printing. We decorated the hall at Christmas with long ropes of paper chains which we made on a production line! The Christmas tree was decorated with peg-doll angels, using some pompoms made earlier in the year.

At the Christmas party, each place setting had a face-cloth snowman holding a sweet (donated by a garage in Devon)! Members made all the snowmen and each one was unique!



So a full and busy year, I'd like to express special thanks to my colleagues in the Craft Team, Lorraine and Amanda. They nearly always go along with my crazy crafty ideas and cheerfully manage to interpret my intriguing instructions. We would all like to extend our thanks to the people who have given their time to volunteer and help with the crafts. All our craft volunteers are invaluable to us, enabling more members to take part and create worthwhile crafts.

The programme for 2017 is taking shape and we will hopefully be including felting and more mosaics. If there is a craft you would like to try, please talk to me and I will try to include it in the programme.

Suzanne Weston, Craft Tutor
January 2017

PUZZLE PAGE

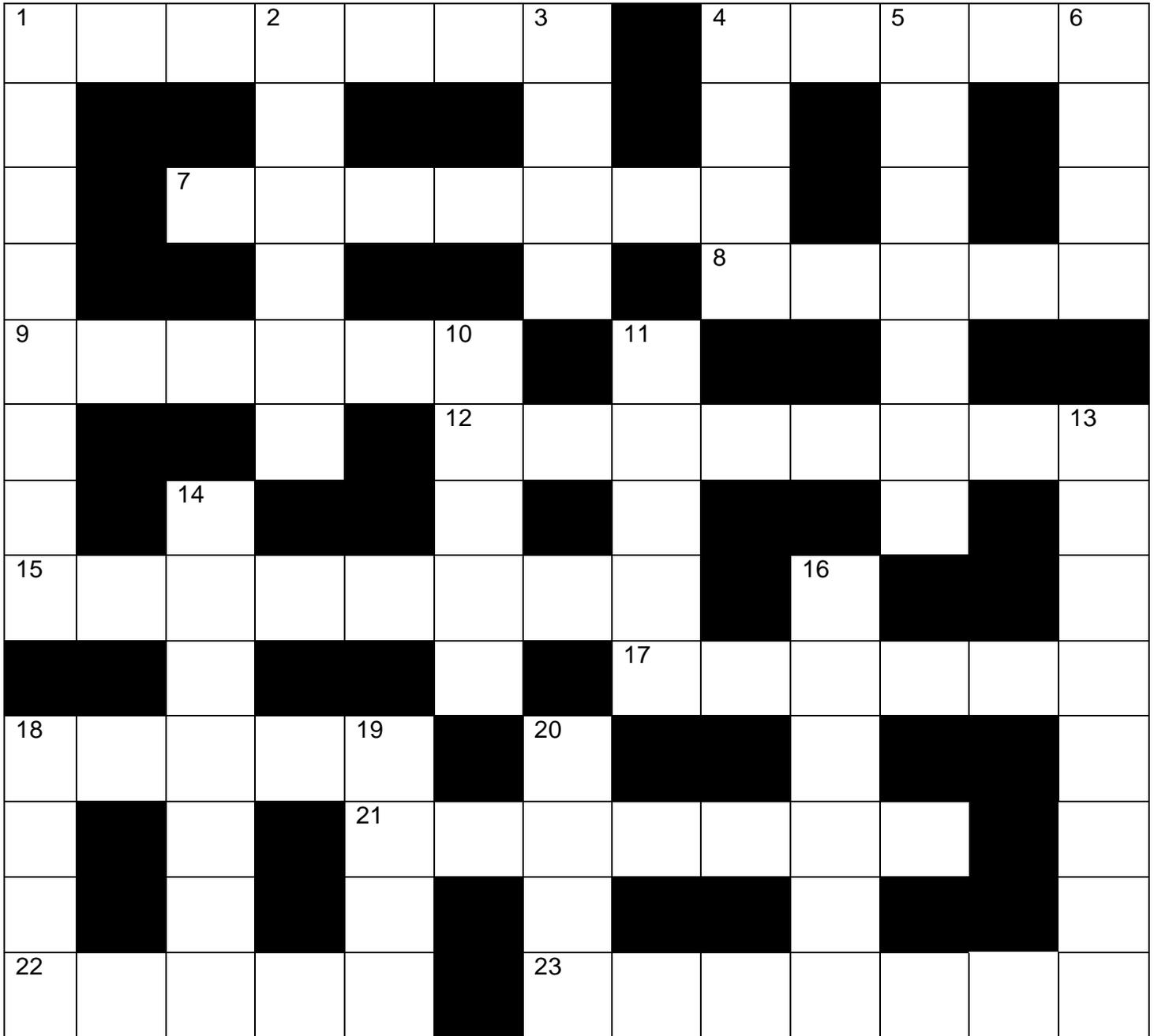
Supply the missing surnames:

1. Isambard Kingdom _____ (engineer)
2. Terry _____ (special envoy)
3. Herbert George _____ (writer)
4. William Gilbert _____ (cricketer)
5. Henry _____ (sculptor)
6. Henry _____ (pirate)
7. Sandro _____ (artist)
8. Samuel _____ (diarist)
9. Engelbert _____ (singer)
10. Kenny _____ (footballer)
11. Alphonse _____ (gangster)
12. Albert _____ (physicist)
13. Alfred Bernhard _____ (chemist/inventor of dynamite)
14. Ronnie _____ (comedian)
15. Lee Harvey _____ (assassin)

Answers can be found on page 27

Thanks to Wendy Gibson for providing this quiz

CROSSWORD



ACROSS**DOWN**

1	Bram Stoker's Creation (7)	1 & 7 Across	Hot dish of excretory organs (8&7)
4	Get to (5)	2	Shrink in fear (6)
7	See 1 down (8 & 7)	3	They go with cakes, according to Somerset Maugham (4)
8	Sailing vessel smacking of tomatoes (5)	4	Food for a baby (4)
9	Fencer's habitual movements (6)	5	Helped to do something dubious (7)
12	Undiplomatic (8)	6	Silence (4)
15	Treelike formation of crystal (8)	10	Denude (5)
17	Part of a circle (6)	11	Large quantities of land (5)
18	Temporary place holder (5)	13	Philosopher who died from hemlock (8)
21	Relating to a complex which preoccupied Freud (7)	14	Smiling contempt (7)
22	Wading bird (5)	16	Abrade (6)
23	Plans (7)	18	Attract with bait (4)
		19	Debatable (4)
		20	Poems (4)

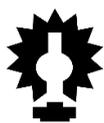
Thanks to Mick Paige for putting this Crossword together.

Answers to this crossword can be found on page 28

YOUNG AT HEART TRIPS - WINTER/SPRING 2017

DATE 2017	ACTIVITY	COST
Monday 23 rd January	Pub Lunch – The Cunning Man Time: 12.30pm – 3pm approx.	£5 + meal
Wednesday 1 st February	Show – ‘Our House’ theatre trip in Henley on Thames Time: 12pm – 10pm approx.	£20 + meal
Thursday 23 rd February	Lunch at Reading College Time: 12pm – 3pm approx.	£5 + meal
Monday 20 th March	Henry Street Garden Centre – pottery painting & lunch Time: 10am – 3pm approx.	£5 + meal etc.
Monday 3 rd April	Easter pub lunch & quiz – venue to be confirmed Time: 12pm – 3pm approx.	£5 + tea
Thursday 18 th May	Afternoon tea at Riseley tea rooms Time: 2pm – 5pm approx.	£17
Friday 9 th – Monday 12 th June	Holiday at Pontins at Weston-Super-Mare 60's/70's weekend! <i>Please note: deposit of £25 needed by the end of January</i>	£79
Monday 26 th June	Aston Pottery – demonstration and lunch Time: 9.30am – 5pm	£10 +meal
Monday 10 th July	Day at the seaside in Poole Time: 9.30am – 7pm approx.	£8

If you wish to attend any of the trips please complete the form at the back of the newsletter and return to Sarah with payment.



READING ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND



SOCIAL CLUB PROGRAMME 2017

DATE 2017	ACTIVITY
Tuesday 10 th January	Julia Roberts This lady has written a book and will be coming to talk to us about historical writing and research
Tuesday 14 th February	Sarah Short - Eye Clinic Officer
Tuesday 14 th March	Songs and music from Helen and Terry Pearce
Tuesday 11 th April	No meeting as closed for Easter
Tuesday 9 th May	Talk and jokes by Rev David Jenkins
Tuesday 13 th June	Crazy Dave's Cider talk
Tuesday 11 th July	Frank the Duke is back by popular demand. He will be entertaining us with funny tales and music.

All Social Club activities are arranged by Julia Canham.
Please speak to Julia if you have any questions.

Ramble Programme Winter/Spring 2017

Monday 30th January

Monday 13th February

Monday 27th February

Monday 13th March

Monday 27th March

Monday 10th April

Monday 24th April

Monday 8th May

Monday 22nd May

Monday 5th June

Monday 19th June

Monday 3rd July

Monday 17th July

All rambles are organised by Alan Futter. If you wish to join the rambling group please contact the office and we can put you in touch with Alan.

**YOUNG AT HEART TRIPS WINTER/SPRING 2017
Attendance Form**

DATE 2017	ACTIVITY	COST	Wish to attend
Monday 23 rd January	Pub Lunch – The Cunning Man Time: 12.30pm – 3pm approx.	£5 + meal	
Wednesday 1 st February	Show – ‘Our House’ theatre trip in Henley on Thames Time: 12pm – 10pm approx.	£20 + meal	
Thursday 23 rd February	Lunch at Reading College Time: 12pm – 3pm approx.	£5 + meal	
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Monday 26 th June	Aston Pottery – demonstration and lunch Time: 9.30am – 5pm	£10 +meal	
Monday 10 th July	Day at the seaside in Poole Time: 9.30am – 7pm approx.	£8	

Please complete this form if you wish to attend any of the Young at Heart trips and return to:

**Sarah Watts
Reading Association for the Blind,
Walford Hall,
Carey Street,
Reading,
Berkshire
RG1 7JS.**

Name: _____

Amount Paid:

Please make cheques payable to Reading Association for the Blind.

Note to Club Members who use the RAB Minibus Transport

If you regularly use the transport and are unable to attend the clubs, could you please endeavour to let us know at the hall as soon as possible to avoid the buses having to make unnecessary journeys. Although the office is only manned on Mondays (8.30am – 1.30pm), Tuesdays and Fridays (8.30 am - 3.30 pm) and Wednesdays (8.30 am - 12.45 pm) there is an answer-phone on which you are able to leave a message, which we will pick up and make note of any alterations for the bus timetable.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Hall Closure – Easter	Monday 10 th – Friday 21 st April 2017
Hall Closure – August	Monday 31 st July 2017 – Friday 1 st September 2017
Hall Closure – Christmas	Wednesday 20 th December 2017 – Friday 5 th January 2018
Table Top Sale	Friday 28 th July 2017
RAB Christmas Fair	Friday 1 st December 2017
RAB Christmas Party	Friday 15 th December 2017



**READING ASSOCIATION
FOR THE BLIND
APPLICATION FOR 2017 MEMBERSHIP**

Name	
Address	
Postcode	
Telephone No	

For Office Use Only:

Money received: £5

Receipt

Received the sum of £5 for 2017 membership to Reading Association for the Blind

Member's Name:

Money received by:

Signed:

Date:

If you wish to renew your membership or become a new member of Reading Association for the Blind, please complete this form and return with payment via your Visiting Officer or direct to:

**Reading Association for the Blind
Walford Hall
Carey Street
Reading
Berkshire
RG1 7JS**

Puzzle Page –
Answers to Puzzles on Page

1. Brunel
2. Waite
3. Wells
4. Grace
5. Moore
6. Morgan
7. Botticelli
8. Pepys
9. Humperdinck
10. Dalglish
11. Capone
12. Einstein
13. Nobel
14. Barker or Corbett
15. Oswald

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS

1	Dracula
2	Reach
8	Ketch
9	Lunges
12	Tactless
15	Dendrite
17	Sector
18	Locum
21	Oedipal
22	Egret
23	Schemes

DOWN

1&7 across	Devilled Kidneys
2	Cringe
3	Ales
4	Rusk
5	Abetted
6	Hush
10	Strip
11	Acres
13	Socrates
14	Snicker
16	Scrape
18	Lure
19	Moot
20	Odes

Useful Telephone Numbers

Berkshire Vision	0118 987 2803
RNIB Helpline and Enquiries	0303 123 9999
Action for the Blind	0207 635 4800
Macular Society	0845 241 2041
Diabetes UK	0845 120 2960
Age Concern Berkshire	0118 959 4242
Age Concern Reading	0118 950 2480
Age UK	0800 169 6565
OPTALIS Visual Impairment Team	0118 937 6131
Guide Dogs	0118 983 5555
Reading Borough Council	0118 937 3797
Alzheimers Society	0300 222 1122
Dementia Support Service	0147 453 3990
Deafblind UK	0173 335 8100
Welfare Rights	0138 725 2525

READING ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND

Walford Hall

Carey Street

Reading

RG1 7JS

Telephone No: 0118 957 2960

(Outside office hours please leave a message,)

Main email: rab@raftb.org

Website:

www.readingassociationfortheblind.org

Walford Hall is open as follows:

Office Opening

Monday 8.30am – 1.30pm

Tuesday - 8.30am - 3.30pm

Wednesday - 8.30am - 12.45pm

Friday 8.30am - 3.30pm

Handicraft Clubs

Tuesday - 10am - 2pm

Friday - 10am - 2pm