

Calibre Audio launches appeal to transform lives of people with print disabilities

National charity Calibre Audio has launched a fundraising appeal to raise much-needed funds to transform the lives of those with print disabilities this winter.

Calibre Audio provides a free audiobook service for adults and children across the UK with a wide range of different conditions that mean they struggle to read. Conditions covered include blindness and visual impairment, learning difficulties such as dyslexia and ADHD, neurological conditions, physical disability that prevents holding a book and even long COVID.

2.25 million people are currently living with sight loss in the UK*. When combined with the 2% of adults and 2.5% of children who have learning difficulties and the many thousands suffering from the effects of strokes and other physical and neurological conditions that prevent reading, this is very much an issue affecting people across the UK.

Anthony Kemp, Calibre's Chief Executive Officer explains:

"We know this winter is going to be tough for so many, but reports show that disabled groups will suffer more than most. Many of our members are older people, living alone with sight loss or other disabilities that prevent them from moving around in the same way as other people. They tell us that the audiobooks they borrow from us free of charge are a lifeline that helps take their mind off their problems, reduces their feelings of isolation and makes them feel more hopeful."

Liz, who lost her sight and her mobility when she had a stroke, says she couldn't live or manage without her audiobooks:

“Joining Calibre Audio helped me resume normality. I discovered you can bridge the sighted and unsighted worlds with a single step providing you can read. Just by opening my ears and listening, I can still be part of everything I always loved. It made me wake up and realise that I’m still here and life continues.”

Nine-year-old Toby is severely dyslexic and has ADHD and his mum Claire explains the effect this has on him:

“It can take Toby an hour or more to read a page, struggling to decode the text. Then all the meaning – and most of the joy – is lost in translation. Discovering Calibre has been an absolute game changer. With audiobooks, Toby’s in his element. The gift of a book is so much more than the pages it’s written on. It supports education, self-esteem, social interaction and it boosts a child’s confidence.”

Calibre Audio is asking the public to give whatever they can spare this winter to help people like Liz and Toby. Just £10 could fund sending an audiobook to someone in desperate need of a pick-me-up or a gift of £85 could provide a year’s membership to give a child a brighter future.

To find out more about Calibre Audio’s Winter Appeal, please go to calibreaudio.org.uk/appeal. If you know someone eligible to benefit from Calibre Audio’s service this winter, please spread the word and encourage them to find out more at calibreaudio.org.uk.

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