



Visible

Keeping you informed of local
sight loss news and services



See the difference Reveal 16 and 16i can make for you

Reveal 16

- Simple to use
- Crisp, bright images
- Built in distance camera
- Portable, foldable design
- Optional battery for wireless use



Reveal 16i

- The Smart Magnifier
- Online connectivity
- Speech
- Scrolling text
- Built-in distance camera
- Portable, foldable design



If you need a portable low vision solution the Explores are perfect

Explore 5

is jam packed with exciting features including a brilliant HD Display, up to 22X magnification, a flip out handle which instantly switches on the Explore and even look at images on your TV.



Explore 8

has a stunning quality HD 8" screen for people who prefer a larger screen on a portable magnifier. The touch screen allows easy navigation. Explore 8 includes a distance camera.



**For further information including details on our
12 Month Interest Free Credit,
please call Freephone: 0800 587 2589**

Welcome

Thank you for taking the time to pick up our new look magazine, Visible. We hope you enjoy it and find it useful.



Wiltshire Sight has now been helping blind and partially sighted people across the county for over 100 years. Although much has changed during that time, the impact of sight loss on the lives of people in Wiltshire continues to be significant. Our role is to ensure people have the support they need at the time they need it.

Our small but dedicated team of Community Sight Loss Advisors, supported by our wonderful volunteers, aim to help everyone diagnosed with sight loss not only to cope with the impact of their condition, but then to still live as active and fulfilling lives as possible.

As people live longer and the provision of support from social services continues to decline, the need for our work grows greater. We want to ensure that everyone living with sight loss knows about us and knows that we are here to help, as and when they need us.

As a small charity reliant on support from the community, Wiltshire Sight's biggest challenge is to maintain and grow our services to meet the demand. Our exciting new partnership with Vision West of England has helped us to reduce our costs, and to influence the development of new services in parts of the South-West where there were previously little or no local services, but there is still a long way to go to develop our fundraising to help us ensure that our work in Wiltshire remains for many years to come.

If it is within your means to support our work in any way that you can, please do so. Whether it's a small monthly donation or a few hours of your time as a volunteer, we welcome your support.
With thanks, and my best wishes

Mike Silvey, Chief Executive





Assessing the impact of Sight Loss

In late Spring this year, Wiltshire Sight introduced a new assessment process, which helps us to work with our clients to look at all areas of life affected by sight loss and how we can help. Through a personal, one-to-one conversation, the assessment will look at areas from managing at home to getting out and about, understanding your condition and health and wellbeing. We believe this new way of working will enable us to help more people in much more meaningful ways, and feedback so far has been very encouraging. Do contact us if you are interested in learning more.

Bringing support nearer to you

Our re-vamped team of Community Sight Loss Advisors are now working regionally, and this year we have expanded the number of locations where we are running information and advice clinics across Wiltshire. The aim is to ensure that our service is more accessible to people living with sight loss across the county. Louise is covering north-east Wiltshire and Swindon, Alan is covering west

Wiltshire, Sarah is central and Alison is covering the south. You can find more about their role by reading the brief interview with Alison later on.



Living with Sight Loss practical courses

In early 2020 Wiltshire Sight will start running Living with Sight Loss courses for people newly diagnosed with sight loss. The course is designed to give clients, carers and family, support and information that will help them with everyday living. Packed with hints, tips and practical demonstrations aimed at encouraging continued independence, the courses will also provide opportunities to connect people going through similar experiences and provide opportunities for peer and group support.

Skills for Seeing

Could you benefit from a one-to-one session to help you to continue reading, enjoying TV, staying independent and doing the things you love? Our Sight Loss Advisors are now able to offer Skills for Seeing training, developed by the Macular Society, to help people to make best use of the vision they have to continue doing the things they love. The course is designed for anyone losing their central vision, and combines vision know-how, magnification, lighting, eccentric viewing and steady eye techniques. If you are interested, do give us a call.

Helping Hands

We are delighted to have recruited a new Volunteer Coordinator, Becs Thurgur, who started with us in August. With Becs in post, we are hoping to develop a growing team of volunteers who can provide support for our clients across Wiltshire – from peer support and befriending, to running stalls and supporting at social events. If you are interested in helping out, Becs would love to hear from you.

Seeing Beyond the Eyes

At the end of January, Wiltshire Sight will be working with Visualise Consultancy to deliver training for eyecare professionals across Wiltshire and Swindon. The Seeing Beyond the Eyes course will support opticians and optometrists to offer better services for patients with low vision at the point of diagnosis, helping them to understand the potential emotional impact of initial diagnosis, and how to better support and refer patients on quickly to receive essential support services.

Rehabilitation at home

Vision West of England is delighted to be working with South Gloucestershire Council to deliver rehabilitation and mobility services for people newly diagnosed with sight loss in the area. The service will complement our existing sight loss advice service and social activities, providing a one-stop coordinated service for residents of South Glos, helping to ensure that no one is left without support.

Tips and Tricks at Home

Our clients tell us that adapting and managing at home can be one of the biggest challenges when diagnosed with sight loss. Everyday tasks can sometimes seem insurmountable. Yet there are many simple tips and tricks that can make a difference. Here are a few that people have shared with us at social groups recently.



We'd like to hear from you – if you have any hints or tips which you think could help others, please send them in and we will share them with others. Email handyhints@wiltshiresight.org

- 1 Make it easy to locate plugs, switches and dials through colour contrast. You can use a coloured border around a switch or bump-ons on a dial.
- 2 Move furniture out of the busy areas where you regularly walk through in your home. Keep chairs pushed in.
- 3 You can create your own system for identifying clothes in your wardrobe. For example, you can use a different number of safety pins to signify either a colour or style of clothing. You can also use a free colour detection App or purchase a colour detector.
- 4 If you don't already have a railing on your stairs, consider adding one. Then place a bump near the top and bottom so that you know the stairs are ending soon.
- 5 When walking down stairs, use the heel of your foot to ensure you know where the steps are.
- 6 Choose a colourful ironing board cover to provide contrast against clothing. Follow the cable to find the iron safely, you can also purchase an iron guard.
- 7 If you have lost something small on the floor such as a coin, place a thin sock over your Hoover attachment. This should locate the object for you and present it at the end of the attachment.
- 8 Most utility providers or retailers can now send bills and receipts either in large print, Braille, audio or by email. This makes managing household bills much easier.
- 9 Consider pairing your socks with a safety pin as soon as you take them off, this will keep them together while being washed. You can also pair your shoes with a peg.
- 10 Registered blind or visually impaired people receive a 50% discount on their TV licence.



Ivor has always enjoyed his DIY, but had been finding it more and more of a challenge as his sight deteriorated. He previously attended Men in Sheds, a social space where he worked alongside others who shared his passion and where he could bring his creative ideas to life. But as a result of his sight loss, he felt he could no longer go. Ivor also used to enjoy reading the paper every day, however more recently Ivor has struggled to see the newspaper and told us that he felt quite useless. His wife saw him trying to do some DIY, rather unsafely, and after hearing about us on Talking News, they got in touch to see if we could help.



When he came to meet Marc, one of our Sight Loss Advisors, Ivor said he was downhearted and frustrated with life. Marc took time to listen and understand the frustrations, and together they looked at practical solutions to enable Ivor make the most of his remaining sight, including different lighting options and magnifiers, along with technology training for new equipment to help with his reading. Ivor was able to focus on what he is able to do, with a few adaptations, rather than what he feels has been taken away from him. Through this positive conversation, Marc helped to restore Ivor's confidence and give him the courage to return to Men in Sheds.

Ivor said “I’m the happiest man alive!” after meeting with Marc; excited for the future once again.

We are keeping in touch with Ivor, and it was great to hear him sharing his positive experience of our support with friends at a local sight loss group recently.

Have you thought about becoming a volunteer for Wiltshire Sight? No matter what your skills and interests, we believe everyone has something to offer and we would love to hear from you!



Hello, I am Becs Thurgur and I am delighted to introduce myself as the new Volunteer Coordinator at Wiltshire Sight.

Since starting here in September, I have been incredibly inspired by the way our team of Sight Loss Advisors really do change lives – providing local, relevant and appropriate support and guidance to people with a wide range of sight loss issues. However, as a local charity with limited resources, it is also clear that volunteers have a huge part to play in making our services successful and in extending our reach to ensure we can provide support to as many people as possible. With a small staff team and a large area to cover, our volunteers can make an enormous difference to how much we can achieve.

Our team of volunteers support us in a wide range of roles – from answering the phones to running social clubs, supporting our drop-in events, helping us with IT, raising funds and running our audio library. Many of our visually impaired volunteers provide invaluable peer support to others who are just coming to terms with their sight loss.

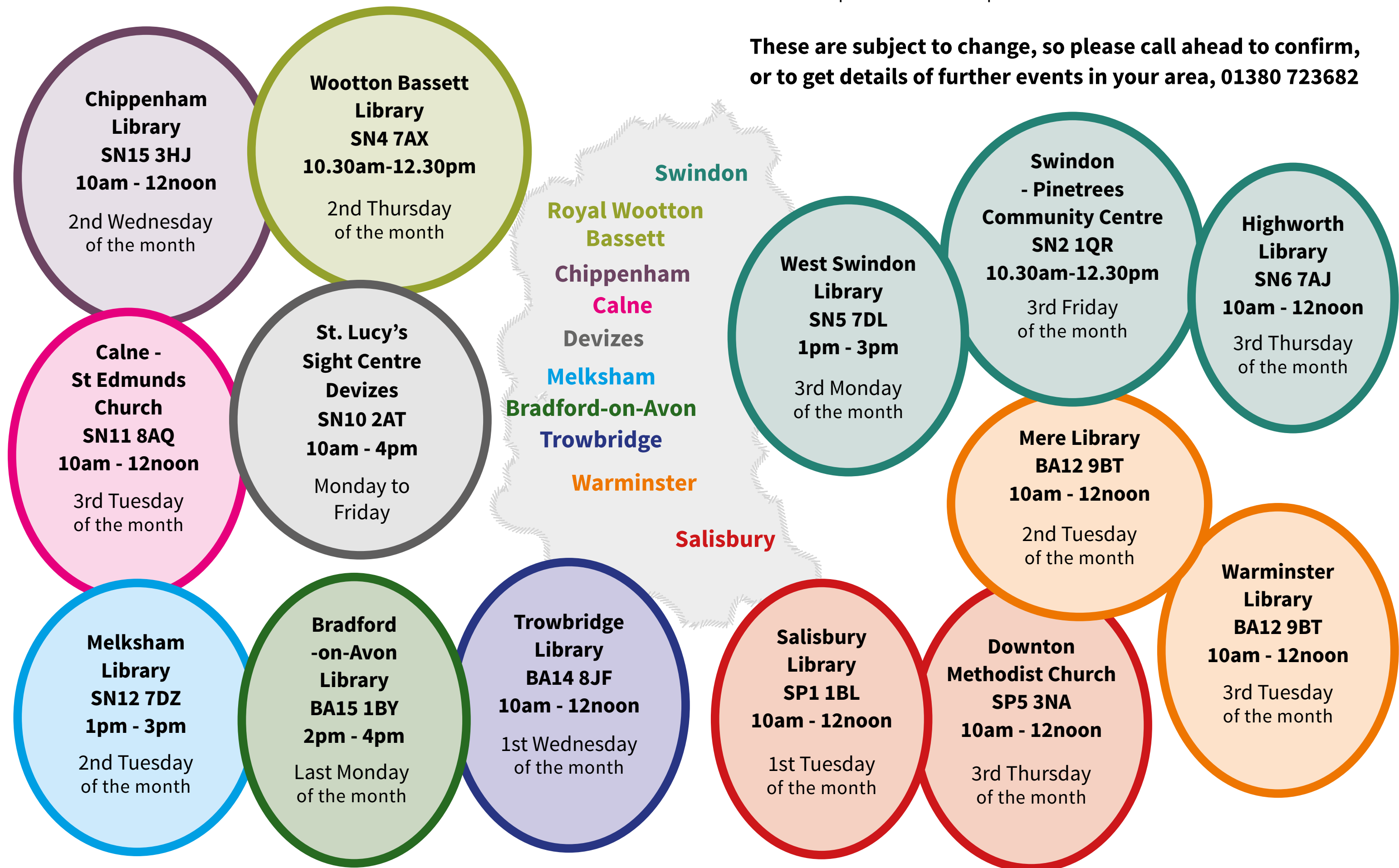
Volunteering is a really great way to make a positive difference in your local community, to learn new skills, make new friends and improve your overall wellbeing. I am a volunteer myself for a local conservation charity, and the work I do gives me a huge amount of pride and satisfaction – I look forward to it every week.

Whatever your interest, and whether you can commit to a couple of hours a month or a day a week, I would love to hear from you and arrange a chat about how you can get involved. Do give me a call on 07849 833047 or email volunteering@wiltshiresight.org. ***Thank you!***

Where you can find us

Community Sight Loss Advisors will be at the following locations to answer your questions and demonstrate a range of daily living aids and hi-tech gadgets. You are welcome to drop in or make an appointment if you would like some specific advice or a private chat.

These are subject to change, so please call ahead to confirm, or to get details of further events in your area, 01380 723682



Making Technology work for You

Mark Gulwell, Senior Sight Loss Advisor, writes about how sight loss doesn't mean you lose connection to the world, in fact in many ways it's quite the opposite.

Embracing the wide range of technology that is available can mean you are more connected than ever. Practically every new phone, tablet, computer or software released these days has built-in accessibility functions which can make a real difference to those of us who are visually-impaired. Below you will find a brief summary of some of the devices which can help. Our team of Sight Loss Advisors are trained to help you find the right piece of technology to suit your needs, or to help you get the most out of any technology you already have.

Computing Software and Mobile Phones

Microsoft have introduced an Ease of Access Centre, Apple use a whole range of accessibility tools including VoiceOver and Zoom, Android phones include TalkBack and Magnification Gestures along with a range of other features. No matter what system you use, they are all either accessible or can be made accessible. Additional software can be added to computers such as Supernova, ZoomText or Jaws. These are all software solutions that can be installed on to computers to give users magnification and speech solutions.

Hi-Tech Reading Aids

With optical magnification, you can only increase the size of the print you are reading, the text does not become clearer. With the addition of a daylight bulb in the magnifier, this can be improved but it doesn't give you the clarity that a CCTV or portable electronic magnifier can. CCTVs and Portable Electronic Magnifiers are designed to give users changeable magnification levels, ability to have lines or windows on screen and most importantly in many cases, high contrast colour options. For many these high contrast colour options can make the difference from not being able to read at all, to reading with much more simplicity.



Text to Speech Readers

A Text to Speech Reader is just that, the device will take a photograph of any printed text and will read it back to you within seconds. There are a wide range of Text to Speech Readers available that range from stand-alone units, to systems that incorporate Hi-Tech magnification systems (portable and desktop) and even cameras that will attach to a pair of glasses and read back discreetly in your ear.

Smart Speakers

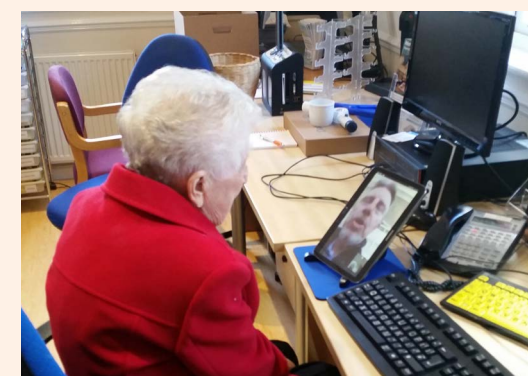
Amazon Alexa and all of the other smart speakers that have come to market in recent years such as Google Home and the Apple Home have revolutionized the way many homes operate. A smart speaker can make a real difference. You can use your voice to make a phone call, use it to change the TV channel, turn the heating on and so much more.

Apps /Smart Devices

Apps such as SeeingAI and Envision can take pictures and read text and describe scenery to you, Soundscape can help you to navigate and there are Apps such as Trainline and Moovit to help you find out when trains and buses are running.

Be My Eyes can connect you with a sighted volunteer who is able to describe what something is to you using the device's camera.

If you'd like to find out more, or try out some demonstration equipment, do call us to make an appointment.





Alun Davies reviews this must have App for blind and partially sighted people

I have been totally blind since 1978. In 2015 I discovered the iPhone and this I told friends was the single most important improvement to my quality of life. I did not expect to better it – but I have been proved wrong with my discovery of the “Be My Eyes” App.

The concept behind the App is remarkably simple. At the touch of a button on the App a call goes out to a network of sighted volunteers across the country. When one of them answers it, they use the video facility in you mobile to tell you what the telephone is pointed at. And this can be anything – the colour of your jumper, the sell-by date on food, what is on your computer screen, a road-sign, whether your light is on or off. It is literally like having eyes at the end of your telephone.

Is this milk out of date?

Twice I have used them to tell me what colour my shoes are as I have several pairs that feel identical but are different colours and I’ve gone to a couple of meetings in odd shoes. And all the volunteers are lovely helpful people. I have had two of them say to me that receiving the call has made their day. The volunteers are usually available during the day – I have not yet tried evenings.

In terms of the App itself it is free both to download and use. The operation is simple. When you open it, it takes you automatically to the “Call first available volunteer” button. The App has its own voice messages to tell you what is happening and is fully accessible.

I cannot praise this App enough in terms of what it has meant to my life. It means I can be as independent as I want, and it also takes pressure off my partner and friends who don’t now have to be my surrogate eyes all the time. If you have a smart phone download the App today – you won’t regret it!

What colour are these shoes?

Meet the Team

Alison is one of our small team of Community Sight Loss Advisors, she joined Wiltshire Sight in Spring 2019, covering the South of the county.



How would you describe your job? I work in the community with a huge variety of people. My job is varied covering a large geographical area. I have some bigger towns (Salisbury and Warminster) and lots of little rural locations in the area that I cover. I provide 1-1 support to people living with sight loss to help them to make the most of their remaining sight, or to cope with the impact of their sight loss. I hold drop-in clinics for anyone to attend for some advice, help or simply a chat. I also attend clubs, coffee mornings and societies to let them know what we do at Wiltshire Sight and how we can help.

What does a typical day look like for you? I don’t have a typical day! For example, the other day a new client came to one of my drop-in sessions to look at lighting solutions to help with her sewing, and we ended up looking at talking watches and setting up voice controls on her phone so she could talk into it and send texts. Last week I was supporting a colleague to run an information event for clients to meet exhibitors showing a full range of hi-tech magnification and text reader equipment. Some days I have appointments at our resource centre in Devizes and at other times I’m keeping up with my admin or scouting out new places where I can run more sessions in the community.

What are your biggest professional challenges? Social isolation - many of my clients live in rural locations with limited transportation making it difficult to meet others. I always try to find what is going on in the area and do what I can to connect people with social groups and activities that will really make a difference to their lives. We know there are over 4000 people registered blind in Wiltshire alone with a further 18,000 people living with sight loss. We want to make sure they know about us and able to access the support they need.

What gives you the most job satisfaction? I get huge satisfaction from knowing that I have made a difference however big or small to someone’s life. I meet a wide range of people who have fascinating stories to tell. I love it when I can give some advice that I know is going to make a difference to someone.

Zoom Club

Zoom Club is our club for visually impaired children, young people, and their families.



In Spring 2019 we set out on an ambitious plan to deliver a range of activities that would provide members, new and old, with the opportunity to enjoy as many of the same opportunities as their sighted peers, by working with providers to make activities 'VI-friendly'.

The year got off to a great start in the Spring with a visit to Caenhill Countryside Centre. Alongside the staff and volunteers, we were greeted by a few of the animals who roam free range on the farm.

After a 'touch and smell' talk on herbs grown on the farm, we met Coco and Eli, the donkeys; Marlene and Marmite, the pigs; Doris and Doreen, the cows; and Dotty the sheep – amongst many others. The favourite animals, not surprisingly however, were the baby ones – the tiny goats who were only a few weeks old, and the chicks that we all got to cuddle. The highlight of the day for many (including a few of the Dads) was a tractor ride around the farm. Before settling down to a picnic, the children got to do some art with visiting French artist, Carolyn Le Bourgeois.

“It was a brilliant afternoon getting hands on experience with the animals, it was enjoyed by the whole family! Thanks to Wiltshire Sight and Caenhill Countryside Centre”



In the summer, Zoom Club enjoyed a family day out at Bowood House and Gardens, where we were given a special 'touch tour' of the house, thanks to our Patron, Lady Lansdowne. Zoom Club headed inside in the Autumn, with a trip to Rockstar Climbing Centre in Swindon where we had exclusive access; and then to The Farm Cookery School, where the children learnt to make pizza and shortbread.

“We were delighted that we were able to attend cooking as this gives my son confidence and independence in the kitchen”



The highlight of the year so far for many, was a trip to see the audio-described performance of Disney's The Lion King at Bristol Hippodrome in October. It really was a night to remember!

We are currently planning the next set of Zoom Club activities and would love to hear from as many of you as possible. So far the long list includes a pantomime, ice skating, donutting, cricket, cycling, archery, trampolining to name but a few.

Zoom Club is free to join and all families with a visually impaired child living in Wiltshire, Bath & NE Somerset, South Gloucestershire or Bristol are welcome.

Please get in touch with Sarah O'Rourke on 01380 723682 or sarah.orourke@wiltshiresight.org





Traveller HD

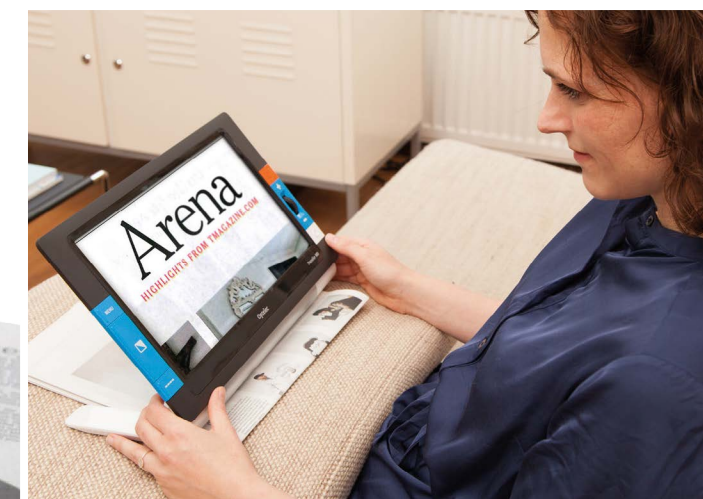
Advertisement



Slide & Read



Magnify and read in high contrast



Enjoy reading on the sofa



Add a writing stand

Improve your reading fluency with this portable video magnifier

The unique **Slide & Read** mechanism provides a more natural reading experience, especially for those people that find it difficult to keep their hands steady. Simply slide the screen across a line of text and view the content on-screen - as if it were in large print. Reaching the next line is easy - simply roll the Traveller HD towards you. It has never been easier to follow the line or sentence. Sliding back and forth enables you to recognise the shapes of individual words.

The Traveller HD allows you to comfortably read newspapers and letters at the dining table, in bed, or in your favourite chair. Whether you are at home, in the office or on holiday, the Traveller HD is your ideal light weight reading companion.

£1495.00

Price Excludes VAT
where applicable

Key features

2.4x to 30x zoom

HD camera

13.3" tilting screen

Less than 2 kg

3 hours rechargeable



Large tactile buttons for easy use

Switch between full colour and up to

4 high contrast semi-colours

Snapshot/archive up to 1,000 images

Activate a reading line

To request a home demonstration of the Traveller HD

call Freephone 080 8090 8090

enhanced
vision

Freedom
Scientific

Optelec

SCHWEIZER

If you or someone you know is losing their sight or living with sight loss, we can help.

Call us on 01380 723682 for Wiltshire and Swindon

Email - info@wiltshiresight.org

Call us on 0117 3224882 for Bristol, Bath and South Gloucestershire

Email - info@visionwestofengland.org.uk

www.wiltshiresight.org

**Wiltshire Sight is registered in England and Wales
under charity number 1119462 and company number 6060187**



Join a weekly lottery, supporting Wiltshire Sight
and Vision West of England, from just £1 per week!

For just £1 per week, you could win:

**£25,000
for
6 matching
digits**

**£25
for
4 matching
digits**

By entering
the lottery,
you are both in with a
chance to win yourself,
and you're supporting
your local sight
loss charity!

**£1,000
for
5 matching
digits**

**Five entries
in to next draw
for 3 matching
digits**

**Register online:
www.bit.ly/lottery-sign-up
or call us to register: 01380 723682**

You must be 16 or over to enter, and rules can be found at www.unitylottery.co.uk