# Monthly What’s On E-Newsletter August 2025

Welcome to your monthly update of accessible services and events in Wiltshire and Swindon, covering August 2025.

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# Wiltshire Sight Events and Notices

## Win up to £500 in our Summer Raffle!

Our Summer Raffle is back and it’s a great way to support us and be in with a chance to win!

Prizes include a top prize of £500, plus cash prizes of £100, £25, and £10. Tickets are just £1 each or £10 for a book of 10 tickets. All proceeds support the work of Wiltshire Sight, Sight Support West of England and Insight Gloucestershire.

Buy online today and we’ll email your ticket numbers. If you’d like to sell tickets on our behalf, call us on 01380 723682 and we’ll post you some ticket books.
The last day to enter is Friday 3 October.

Buy tickets here: [Raffle tickets webpage](https://buy.stripe.com/fZe5mCbbLgKc9na6os)

Find out more or see terms and conditions: [Our Summer Raffle webpage](https://www.sightsupportwest.org.uk/get-involved/raffle/)

## Smart Discovery Sessions

Curious about smartphones but don’t have one yet? These one-hour sessions, held at our social groups, are a relaxed way to explore what’s possible. We’ll show you how voice commands make smartphones easier to use and you can have a go for yourself.

To book your place on a course, call Mark Durnford on **01380 723682** or email info@wiltshiresight.org

## Eye Can Bath – 16 October

If you’re based near Bath, don’t miss Eye Can Bath – a free exhibition organised by our partner charity Sight Support West of England.

It takes place on Thursday 16 October, from 10am to 3pm at Bath Pavilion, and is open to anyone living with sight loss, along with family and friends.

There’ll be technology, equipment, services, and support on display, plus talks and advice from Sight Loss Advisors.

To pre-register, call 0117 322 4885 or email info@sightsupportwest.org.uk

## Your voice matters – help shape services for people with sight loss

Are you living with sight loss in Wiltshire? We’re looking for people who want to use their experience to make a difference.

Join our Lived Experience Advisory Panel (LEAP). LEAP brings together people with lived experience of sight loss to help guide and improve our services.

As a member of the panel, you’ll meet four times a year to:

* Share feedback and suggestions
* Help shape new initiatives
* Advise on accessibility, communication, outreach and more

You don’t need any formal qualifications, just your experience and a willingness to speak up on behalf of others living with sight loss.

If you’d like to get involved or find out more, we’d love to hear from you, contact Glenda Prall, our Head of Services, at glenda.prall@sightsupportwest.org.uk

## Could you volunteer with us?

We’re always looking for friendly volunteers to support our work across Wiltshire. Whether it’s helping at a local social group, supporting someone one-to-one with their digital device, or lending a hand at one of our events – your time can make a real difference.

Right now, we’re particularly keen to hear from people who could help in our Trowbridge charity shop. We make every effort to ensure our shops are accessible and welcoming places for people with sight loss to volunteer. If you're interested, we’d love to hear from you. Full training and support are provided.

Find out more:
[www.sightsupportwest.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer-with-us/](http://www.sightsupportwest.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer-with-us/)
Or email Becs, our Volunteer Coordinator: volunteering@wiltshiresight.org

# Wiltshire Sight Community Hubs & Socials

[Click here for our website hub and social group listings.](https://www.sightsupportwest.org.uk/events/)

Our monthly advice hubs offer consultations with local advisors across the region. At a hub you can get tailored information and guidance and explore accessible aids. Most hubs also host social groups where you can meet others living with sight loss. Full listings are available on our website (linked above) or by calling us on 01380 723682.

# Events & Notices From Local Organisations

There’s nothing in this section for now, but we’ll update you next month

# Leisure and Sporting Activities

## Free tandem bike hire in Salisbury

Charlotte’s Tandems now has a local representative in Salisbury, offering free tandem bike hire for people with a visual impairment or other disability. Four bikes are available and ready to be enjoyed this summer.

To find out more or express interest, visit: [www.charlottestandems.weebly.com](https://charlottestandems.weebly.com)

## Wiltshire Sight Audio Book group

Do you enjoy listening to books?

You are invited to come and join in Wiltshire Sight’s Audio Book group which meets at the Central Library, Swindon on the first floor on the second Tuesday of each month at 10.15am -11.30am.

The titles we listen to are available via BorrowBox from the library service. Usually by the end of the first week of the month.

On August 12th we are meeting to discuss Adele Parks Book ‘First wife’s shadow’.

Our September listen is by, Michael Crichton/James Patterson titled ‘Eruption’.

We meet on September 9th.

If you’d like to chat about joining in, please contact Ali Fulton via audiobookgroupvolunteer@gmail.com

## Reach Inclusive Arts - Right Time for Art group

Come and try your hand at art at a weekly group run by Reach Inclusive Arts at the Wyvern Theatre Swindon, 10.30 – 12:30 every Tuesday (except August). The group offers accessible and inclusive artistic opportunities, for people of all ages who are affected by disability, illness, disadvantage or social isolation and new members are always welcome!

Facilitated by professional artist Billy Beaumont and supported by staff and volunteers, participants flourish in this supportive, creative and friendly environment. No previous experience is necessary, participants develop their artistic skills at their own pace.

All materials provided and refreshments available. £5 per session.

To find out more email: info@reachinclusivearts.org.uk

Or phone : 01793 520318 Mondays or Tuesdays 9 – 3.30pm (except bank holidays)

## Bowls in Pewsey

Are you curious about bowls or looking for a new way to get active and socialise? These sessions are relaxed and friendly and specifically for people living with sight loss.

Third Tuesday of each month, next session is 21st August, 10am – 12 noon
Venue: Pewsey Vale Bowls Club, The Recreation Ground, High Street, Pewsey, SN9 5AQ

The session will be supported by volunteer Ian alongside club members, and no previous experience is needed. All equipment will be provided.

Places are limited, so if you’re interested or would like to find out more, please contact Jenny Spencer at Wiltshire Sight:
Email: jenny.spencer@wiltshiresight.org
Phone: 01380 723682

## Enjoy audiobooks? Join Wiltshire Libraries online / telephone book group

Wiltshire Libraries run a small and friendly audio book group for people who are blind or partially sighted.

The group meets via Microsoft Teams on the second Friday of each month at 3pm. You don’t need a computer – just a phone is enough to join the call.

Each month a different member chooses the book. There's no set genre – the group enjoys everything from crime fiction to non-fiction and beyond.

To find out more or to join, call Wiltshire Libraries on 01672 512663 or email libraryenquiries@wiltshire.gov.uk

## Visually Impaired Sailing

The [Visually Impaired Sailing Association](https://visa-gb.org.uk/get-on-the-water/) (VISA) has published its schedule for 2025,

## Driving Experiences

Speed of Sight is running  [Driving Experience Days](https://speedofsight.org/book-now) (for people with disabilities including vision impairment).

## Fitness and Friendship Clubs – Age UK Wiltshire

Friendly, sight-loss aware sessions for older adults, offering gentle chair-based exercise, social time with tea and biscuits, and relaxing tai chi.

**More info**: Tracey – 07754 612 569 or fitnessandfriendship@ageukwiltshire.org.uk

## Swindon Blind Craft Club

Swindon Blind Craft Club meets every Tuesday between 10 am and 1 pm and is run by Lou Curtis at Swindon Blind Association, Craven House, 145 Victoria Road, Swindon, SN1 3BU. Parking available and bus stop opposite. Bring your own lunch. Carers welcome. Get in touch with Lou if you want to come along and find out more: 07703 306 403.

## Swindon Chat group

Last Tuesday of the month 5.15pm

Contact communityconnectionsouthwest@rnib.org.uk

## **Swindon Bats Sports & Social Club**

Swindon Bats have a fantastic variety of groups and events taking place including Ten Pin Bowling, Showdown, Coffee & Chat, Walk and Talk and more. Contact them at: info@swindonbats.org or call their Secretary Sue Mead on 07788150487. You can check their website for details of all their upcoming events and groups  [Swindon Bats Website](https://www.swindonbats.org/activities)

## Bowls Club in Chippenham

The Bowls Club in Chippenham are running a weekly indoor bowls club for people with sight loss and other disabilities.  Taking place at North Wilts Bowls Club in Chippenham (near Sainsburys) each Friday 4-5pm, September - Easter.  Coaching is given.  The contact for this club is Maureen on 01249 657228.

## Devizes PHAB Group

(Physically disabled and Able bodied) an organisation which brings people with and without disabilities together. See their program of events at [Devizes PHAB meetings and events](https://www.devizesphab.co.uk/uploads/1/2/3/4/123478387/phabprogramme16apr2023.pdf)

# Support Groups and Courses

See our website for a list of regular support groups offered by other organisations that take place locally and online. Click here: [Webpage for regular support groups and services](https://www.sightsupportwest.org.uk/support-groups-and-services/)

## Royal National College – Get Workplace Ready Course

RNB are offering a Get Workplace Ready, a free three-month course for ages 18–29, starting 27 October.
Details and booking: [www.rnc.ac.uk](https://www.rnc.ac.uk/event-item.aspx?id=127)

## RNIB Living well with sight loss courses

During August, RNIB will be running three presentations of its Living Well with Sight Loss telephone course.  The four-session course is open to people with sight loss across the UK and first one starts on 1st August.

[RNIB LIving Well With Sight Loss Telephone Courses](https://www.rnib.org.uk/events-and-courses/living-well-with-sight-loss-course-national-phone-group-august-25/)

RNIB is also running a [telephone course, ‘Focus on Friends and Family’](https://www.rnib.org.uk/events-and-courses/living-well-with-sight-loss-course-focus-on-friends-and-family-phone-group-september-2025/) starting on 3rd September.

# Audio Described Arts Events

There’s nothing in this section for now, but we’ll update you next month

# Children and Young People

## Inclusive summer activities in Bristol

Ignite Bristol is running a brilliant range of inclusive sessions for d/Deaf, disabled, and neurodivergent children and young people this summer:

* Martial Arts – 30 July (ages 5–18): [Register for Martial Arts](https://bit.ly/martial_arts_taster)
* Skittles – 8 August (ages 16+): [Register for Skittles](https://bit.ly/skittles_taster)
* Sensory Storytime & Movement – 10 August (all ages): email Laura.Dear@bristol.gov.uk
* Street Dance – 12 August (ages 5–18): [Register for Street Dance](https://bit.ly/street_dance_taster)
* Multi-Sport – 15 August (ages 5–12, with BSL): [Register for Multi-Sport](https://bit.ly/multi_sport_taster)
* BMX – 21 August (ages 8+): [Register for BMX](https://bit.ly/BMX_taster)
* Tag Rugby – 26 August (ages 5–25): [Register for Tag Rugby](https://bit.ly/tag_rugby_taster)

Contact: Katie.Crook@accesssport.org.uk or James.Snook@accesssport.org.uk

## LOOK family bowling in Hereford

Join LOOK for a fun, free family bowling event on Wednesday 6 August, from 1pm to 3.30pm at Hereford Bowl.
This relaxed afternoon is for families with a visually impaired child or young person, including siblings and carers. It’s a great chance to connect with others, enjoy some friendly competition, and meet the LOOK team. All welcome, no bowling experience needed!
**Book your place:** [LOOK Family Bowling Event](https://www.look-uk.org/strike-it-lucky-with-look/)

## RNC events for young people

The Royal National College for the Blind (RNC) is running three events:

* Summer Weekend (2–3 August) for ages 10–13: V.I. sports, activities, and a slumber party (£25).
* Open Day (19 September) for prospective students and families.
* Have a Go Weekend (25–26 October) for ages 13–17: free accommodation, sports, music, and cooking.
* They also offer Get Workplace Ready, a free three-month course for ages 18–29, starting 27 October.
Details and booking: [www.rnc.ac.uk](https://www.rnc.ac.uk)

## The Outlook Trust

The Outlook Trust organises outdoor activity and residential breaks for blind and partially sighted children and young people with additional disabilities.
Find out more: [About The Outlook Trust Charity](https://www.outlooktrust.org/about-us/)

## Inclusive tennis in Winterbourne

Weekly sessions for disabled, d/Deaf and neurodivergent young people aged 8–18.

* Thursdays, 5–5.45pm
* Fridays, 11.15am–12pm
First session free. Book: [bit.ly/winterbourneAcez](https://bit.ly/winterbourneAcez)

## SEND inclusive climbing

Clip ‘N’ Climb sessions for d/Deaf, disabled and neurodivergent children aged 4–17.

* Wednesdays, 5–6pm
* BLOC Climbing Centre, BS2 0SH
* £9.90 per session
More info and booking: BLOC website

## Super 1s girls’ cricket

Free inclusive cricket sessions for girls aged 12–25 with SEND.

* Mondays, 6–7pm
* Hanham Cricket Club, Bristol BS15 3NP
Contact Jeanette Tate: 07432 728926 or jeanette.tate@glosccc.co.uk

## City of Bristol Para Swimming Trials

For confident swimmers aged 7+ with basic stroke ability and a can-do attitude. Trials are flexible to individual needs.
Enquiries: cobscpara@gmail.com (Coach Keira)

## Victa: VI tandem cycling in Reading

Victa is running a free VI cycling day on 19 August at Palmer Park Velodrome, Reading, for ages 8–17. Beginners welcome.
Apply by 1 August: [Victa VI Cycling Application Website](https://victa.us18.list-manage.com/track/click?u=b3f7c25f918ce44ae8cbc3d1d&id=fa06d9f88a&e=5426ac0019)

## Online Groups / Events / Socials

* LOOK will be running two more Healthy Parent Carer Programmes for families with a vision impaired child.  The twelve-week online courses will run in Autumn 2025 (apply by 1st August) and Spring 2026 (apply by 3rd November).
<https://www.look-uk.org/healthy-parent-carer-programme-spring-2026/>
* Retina UK runs an online [Peer Support Group for the parents and carers](https://retinauk.org.uk/event/parents-carers-group/) of children with an inherited retinal dystrophy.

# Research Opportunities

## Survey – Employment support for disabled people

The Commons Work and Pensions Committee has launched a new inquiry, ['Employment support for disabled people](https://committees.parliament.uk/work/9270/employment-support-for-disabled-people/news/208345/mps-launch-new-inquiry-to-address-disability-employment-gap/)', on how to improve the job prospects of disabled people and is calling for the views of disabled people, employers, and experts (the closing date for submissions is 29th September).

## Writing and sight loss – share your experience

Anglia Ruskin University is exploring the challenges people with sight loss face when writing or typing. The aim is to better understand these difficulties and find practical solutions.

They’re looking for adults (18+) who experienced sight loss in both eyes after learning to read and write.

You can take part by completing a short 10–15 minute online survey, or by arranging a phone call with Rukaiya (15–30 mins) on 07460 445124.
**Take the survey:** [A.R.U Survey Link](https://app.onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/s/angliaruskin/through-their-eyes-a-survey-on-writing-challenges-with-acquired)

# Online Events / Notices / Groups / Socials

Looking for online groups, events or peer support?
You can find many of our regular online listings, including national social groups, webinars and condition-specific support, on our website. Visit our [Online Resources From Other Organisations webpage](https://www.sightsupportwest.org.uk/resources/online-resources/)

* The Marfan Trust is holding its annual [Marfan Information Day](https://www.marfantrust.org/events/marfan-information-day-saturday-11-october) on Saturday 11th October, via Zoom.
* The Macular Society runs monthly ‘[My Macular and Me’ webinars](https://www.macularsociety.org/support/events/webinars/). The next one is on 19th August, and the subject is genetic counselling for macular disease.
* During August, RNIB will run three presentations of its [Living Well with Sight Loss telephone course](https://www.rnib.org.uk/events-and-courses/living-well-with-sight-loss-course-national-phone-group-august-25/). The course is open to people with sight loss across the UK and first one starts on 1st August.
* RNIB is also running the following UK-wide telephone course: [‘Focus on Friends and Family’](https://www.rnib.org.uk/events-and-courses/living-well-with-sight-loss-course-focus-on-friends-and-family-phone-group-september-2025/) starting on 3rd September.
* This year's [Macular Disease Conference](https://www.macularsociety.org/support/events/conference/) will be held online on Saturday 13th September and registration is open.

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Tel: 01380 723682, Email: info@wiltshiresight.org

Wiltshire Sight is a registered charity no 1119462. Registered Office: St Lucy’s Sight Centre, Browfort, Bath Road, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 2AT