BucksVision
Sensory Loss Charity

Autumn/ Winter 2026

Newsletter



bucksvision

COMMUNITY FUND

bucksvision143



Leaving even 1% of your estate to BucksVision in your Will would make a lasting difference to our future.

To find out more about leaving us a gift in your Will contact - **bsawyers@bucksvision.co.uk** or call **01296 487 556**

Registered Charity no- 1147814 Registered company no - 8016572

Contents

Welcome ..... 4 & 5
Christmas Appeal 6
Notices ..... 7, 8 & 9
Marathon Moments ..... 10 & 11
Social Clubs & Activities 12
Experience Days ..... 13, 14 & 15
Meet our Volunteers: Roy & Josie ..... 16 & 17
Technology Training at Home 18
Milton Keynes Fundraising Quiz 19
High Wycombe's New Walking Group 20
Equipment & Information Days 21
Exercise – The Best Medicine ..... 22 & 23
Southeast Summer Fete ..... 24 & 25
BISS – Small Changes, Big Impact ..... 26 & 27
Living Well with Sight Loss Course 28
Free Counselling Sessions 29
Thank You to our Funders 30
Remembering Sheila 31
South Bucks Talking News 32
Social Clubs and Activities ..... 33 & 34

143 Meadowcroft, Aylesbury, HP19 9HH
01296 487 556
reception@bucksvision.co.uk
www.bucksvision.co.uk

BucksVision
Sensory Loss Charity

Opening Hours

Monday - Friday: 9am - 5pm

Charity Registration No. 1147814



Welcome

Steve Naylor, Chief Executive

Welcome to our Autumn Winter 2026 newsletter.

Things are pretty tough in the charity sector at the moment, as well as the wider world in general. I hope that this newsletter helps remind you of the positive difference that BucksVision and our volunteers make to the lives of people across Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.

Sincere thanks to all of you who support our work, whether that is through volunteering or through fundraising.

Our newsletter highlights your efforts and includes information about our experience days, activity groups and help with technology and equipment.

I hope you enjoy this edition – suggestions, as always, are welcome!

We are delighted to welcome several new members of the team:

Milena Dixon- Rajkovchevska, Volunteer Manager

Milena leads the management and development of our volunteer-led services, such as our divisional social clubs and activities.



Milena has worked as a volunteer manager for many years, having previously worked 12 years for a homelessness charity.

Mandy Legg, MK Volunteer Community Services Manager (Divisional Activities)

Mandy is working with our volunteers in Milton Keynes Division to help run the activity

and support groups that they deliver.



Mandy Legg has worked in the voluntary sector for many years (I remember meeting her over 20 years ago!) and is a well-known public speaker on mental health.

Bethany Holttum, MK Volunteer Community Services Manager (Home Services)



Bethany is working with our home service volunteers in Milton Keynes. This means supporting our befriending, shopping and reading services (previously delivered by MK Reader Service before their closure last year).

Bethany has a background in the voluntary sector, including running befriending services for over 12 years for different charities in London.

We say farewell and thanks to Kimmi Gray and Faye Rumbsy.

Kimmi Gray was our volunteer manager for several years and was responsible for improving the recruitment and management of volunteers.

Kimmi is continuing to support volunteers in the sector, having joined a national charity that provides listening services to people struggling to cope with everyday life.

Faye Rumsby was with us only briefly, supporting our volunteers across Milton Keynes before deciding to move to on.

Faye has joined an organisation that carries out product trusting for an accredited certification programme.

We wish them all well!

Christmas Appeal



This Christmas, help make sure no one feels alone.

For many of us, Christmas is a time for family, friends, laughter and shared memories. But for someone living with sight loss, Christmas can feel very different.

Getting out to meet friends, joining in with festive activities or simply managing everyday tasks can become more difficult. For someone who is already isolated or living alone, the Christmas season can make those feelings of loneliness even harder.

No one should feel forgotten at Christmas.

Your Christmas donation could help someone feel supported, connected and remembered when they need it most.

How your donation could help:

£10 could help provide an enjoyable and accessible day out for someone living with sight loss, giving them the opportunity to get out, connect and make new memories.

£25 could contribute towards specialist advice and equipment demonstrations to help someone find practical solutions to everyday challenges.

£50 could help support and train a volunteer befriender, helping someone who may otherwise spend long periods feeling isolated.

This Christmas, your kindness could make a real difference.
Please complete the donation form included with a cheque and return it in the pre-paid envelope or call **01296 487 556** to make a donation.

Thank you for helping us make sure no one faces Christmas alone.

Notices

Christmas Telephone Befriending

If the Christmas season is a lonely time for you and you would like someone to talk to, we are offering our special telephone befriending service again this year.

We can ask one of our telephone befriending volunteers to give you a call, for up to an hour, on any day between 24 December and 1 January, including Christmas Day. Conversation on almost any topic is permitted but a few ideas are: what you are doing over the festive season, why you might find this time of the year difficult, happier times, childhood Christmases, family, pets or any hobbies you might have.

We can also offer a permanent telephone befriender if you would like one. If any of our existing volunteers would like to do some Christmas telephone befriending, even if that is not your usual role, your help would be very welcome.

To find out more, please call Lisa on **01296 487 556**.

Free Screen Magnifier now available for Windows

As of September 2026, the free NVDA screen reader now includes a built-in screen magnifier.

This is great news for anyone who needs to enlarge content on their computer screen. Previously, users might have needed to purchase specialist magnification software such as ZoomText or SuperNova, which can cost hundreds of pounds.

With the latest version of NVDA, version 2026.2, screen magnification is included at no additional cost. Simply download and install NVDA to access the magnifier alongside its existing screen-reading features.

BucksVision members feature on BBC Morning Live

In last year's Autumn/Winter newsletter, we told you about Finding Your Feet, a specialist judo course designed to teach

people how to fall safely and reduce the risk of serious injury.

We're delighted to share that some of our BucksVision members who completed the course appeared on BBC Morning Live on 24th September to talk about their experience and demonstrate some of what they've learned. If you missed it, you can find the programme on BBC iPlayer.

Thank you to Horizon Radio for helping to spread the word about BucksVision in Milton Keynes!

The new Horizon Radio is aimed at a 20s to 50s aged audience. Playing a daytime mix of music from the eighties to current hits with specialist DJs in the evenings.

Horizon Radio broadcasts to a coverage area of 300,000 adults across the borough of Milton Keynes and Leighton Buzzard on 105.5 FM, DAB Digital Radio, online and via mobile apps and smart speakers.

Milton Keynes Fundraising Quizzes

In May, Pat and Neil Hodges organised a charity quiz evening for BucksVision MK. Participants enjoyed a super selection of quiz questions and delicious ploughman's platters. Volunteers prepared and served all the food and ran a bumper raffle.

MK Chair, Ian Taylor, gave a good short speech and did most of the washing up, along with his wife! A really good time was had by all, and over £1000 was raised! Many thanks to Neil and Pat, to all the hard-working volunteers who helped and to those who came and supported the event.

See page 19 for details of the next MK Quiz Night, on **13th November**.



Screen Acting Workshop – Complimentary Places

Actors Studio, based at Pinewood Studios, is offering two complimentary places to BucksVision members on its one-day Screen Acting Workshop for Beginners, taking place on 7 January 2027.

The workshop is open to actors aged 17 and over. The team is keen to make its training as accessible and inclusive as possible and would particularly welcome people who are blind or partially sighted.

They are happy to discuss individual requirements in advance to ensure participants feel comfortable and fully supported.

If you are interested in taking up one of the complimentary places, please contact Helen at **info@actorsstudio.co.uk**.

Marathon Moments

2026 has been a year of incredible running achievements for BucksVision!

Our member, Blanche Morrissey, and our very own Operations Manager, Abi, both took on the iconic London Marathon in April.

Abi then went one step further, taking on the Amsterdam Marathon in October and raising over £2,400 for BucksVision.



Photo: Thank you to d-flo Ltd for sponsoring Abi's marathon t-shirt and supporting her every step of the way through her marathon challenges!

For Blanche, the London Marathon was a challenge she once thought impossible, made even more special by the support of her running guide Carolyn, family and friends.

Here, Blanche shares her experience of this unforgettable day, from the excitement at the start line to the joy of crossing the finish line.

"After the long months of winter training & preparation, we arrived at the start line of the London Marathon. We were determined to enjoy every moment of this incredible event.

The day dawned bright & cold but warmed up quickly. Blackheath, the start area was buzzing with the excited chatter of runners, all waiting to be led to their start pens.

The streets were spectator lined, cheering crowds supporting all 59,800 runners including us! The atmosphere was amazing, all participating in the world's most desired marathon, everyone running for special reasons, ours

Photo: Blanche (right) and her guide, Carolyn



to raise funds for Moorfields Eye Charity.

Family and friends cheered us every 2/3 miles, and it was a boost to stop for a quick chat and photo opportunity. Seeing the famous landmarks especially Tower Bridge was emotional, it's an iconic sight! A few scary moments included severe cramping & a stumble or two.

Carolyn and I were so happy to cross the finish line, the most wonderful moment of this incredible event. Being SSI and completing the London Marathon with Carolyn was a privilege, a challenge and achievement. Carolyn ticked off a bucket list item and I did something I thought impossible!

I have no words to express my gratitude to Carolyn for her help and support, our families and to all Marlow Striders who run with me and encourage me to keep going."

Social Clubs and Activities at BucksVision

BucksVision offers a range of social clubs and activities across Buckinghamshire, giving people with sight loss the opportunity to meet others, make friends and enjoy shared interests in a welcoming environment.

There are plenty of ways to get involved, whether you enjoy getting creative, keeping active or simply catching up over a cup of tea.

Social groups meet regularly in Aylesbury, Chalfont, Chesham, Marlow, Milton Keynes, Padbury, Stoke Poges, High Wycombe and other locations across Bucks. These provide a relaxed opportunity to socialise, chat and connect with other BucksVision members.

For those who enjoy being creative, craft groups and clubs meet in Chesham, Marlow, Stowe, High Wycombe and Milton Keynes.

If you prefer something more active, there are walking groups in Aylesbury, Milton Keynes and Wycombe, as well as bowls in Aylesbury, Tai Chi in Milton Keynes and tandem cycling for those who would like to get out and about on two wheels.

Milton Keynes also hosts a technology group, offering an opportunity to explore technology alongside other members.

There are also opportunities to enjoy shared interests at reading groups and lunch clubs.

Interested in joining a group?

For more information about activities, meeting arrangements and which group might suit you, please contact BucksVision on **01296 487 556** or email **reception@bucksvision.co.uk**.

Experience Days

Our 2026 experience days took BucksVision members to a range of fascinating places, with opportunities to learn, explore and enjoy new experiences together.

March – Amersham Fair Organ Museum

Chiltern and Wycombe divisions began the year at Amersham Fair Organ Museum, where the beautiful mechanical instruments brought back memories of seaside carousels. Members could handle the punched cardboard books that played the tunes, explore the instruments and touch some of the figures and miniature drums, tambourines and bells. Tea and cakes rounded off the visit.



"It was a very interesting afternoon. The young man was knowledgeable and gave a very informative talk."



April – Bletchley Park

MK and Northwest travelled back to the Second World War to discover Bletchley Park's code-breaking history. A guided tour introduced key people and techniques, followed by a visit to the Radio Centre, where everyone could type their name in Morse code using an instruction board with raised letters, dots and dashes.

May – Henley Distillery

Chalfont, Marlow, Wycombe and Southeast visited Henley Distillery for a tour arranged by Kimmi Gray before she left BucksVision. Members heard about the distilling process, felt the stills, sampled gin and rum, and explored the botanicals used to create different flavours, including rosemary, lavender, cinnamon and juniper. A generous lunch was another highlight.

June – Bodleian Library, Oxford

Mid, West and Marlow enjoyed a humorous and informative tour of the Bodleian Library and Sheldonian Theatre. Audio description and tactile images helped visitors explore the theatre's remarkable painted ceiling. The group also heard stories about Oscar Wilde's student days and visited the 'Pets and Their People' exhibition, which included a poem about guide dog Sparky in Braille and an interactive toy cat.

"It was excellent. The tour was interesting and informative…

Staff were helpful and patient and explained clearly."

July – Perfume Making and Archery

In July, MK, Mid and Northwest tried perfume making at Fire Nest Studios near Bedford. Everyone created a unique scent to take home by choosing and combining different oils. It was a new experience for us, and we hope to return with more divisions next year. One member's creation was such a hit that the office was treated to a spray!

We also held our usual archery day with Whiteleaf Bowmen for Mid, Wycombe and West. This year, some severely sight impaired participants were able to try a foot locator frame and tripod, designed by an instructor and used by visually impaired archers.

August – Waddesdon Manor

Chiltern and West visited Waddesdon Manor on 27 August. Highlights of the house tour included a beautiful piano and an 18th-century musical automaton in the shape of an elephant, especially wound for our visit. During an object-handling session, members explored replicas of items from the house, including a chandelier detail and buttons once used to summon servants. (Please don't let Steve know about this because he'll want one in his office!) The group then visited the conservation aviary, heard from the keeper and handled nests, blown eggs and feathers.



"Thank you for a magical day. Time flew. I get sad when the day is over."

October – Hughenden Manor

Our final experience day took Southeast, Chalfont and Wycombe to Hughenden Manor on 9 October. Members learned about former owner Benjamin Disraeli and heard the story that he shortened a dining chair for Queen Victoria. They also discovered the manor's wartime role in map-making. An object-handling session included a house brick, a silk scarf, a map-maker's glass and a marble cast of Disraeli's wife Mary Anne's foot – an unexpectedly heavy and memorable artefact.

If you have a suggestion for somewhere we could visit in 2027, please call us or email Lisa at **lnancollas@bucksvision.co.uk**.

Volunteering with BucksVision

Meet Roy Secker and Josie Smith, the Chair and Social Secretary of the West Division.

With a combined 27 years of volunteering experience, they joined the division under different circumstances. Josie took her late mother with vision impairment to socialise, while Roy sought a new challenge after retirement. They quickly became involved in running the division, to their delight.

The biggest enjoyment for them both comes from the monthly meetings with members and volunteers.

They enjoy coffee chats, lunches, singing and talks. Their yearly agenda is packed with exciting activities.

For Roy and Josie, the West Division is more than just a volunteering opportunity. It's a place where members and volunteers work together to create a welcoming environment.

Kindness, respect and compassion are shared, and everyone feels like family. Every meeting for them is a special event but one of Roy's proudest moments was attending the garden party at Penn House hosted by Lord-Lieutenant for Buckinghamshire Countess Howe, to celebrate local volunteering heroes.

He said, "I was chosen for this award, but it could have been any of us. We're all equal. I accepted it as a representative of the West Division, not as an individual."

To continue supporting people with visual impairment, they would like to grow their number of members and volunteers.

The West Division is open to welcome like-minded volunteers and members, especially those who can provide transport. They are keen to encourage more volunteers aged under 50 to get involved, while continuing to welcome volunteers of all ages.



The division meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at the Baptist Church Hall in Princes Risborough. Start time is 2pm and we finish at 4pm.

Roy and Josie want to express their deepest gratitude to all members and volunteers for their unwavering support and help.

Without them, the West Division wouldn't be what it is today.



Technology Training at Home

BucksVision is delighted to be offering technology training to eligible members, delivered by James Goldsworthy of Alternate Visions Coaching, with funding from The National Lottery.

The sessions focus on practical technology that can help people with sight loss become more independent, including smartphones, AI and Ray-Ban Meta smart glasses. Best of all, James can provide the training in your own home. One recent session demonstrated just how transformative this technology can be.

A lady with significant sight loss was finding it increasingly difficult to read her phone, her post and everyday items such as food packets and tins. James demonstrated accessibility features on an Apple iPhone, including magnification, bold text and colour contrast adjustments, which made the phone much easier for her to use. However, it was the introduction to Siri and voice control that proved a real revelation.

She then tried the Ray-Ban Meta smart glasses. Wearing the glasses, she was able to read cooking instructions and ingredients from packets and tins in her kitchen. Two pieces of post arrived during the session, and she was able to read those too. She also successfully made and received telephone calls using the glasses and Siri, all through her voice.

The experience was so positive that she went on to purchase both an iPhone and a pair of Ray-Ban Meta smart glasses. James returned to help set everything up, and she has since booked further training.

Eligible BucksVision members can have one technology training session with James, fully funded by BucksVision. Additional sessions are available but will be chargeable. Call or email us to find out more.

COMMUNITY FUND

Quiz Night and Supper

Friday 13th November
6.45pm for 7.15pm at New Bradwell Sports Club, Bradville MK13 7AB

Help raise funds for our charity - come along to an entertaining evening of quiz questions, good food and early festive fun, a bumper raffle and mystery tombola



£10 per person

Teams of up to 6 people

Splendid Ploughman's supper included

Licensed bar

BucksVision
Sensory Loss Charity

Book your place today
Mobile: 07394473650
mlegg@bucksvision.co.uk

New Walking Group Started in Wycombe

BucksVision is very pleased to announce that our new walking group, run by the Wycombe division, started in July.

The first walk took place around Hughenden Park on Saturday 18th and the second at The Rye on September 12th and there was another on 10th October in Marlow.

The walk will usually take place on the 2nd Saturday of each month but could be moved occasionally due to the availability of walk leaders, who are all volunteers.

Length will vary between 2 and 5 miles and anyone interested will receive a letter/email every month from the administrator, Stephanie, describing venue, distance and terrain; it is then up to the member/volunteer to let Stephanie know if they wish to attend.

This group is for people who like a fairly active walk so cannot facilitate walking frames or buggies due to the terrain and walking speed.

If you live in the Wycombe area and would like to join the group please call the office and speak to Lisa or let Richard Martyn, Chair of Wycombe division, know and they will pass your details onto the administrator.

We also have a walking group in Aylesbury, and two in Milton Keynes, which also take place at weekends so if you are interested in either of them, do give us a call on **01296 487 556**.



Equipment & Information Days 2026

In September, BucksVision held its annual Equipment & Information Days at Chalfont St Peter Parish Church Hall and Burnham Park Hall.

Both venues provided excellent facilities, and we were warmly welcomed at each location.

We were delighted to welcome 17 companies and charities this year, including several new exhibitors who were keen to return next year.

Both events were well attended, with visitors enjoying the opportunity to try out a wide range of equipment, learn about the support and services available, and speak directly with exhibitors. We received some lovely feedback, including:



> 'A very useful exhibition of aids for people with hearing and sight difficulties. It's good to talk face to face. Everyone was very kind.'
>
> 'Thank you so much for doing what you do and for coming here to Chalfont St Peter. I'm not able to come to Aylesbury, thank you so much…'
>
> 'It's a really great event and we're really glad to have it in Burnham.' – Adam, Parish Clerk, Burnham Park Hall

A huge thank you to everyone who exhibited, volunteered, supported or attended. Your involvement helped make both events a success, and we look forward to welcoming you back next year!

Exercise - the best medicine for t

Inactivity is a growing modern problem. Work, household chores, shopping and other necessary activities are far less demanding than for previous generations as we rely on cars, machines and technology to make our lives easier.

Our Southeast Division has been busy this summer getting their members moving again!

Even without a visual impairment, we move around less and burn off less energy than we used to. Latest evidence, as outlined in the See Sport Differently report from RNIB, shows that blind and partially sighted people are twice as likely to be inactive. There is a very clear desire from people with sight loss to be more active. However, accessibility, cost, confidence and transportation are all key barriers to accessing sport and physical activity for blind and partially sighted people.

Members in the Southeast Division meet multiple times a month combining opportunities to interact and build new relationships along with being active and participating in physical experiences. We are committed to reducing social isolation for people living with sight loss and offer a range of activities to appeal to different interests.

Frequent trips and walks are organised throughout the year which provide a fantastic chance to experience a change of scenery, be it exploring a garden centre or visiting the shops. A recent excursion to Black Park was a wonderful afternoon in the sunshine surrounded by nature.

Members, paired with a personal sight guide, chose a route suited to their ability mindful of mobility concerns as well as the environment. Our volunteers are all trained to use audio and sight guiding skills which make challenging environments safe, accessible and welcoming.

This dedicated support helps build deep relationships of

trust, empathy, and mutual understanding across the group. And of course, everyone was rewarded with tea and cake at the cafe by the lake!

Given that the Southeast Division's 'Burnham Last Thursday' group aims to be an activity club, the summer heatwaves were a challenge. The group usually meets once a month at Burnham Bowls Club, but the venue is very difficult to keep cool. St Andrews Hall (where our Stoke Poges Club meets) however is a large airy space with plenty of shade down one elevation of windows.

Luckily, we could switch venues in July. We were very grateful to the Bowls Club for lending us a bright highly coloured skittle set to complement some Visual Impairment games of our own, enabling us to offer our members a mini-indoor sports day, despite the heat.

The afternoon was great fun with a lot of laughter, and a healthy bit of competition, showing that exercise is good but exercising with friends is even better!

If you live down in the Southeast of the county and you would like to know more about the local support, clubs and events please do get in contact with us. Our members receive transport to clubs and events.

Contact the local BucksVision Southeast Division team via **southeastbv@gmail.com** or **01753 373638**.



Photo: Members guided by volunteers bowling indoor skittles

Southeast Summer Fete

Lead volunteer from Wycombe division, Pip Mahdy tells us all about the fun her and members had at this year's Southeast Summer Fete.

"Pam Warren and her volunteers invited us for the second year to their craft/lunch/music and fun get together on August 11th in Stoke Poges. It was a wonderfully busy afternoon with a brass band, amazing lunch, raffle prizes and of course the competition of the prose, limerick and poems being read out!

This year we had four volunteers attending and entering the craft and prose competitions. A special thank you to Liz Green from the Southeast who designed, sourced and delivered the home project packs to us earlier in the summer.

On the day, our Wycombe Division team of 12, including volunteers, had a dedicated table at the front and thoroughly enjoyed wining so many of the prizes.

The craft competition categories and winners were:

Best Three Blooms	Jackie Sprules (Southeast)
Handmade Individual Bloom	Ann Prestidge (Wycombe)
Desert Island Disc Home Project	Irene Wright (Wycombe)
Decorated Face Mask Home Project	Wendy Scott-Thorburn (Southeast)
Lemon Drizzle Cake	Tricia Hawes (Southeast)
Limerick	Irene Wright (Wycombe)
Poem	Irene Wright (Wycombe)
Prose	Joyce Bannister (Wycombe)

Pam and her team once again gave us an amazing afternoon. We all thoroughly enjoyed it and hopefully will be reinvited next year."

Response from Southeast Division

Thank you, Pip and Grace, for joining us in August. Your group really entered into the spirit of the occasion and having such a full hall created a super fun ambience.

This year, we introduced for the first time in our division, a trophy cup, in memory of John Norman who was so enthusiastic and creative at our clubs and workshops.

Liz Green made this announcement and presented The John Norman cup to winner 2025/26 winner Jackie Sprules;

“As a craft group, we want members to enjoy and be challenged in our activities. It’s always great for members to come feeling that they can ‘have a go’ and very often surprise themselves in what they achieve on projects – when this happens it’s a great source of pleasure for both members and supporting volunteers.

Jackie is a keen and willing participant in our sessions and her love for all things crafty extends to her home too, where she enjoys making items for BucksVision to sell at the various local fairs that we attend as well as items for the charity hub in May’s Chocolate Shop in Burnham village.

As the first recipient of the John Norman Trophy, she is a worthy winner for her imaginative entries in our various competitions today and for all her support and enthusiasm throughout the year.”

We very much hope to organise a similar summer party in August 2027 and invite Wycombe to join us again. We are sure some of our crafty Southeast members will look forward to a re-match having been somewhat outperformed this year!



BISS - Small Changes, Big Impact Su

Specialist sensory advice can sometimes lead to relatively simple changes that make a significant difference to a person's everyday experience.

Sarah* is Severely Sight Impaired and lives in residential care. Following a sensory assessment and visit, practical advice was provided to help staff better understand how Sarah's sight loss affects her daily life and how they could adapt their approach to support her.

Turning advice into everyday practice

One of the most positive outcomes has been how the care home has taken the sensory advice on board and incorporated it into Sarah's day-to-day care.

Sarah's care plan has been updated with information and practical guidance from the visit.

Changes include:

- A sign in Sarah's room informing staff that she is severely sight impaired.
- Guidance about appropriate lighting.
- Advice about how Sarah's table should be laid out so that items are easier to locate.
- Using a yellow contrasting cover, which Sarah preferred to red.
- Providing a bowl and plate with a lip to make mealtimes easier.
- Using a spork where helpful.
- Giving Sarah clear verbal information when approaching a chair so she can position herself safely and confidently.
- Access to information from the RNIB, including a book ordered by Sarah's daughter.

Importantly, these are not simply recommendations sitting in a report. They have been incorporated into Sarah's care plan so that the people supporting her have clear information about her individual needs and preferences.

Learning that can benefit others

The impact of the visit has also extended beyond Sarah. Staff have shown an interest in developing their understanding of sensory loss further. The care home is interested in sensory awareness training for its team, helping staff develop skills that could benefit other residents now and in the future.

A person-centred approach

For Sarah and her daughter, the changes have meant greater awareness and understanding of Sarah's needs. For staff, the experience has provided an opportunity to build their knowledge and confidence.

Most importantly, it demonstrates that small, person-centred adaptations can have a big impact. By listening to the person, involving their family and working alongside care staff, specialist sensory services can help create an environment where someone with significant sight loss is better understood and supported.

A noticeable difference

Sarah's daughter described the difference she had noticed following the visit: "I think your visit really did make a difference in the approach of the staff. I don't think they've had many residents whose sight is as bad as Mum's and didn't necessarily realise the extent of Mum's difficulties, I've found the care staff to be very helpful since your visit.

One staff member, in particular, has been fantastic. She is also keen to learn more and has been thinking about how she can put things in place to support other residents with similar difficulties."

*Name changed for privacy reasons

BISS
Buckinghamshire Integrated Sensory Service

Living Well with Sight Loss Course

In May, BucksVision held a 'Living Well with Sight Loss' course in Aylesbury. The 11 attendees learned about the support available to them and had the opportunity to share experiences and ask questions in a safe, informal space.

Laura Finnis, ECLO at Stoke Mandeville Hospital, provided valuable information on hospital processes, registering as sight impaired (SI) or severely sight impaired (SSI), welfare benefits, concessions and support from RNIB.

BISS, Buckinghamshire's Sensory Service, explained the support available to people with sight and/or hearing loss, including home visits, mobility training, equipment and links to other organisations and charities.

James Goldsworthy demonstrated a range of assistive technology, including Apple and Dolphin products and Meta Ray-Ban glasses, sharing useful tips and advice.

Other topics included travel passes, public transport, Blue Badges, accessing information in preferred formats and support from other charities.

At our Meadowcroft Resource Centre, attendees could also try equipment such as magnifiers and specialist lighting, learn about colour contrast and Charles Bonnet Syndrome, and explore helpful mobile phone apps and accessibility features on Apple and Android devices.

One participant summed up the course, saying: 'I thought the course was very thorough in scope, well explained and put together. The format was friendly and informal, but sharply focused".

Emotional support for people with sight loss

BucksVision
Sensory Loss Charity

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE NEW UNIVERSITY
EST. 1891

Counselling and psychotherapy sessions

BucksVision and Buckinghamshire New University are working together to offer specialised counselling and psychotherapy sessions for people diagnosed with sight loss who are struggling emotionally.

This includes navigating feelings of **grief, anxiety, depression, isolation,** or **adjustment difficulties related to their sight loss diagnosis.**

How we can help

Our service provides a **safe, confidential, and supportive space** where you can explore your feelings and develop strategies to cope with the emotional impact of sight loss.

These sessions offer:

- **Individualised support:** Tailored sessions to meet your unique needs.
- **Coping Strategies:** Developing ways to manage daily challenges.
- **Grief and Loss Therapy:** Help processing the emotional impact of sight loss.
- **Emotional Processing:** Understanding & working through complex emotions.
- **Improved Well-being:** Developing resilience and a positive outlook.

Sessions are **face-to-face, free of charge** and are available in **High Wycombe.**

Find out more

If you or someone you know could benefit from our service, please get in touch for a **completely confidential** discussion.

01296 487556
reception@bucksvision.co.uk

With financial support from:

COMMUNITY FUND

Thank you to our funders

- The AMMCO Trust
- Aston Manor Care Home
- Aylesbury Town Council
- Burnham Parish Council
- David Lock Associates
- Dentons Charitable Trust
- The E M MacAndrew Trust
- Helen Robertson Charitable Trust
- The Hospital Saturday Fund
- Mobbs Memorial Trust
- PA OIL & GAS
- The Roger and Jean Jefcoate Trust
- St Mary's Church
- Thomas Hickman's Charity
- William Harding's Charity

The National Lottery Community Fund – Reaching Communities

Thanks to players of The National Lottery and The National Lottery Community Fund for the multi-year grant award we have received in contribution towards our core costs. Your support transforms lives!

If you buy a lottery ticket regularly, then thank you, as this contributes towards the £32M raised each week for good causes, which now include BucksVision!

We deeply appreciate all our funders for believing in our work and helping us continue to support our community. Thank you!

We would also like to thank everyone who entered our Spring/Summer raffle this year.

In total we raised £860! Special thanks to everyone in our local community that has shown us support with fundraising, raffle prizes and allowing us to raise awareness through training and talks.



Remembering Sheila

We are deeply grateful to Sheila for remembering BucksVision in her will.

Her generous gift is a lasting legacy that will help us continue to support people living with sight loss across Buckinghamshire for years to come. We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Sheila and her family.

Below, her cousin Christine shares the story of Sheila's life and the reasons she believes Sheila may have chosen to support BucksVision.

"My cousin, Sheila Hazel Warne (1930-2023) was a remarkable lady with many interests. She came to live in Marlow in 1939, attending the local primary school, later going to Pitman's College to learn shorthand typing. She worked at Wethereds in Marlow (later to become Whitbreads) as a secretary / PA, for 50 years.

Sheila never married but lived with and supported her parents until they were deceased. After this, she extended her bungalow and tended her garden, which



she loved. She belonged to the local history group, gardening club and, after retiring, volunteered at Oxfam in Marlow for many years. She also enjoyed swimming and Tai-Chi.

Sheila was my first cousin and I used to regard her as the sister I never had. Although Sheila didn't confide in me the reason she chose BucksVision for this gift, I know she wore glasses from a young age and wore a patch for a lazy eye. When she had cataracts removed later in life, she was full of wonder at the colours she could see. This could well have been one of her personal reasons for including BucksVision.

Sheila had many friends and, I believe, is greatly missed by us all."

South Bucks Talking News

South Bucks Talking News: A totally free service delivering local news to those unable to read

South Bucks Talking News (SBTN) is a completely free, volunteer-run service, dedicated to bringing local news to those in South Bucks who are blind, visually impaired, or otherwise unable to read the news.

Our teams record articles every week from the Bucks Free Press Group and other local journals covering southern Buckinghamshire. These articles are supplemented with useful items from RNIB, BucksVision, and The Macular Society, as well as a weekly quiz.

We regularly include other interesting features that make it more like a magazine you are listening to. Typically, there are 75 to 100 minutes of recordings each week.

The recordings are made on a Friday, the day that the Bucks Free Press is published, copied onto small USB memory sticks, and posted to recipients on Saturday. When they have finished listening, the listener, or their carer, sends the memory stick back to us in the same envelope; both the stick and the envelope are then re-used time and time again.

We also loan USB players to our listeners. Thanks to the Royal Mail's 'Articles for the Blind' service, there is no charge for postage, and the entire service is free.

If you or someone you know in South Bucks would benefit, please contact us.

Call **01494 854 920** or email **help@southbuckstn.org.uk**
Visit our website for more information or to donate **www.southbuckstn.org.uk**

Social Clubs and Activities

If you are interested in joining one of our social or activity groups, please contact us on **01296 487556** or **reception@bucksvision.co.uk** for more information.

Club	Days	Times
Aylesbury		
Sunshine Group	Last Monday of each month	10:30am -12:30pm
Bowls Group	Thursdays	10:30am – 12:30pm
Walking Group	Last Saturday of each month	Afternoon
Chalfont		
Social Group	2nd & 4th Tuesday of each month	2pm – 4pm
Chiltern		
Social Group	Mondays	2pm – 4pm
Craft Group	Mondays	2pm – 4pm
Marlow		
Social Group	4th Wednesday of each month	2pm – 4pm
Craft Group	2nd Wednesday of each month	2pm – 4pm
High Wycombe		
Social Group	1st & 3rd Thursday of each month	2pm – 4pm
Craft Group	2nd & 4th Thursday of each month	2pm – 4pm
Walking Group	2nd Saturday of each	Varies

Club	Days	Times
Milton Keynes		
Partridge Social Club	Fortnightly Thursdays	2:30pm – 4:30pm
Wolverton Social Club	Fortnightly Tuesdays	2pm – 4pm
Eye for Art	1st Tuesday of each month	10am – 1pm
Lunch Bunch	1st Monday of each month	
Reading Group	2nd Monday of each month	2pm – 3pm
Tai Chi	Fortnightly Thursdays	2:30pm – 4pm
Tandem	Choose regular or occasional	10am
Technology Group	2nd & last Friday of each month	10am – 1pm
Walking Group	**Long walks:** 3rd Saturday of each month **Short walks:** 2nd Sunday of each month	10:30am
Northwest		
Social Group	2nd Tuesday of each month	2:30pm – 4pm
Craft Club	1st & 4th Tuesday of each month	10:15am – 12:15pm
Southeast		
Social Group: **Stoke Poges**	2nd Tuesday of each month	2pm – 4pm
Social Group: Burnham	Last Thursday of each month	1:30pm – 4:30pm
West		
Social Group	2nd Tuesday of each month	2:00pm – 4pm

NEW
Compact Go

enhanced vision | Freedom Scientific | Optelec | SCHWEIZER

A perfect Christmas gift for anyone who loves the finer details.

Sale Price: £499
RRP £595
Carriage £5.95



Designed for life on the move, Compact Go is a lightweight and easy-to-use portable video magnifier that delivers clear, high quality images wherever you are. Whether you're reading mail, checking labels, or viewing details at home or on the go.



Compact Go combines powerful magnification, intuitive controls, and versatile viewing modes in a sleek, pocket-sized design. With dual cameras, vibrant contrast options, and reliable performance, it empowers users to see more clearly and stay independent throughout the day.

Ideal if you're struggling with a magnifier

Freephone: 0800 145 6115

www.lowvisionshop.co.uk

Useful Contacts

NHS Volunteer Responder Scheme – 0808 196 3646
Volunteer support with shopping and hospital transport.

Bucks Integrated Sensory Service – 01296 479 970
Practical support for people with sight loss in Buckinghamshire.

Milton Keynes Sensory Service (formerly SARC) – 01908 401 135
Practical support for people with sight loss in Milton Keynes.

RNIB – 0303 123 9999
Advice and support with all aspects of sight loss.

Macular Society – 0300 3030 111
Information and support for people with macular conditions.

Glaucoma UK (formerly IGA) – 01233 648 170
Information and advice for people with Glaucoma.

Eye Casualty – 01296 315 939
A telephone triage service for patients concerned about sudden changes in their sight.

Age UK
Support for older people to help them achieve and maintain independence and wellbeing.
Buckinghamshire – 01296 431 911
Milton Keynes – 01908 550 700

Retina UK – 0300 111 4000
Supporting people with inherited sight loss and investing in medical research

ECLO Bucks - 01296 838 390 Milton Keynes - 01908 401 135
Eye Care Liaison Officers who liaise between patients and the medical teams in the Hospital Eye Clinics, providing a wealth of information and support.