

# **BucksVision Autumn 2017 Newsletter**

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## **Welcome**

Welcome to our Autumn 2017 Newsletter. As I type this, the weather is absolutely glorious. Perhaps we will have an “Indian summer”, as the one promised to us did not arrive!

Firstly, I am thrilled to announce that BucksVision, with support from RNIB and Bucks NHS Healthcare Trust, has recruited an Eye Clinic Liaison Officer, Ellie Richmond. Ellie will provide essential emotional support at our local eye clinics and we cannot wait for her to get started. Find out more about her on the next page.

We have continued to offer exciting Experience Days to our members; you can read more about our trips to

Oxford, the Henry Moore Foundation and Frithsden Vineyard inside.

Entries to our Creative Writing competition have been trickling in, if you want to enter remember the deadline is 30 September.

18 – 22 September is National Eye Health Week and we will be holding several information and equipment days during the week.

We have been working with Buckinghamshire libraries on providing additional support around tablet technology, and I am delighted to announce that Chesham and Buckingham libraries will be holding events during Get Online week.

As always, thanks to all of you who support our work in some way, we are extremely grateful, especially to all of our volunteers. Without your time, efforts and kindness, many blind and partially sighted people in our area would simply have no-one to turn to.

Steve Naylor,  
Chief Executive

### **Meet our Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO)**

We are delighted to announce that we have recruited Ellie Richmond to be our Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO).

Ellie will be based at Stoke Mandeville Hospital and will be able to provide those recently diagnosed with an eye condition with the practical and emotional support they need.

Here Ellie tells us a little bit about herself:

I am very excited to be joining BucksVision as their ECLO.

I nearly 20 years experience of working in various roles within Education, Housing Support, Mental Health and the Health and Social Care sector.

I have provided support to people of all ages and from various backgrounds within the community and have helped enable people to access the services and support they need. I now plan to use my experience to support people living with sight loss.

I live in Aylesbury with my fiancé and two lively dogs called Toby and Rolo. I usually spend lots of my free time walking the dogs in the countryside. When I get the opportunity, I love to plan visits to the coast and enjoy visiting new places.

I am really looking forward to working with the BucksVision team, their service users and fantastic volunteers. I look forward to meeting you all soon!

## **Equipment and Information Days**

During Eye Health Week in September we are once again holding our equipment and information days; this time they are taking place.

These days are designed to give you an opportunity not only to find out what equipment is available for people with sight loss but also to learn about other organisations that provide advice and help.

A selection of some of the companies and organisations attending include:

Calibre  
Sight and Sound Technology  
Optelec  
Independent Vision  
Macular Society  
Sensory Services

(Contact us on a full list)

**Milton Keynes**

**Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> September**

10.00-3.00pm

Fishermead Trinity Centre, Fishermead Boulevard, MK6 2LA

**(Sponsored by Sight and Sound Technology)**

**Aylesbury**

**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> September**

10.00-3.00pm

Friars Square Shopping Centre, HP20 2QF

**High Wycombe**

**Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September**

10.00-3.00pm

Second Floor, High Wycombe Library, 5 Eden Place, HP11 2DH

**Creative Writing Competition**

A reminder that there is still time to enter our Creative Writing Competition!

The categories are as follows:

**Adults**

- Short story
- Poems

**Young Person (12-17 years) & Children (5 – 11 years)**

- Short story

We are delighted to announce who our judges are:

Children & Young Person

**James Goldsworthy**

James is a writer of short stories and poetry. His releases to date are a book of poetry titled The Edge of Darkness and the first book in his series for children called The Adventures of Larry the Stick Insect.

### Short Story

#### **Matt Holland**

Matt, erstwhile book reviewer, gaucho, and literature tutor, believes that writing a few words that work well is harder than writing many that don't. Matt is founder and Director of the annual Swindon Festival of Literature.

### Poems

#### **Stephen Kirk Daniels**

Stephen is the editor of Amaryllis Poetry and Strange Poetry. His poetry has been widely published in numerous magazines and websites.

His debut pamphlet 'Tell Mistakes I Love Them' was published in 2017 by V. Press.

### **Prizes**

We are very excited to announce our prizes are as follows:

#### **Children**

1st- Tablet

2nd Audible Subscription

3rd Family ticket to Roald Dahl Museum

#### **Young Person/Adult Short Story/Adult Poems**

1st - Tablet

2nd- Audible Subscription

3rd Bluetooth Keyboard/ Monster Headphones

#### **Volunteer Competition**

We are also running a short story competition for our volunteers. The criteria is 500 – 1,000 words on any topic. First prize is a £50 book voucher.

### **Prize giving ceremony**

We will be holding a prize giving ceremony on evening of Friday 10<sup>th</sup> November at 6.30pm at the Gateway conference Centre in Aylesbury. All entrants will be invited along to hear the winners being announced.

If you would like to enter please contact us to request an entry form on 01296 487 556 or [adeuchars@bucksvision.co.uk](mailto:adeuchars@bucksvision.co.uk)

### **New 2018 Arts and Craft Competition**

We are busy working on our new competition to be launched in 2018. Look out for details in our Winter Newsletter.

### **Magical Oxford Tour**

On 6 June a small group journeyed to the centre of Oxford to enjoy a walking tour of its famous sites.

The focus of our tour was to visit the many locations which were used to film the Harry Potter movies, but we also learnt a lot about Oxford's university buildings and history along the way.

Although heavy rain in the morning put some participants off, by the time we reached Oxford, the rain had stopped and the sun even made a few brief appearances!

### **Frithsden Vineyard**

On Friday 19 July a group of 30 visited Frithsden Vineyard in Hertfordshire.

On arrival the group braved the rather wet weather to tour the vineyard before taking cover to learn about the wine making process.

Then it was time for the wine tasting! There were three different wines to taste, two white and one rose. Everyone

found the experience of smelling and tasting the wine fascinating.

We would like to thank Simon and Natalie for making us feel so welcome and providing everyone with a great experience.

### **Volunteer Quiz and Celebration**

On the evening of Wednesday 7 June we held our first ever volunteer quiz and celebration evening.

It was a fantastic night. Actress Gillian Wright was our brilliant quizmaster and we all got stuck into several rounds of quizzing.

After the first few rounds we took a break to announce the winners of our special Members and Divisional Choice as well as presenting Outstanding Service Certificates to volunteers with 15+ years of service.

The winners of the Special Awards were as follows:

#### **Made me Smile**

Vanessa Jones- MK

#### **Make a Difference**

Pam Warren- SE

#### **Star Committee Member**

Ted Tearle- SE

Congratulations to all of our winners, and thank you to all of our volunteers who kindly give their time to help support our services.

### **Our Henry Moore Experience**

On Friday 6 July, 20 members set off on a trip to visit the Henry Moore Foundation in Hertfordshire.

The day started with a tour around his house, where we learnt who Henry Moore was and how he became a famous sculptor.

After lunch we were given a guided tour around his studios and got the chance to feel and learn more about his sculptures.

The sun was shining, and everyone had a fantastic time.

"My wife and I enjoyed the day very much indeed and learned a great deal about an art form which we had not previously taken a great deal of notice."

Thank you to the foundation staff who gave us such a lovely welcome and were very helpful during the course of the day.

### **Our Trip to the Mayor's Parlour**

On Thursday 27 July our Mid Working Age Group members spent a wonderful afternoon at Aylesbury Town Council, in the company of the Mayor of Aylesbury, Cllr Tom Hunter-Watts, Deputy Mayor, Cllr Mark Willis and PA to the Mayor, Sue Carpenter.

They were all delightful hosts, and the group was encouraged to handle various pieces, including the Ceremonial Mace, Olympic Torches, and the Chain of Office.

There was even the opportunity to dress as the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, which was great fun.

They all had a brilliant time, and we would like to say a big thank you for a fascinating and entertaining afternoon

### **British Wireless for the Blind – Bumblebee App**

**British Wireless for the Blind Fund (BWBF)** is a national charity providing specially adapted audio equipment free of charge to visually impaired people who would otherwise be unable to afford it.

Over the years they have provided radios on free loan but have kept up with the fast-paced technological updates and are very proud to have created their own bespoke app, **Bumblebee**.

### **What is Bumblebee?**

Bumblebee is an easy to use app specially designed to give visually impaired listeners simple, portable access to a huge range of internet audio content.

The large, simple menus can be viewed in a variety of contrasts, including black and yellow so they stand out to those with residual vision. Combined with audio description of each menu item, it is also user friendly for people with very little or no sight.

Bumblebee includes a community section, where users can share their experiences, discuss trending topics, talk about popular content and help and support each other – all by using the in-built text-to-speech function.

Part of the exclusivity of Bumblebee is the user-led content aspect, where listeners can essentially create their own personalised audio library in their pocket.

It requires a wireless connection to stream live radio and download content. Once the audio files have been saved to the tablet which the app is issued on, they can be accessed anywhere; making Bumblebee perfect for listening on-the-go.

From one portable device, Bumblebee provides access to:

- radio stations
- podcasts
- talking newspapers and magazines
- audio books
- online content
- a wealth of useful information

## **Who is Bumblebee for?**

Bumblebee is available on free loan to visually impaired people who meet our criteria.

They must be a UK resident who is registered blind or partially sighted, over the age of eight, and in receipt of a means-tested benefit. Users also need to have a wireless internet connection at home.

Bumblebee will be issued to people who meet this criteria, on a locked tablet which will be theirs to keep for the duration of the free loan period. It also comes with a speaker if required.

It will be brought to your home and a trained BWBF representative will set it up and show you how it works. If you are interested in learning more, please contact BWBF on 01622 754 757 or go to [www.blind.org.uk](http://www.blind.org.uk)

If you would like to find out about other equipment that BWBF can provide on free loan please call us on 01296 487 556.

## **Fundraising Update**

Since our Fundraiser, Anne, started back in March she has been very busy since working to improve awareness of BucksVision and raising money for us.

## **STAMPS!**

We are now collecting stamps so please remember to send your used stamps to us.

## **We need your help**

All of our big plastic yellow and pink elephant collection pots need to return to BucksVision for a refresh and change of branding.

If you have or know of any BucksVision collection pots in a store or venue please let us know.

## **Talks**

We held our first talk at BucksVision on 28<sup>th</sup> June, which was a success as we recruited a volunteer and spread the word about our services amongst Occupational Therapists.

We are also happy to give talks out in the community so if you know of any group who may be interested in learning more about us let us know!

## **Mayoral Visits**

We have been making contact with many local town Mayors all of whom have kindly taken the time to visit us and learn about our services.

## **In Memoriam Envelopes**

We have created bespoke BucksVision donation envelopes to use “in lieu of flowers” at funerals. We hold stocks of these at our office for anyone to use.

## **Old £1 coins**

The old £1 coins cease to be legal tender from 15 October, so if you find you are left with a couple of old coins why not pop them into one of our home collection boxes and drop it into us!

## **Bucks County Show**

By the time you read this we will have had our stand at the local county show to raise awareness of our essential work. Look out for a report in the Winter Newsletter

## **Amersham Heritage Day**

We have been invited by the Mayor of Amersham to attend this special day on Sunday 10 September, so come and say hello.

## **Corporate Supporter – John Lewis**

BucksVision have been chosen by the Partners (staff) at John Lewis in High Wycombe and Milton Keynes as beneficiaries of the Community Matters for August to

November. At the end of 3 months the £3,000 is shared proportionally amongst the charities, the largest amount going to the charity with the most green tokens.

If you are visiting the restaurants at these two John Lewis stores please grab a green token and vote for BucksVision.

### **Thank you**

We would like to say a big thank you to the following Donors:

**Aylesbury Town Council** £1,000  
**Buckinghamshire Masonic Centenary Fund** £2,400  
**IBB Charitable Trust** £1,000  
**The Childwick Trust** £5,000  
**Woodroffe Benton** £500  
**Waitrose Aylesbury** £350  
**Wolf Eyecare** £50  
**The Mid Counties**  
**Co-operative Group** £250

### **South East and Chiltern Division Joint Event**

On 8 August members and volunteers from Chiltern Division visited South East Division (SE) to take part in a small inter-divisional competition.

There were three categories to choose from; Textile Handicrafts, Single Rose Bloom, and Any Three Blooms.

As well as competing against each other they also enjoyed some great entertainment from The Maidenhead Golf Singers.

Volunteers from the SE Division then served a 'summer party' themed tea complete with strawberries and cream and a glass of Pimms.

The winners were presented with prizes for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> places by Cllr. Dr Wendy Matthews, Chairman of South Bucks District Council who also judged the classes.

There were a total of 34 entries across the three classes (24 from South East 10 from Chiltern).

The lucky winners were:-

### **Single Rose Bloom**

- 1<sup>st</sup> -Bryan Whitby, SE
- 2<sup>nd</sup> -Maureen Kirk, SE
- 3<sup>rd</sup> -Ron Dean, SE

### **Any Three Blooms**

- 1<sup>st</sup> -Audrey Creasey, SE
- 2<sup>nd</sup> -Jean Best, SE
- 3<sup>rd</sup> -Joan Dring, SE

### **Textile Handicraft – PS & NR**

- 1<sup>st</sup> -Ann Goddard, Chiltern
- 2<sup>nd</sup> -Joan Evans, Chiltern
- 3<sup>rd</sup> -Ruth Hicks, Chiltern

### **Textile Handicraft – TB & B**

- 1<sup>st</sup> -Vera Heslop, SE
- 2<sup>nd</sup> -Jackie Sprules, SE
- 3<sup>rd</sup> -Susan Silver, SE

## **Divisional Round-Up**

### **Aylesbury**

The Aylesbury Walking Group is undergoing some changes and therefore the next walk won't be taking place until **Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> October**. If you are interested in joining the group get in touch.

### **Chiltern**

Chiltern Division Club will celebrate their 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in October. They are planning on having a big celebration;

look out for a report on their event in the Winter newsletter.

### **Milton Keynes**

Paul Firth, Pilot and Jeff Bashton, Stoker took part in Willen Hospice's charity bike ride on Sunday 20 August.

Eye For Art held a display of their work produced with Emilie Giles at MK Gallery on the afternoon of 21<sup>st</sup> August.

### **South East**

SE division were part of Burham's Sports and Activities day on 29 July. As well as providing well needed refreshments they also had a team of members and volunteers who took part in a walking marathon and achieved a total of 61km, coming third!

### **The Wright Tournament**

Created by Wycombe Chestnuts the **Wright Trophy** is a new VI Bowls competition held for first time this year on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> April at Handy Cross Leisure Centre in Wycombe.

Six clubs took part with Enfield Vision winning after a competitive day; the Chestnuts came a close second. The competition was such a success it will be held again in 2018 on 20<sup>th</sup> April.

### **Upcoming Events (incl. Make More of Your Device)**

#### **Make your device work for you!**

As part of Get Online Week 2017 the local libraries of Buckingham and Chesham will be holding accessibility events on **Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October.**

**11am - 1pm**

Chesham Library  
Elgiva Lane  
HP5 2JD

**2pm - 4pm**

Buckingham Library  
Verney Close  
MK18 1JP

Technology can make life easier for you if you have sight loss but knowing where to start with tablets and smartphones can be difficult.

Join a session at the library to find out about the benefits of being online and how technology can help you. Discover how your device can be adapted to make getting the most out of it easier.

Contact Buckinghamshire Libraries to book a session or just drop in on the day.

**Tel:** 01296 382 415

Or call in at Chesham or Buckingham Libraries for more information.

### **Awareness Day with SeeAbility**

We are hosting a strawberry cream tea event with SeeAbility in Aylesbury on **Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> September** at 2pm.

Come along and join us at Waterside House, Taylor Rd, HP21 8DJ

### **FOR SALE**

#### **Magnilink Vision 12**

Video Magnifier. 4 years old but good as new.  
OIRO £1,000

### **RNIB Campaign Update**

#### **Campaign to ban parking on pavements**

On the day of action on 17 June we collected nearly 300 signatures on petition forms in Milton Keynes.

Padma Cheriyan had the honour of being chosen to hand the nationally collected 31,000 signed petition forms in to 10 Downing Street on 12 July.

In order to focus public attention on the problem of cars parked on pavements, on 24 June Cllr. Mick Legg, Milton Keynes Council Cabinet member for Customer Services, walked blindfolded in an area where the problem of cars parked on pavements is acute. Our local paper MK citizen covered the event well. The campaign continues.

**Milton Keynes University Hospital has a new main entrance.** On 31 July Paula Suchy (VI), Padma Cheriyan (dual sensory loss) and Rosalie Bloor (profoundly deaf), representing the Physical Disabilities and Sensory Impairment Consultation Group (PDSICG), were given a guided tour of the newly built main entrance to the Hospital. They gave feedback on how to make visiting the Hospital as comfortable as possible for people with sensory disabilities

**Milton Keynes Council Office building refurbishment:** On 1 August Paula, Padma, Rosalie and Ernie, a wheelchair user, representing the PDSICG were invited to give feedback on the proposed extensive refurbishment of Milton Keynes Council offices.

### **Donations and Gift Aid**

If you would like to make a donation to BucksVision this can be done by cheque, bank transfer, card or standing order. Contact us for more information on 01296 487 556.

Remember if eligible please request a Gift Aid form as this will mean we can get an extra 25p for every £1 you donate.