

Working together

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**R N I B**

See differently

# BucksVision Volunteer Welcome Pack

Your volunteer journey starts here

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## Welcome to BucksVision

Thank you for expressing an interest in becoming a BucksVision volunteer, and welcome to our team.

BucksVision is your local society that provides support and services to visually impaired residents in Buckinghamshire.

Founded in 1911 we have over 100 years' experience of providing continuous support and a network of social and activity clubs across Buckinghamshire. In 2014 we associated with RNIB a national sight loss charity with whom we share many of same aims and values.

Throughout our long history, BucksVision has been a charity that relies on our volunteers. We are run by our Board of Trustee Directors, and a small team of employees. While our fantastic team of volunteers deliver most of our services.

Becoming a BucksVision volunteer can be very rewarding, and there are many ways that you can help support BucksVision's work with visually impaired people.

This Volunteer Welcome Pack aims to give you some general information about BucksVision, the process of becoming a volunteer and the volunteer opportunities we offer.

## Our Commitment to our Volunteers

BucksVision welcomes the opportunity to work with volunteers. We make every effort to ensure that you receive the appropriate support and feel valued, so that you can realise your full potential as a volunteer helping people with visual impairment. You can expect

- To be valued and respected as a volunteer
- To be provided with a Role Description of the volunteering task you have chosen to ensure you are clear about your role and responsibilities
- To be provided with training relevant to your role, such as Visual Awareness, Sighted Guiding and Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults
- Respect from staff, fellow volunteers and customers
- A volunteer 'Handbook' that provides our policies and procedures and practical information regarding volunteering
- Appropriate steps to be taken to ensure your health and safety and you will be covered by our Public Liability insurance when engaging in BucksVision approved activities
- Continuous support and advice
- Agreed out of pocket expenses paid in accordance with our expenses policy
- Your experience of volunteering with BucksVision to be as enjoyable as possible.

## What we expect from our Volunteers

BucksVision expects both new and existing volunteers to:

- Be polite, professional, reliable, confidential and respectful of customers, staff, fellow volunteers and any other representatives you may interact with as a BucksVision volunteer
- Read and comply with our policies, practices, procedures and management decisions
- Be reliable and honest in all your voluntary work
- Be responsible for all your own actions and to reflect the aims and values of BucksVision
- Carry out your voluntary role within the professional boundaries that will be set out for you in your training
- Attend volunteer training required by BucksVision as part of your induction, and any further training for your chosen role
- Agree to a criminal record check if required by your role
- Wear and produce your identity badge when required to do so.

## Volunteering Opportunities

There is a wide range of volunteering opportunities available to you at BucksVision. The information below will provide you with an idea of the roles available, and what is involved. However, we are always pleased to hear of other ways in which you feel you could support us.

### Befrienders

Befrienders offer companionship to a visually impaired person in their own home, however, your visits can also involve local trips together, to coffee shops or places of interest. Visits can vary depending upon individual circumstances and the duration anything from up to an hour or two. Befriending partnerships will often grow into lasting friendships.

*Approximate volunteering hours required: 1–2 hours per week/month*

### Bowls Groups (Aylesbury & Wycombe)

A Bowls Club volunteer will be trained how to assist people with sight loss to play bowls. Our Bowls Clubs are run by both sighted volunteers and visually impaired customers of BucksVision and they all have an enormous amount of fun. They play indoors during winter months and outdoors in the summer, so it is an all year-round activity. Our volunteers learn how to play bowls too, so they enjoy their role even more. Our Bowls Club volunteers are often drivers as well so that they can assist the customers to travel to and from the venues.

*Approximate Volunteering hours required: 2 hours per week*

### British Wireless for the Blind (BWFB) Agent

BucksVision BWFB Agents will meet with visually impaired customers in their homes and assess requirements regarding receipt of an audio set on a free loan basis. They will deliver the equipment to the customer and provide guidance and training in its operation.

*Approximate volunteering hours required: Flexible*

## Digital Technology Volunteer

Technology can make life easier if you have hearing or sight problems but knowing where to start is not always easy. Volunteers with an interest in IT products, such as tablets and smartphones, can share their skills and experience with visually impaired people.

*Approximate volunteering hours required: Flexible*

## Divisional Officers

Each Division has, at a minimum, three defined roles to include a Chair, Treasurer and Secretary.

The Chair will organise meetings, acts as the main link with Head Office, attends Head Office meetings to represent division customers, and speaks on behalf of the division.

The Treasurer will keep accounts and ensure BucksVision's finance requirements are met and act as the main point of contact for finance matters.

The Secretary will organise the programme of activities, deal with any correspondence, and take notes at meetings and AGM.

*Approximate volunteering hours required: 1–2 hours per week*

## Drivers

Volunteer Drivers will collect a visually impaired person from their home and driving them to and from a BucksVision social club, bowls club or some other BucksVision activity. As this can be a regular activity, the partnership often develops into one of great friendship.

*Approximate volunteering hours required: Flexible*

## Events

Volunteers will help at designated events to promote BucksVision with display stands and publicity materials.

*Approximate volunteering hours required: Ad hoc*

## Eye Clinic Patient Support (Amersham, Aylesbury & Wycombe)

BucksVision offer an information service at the eye clinics in Wycombe, Amersham, and Stoke Mandeville Hospitals. Volunteers provide a listening ear and signposting service to patients within the clinic setting, who may be worried or anxious about their eye condition. This is a vital service to people who may be learning of their sight loss for the first time.

This role involves liaising with our Eye Clinic Liaison Officer and hospital staff, maintaining a daily logbook on clinic activity, recording the number of patients attending clinic, recording the number of registrations and referrals to BucksVision, and replenishing stocks of literature on display.

*Approximate volunteering hours required: 1–3 hours per week*

## Fundraising

You can support BucksVision and visually impaired people within Buckinghamshire by helping with collection of tins from various community locations. This role includes but is not limited to exchanging tins, and possible counting and recording of donations.

*Approximate volunteering hours required: Flexible*

## Goalball (Aylesbury)

Goalball was originally developed in 1946, as a rehabilitation program for visually impaired World War II veterans. Goalball players are required to be blindfolded, played by two teams of three, using a ball with bells inside. The object of the game is to throw the ball into the opposing team's net, while defenders attempt to block it with their bodies.

As a Goalball Volunteer there are various roles you can get involved with, for example, referee, goal judge and coach. No previous experience is necessary as you will be invited to attend a highly practical one day course delivered by an approved Goalball UK tutor.

*Approximate volunteering hours required: 3 hours per month*



## Office Support (Aylesbury)

BucksVision has a small team of staff, so there are times when volunteers are needed to help with general office support, such as photocopying, preparing information packs, and helping to prepare and mail out our customer's newsletters. Volunteers with additional skills may be invited to contribute to other activities.

*Approximate volunteering hours required: Ad hoc*

## Reader and Shopper Service

Our Reader and Shopper service supports visually impaired people to remain independent and offers support with everyday tasks we may take for granted.

Our Reader Volunteers will visit a person in their own home, to provide help with reading and writing. Sometimes this also includes 'social' reading, maybe a magazine or book that the person cannot access in another form.

Our Shopper Service Volunteers will collect the person from their home, to take them shopping whilst acting as a guide and eyes to help them make their purchases. Some of our clients ask for help shopping on a regular basis, while others may request occasional help, perhaps to choose clothes or gifts. (Service available in the Buckinghamshire CC area only)

*Approximate volunteering hours required: 1–2 hours per week*

## Resource Centre (Aylesbury & Milton Keynes)

We have a Resource Centre in Milton Keynes, and a Resource room in Aylesbury where volunteer's welcome visitors. Volunteers explain and demonstrate the wide range of equipment that is available for people to maintain independence.

*Approximate volunteering hours required: 3 hours per week*

## Social Groups and Activities

There are nine BucksVision Divisions across Buckinghamshire. Each Division has a volunteer run social club and/or activity group. Support is always required to help run these services, perhaps for

a friendly chat, to support the groups chosen activities or to help with refreshments.

*Approximate volunteering hours required: 2 hours per week/month depending on area*

### **Tandem Pilot (Milton Keynes)**

Tandem Pilots support our visually impaired members enjoy a tandem experience. Reliability, trustworthiness and very clear communication skills are vital for a successful tandem partnership.

The tandem cycles are provided and although previous tandem experience is an advantage, training can be given.

*Approximate volunteering hours required: 1–2 hours per week*

### **Telephone Befriender**

Telephone Befriending volunteers to offer companionship and alleviate the loneliness blind and partially sighted people can often experience by telephoning people from their own home; having a chat and providing companionship.

*Approximate volunteering hours required: 1-2 hours per week/month*

### **Walking Groups (Aylesbury & Milton Keynes)**

Walking Group sighted guides assist our visually impaired customers to enjoy the open air and access the pleasures of walking. Volunteers will be given full training in sighted guiding techniques.

*Approximate volunteering hours required: 3 hours per month*

## How do I become a Volunteer?

You should complete and return the enclosed application form, in the freepost envelope provided, to the address overleaf. Please note, you are requested to provide the names and addresses of two willing referees who have known you for a minimum of two years (family members/partners will not be accepted). If you are unsure, or you think you may have problems providing an appropriate referee, please ask Samantha Lah, our Volunteer Recruitment Officer, for further guidance.

We will then arrange to meet you for an informal chat to discuss the volunteer opportunities you are interested in and explore your skills and experience. Depending on your chosen role, you may be required to complete a Criminal Records Bureau/Disclosure and Barring Service form. This is a standard check required by all organisations where staff or volunteers have certain access to vulnerable customers.

BucksVision will not proceed with a new application if any of the following is highlighted on their Disclosure form:

- History of any form of abuse or attempted abuse of a vulnerable adult or child
- Any serious financial fraud or irregularities
- Any history of significant or habitual theft
- Other minor or spent convictions will be considered depending on relevance and risk in relation to the volunteering position.

Please be aware the recruitment process will take, at a minimum, three months. We will endeavour, throughout the entire process to remain in regular contact with you during this period, and to keep you updated as to your progress.

## Contact Details

If you would like to discuss this pack or would just like a general chat about volunteering with BucksVision, please do not hesitate to contact the Volunteer Recruitment Officer using the details below.

Thank you for your interest, we look forward to hearing from you.

**BucksVision**  
**143 Meadowcroft**  
**Aylesbury**  
**Buckinghamshire**  
**HP19 9HH**

**T:** 01296 487 556

**E:** [reception@bucksvision.co.uk](mailto:reception@bucksvision.co.uk)

**W:** [www.bucksvision.co.uk](http://www.bucksvision.co.uk)