



# A Message of Support for our members with sight loss

It's amazing how quickly we absorb new words and phrases into our everyday language. It was only a short time ago that 'social distancing' and 'shielding' were unheard of in our daily conversations.

For many visually impaired people they may have felt confident that they knew the layout of their local food shop and could easily arrange their weekly shop. But like everything else, this is now a thing of the past.

Shop opening times have changed, people now queue outside, markings on the floor dictate where to stand and checkout staff are often behind plastic screens. What impact do all of these new measures have on the visually impaired shopper?

For me, knowing if I am being beckoned in to the shop for my turn is a frustrating experience and not knowing if I am too near other people or even where the queue is proves to be yet another frustrating barrier.

Many visually impaired shoppers rely on asking shop staff for support but now there is the concern of not maintaining social distancing when asking for help.

So, what can help with this? Use your cane to alert others so they can move out of your way. Don't be afraid to call out to staff to attract attention and alert them to your needs. If you are able to, consider shopping online.

Remember you can make use of the designated opening times for people that are vulnerable and only go out when you really need to.

If needed, there is support from local councils sensory teams, organisations and volunteers that can help you. Don't be shy! If you need help, ask.

Stay safe

Dean  
GMB London Region  
Ability Group



## **How We The Public Can Help**

- We could ask if we can help
- We could indicate left or right
- Where necessary, using the clock face for e.g. at the number 3 is your money and at number 6 is your receipt.
- Studies show that partially sighted people find it easier to read things using the black background with yellow writing or vice versa.

## **The London Taxicard Scheme**

### **Covid-19 – Taxicard Changes**

In light of the current situation with the outbreak of Covid-19 (coronavirus), we have made changes to the London Taxicard scheme to support Taxicard members at this time.

#### **You can now use you Taxicard for:**

- Taxicard drivers to pick up and deliver essential supplies for you; and
- Allow friends and family to travel on your behalf using your Taxicard for the same purpose

**For further information contact London councils by email at: [taxicard@londoncouncils.gov.uk](mailto:taxicard@londoncouncils.gov.uk)**