

Newsletter



Clearview C One.

enhanced
vision

Freedom
Scientific

Optelec

SCHWEIZER

Featuring a 21.5-inch widescreen and a High Definition camera, the unique C-shape provides you with more working space for reading a favourite newspaper, enjoying craftwork or writing a cheque without being restricted in movement.

Sale Price: £1495
RRP £1885

C-ing without limitations

When we started to develop the ClearView C, we wanted to eliminate all of the difficulties users experienced. After extensive research involving our clients, we came up with a completely new design.



Reading from top to bottom

With a document placed on the movable table, the camera is positioned so that you naturally read from the top of the page. You no longer need to pull the reading table into your stomach to start reading. This design is unique to desktop video magnifiers.

Enjoy greater freedom with more working space

The left-sided C-shaped design provides you with more working space beneath the camera. Enjoy reading from broadsheet newspapers, viewing photograph albums and practical craftwork without being restricted in movement.

Freephone: 0800 145 6115 For a FREE home demonstration or for more information.

Contents

We do hope that you look forward to receiving our newsletter and find the articles interesting. If you have any suggestions for improvements, please do let us know.

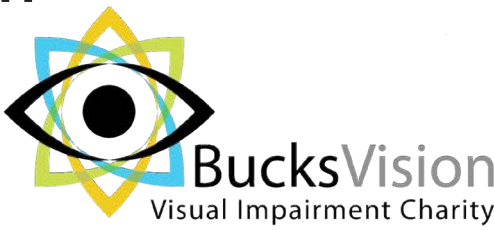
Welcome.....	4
Board of Trustees	5
Plenty of Drama at Head Office.....	6
Equipment & Information Days 2024.....	7
Meet Susan	8 - 9
Living Well with Sight Loss Course	10
Meet our New Corporate Partner	11
Meet Kirsty.....	12 - 13
Thank You to Our Loyal Supporters	14
Gifts in Wills Help Fund Our Work.....	15
Remembering Barbara and Tony.....	17
Resource Room.....	18 - 19
Social Media	20 - 21
Social Clubs and Activities.....	22 - 23
Useful Contacts	24

143 Meadowcroft, Aylesbury, HP19 9HH

01296 487 556

reception@bucksvision.co.uk

www.bucksvision.co.uk



Opening Hours

Monday - Friday: 9am - 5pm Phone Line: 9am - 4pm

Charity Registration No. 1147814



Welcome

Steve Naylor, Chief Executive

Welcome to our Spring/Summer newsletter.

Some exciting news hot off the press – BucksVision has appointed a new Chair and Vice Chair of Trustees. You can read more about them on page 5.

As Chief Executive, I work closely with the Chair, relying on him or her to provide counsel and wisdom with difficult and challenging problems.

I have been fortunate to work with the same Chair since I came into post nine years ago. Bob Dean has been an absolute stalwart, leading the Board and the charity through some turbulent times. Bob has been Chair since February 2013 and felt that now is a good time to pass the baton on to a new Trustee.

During our time working together, BucksVision has merged with a

national charity, then separated from that charity, experienced the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown, and won the Integrated Sensory Service tender in Buckinghamshire. To paraphrase a well-known proverb, we have been through some interesting times together.

I'd like to pass on my sincere thanks to Bob for all of his support over the years. It really has been a pleasure working with him and I am delighted that he will continue to be a Trustee for us.

Our new Chair, Cristina, and Vice Chair, Val, are fairly new to the charity and bring a wealth of ideas and experience to the table. I very much look forward to working with them so that we continue to help local people with sight loss in the best way possible.

My sincere thanks to all of you who support our work in some way.

Board of Trustees

We are delighted to announce two key appointments to our Board of Trustees.

Cristina Hadjez, Chair



Cristina is our newly appointed Chair, responsible for leading the Trustee Board and supporting the Chief Executive.

Cristina is an experienced management consultant and commercial director and was until recently Head of Commercial with Vodafone Business.

Cristina has been a Trustee for several months and is eager to drive change to improve the services we deliver.

Val Caldwell, Vice Chair



Val Caldwell is our newly appointed Vice Chair, acting as a deputy for the Chair and leading meetings when the Chair is absent.

Val has extensive experience of the medical and pharmaceutical industries, and lots of volunteering experience, including teaching French at a local school.

Val has been vision impaired since birth and has lived experience of sight loss.

With sincere thanks to Bob Dean and Jan Antosiewicz for their hard work as Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, over the years.

Plenty of Drama at Head Office

On 17th April this year Sam Potter, playwright and director, started her 6-week run of drama workshops with BucksVision service users.

Sam is writing a play about sight loss and instead of doing her research by just talking with visually impaired people, she decided to give them the opportunity to experience acting, improvisation and musical theatre for themselves so as everyone could benefit. She is working with other groups of VI people as well as those from BucksVision.

So far, the participants have improvised with dialogue, sounds, memories from their own lives,

sung songs from musicals and pretended to be famous people. They have also learnt to warm up their voices with quirky vocal exercises.

When asked how she felt the workshops were going Sam told us: *"They are amazing. They are really enriching the work I am aiming to create. It is great interacting with the people and finding out their needs and priorities."*

The group put on an informal showing of some of their work for BucksVision staff at the end of their last workshop on 22nd May.



Equipment and Information Days 2024

WHERE YOU CAN TRY OUT AND LEARN ABOUT:

- Magnification, Equipment & New Technology
- BucksVision – all the help and support we provide
- Support available from other local VI and HI Charities
- General information about sight loss

Tuesday 17th September

10am – 2pm

Princes Risborough Community Centre
HP27 9AX

Wednesday 18th September

10am – 2pm

Buckingham Community Centre
MK18 1RP

Friday 20th September

10am – 2pm

St Andrews Church Hall, Stoke Poges
SL2 4LN

Meet Susan

Meet Susan, who has been a member of BucksVision's Southeast division for an amazing 20 years!

She lives in Taplow, in the house she grew up in and is registered as Severely Sight-Impaired. Susan was born 6 weeks prematurely. When she was 6 years old, her parents took her for some eye tests, and it was decided that she needed glasses for short-sightedness. Susan couldn't see in the dark, but she thought that was normal. She could read and play games as a child, so her eyesight wasn't a concern for her.

Years later, in the 1970s when Susan was 21, she went for an eye appointment and was told by the Optician that she needed to be referred to a consultant because he could see something unusual at the back of her right eye.

She was diagnosed with Retinal Dystrophy by the consultant and told that she would have to accept it because there was nothing that could be done.

In the 70s and 80s Susan had a successful career at her local council. She started in the finance department in rates and revenues and then moved into payroll which really interested her. Susan's sight deteriorated gradually post-diagnosis, however and by 1987 she had to take medical retirement as she was no longer able to see enough to carry out her work. She was in her 30s.

Susan was devastated by this and didn't know what her life would look like going forward. She went to a tribunal because she felt she could do something else within the council, such as working on the



reception. Susan was awarded a lump sum at tribunal, but this was little compensation to her as she loved her job.

However, she soon became a Girl Guides group leader, having been involved with Brownies and Girl Guides since her childhood. This gave her a new sense of purpose and she was involved for almost 50 years, until 2016. Susan says *“That was my saviour when I lost my sight. A lifesaver.”*

Susan first heard about BucksVision in the mid-1990s, through a long-term friend of hers who also happened to be the local BV Link Officer. In 2004, following an audio-described theatre trip with BV, Susan decided to become a member.

Over the last 20 years, Susan has had some wonderful experiences with the Southeast division, including taking part in craft clubs, walking groups and quizzes, as well as receiving IT support, lifts to appointments and other help to enable her to live as independently as possible. Susan is grateful for

the new friends she has made and the sense of community that comes with being a member.

When asked how she feels about her sight loss now, Susan said *“I’m so grateful I’ve still got some sight when I think of people that haven’t and I feel lucky that I used to have sight. I’m just living with it now. There are some things I can’t do but I’m very independent.”*

I carry a symbol cane when I’m out so that people know why I might not move out of the way for them. I don’t like being underestimated by sighted people who make assumptions.

There is still a lack of awareness about what blind and partially sighted people can do. I would like there to be some TV programmes on blindness and deafness to increase understanding because they can be hidden disabilities. Sign-language and Braille should be taught in schools.”

Thanks to Susan for sharing her story and being a valued BV member for so many years!

Living Well with Sight Loss Course

The RNIB and BucksVision are hosting another of their popular Living Well with Sight Loss courses at:

BucksVision, 143 Meadowcroft, Aylesbury, HP19 9HH

Thursday 20th June and Friday 21st June

10:30am – 3:30pm

This free two-day programme offers peer support for people living with sight loss, their friends, family and anyone affected by visual impairment.

The course is interactive with lots of opportunities to share experiences with others who understand the frustrations of visual impairment and to learn about all the help and support available.

Topics include:

- **Practical skills for everyday life**
- **Benefits and Registration**
- **ECLO'S and The Sensory Service Team**
- **Using Technology**
- **Eye Health and Emotional wellbeing**
- **Travel Support and Concessions**
- **Charles Bonnet Syndrome**
- **Confidence Building and Next Steps**

Places are free!

To book a place or for more information call
01296 487556 or email **reception@bucksvision.co.uk**

R N I B

See differently

Meet our New Corporate Partner



We asked them to tell us why they chose BucksVision.

We're proud to partner with BucksVision as our chosen charity. We are thrilled to announce that BucksVision is our chosen charity here at Argosy! BucksVision is a remarkable local charity nestled right here in Buckinghamshire. Their dedicated efforts extend a helping hand to individuals grappling with sight loss and impairment, offering invaluable support to navigate through the challenges of this life-altering condition.

Given that vision plays a pivotal role in our industry, it felt only natural for the Argosy team to give back to those affected by sight loss conditions. With this in mind, we will be celebrating our partnership with BucksVision, and are thrilled to announce our upcoming fundraising initiatives at MPTS, IBC, and our Kitplus shows, alongside engaging

employee-driven events. These efforts underscore our dedication to supporting BucksVision and making a positive impact in our community.

Raising awareness of BucksVision through our extensive network holds deep significance for the entire team. If you find resonance with our cause or have been touched by similar experiences, we invite you to join us in supporting BucksVision's unwavering dedication to assisting those facing challenges beyond our own. This could be a one-off donation or any personal fundraising events you may be involved in across 2024.

We would like to say a huge thank you to Argosy for choosing us and we look forward to working with you!

To find out more about our new corporate partner please visit:
<https://www.argosycable.com>

Meet Kirsty

Volunteering is more than just an act of service; it's a journey of personal growth and community connection.

This month, our Volunteer Manager, Kimmi had the pleasure of sitting down with Kirsty, a dedicated volunteer at BucksVision, to discuss her experiences from the impactful work she's doing. Despite being severely sight impaired, Kirsty's enthusiasm and commitment to helping others is obvious, proving that everyone has something valuable to contribute. Here's what Kirsty shared about her volunteering journey.

Kirsty's Journey into Volunteering

Can you tell us a little about yourself and what motivated you to start volunteering?

My name is Kirsty, I'm registered severely sight impaired. I live in Aylesbury. I love to help others, so I approached BucksVision to become a volunteer.

First Experiences and Feelings

What was your first volunteering experience like?

My first volunteering experience was very rewarding because I found that I helped our social media pages grow, as this was my first volunteer role at BucksVision, and that I could give something back to the charity.

How did it make you feel?

When I first became a volunteer, it made me feel very proud as a person because it was helping me with my confidence and social skills.



Moments That Make a Difference

Can you share a particular moment or story where you felt your volunteering efforts really made a difference?

A particular moment where my volunteering has made a difference is doing the organising for the sunshine club which is a social club for visually impaired members held at the BucksVision head office. I help getting everyone together to enjoy each other's company & organise interesting speakers for the group. It's lovely to see the group bond and enjoy themselves.

Passionate Causes

What causes are you most passionate about, and why do you choose to volunteer in these areas?

The causes I am most passionate about are IT and digital inclusion. I choose to volunteer in these areas because I like learning about the various technology.

Growth Through Volunteering

How has volunteering helped you grow personally and/or professionally?

Since I've been doing volunteering over the last 10 years or so with BucksVision, it has most definitely helped me with my confidence as a person.

Kirsty's experiences at BucksVision highlight the transformative power of volunteering, not just for the community but for the volunteers themselves. Her story is a vivid illustration that with passion and determination, anyone can make a significant impact.

Inspired by Kirsty's story? We welcome you to join our community of volunteers at BucksVision. No matter your skills or experiences, there is a place for you here. Contact us today to find out how you can start your own volunteering journey.

Thank You to Our Loyal Supporters

We extend a huge thank you to all who contributed to our winter appeal, helping us to raise over £1,200.

Your support allows us to continue to help people like Adrian navigate their way through sight-loss right from diagnosis onwards.

Huge thanks to our supportive Trusts and Foundations.

We would also like to extend our sincere thanks to all the Trusts and Foundations that have provided grants to us. Each grant received is not just a financial boost but a vote of confidence in our work.

Recognising the responsibility that comes with this support, we're committed to using the

funds carefully. Our goal is to make sure every pound contributes positively to the lives of our members.

These contributions are crucial to BucksVision's success and we're eager to share stories that unfold from these collaborations.

This support plays a key role in helping us to continue to make a positive change in our community and we appreciate the opportunity to make a difference together.

"Having you at the end of a phone makes such a difference to my life. Having sight loss can be very lonely and frightening and you have made a real difference to me." – Mrs P, a BucksVision member.

Our thanks go to:

The Dixie Rose Findlay Charitable Trust
The William Harding's Charity
The Rothschild Foundation
The Shanly Foundation
The Anson Charitable Trust
Fairhive Thriving Community Trust

Gifts in Wills Help Fund our Work

We would like to acknowledge the invaluable support of our legacy pledgers at BucksVision, whose generosity has significantly impacted the lives of individuals facing sight loss in Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.

We are deeply grateful for their contributions, which play a crucial role in advancing our mission. After you've taken care of those closest to you, it's amazing how much difference a modest percentage can make.

If you are a UK taxpayer and have donated to us within the last 4 years, or plan to in the future, we would be grateful if you would complete and return the Gift Aid declaration enclosed with this newsletter. This enables us to claim an additional 25p for every £1 you donate, in Gift Aid.
Thank you!

Any legacy gift, regardless of size, ensures our ongoing ability to assist local individuals with sight loss.

Last year, BucksVision received just over **£37,000** from bequests, thanks to the kindness of those who remembered us in their Will.

These gifts, combined with other funding sources, enable us to reach over **3,500** people with sight loss, providing vital support to help them maintain independence and reduce isolation.



PROFESSIONAL
Vision
SERVICES LTD

Low Vision Drop in Days

Professional Vision Services Exhibitions

Wednesday 19th June 12:30 – 3:30pm

**Hornhill Village Hall, Rickmansworth Lane, Chalfont St Peter,
Gerrards Cross SL9 0LX**

Thursday 20th June 11:30 – 2:30pm

**The Carrington Room, Princes Risborough Town Council, Wades
Centre, Stratton Road, Princes Risborough, Bucks HP27 9AX**

Come along to one of our low vision drop-in days, where we will be demonstrating all the latest technology and equipment for the visually impaired.

No need to book, just come along. Light refreshments available



Professional Vision Services 90 Walsworth Road, Hitchin SG4 9SX (01462) 420751

Remembering Barbara and Tony

We are saddened to share the news of the passing of two of our much-loved supporters, Barbara Rippington and Tony Gill.

Barbara tirelessly volunteered with High Wycombe division for over 20 years in many different roles, with selfless dedication.



As a friend observed: “Barbara was lovely, it was lovely to have her ring every week. So

helpful. Everybody loved her. It was wonderful to have her as a friend”.

Tony Gill became involved with BucksVision in 2013 and was a tireless advocate for our cause. Tony's dedication was absolutely remarkable. Last year alone, he distributed hundreds of raffle tickets, significantly contributing to our fundraising efforts. Additionally, Tony placed collection pots in many local establishments, helping to raise awareness and funds for our work.

Barbara and Tony's unwavering support were a source of inspiration for all of us at BucksVision. Their efforts have made a lasting impact and their absence will be deeply felt.

We extend our heartfelt condolences and love to their families during this difficult time.

Resource Room

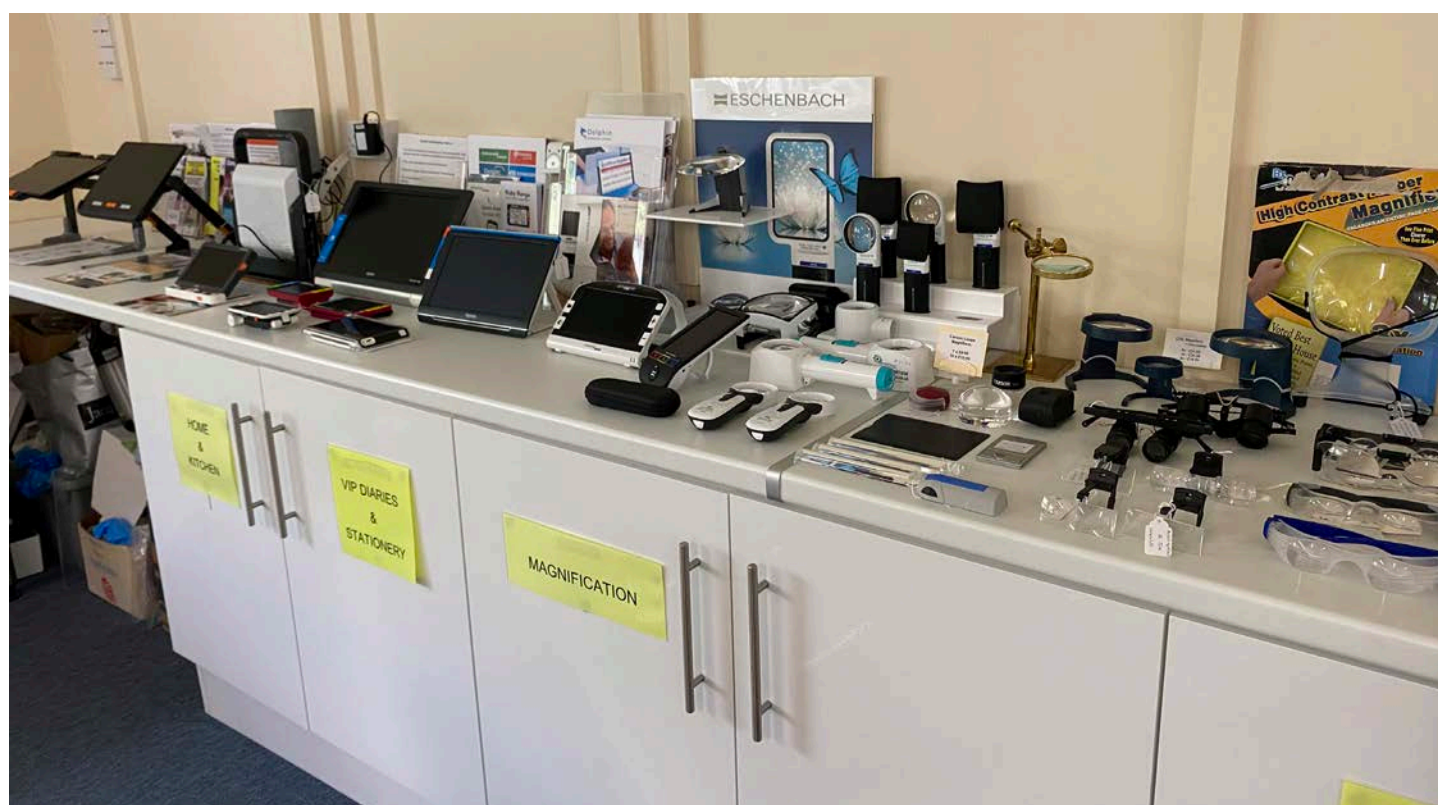
BucksVision hold almost 100 Resource Room appointments each year and many who visit us have come as a result of referrals from eye care professionals and even taxi drivers!

Our aim is to open up a world of both equipment and information for those with sight loss, who have no idea what help, and support is available for them.

Firstly, we will chat about all the things you are struggling with, and what you would like to

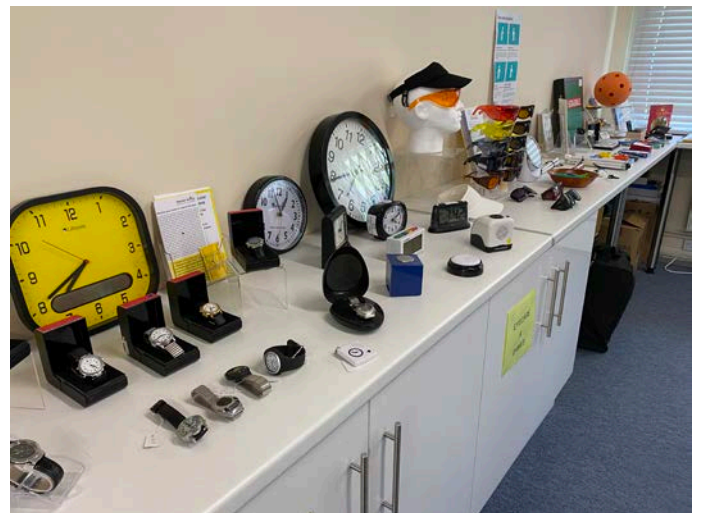
achieve; we will then ask you to read down a page of text, which gradually decreases in font size as you go down, without straining your eyes. This gives us an idea of the correct strength magnifiers that will be best for your eyes.

We show you how good lighting can make such a difference, as well as being able to demonstrate a variety of equipment from talking clocks, anti-glare glasses, games and leisure pursuits; helpful kitchen equipment including talking weighing scales and talking microwave ovens,



stationery and audio readers; visual hallucinations, which can sometimes occur as a result of sight loss; colour contrasting, where to find help with technology; other professionals and charities who may be able to help, up and coming sight loss courses, equipment events, training courses as well as all the help and support BucksVision can provide... and so much more.

If you too would like to come and visit our Resource Rooms in either Aylesbury or Milton Keynes, you will need to call us on **01296 487556** to book an appointment. This is so you won't be disappointed, should you arrive at BucksVision, only to find we are unable to help you at that time.

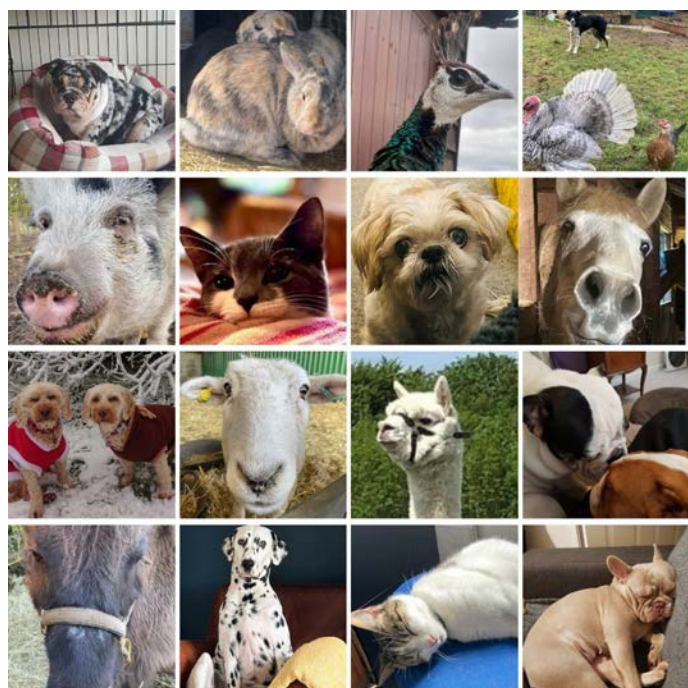


Social Media

BucksVision has a great presence on social media via Facebook and Instagram and we share lots of interesting stories and information. Here is a snapshot of some of them:

National Love Your Pet Day –

Staff members sent in pictures of their pets to mark this important day.



Lisa and Ruth spent the day at **Bekonscot Model Village** to help them with their accessibility project.



Steve and Ruth were delighted to have the opportunity to talk about BucksVision at the charity celebration day for the **Buckinghamshire Masonic Centenary Fund**.

Thank you for all your support!

Colour blindness (colour vision deficiency, or CVD) affects approximately 1 in 12 men (8%) and 1 in 200 women. In the UK there are approximately 3 million colour blind people (about 4.5% of the entire population), most of whom are male.

Your eyes rarely hurt when something is wrong with them, so having regular eye tests is important to help detect potentially harmful conditions.

The NHS recommends that you should have your eyes tested every 2 years (more often if advised by your ophthalmic practitioner or optometrist).

It's important to note in England and Wales a colour vision test for children and adults do not usually form part of the NHS eye test but you can ask for one if you feel you need it.

March 23rd was World Optometry Day; a day to recognise and raise awareness about the important role of optometrists in providing eye care services and improving vision health worldwide.

Optometry helps patients maintain good vision, and continues to provide the highest quality of care.

Please make sure you have your eyes tested regularly!



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
West		
Social Group	2nd Tuesday of each month	2pm – 4pm

Club	Days	Times
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
Milton Keynes		
Partridge Social Club	Fortnightly Thursdays	2:30pm – 4:30pm
Wolverton Social Club	Meets monthly	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



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 231 123

BucksVision, 143 Meadowcroft, Aylesbury, HP19 9HH

01296 487 556

reception@bucksvision.co.uk

www.bucksvision.co.uk