# Monthly What’s On E-Newsletter October 2025

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

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# Wiltshire Sight Events and Notices

## Have your say: help shape the future of our support

Your experiences matter to us. We want to make sure our services, activities, and events reflect what people living with sight loss really want and need. That’s why we’ve launched our 2025 survey, and we’d love you to take part.

It only takes about 15 minutes, and all responses will be kept confidential. The more people who share their views, the clearer picture we’ll have of what matters most to our community.

You can take part:

* online - [Wiltshire Sight survey link](https://forms.office.com/e/e1NBDDSUM3)
* by phone – call us on 01380 723682
* at your local hub in October
* or by posting back your answers to the survey questions included in our recent letter / email.

However you choose, your voice will make a difference.

The survey closes on 5 November, and we’ll share the results in the summer edition of Visible magazine.

## 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.

* **10.30am – What Digital Technology Can Do For You**
Discover how smartphones, voice commands, and online tools can make everyday tasks easier. Learn about our digital skills support service available at hubs across the region.
* **11.45am – Ask the Expert: Amar Shah**
Amar Shah, Sight Support West Trustee and leading optometrist, will answer your questions, challenge myths, and explain support and treatment options.
* **1.00pm – Fraud Protect Talk**
Claire Bounds from Avon and Somerset Police will explain common fraud tactics and share tips on how to keep yourself and loved ones safe.
* **2.00pm – The Digital Switchover**
Sodhi Dhillon from BT will outline what the landline switchover means, how it’s happening, and the support available to customers.

Pre-registration helps us plan and is quick and easy to do. Book your free ticket at Eventbrite: <https://eye-can-bath-2025.eventbrite.co.uk> or call us on 01380 723682.

## Interested in tandem cycling?

Would you like to experience the joy of tandem cycling in and around Salisbury and Amesbury? We’re exploring the possibility of setting up a new group, with trained pilot riders on hand to help.

Tandem cycling is a great way to enjoy the outdoors, get active, and connect with others. If this is something you’d like to try, we’d love to hear from you.

Call us on 01380 723682 and leave a message for Lucy Brown.

## Final call – Summer Raffle closing soon!

Time is running out to get your tickets for our Summer Raffle and the chance to win up to £500. Tickets are £1 each or £10 for a book of 10, with all proceeds supporting Sight Support West of England, Wiltshire Sight, and Insight Gloucestershire.

Prizes: £500, £100, £25 and £10. Entries close **Friday 3 October** – don’t miss out!

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

Full details and terms: [Our Summer Raffle webpage](https://www.sightsupportwest.org.uk/get-involved/raffle/)

## Young Adults Virtual Hub – themed session

Our Young Adults Virtual Hub is introducing a themed discussion for the upcoming session on Wednesday 15 October. The topic will be ‘Getting out and about’.

Amber would love to talk to you about the challenges young people face when navigating sight loss, overcoming and managing the stigma that is sometimes associated with visual impairment, and sharing hints and tips for how you cope and maximise your independence.

She says: “With first-hand lived experience this is something I’m acutely aware of and would love to speak to others about how they manage.”

This is a friendly space to connect with others, share experiences, and support one another. To join, contact us on 01380 723682.

# 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.

## Hub updates to note

### Swindon – new social group

Thursday 30 October 10 – 12.30 Swindon Social and Information Session, Pilgrim Centre, Regent Circus

All welcome to our new drop-in social and information session in Swindon.

Adele Peacock, Low Vision optician and acting ECLO from Swindon Great Western Hospital will be presenting at Wiltshire Sight Social group, Thursday October 30th 10.30 – 11am.  Come and find out more about what help they can offer to the visually impaired community.

# Events & Notices from Local Organisations

# Leisure and Sporting Activities

## 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 October 14th we are meeting to discuss,’ THE SECRET LIVES OF BOOKSELLERS AND LIBRARIANS”  a non-fiction title.

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

Join a friendly weekly art group at the Wyvern Theatre, Swindon, every Tuesday from 10.30am–12.30pm. Run by Reach Inclusive Arts, the sessions are open to people of all ages affected by disability, illness, disadvantage, or social isolation.

Led by professional artist Billy Beaumont with support from staff and volunteers, the group provides a welcoming space to get creative – no experience needed. All materials are provided, with refreshments available. Cost: £5 per session.

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

## Inclusive cricket in Wiltshire

While there are no dedicated visually impaired cricket sessions in Wiltshire, Super 1’s cricket welcomes young people with SEND and can accommodate those with sight loss. Sessions are friendly, flexible, and open mainly to ages 12–30 (with trial sessions for others).

* Monday – Salisbury, Sarum Academy, 5–6pm
* Tuesday – Westbury, Leighton Leisure Centre, 5–6pm
* Tuesday – Chippenham, Chippenham Dome, 5–6pm
* Thursday – Swindon, St Joseph’s Catholic College, 5.15–6.15pm

For more details or to try a session, please contact Josh May, **07923236489** josh.may@wiltshirecricket.co.uk

## 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 plans for 2026,

## 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/)

## STEP Together 2025 – free student event

Join Thomas Pocklington Trust for STEP Together 2025, a free in-person event on Saturday 11 October 2025, 11am–3.30pm at the TPT Hub, London.

Designed for blind and partially sighted students preparing for further or higher education, the day offers workshops, practical advice, and the chance to meet others who share your experiences. Highlights include a Q&A with current students and an assistive technology session.

Spaces are limited – register here: [**Event registration form**](https://pocklington.tfaforms.net/5069021?event=701Pz00000fAlFt&tfa_168=5)
More info: [**Student Transitions - Thomas Pocklington Trust**](https://www.pocklington.org.uk/education/engage-with-us/student-transitions/)

## Royal National College - GetWorkplace 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 Telephone course, ‘Focus on Friends and Family’

RNIB regularly run telephone courses on Living Well With Sight Loss see more info on the [RNIB courses website](https://www.rnib.org.uk/events-and-courses/living-well-with-sight-loss-course-national-phone-group-september/)

# Audio Described Arts Events

### Salisbury Playhouse

Wiltshire Creative are producing Noel Coward’s Blithe Spirit at Salisbury Playhouse from October 2nd to 25th. On Thursday 23rd of October both shows will be Audio Described and will have Touch Tours 60 minutes before the show. To book please contact Ticket Sales on 01722 320333 or visit our website <https://www.wiltshirecreative.co.uk/whats-on/access>

# Children and Young People

## Building Prospects workshops for young people

Building Prospects is back with a refreshed series of fun, peer-led online workshops for ages 13–18. Running from 15 September to 15 October, sessions take place on Mondays or Wednesdays, 5–6pm via Zoom. Young people can build confidence, develop life and employability skills, explore career pathways, and connect with peers.

Apply online: [Building Prospects application form](https://forms.office.com/e/jTJRAy6TBu?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

## Opportunities from VICTA for children and young people

VICTA has a range of activities open for application this autumn and winter:

**Families**

* Circus Starr Big Top Show, Milton Keynes – 1 October (free tickets)
* Sport Young Achievers Day, Kent – 8 November (£5pp)
* Young Achievers Create Family Day, Tate Modern, London – 29 November (£5pp, age 5+)

**Ages 10–13**

* Online Taskmaster Club, October–November (£10pp)
* Equine Taster Day, Borehamwood – 30 October (£20pp)
* Lions International Peace Essay & Poster Competitions – free, closing October

**Ages 14–17**

* Sports Leadership Residential, RNC Hereford – 27–31 October (£50pp)
* Spanish Celebration Day, NCW Worcester – 28 October (£5pp)
* Behind the Scenes at Shakespeare North Playhouse – 31 October (£20pp)

**Ages 18+**

* Get Workplace Ready employability programme – RNC Hereford & self-led learning
* Hair & Care workshops – ongoing (£5 refundable)
* Arts Award Blind Photography Course, London Institute of Photography – 12–15 November (£75pp)

**Further sport**

* VI Climbing taster, Manchester (ages 10–17, £5pp)
* FA England Talent Days travel offer (ages 7–16)
* VI Cycling taster, Derby (ages 12–19, free)

Full details and applications: [www.victa.org.uk](http://www.victa.org.uk/)

## VICTA Early Years Sensory Discovery Packs

VICTA offers free Sensory Discovery Packs for children aged 0–4 who are vision impaired. Each pack is filled with specially chosen sensory items to help families enjoy playtime together. Online play ideas are also included to help parents get started.

Parents and professionals can apply for baby or toddler packs here: [victaparents.org.uk/early-years-sensory-pack](https://victaparents.org.uk/early-years-sensory-pack)

## Inclusive sport opportunities from Ignite Bristol

**Flyerz Hockey**
Fortnightly inclusive hockey sessions for disabled and neurodivergent children and adults. Free, equipment provided, no experience needed.
Tuesdays, 6–7pm, OB’s Pitch, Beggar Bush Lane, BS8 3TH.
Contact Lizzie: 07511 700220

**Wheelchair Basketball**
Weekly sessions for children with additional needs and siblings. Sports wheelchairs provided.
Mondays, 4:30–5:30pm, Kingswood Leisure Centre, BS16 4RH.
Contact Jenny for details.

**Female & Non-Binary Sessions – Expression of Interest**
Ignite Bristol is seeking views on how to make sport more welcoming for girls and non-binary young people.
Complete the form: <https://forms.office.com/e/XsaAWCCVHY>

Find out more: [ignitebristol.co.uk](https://www.ignitebristol.co.uk)

## FA Para Football – England Talent Days

For ages 7–16 with a visual impairment, cerebral palsy, or hearing impairment. First step on the Para Football pathway. Upcoming dates: 18 October 2025 and 1 April 2026 at St George’s Park, DE13 9PD. Register online - <https://forms.office.com/e/RqFfguz20V>

## Guide Dogs Children’s Services

[Guide Dog services for children](http://www.guidedogs.org.uk/getting-support/help-for-children-and-families/) with vision impairment and their families, from independent living skills to family events. My Time to Play (ages 0–4) helps children develop through play. Groups are running in Bath & North East Somerset, with new ones starting in South Gloucestershire and North Somerset this autumn.

## RNC events for young people

* Have a Go Weekend (25–26 October) for ages 13–17: free activities and accommodation.
* Get Workplace Ready (ages 18–29): free three-month course starting 27 October.

Details and booking: [www.rnc.ac.uk](https://www.rnc.ac.uk)

## The Outlook Trust

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

## Super 1s girls’ cricket

Free inclusive sessions for girls aged 12–25 with SEND. Mondays, 6–7pm, Hanham Cricket Club, BS15 3NP jeanette.tate@glosccc.co.uk

## City of Bristol Para Swimming

Trials for confident swimmers aged 7+ with basic stroke ability. Flexible to individual needs. Coach Kiera - cobscpara@gmail.com

## Inclusive tennis – Winterbourne

For ages 8–18 who are disabled, d/Deaf, or neurodivergent. Thursdays, 5–5.45pm at Winterbourne Tennis Club. First session free. [Winterbourne Tennis Club booking link](https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/WinterbourneTennisClub/Coaching/Course/15de1228-ba13-49fe-a3d1-16ed3a458786)

## Online groups

* [LOOK Healthy Parent Carer Programme](https://www.look-uk.org/healthy-parent-carer-programme-spring-2026/): 12-week online course in Spring 2026 (apply by 3 November).
* Retina UK online [Peer Support Group for the parents and carers](https://retinauk.org.uk/event/parents-carers-group/) carers of children with inherited retinal dystrophy

# Research Opportunities

## Have your say – Sight Support West of England survey

We’d love to hear from anyone with lived experience of sight loss about how we can best support people across our region. Our short survey takes about 15 minutes, and all responses will be kept confidential.

You can take part in the way that suits you best:

* Online: <https://forms.office.com/e/vb73YjaTyQ>
* By phone: call 0117 322 4885
* At your local hub in October
* In writing, if you received our survey letter

The survey closes on 5 November. Results will be shared in the summer edition of Visible magazine.

## How will you vote? – RNIB survey

Further to the survey on local support provided by us here at Sight Support, the RNIB have gathered ideas for new ways to support people with sight loss and now want your views on which could make the biggest difference. They are keen to hear from people living with sight loss, family and friends, and health or care professionals.

The survey takes 20–30 minutes, includes a quick eligibility check (age 18+), and is open until Wednesday 8 October 2025.

Take part here: <http://bit.ly/4251Rt5>

## AI-EMPOWERED: research on AI and disabled people’s work

University of Birmingham researchers are exploring how AI is changing work for disabled people. Disabled people, employers, and stakeholders can join confidential surveys and interviews. Participation is voluntary and ethically approved.
Learn more and take part: [ai-empowered.org.uk](https://ai-empowered.org.uk/)
Contact: d.wheatley@bham.ac.uk

## Research study: childhood vision and sensory impairment

Parents and professionals with experience of childhood vision impairment (including combined conditions such as VI and autism or deafness) are invited to take part in a University College London study. The aim is to identify future research priorities based on real-world needs.

Taking part involves completing an anonymous online survey lasting around 10–15 minutes. Participation is voluntary and confidential.

For more information or to request the survey link, contact Xinyu Yang at zcjtxya@ucl.ac.uk or see this [UCl participation information webpage](https://qualtrics.ucl.ac.uk/jfe/form/SV_eQYtR1Tmfx3aj6S)

# 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/)

[**Blind Ambition**](https://www.blindambition.co.uk/training-support/waf-working-age-forum/)

* Monthly Working Age Forum sessions discussing employment-related issues. The next is on 14 October.

[**Deafblind UK events**](https://deafblind.org.uk/events/)

* Fortnightly Zoom sessions on Friday afternoons offering on-the-spot tech support for people with dual sensory loss. The next is on 3 October.
* Fortnightly online Job Club for people with sight and hearing loss. The next meeting is on 3 October.
* [Online annual Deafblind conference](https://deafblind.org.uk/get-involved/our-campaigns/deafblinduk-conference-2025/) 9th October

[**Fight For Sight**](https://www.fightforsight.org.uk/news-and-insights/fight-for-sight-presents/)

Online webinars

[**Glaucoma UK**](https://glaucoma.uk/get-involved/glaucoma-uk-events/)

Offer both face to face and online meetings. Next Digital Support Group meeting: 7pm on 28 October. Topic: Driving and Glaucoma.

[**Macular Society**](https://www.macularsociety.org/support/support-group/condition-specific-groups/)

* My Macular and Me monthly webinars. Next session: 21 October (topic TBC).
* Online condition-specific groups for people with diabetic macular oedema, myopic macular degeneration, Best disease, Sorsby’s fundus dystrophy, and Punctate Inner Choroidopathy (PIC). Also, a group for people with early onset macular degeneration.

[**Marfan Trust**](https://www.marfantrust.org/pages/83-events)

Runs a online clinics for people affected by Marfan syndrome.

[**Nystagmus Network**](https://nystagmusnetwork.org/support/monthly-online-get-togethers/)

Runs virtual support groups for adults with acquired or congenital nystagmus.

[Retina UK](https://wiltsblind.sharepoint.com/sites/SightSupport/Shared%20Documents/0.%20Shared/Communications%20%26%20Marketing/Newsletter%20What%27s%20On%20and%20Visible/Monthly%20Update%20What%27s%20On/Sight%20Support%20What%27s%20On/Retina%20UK%20runs%20a%20wide%20range%20of%20Peer%20Support%20Groups)

Runs a wide range of Peer Support Groups

[**RNIB online groups**](https://www.rnib.org.uk/living-with-sight-loss/community-connection-and-wellbeing/talk-and-support/)

Community Connection telephone groups, run by RNIB’s Talk & Support service.

[**Sense**](https://www.sense.org.uk/shop/online-shop/category/bookable-activities/?_locations=in-your-own-space)

Runs a range of activities online and by phone for people with deafblindness.

[The Royal Collection](https://www.rct.uk/event/descriptive-zooms)

Free monthly online lectures for blind and partially-sighted people on the first Tuesday of the month

[**Thomas Pocklington Trust**](https://www.pocklington.org.uk/employment/works-for-me-employment-programme/tech-workshops/)

Let’s Talk Jobs workshops – next session on 13 October: Creating the best you at interview.

[**UK Keratoconus Self-Help and Support Organisation**](https://www.keratoconus-group.org.uk/index.php/2025/08/19/kc-coffee-morning-on-zoom/)
Holds quarterly Zoom meetings. Next one is on 4 December.

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