

Pandemic forces choir to harmonise over the telephone

A choir of blind and partially sighted people, launched by RNIB Scotland earlier this year, is harmonising over the phone-line.

The choir's organiser Mike Holroyd, a community co-ordinator with RNIB Scotland, is a guide-dog user, and formerly lead a choir of blind and partially sighted people when he lived in Bristol.

He said: "We started face-to-face in January, but when lockdown started folk were keen to continue and we now get together every week."

The emphasis currently is on the fun of getting together and 76-year-old Hazel Kelly (pictured) from Corstorphine, Edinburgh, said: "I haven't sung in a choir since I was a teenager.

"It (the choir) was originally held at the RNIB Scotland offices at Hillside Crescent every second Tuesday with just four of us and a piano.

"The numbers gradually increased. Our organiser Mike makes us work hard and we had started to harmonise a bit, although this is more difficult now we're all at home.

"We tried to get together with Zoom which was not particularly ideal, and Mike is still working on the best solution for us."

She added: "I am now chatting and singing with a lady from Glasgow and another from Stirling among others but I don't

think we are quite ready to perform anywhere yet.

“It is good fun and you find yourself singing in the bathroom and while pottering around the house.”

* The RNIB Helpline is available to help blind and partially sighted people and their families and carers on 0303 123 9999.