**BucksVision Spring 2018 Newsletter**

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# Welcome

This month’s introduction is different from my usual review of the updates and features within these pages. Instead, I am going to use it as an opportunity to talk about something that is a “hot topic”!

That topic is data protection and a change to the law that is happening in May of this year, with General Data Protection Regulation (abbreviated to GDPR) coming into effect.

Now, please bear with me, I appreciate that data protection may not be the most exciting of subjects but the changes that are happening are significant. So, why am I mentioning it here? Well, the first thing to say is that GDPR is about ensuring that companies treat people’s data responsibly. In particular, people should understand how their data is being used, with no “nasty surprises”.

Here at BucksVision we are reviewing our systems to ensure that we comply with best practice. I must add that we have been ably supported by our national partner, RNIB, who have provided useful guidance and training to us.

Under the new rules, you can specify exactly what information you would like to receive and how you would like to receive it. If we send you information that you would prefer not to receive, please let us know. We are keen to ensure that our communications are useful, interesting and… welcome.

*So,***welcome** to this edition of our Newsletter, we hope that you enjoy reading it and remain extremely grateful for your support.

Steve Naylor, Chief Executive

# Ian Jenkins, Our Marathon runner

Ian Jenkins is running the marathon to raise money for us. Anne and Steve met with Ian to find out more.

**Ian, why did want to run the marathon?**

I have applied for a ballot place for six years with no success. I’m 35 now and I want to run the marathon before I hit 40. My mum has been supported by BucksVision, so I was delighted to discover that the charity had a space allocated.

**Does your mum have sight loss?**

Yes a few years ago my mum woke up having lost 70% of her vision. It was a difficult time.

**So she found out about BucksVision?**

Yes. As my parents came to terms with the sight loss my dad found BucksVision and contacted you for advice on what support was available for my mum.

**How did you get into running?**

I have always been sporty, I used to play football for a number of years and I also used to work in a gym.

**What is your training regime?**

I am running every weekend now to prepare. I did have Christmas off so I could fully enjoy the food! I started back up in January and have built up to running 14 miles.

I hope to push it up again to 16 miles then gradually increase it up to 23. Then in the run up to the marathon I will decrease the miles I am running so I am fresh and raring to go!

**Do you listen to music whilst you run?**

Yes I have an iPod and playlists to run to. I listen to old school dance music, indie, old rock music, anything really!

**How long do you think it will take you to complete the marathon?**

My half marathon in September took me 1 hr 58 min so my aim is to do it in under 4 hours. This may be difficult to achieve but I am certainly going to give it a very good try!

**Will your Family and friends come down to support you?**

Yes. My family are staying over the night before. We plan to have relaxing evening so I am all ready for the big day.

**And what about you, what’s your background?**

I am key account manager at Quanta. We provide recruitment services to companies.

**Does everyone at work know that you are doing this?**

Yes they all do and have been very supportive. Now Christmas is out of the way I have been around asking for sponsorship!

Thank you for talking to us Ian and very good luck with your training.

So far Ian has raised half of his £2,000 target. If you would like to support Ian to meet his target please donate via his [virginmoneygiving page](https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/IanJenkins_BucksVision) or call the office.

# Living with Sight Loss

If you have recently been diagnosed with sight loss why not attend a Living with Sight Loss (LWSL) course, delivered by RNIB.

LWSL courses provide information, advice, support and practical solutions for people new to sight loss.

They’ll help you to adjust to your sight condition, increase independence and boost your confidence. You will also get the chance to meet and share experiences with others in similar situations.

**These courses are for adults of all ages. Friends, family members or anyone close to you are also encouraged to attend.**

**What topics are covered?**

* Welfare rights
* Getting out and about
* Tips and gadgets for everyday living
* Assistive technology
* Eye health
* Wellbeing
* Leisure, hobbies and interests.

**How to attend**

The next course will take place on **Friday 6** and **Friday 13 July** from 10.00am to 3.30pm each day at our office in Aylesbury.

If you would like to book a place/s please call the office on 01296 487 556 or email reception@bucksvision.co.uk

**Phone Groups**

If you’re unable to attend a course in person, why not join one RNIB phone groups instead?

They are led by a facilitator and cover similar topics as a face-to-face course. You’ll have the opportunity to chat to others and find out useful information.

Phone groups run for four short sessions, over four weeks. Contact us or RNIB to find out more.

# BucksVision Showcase

As mentioned in the Winter Newsletter our re-launched arts and crafts competition will take place on Friday 27 July at the Quarrendon and Meadowcroft Community Centre.

Enclosed with this newsletter is a programme for the event which outlines the timings for the day, the classes available to enter and the competition guidelines.

Whether you wish to enter or simply want to come along on the day we would love to hear from you!

# 30th Birthday of our Resource Centre

On 15 April 1988 BucksVision’s brand new Resource Centre was officially opened by the late Sir Ian Gilmour MP.

We plan to have an event to commemorate the 30th birthday and all those who were involved in raising money to build it. Part of the celebration will also involve officially opening our refurbished resource room.

If you have any memories or pictures about the opening in 1988 please get in touch with us. More details about the celebration will be circulated shortly.

# Interview with a Volunteer

**Lisa Redford, Volunteer Supervisor, chats with Alma Pearce**

**Alma, first of all, tell us how long you have volunteered for us and what you do.**

I started last August. I take a lady shopping in High Wycombe for clothes, around Boots, to the post office or anything else needed. Then we have a cup of coffee together and I really enjoy her company and I think she enjoys mine so we’ve been matched really well.

**Now, you weren’t born in the UK, were you?**

No, I’m an Armenian, born in Tehran, Iran.

**So what brought you over here?**

I finished my education in the ‘60s and wanted to come to London where everything was happening. So I applied to do a nursing course in the UK and did my training at Wycombe and Amersham hospital in 1967.

**And what sort of nursing did you do?**

I did general nursing to begin with then I went to St Mary’s hospital in Paddington and did a one year Operating Theatre specialist course. Four years prior to finishing my training I had met my late husband, John. I went back to Tehran for a year but John followed me and we got married there. We then returned to Wycombe, where I got a job in the hospital. We had two sons together and I’ve been here ever since.

**So how did you come to get involved with us?**

After I retired from nursing I joined the Movers and Shakers in High Wycombe to do Tai Chi. After our Tai Chi session we normally have a speaker in. One Tuesday the speaker was yourself, Lisa, and I was so impressed with the talk that I thought that I must join this fantastic organisation.

**So you don’t regret going to Movers and Shakers that day then?**

Definitely not! I’m glad I went! I love shopping and rummaging round the shops so it’s nice to take someone and explain what’s going on, read bits of information and just enjoy ourselves.

**When you’re not volunteering for us or going to Movers and Shakers, what else do you do with your time?**

I socialise a lot. I never turn down the opportunity to go out with friends! I also enjoy gardening and playing poker. I have two grandchildren living close by and my granddaughter is doing drama at Jackie Palmers, so I go to all her shows.

**If someone you knew was thinking of volunteering for us, would you tell them to go ahead and give it a try?**

Definitely. You get so much satisfaction from helping someone and you can enjoy a few hours away from your ordinary weekly chores doing something different.

If you would like to volunteer for our shopping role or you are visually impaired and would like to know more about this service, please call the office and ask to speak to Lisa.

Phone 01296 487 556 or email lredford@bucksvision.co.uk

# Goalball launch – a fantastic success

On Saturday 3 February BucksVision and Goalball UK launched the Paralympic sport of Goalball at the birthplace of the Paralympics, Stoke Mandeville Stadium.

Sixty people attended, a mix of players, potential volunteers and other organisations. The day was a fantastic success with everyone trying out Goalball and having a lot of fun!

Our many thanks go to Goalball UK who led the session and to Tesco, Tring Road, Aylesbury who provided refreshments. We are also grateful to Aylesbury Vale District Council and Persimmon for their grants.

**Goalball Club Dates**

Now we have launched the club there will be monthly sessions open to all to learn how to play the sport.

The upcoming dates are:

Saturday 21 April

Sunday 13 May

Saturday 2 June

Sunday 24 June

All sessions are from 9.00am to 12.30pm at Stoke Mandeville Stadium.

If you missed the launch and are interested in playing Goalball please get in touch we would love to hear from you!

# Museum Trips

**MK Museum**

Last November a group of BucksVision members and volunteers visited Milton Keynes Museum to reminisce about the area.

The growth of Milton Keynes since it become a new city back in 1967 led to the discovery of many artefacts buried in the ground and provided a rich insight into how people lived in the area many years ago.

After been shown around a Victorian school room and living areas we wandered down the museum’s street of shops where we were able to look into sweet shops, bootmakers and tailors from bygone years.

We then enjoyed a fantastic picnic lunch provided by a team of museum volunteers.

**Wycombe Museum**

On Wednesday 7 March, we visited Wycombe Museum, famous for its chair collection.

We arrived early and split into two groups, each group had the opportunity to experience two interactive sessions. Led by our knowledgeable guide Keith, we explored the museum, including a replica 1920’s kitchen, were we learnt about the life of a servant during the era.

We also enjoyed a handling session with Mandy, including a copper kettle, flat iron and an original washboard. The smell of the soaps and cleaners from the past inspired many memories, which the group shared with each other during the afternoon.

# Best Apps

Henshaws have put together a list of apps which are specifically created to assist people with sight loss in their day to day lives. They can help with identifying objects, reading text, magnification, navigation and much more.

We have highlighted a few of the apps below but please contact the office for the full list.

**Seeing AI**

The app, currently only available on iOS, uses the device’s camera to perform a number of useful functions including:

**Reading text** – it can read documents just be placing text in front of camera or you can take a photo of the document and it will read it to you.

The app also includes the ability to read handwriting although this is still a work in progress.

**Identifying a product based on its barcode** –It snaps a photo and reads the name of the product and any other information stored within the barcode.

**Recognising people** and providing a description of their visual appearance such as their gender, facial expression and other identifying characteristics.

**Recognising images within other apps** – just tap “Share and Recognise” with Seeing AI.

It also boasts colour and currency detection and more.

**Available on**: iOS
**Cost**: Free

**BeSpecular**

“Let blind people see through your eyes” is their tagline and this app matches sighted volunteers with visually impaired users.

The visually impaired person takes a photo of what he or she needs help with and attaches a voice message, which is sent to a community of volunteers (or sightlings as they call them). Within minutes, the user receives a reply and then rates out of five stars the helpfulness of the volunteer. This app is great because you get a description from a real human being, it’s very accessible and it’s quick.
**Available on**: iOS and Android
**Cost**: Free

**Magnifying Glass with Light**This app enables the user to very simply magnify text or objects up to 10x. You can have the light on or off and simply tap to focus. The simple features all work well with VoiceOver and it’s great for someone with a low level visual impairment for things like reading menus or receipts.

**Available on**: iOS
**Cost**: Free

**Soundscape**

Created by Microsoft Soundscape provides information about your surroundings by creating the effect of 3D sound.

It can run in the background in conjunction with navigation or other applications to provide you with additional context about the environment. Your phone tracks movement using location and activity sensors, and lets you move toward a self-set audio beacon.

**Available on:**  [IOS](https://go.redirectingat.com/?id=66960X1514734&xs=1&url=https%3A%2F%2Fitunes.apple.com%2Fus%2Fapp%2Fmicrosoft-soundscape%2Fid1240320677%3Fmt%3D8). iPhone 5S or later

**Cost**: Free

# Walking Group Update

From April we will be starting up again, enjoying Buckinghamshire’s beautiful countryside. Walks vary in length and terrain.

If you are not already on our walking group list and would like to join us, please give the office a call or email Lisa Redford lredford@bucksvision.co.uk.

# Gardening Tips

As we approach Spring and the weather gets warmer our minds also start to turn to gardening.

Thrive is an organisation which uses gardening to change lives. They have also created practical guides on how to carry on gardening when you have various disabilities, including visual impairment. They provide useful hints and tips on digging, weeding, mowing, pruning, sowing seeds and garden design.

If you are interested in any of their publications get in touch with us on 01296 487 556.

# Telephone Befriending

BucksVision is pleased to announce that we have launched our telephone befriending service.

We are seeking both members and volunteers to join so if you have sight loss and would like a friendly chat with someone weekly, fortnightly or monthly, please give us a ring and let us know.

Organisations can refer people to us for this service by emailing lredford@bucksvision.co.uk or calling the office.

Volunteers can be visually impaired or fully sighted so if you would like to help BucksVision without even moving from your armchair, then here’s your

opportunity!

Skills required:

• a friendly telephone manner

• a good listener

• a caring, friendly, helpful and understanding nature**.**

Anyone not already a volunteer will need to go through our volunteer process.

If you want to find out more get in touch with us; we look forward to hearing from you.

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# The Little Match Girl Theatre Trip

**The Little Match Girl and other Happier Tales by Jean Ley**

I was lucky enough to be included on a trip organised by BucksVision to the Oxford Playhouse’s ‘The Little Match Girl’ on Saturday 17 February. The show was described as one of imagination and mystery based loosely on a selection of Hans Christian Anderson’s stories.

It turned out to be a kind of Christmas pantomime, very skilfully produced, heart-warming and achingly sad at the same time. I would not have missed it for all the world.

It is a long time since I have been on a coach trip. We made an early start as we were to be split into two groups for Touch Tours before lunch and the performance. The Touch Tours consisted of talking with some of the cast, actors and musicians who told us about the production and most importantly showed us their beautifully made costumes.

Pride of place was the homeless Little Match Girl herself, an eerily lifelike puppet of 4/5 years of age. On stage she was operated by a puppeteer dressed in dark blue who crouched on stage and operated the strings that made her movements look so real.

For lunch I can recommend the basement of the Ashmolean opposite the theatre. They serve the best coffee I have had for a long time! I came across an easy movement class for older people which I would have liked to join but my radio bleeped and it was time to go back to the theatre. On the way back, we noticed how many beggars there were, with some sleeping on the pavement.

We took up our places in the stalls, row M and I feared the worst. However, though I could only see an illuminated rectangle of the stage, I did at least have a basic understanding of what was happening. The audio description through the earphones I was wearing filled in the details.

The Little Match Girl persuaded various characters to light a match and each time a version of a Hans Christian Anderson story was enacted by the company of Ole and the Shuteyes to the accompaniment of music and dancing. The mistreatments of poor Thumbelina were realistic to the point that I worried for the children in the audience.

However, I perked up when the Emperor, wearing a flesh coloured knitted onesie complete with knitted penis, demanded a referendum of the audience on whether he had any clothes on or not. When he was unconvinced by the result he immediately demanded a second referendum!

The finale was very sad. The Little Match Girl had only three matches left. She insisted that they should all be struck and as the third one fizzled out, she laid down on the pavement and died.

At the end of the performance the cast spoke about homelessness and there was a collection for Crisis as people were leaving.

#

# From the Archives…

On a regular tidy up of the office staff came across this gem of an article, **‘You’ve got to have a go!’**, about Joan Woodward, one of our longest serving volunteers.

“29 year old Joan- a telephonist at Barclays Bank in Aylesbury- was born three months premature and totally blind.

Her story is one of achievement, courage and success at bringing a special kind of personal colour into the darkness of a life without sight.

Last weekend, she won her second bronze medal at the eighth National Games for the Blind in Manchester in the 200 metres running event with a time of 47 seconds in the final.”

*An extract of article originally published in the Bucks Advertiser on 19 July 1985*

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# Other activities

**Music at Lunchtime**

Don’t forget if you live in Aylesbury, St Marys Church host concert performances every Thursday at 12.45pm.

Cost is £4.00

18 under go free. **​**

**Upcoming concerts:​**

12 April - Oliver Nelson, violin; Vasilis Rakitzis, piano

19 April - Kevin Cahill, guitar

**Memory Lane**

**Wycombe Museum**

This event is an opportunity for people of all ages to meet socially and share their stories of the past. They are free, drop-in, and last about 45 minutes. All are welcome.

**Drop In** l **Free**

**Tuesday 10 April at 11am**

# For Sale

**Optelec ClearView C for sale**

A desktop magnifier only three years old, with stand. In good condition. OIRO £500

Collection from Chalfont.

**I-Pad Air** **for sale**

With protective cover 3 years old. £100.

**Optelec Scanner and Opetlec Reader for Sale**

OIRO of £300

Collection from High Wycombe only.

**Optelec Desktop Magnifier**

With stand. OIRO £100

Collection from Aylesbury

**Collection Boxes**

If you have a home collection box we would be delighted if you could count up the money you have collected and send it in to us.

You can then continue to use the box! Thank you for your continued support.

# Useful Contacts

**Bucks Integrated Sensory Service – 01296 479970**

(For support dealing with sight loss at home in Buckinghamshire)

**Sensory Advice Resource Centre – 01908 401135**

(For support dealing with sight loss at home in Milton Keynes)

**RNIB – 0303 123 9999**

Advice and support with all aspects of sight loss.

**Macular Society – 0300 3030 111 (Helpline)**

Information and support for people with macular conditions

**Age UK Bucks – 01296 431911**

**Age UK Milton Keynes – 01908 550700**

Support for older people to help them achieve and maintain independence and wellbeing.

**MK Reader Service – 01908 231123**

Support with reading and shopping in Milton Keynes.

**Talking News Federation – 01793 497 555**

Information on local talking newspapers.

**British Wireless for the Blind – 01622 754757**

Radio sets on free loan for people who meet the criteria.