

Autumn 2018

# Newsletter



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.

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● **BucksVision**  
**143 Meadowcroft, Aylesbury, HP19 9HH**

● Telephone **01296 487 556**  
Open 9am - 5pm weekdays

● E-mail **reception@bucksvision.co.uk**

● **www.bucksvision.co.uk**



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# Welcome

**Steve Naylor**  
Chief Executive



**Welcome to the Autumn edition of our latest newsletter which updates you on recent developments and highlights events in the months ahead.**

In today's ever-changing world of technology, it is easy to forget the debt we owe to people who, in the past, have made sacrifices on our behalf. I always welcome the opportunity to reflect on the soldiers and civilians who died in previous wars (and the loss felt by their families) each time Armistice Day comes around.

This is a special year, of course, because it marks the centenary of the end of the First World War. It was moving to read the poetry of one of our members, *Kathy Martin*, who lost several family members in the War.

We are reminded of their sacrifice by the war memorials

scattered throughout the towns and villages of the entire country, each with lengthy lists of the names of the soldiers who died. Looking back on the past gives us the opportunity to thank those who made the ultimate sacrifice and to realise how fortunate we are today.

In fact, it seems to me that gratefulness and the desire to help others are two of the most important virtues in today's society (something that is easily forgotten when reading the endless stream of bad news stories in today's current affairs).

I am delighted that the spirit to help others lives on today. It is demonstrated most ably by all of our volunteers, who selflessly give up their time to help local people with sight loss.

**Thank you.**

# National Citizen Service



**Every summer, students aged between 16 and 18 are given the chance to take part in the National Citizen Service (NCS).**

NCS involves taking part in a number of activities over the summer and in the Aylesbury Vale area it is run by the charity Action4Youth. Part of the programme involves supporting a charity by organising a week of activities to raise awareness and funds, as well as undertaking any jobs that the charity needs doing.

This year we were delighted that a group of 12 students chose BucksVision as their charity.

We explained the project that we hoped they would be able to help us with. This was to tidy-up a section of land at the back of our office, which was looking overgrown and messy, and to plant some flowers to make it more appealing.

The students came up with a plan on what they could do to raise awareness of our services and to complete our gardening and decorating projects.



On **Monday** 13 August the students had a stall at Aylesbury Market, Friars Square, where they advertised our services as well as selling cakes to raise money on our behalf.

On the **Tuesday** they had a sponsored blindfolded walk, again raising money on our behalf. Both events raised a fantastic total of more than £500.

On **Thursday** and **Friday**, the students came to our head office to undertake our gardening and decorating projects. The students had to source their own tools and to purchase plants and paint for the project.

Unfortunately, on Thursday, the weather had taken a turn for the worse and the students arrived during heavy rain.

However, the group persevered and began tidying up the land surrounding our office, and thankfully by lunchtime the rain stopped and it brightened up.

On **Friday**, the students arrived to complete the planting and to paint our front doors. They worked most of the day and we were absolutely delighted with the result.

**We want to give our sincerest thanks and appreciation to Joe Byrne, Team Leader Action4Youth, and to all of the NCS students for their very hard work - Well done all!**

If you know of anyone in the Aylesbury Vale area who would be interested in taking part in the **NCS** next summer please contact [ncs@action4youth.org](mailto:ncs@action4youth.org)

## 24 - 30 September

BucksVision will be running events all week to highlight the importance of eye health and to promote our services.

We are working with our local Library Services to hold awareness stalls at various libraries across the county.

The awareness stalls will have information about eye health and BucksVision as well as holding sim spec exercises, demonstrating digital technology and other useful equipment.

Staff and volunteers will be on hand, so if you would like to come down and meet us to find out more about what we do, or to ask us any questions, then we would love to see you.

Monday 24 September  
10am - 4pm  
Milton Keynes Library

Tuesday 25 September  
10am - 4pm  
Amersham Library

Wednesday 26 September  
10am - 4pm  
High Wycombe Library

Thursday 27 September  
10am - 4pm  
Buckingham Library

Friday 28 September  
10am - 3pm  
BucksVision, Aylesbury

On Friday 28 September we will be holding an Equipment and Information Day at our office in Aylesbury.

Associated Optical will be demonstrating equipment at our newly refurbished resource room along with a few other charities.

If you have recently been diagnosed with sight loss why not attend a Living with Sight Loss (LWSL) two-day course?

LWSL courses provide information, advice, support and practical solutions for people adjusting to sight loss.

The course will help you to adjust to your sight condition, increase your independence and boost your confidence. You will also get the chance to meet and share experiences with others in similar situations.

These courses are for adults of all ages. Friends, family members or anyone close to you are also encouraged to attend.

### What topics are covered?

- Welfare rights
- Getting out and about
- Tips for everyday living
- Assistive technology
- Eye health
- Wellbeing
- Leisure and hobbies

### How to attend

The next course will take place on **Friday 9 and Friday 16 November** from 10.00am to 3.30pm each day in Milton Keynes.

If you would like to book a place, please call our office on **01296 487 556** or email [reception@bucksvision.co.uk](mailto:reception@bucksvision.co.uk)

### Phone Groups

If you're unable to attend a course in person, why not join an RNIB Phone Group instead? They are led by a facilitator and cover similar topics as a face-to-face course.

You'll have the opportunity to chat to others and find out useful information. Phone groups run for four short sessions, over four weeks.

Please contact us or **RNIB** to find out more **0303 123 9999**

# Wonderful TOAD

In July, BucksVision visited The Oxford Artisan Distillery (TOAD) to learn about the art of distilling gin. The distillery has been in operation for only a year, so it is still fairly new.

Our visit began with an explanation about the background and equipment needed to make vodka and gin. This equipment was described and passed around to be felt. We then moved on to the botanicals, which everyone was able to smell (and in some instances) taste.

We then moved on to the most important part of the visit... sampling their wares! First, we tried a vodka, before moving on to the three gins that the distillery produces: Oxford Dry

Gin, Physic Gin and Ashmolean Gin. The Physic Gin was described as being “wacky” as it used botanicals not commonly found in gin (all grown in Oxford’s Physic Garden). The other two gins were more conventional with Oxford Dry Gin voted as the favourite.

We finished the tour with a sneak preview of their whiskey which has been maturing for nine months; it still has two and a half years left to mature before it is ready, so were lucky to try it! We were also able to feel the barrels that the whiskey is matured in.

**We had a fabulous afternoon and would highly recommend a visit!**



# BucksVision Showcase

Our BucksVision Showcase took place on Friday 27 July and was a great success. Around 50 people attended and there were almost 100 entries across 19 classes.

The day started with a quiz which was won by the Magnificent Seven.



Each table then took part in our Challenge 30 task, where they were given a box of craft materials and asked to create a BucksVision mascot in 30 minutes. BucksVision staff were on hand to judge the mascots and were hugely impressed with all the entries. The Marlow and Wycombe Maniacs won, with their mascot which included a collage saying what BucksVision meant to its members, such as “Friendship”, “Enablement” and “Try”.



After the challenge everyone had an opportunity to participate in the craft demonstrations which included silk scarf painting, clay artistry, lino cut printing and weaving.

We then enjoyed lunch followed by entertainment from Banjovi Revival before drawing the raffle and announcing the winners of the trophies.



**Irene Wright** won the overall trophy of Best in Show for her beautiful embroidery “*Lazy Daisy*” with the judge saying it was “exceptionally impressive” and that the “attention to detail was particularly strong”. **Congratulations Irene!**

# Infosound

**An impartial information service for blind and partially sighted people.**

**Infosound is an independent registered charity which, for more than ten years, has been producing information, in audio format, on any subject that could be relevant to daily living with sight loss.**

It covers a wide range of topics, such as daily-living aids, benefits, holidays, mobility, travel, housing, training, employment, leisure, sport, money, consumer matters, hobbies, the important issues of the moment as well as events and one-off services run for the benefit of blind and partially-sighted people.

Listeners can also phone-in with their own hints, tips, comments and items of information.



**Infosound** hope that their service increases awareness of the kind of help and support that is currently available and, at the same time, breaks down any feelings of isolation that some may experience because of their vision impairment.

As information changes so rapidly these days, **Infosound** keeps its service frequently updated with fresh audio features on an almost daily basis.

And because a monthly audio magazine, for example, would not be able to cope with this, Infosound constantly broadcasts information around the clock in several different easy-to-hear ways:

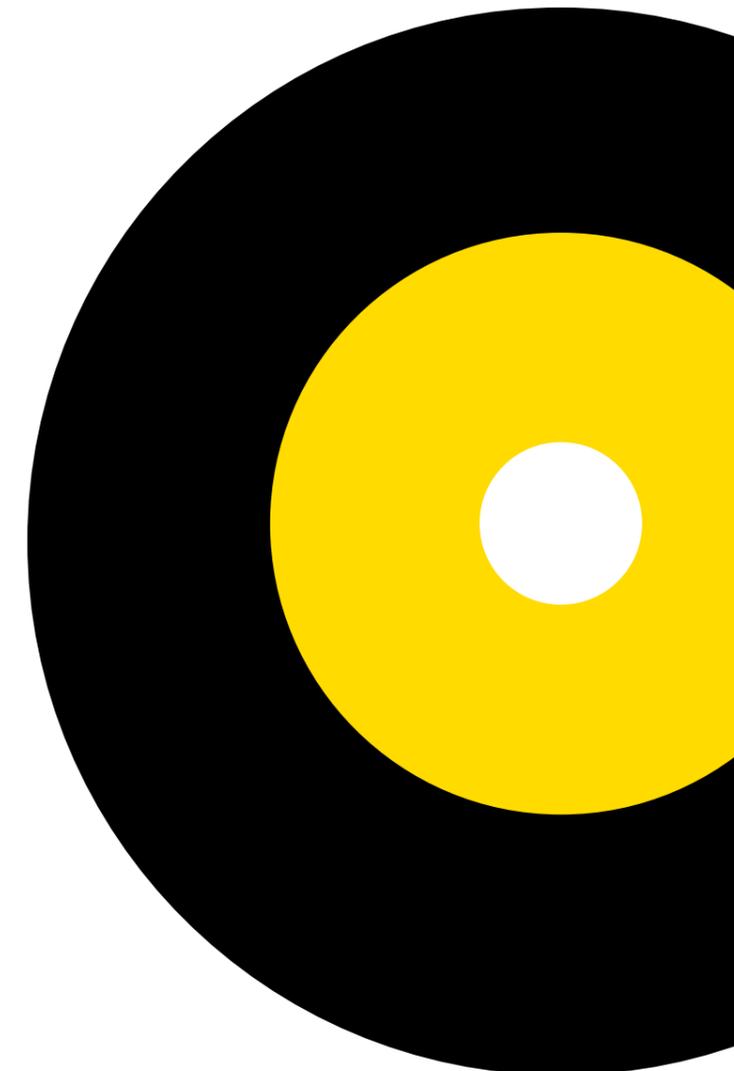
over any home or mobile phone, on Amazon voice-controlled devices, online, as a podcast and on specialist audio players such as British Wireless for the Blind Fund's Sonata Plus radio/player and their Bumblebee tablet app.

To ensure that people don't have to listen to Infosound's rolling broadcast for a long time (although many do), Infosound also make everything available to hear on-demand, as individual audio items, whenever it suits the listener.

**Perhaps the best explanation of the free Infosound service is given via a promotional CD, which outlines what Infosound does and gives some examples of the type of information they include in their broadcasts.**

If you are interested in receiving a copy of the **CD** please contact **BucksVision** on **01296 487 556** to request one.

Alternatively, further information about Infosound can be found on their website **[www.infosound.org.uk](http://www.infosound.org.uk)** or by calling **03000 111 555**



# Centenary of the end of First World War

With the centenary of the end of the First World War approaching on 11 November, we are featuring poetry from one of our members, Kathy Martin, which describes members of her family who were killed in the War.

We also had a look in our archives to find references to how BucksVision helped soldiers who returned home with sight loss.

## Reginald, Albert and George: A brother; A husband; A son By Kathy Martin

*Three members of my family were sadly killed in the First World War. In 2014 I wrote a poem for each of them and entered the poems into the de Fraine competition. The poems are featured here with a little background information about each man.*

**Private Reginald Gordon**  
*1st Battalion, Beds Regiment.  
Born in Kingsthorpe,  
Northampton 1898.  
The sixth of fifteen children born to Harry and Hannah Gordon.  
He is the older brother of Kathy's Grandad and the poem is written from his perspective.*

**Reginald**  
**10th May, 1918**



I remember when I was  
six years old,  
And you were a mere ten,  
At school you were always  
by my side,  
I took it for granted then.  
A soldier now in uniform,  
So proud astride your horse,  
You write of cold and rain  
and mud,  
Little sleep and relentless noise.  
Killed in action with no known  
grave,  
You lie in a foreign land,  
The family Bible records  
your death,  
In our grieving mother's hand.

**Rifleman Albert Stamp**  
*12th Battalion, King's Royal Rifle  
Corps. Born in Islington, 1896.  
Met Sarah Perrin when he visited  
her mother's drapery shop to buy  
a tie; they were both 15 years old.  
They married in April, 1917 the  
day after Sarah's 21st birthday.  
Written from Sarah's perspective.*

**Albert**  
**2nd April, 1918**



Our wedding day less than  
one year ago,  
The April sky so blue,  
Childhood sweethearts my  
dearest Albert,  
How I long to be with you.  
As I sit and write this letter  
with your  
Picture by my side,  
A telegram came, a  
cruel paper anniversary,  
No! No! I cried.  
We shall have no babes now,  
you and I,  
No chance for our dreams  
to come true,  
Your name inscribed on  
a memorial,  
Is all they've left me of you.

**Private George Perrin**  
*11th Battalion, Essex Regiment*  
*Born in Islington, 1891.*  
*Elder brother of Sarah and son*  
*of George and Eliza Perrin.*  
*The first of six children and*  
*the only boy to survive into*  
*adulthood. Written from his*  
*parent's perspective.*

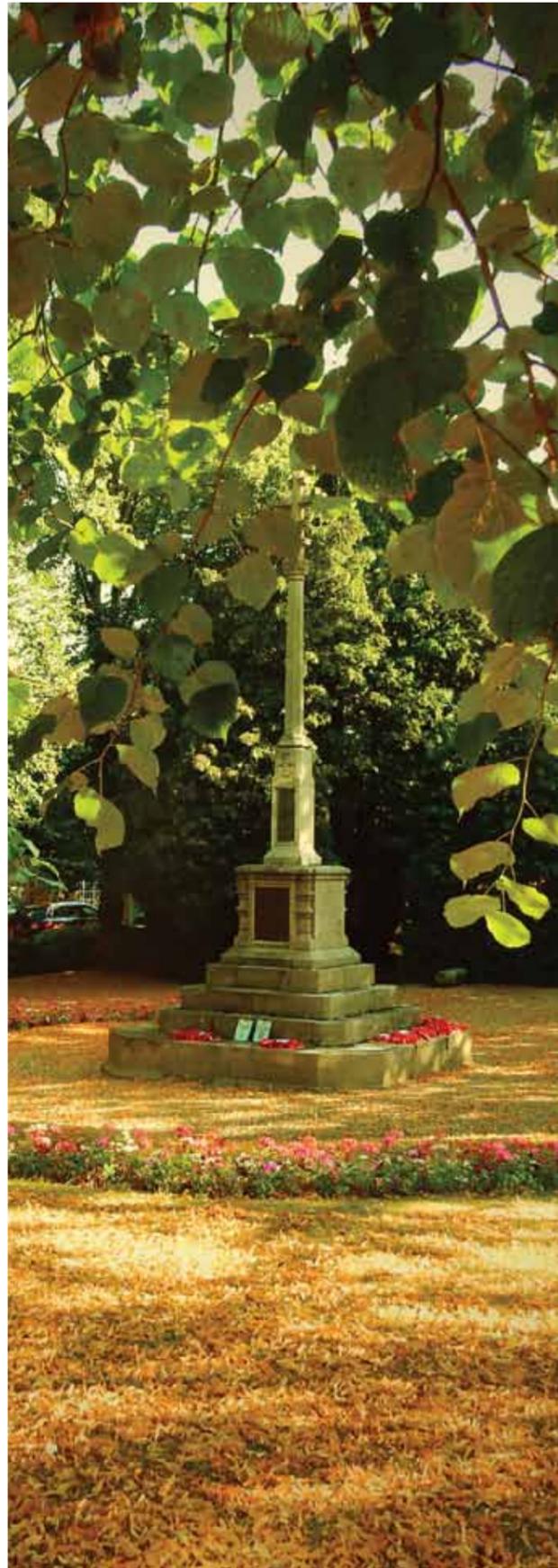
**George**  
**22nd March, 1918**



From the day you were born  
and placed in my arms  
My heart swelled with pride,  
We thought we could always  
keep you safe, with love  
Your father and I.

Then we watched you walk  
away from us,  
We could see the fear in your eyes,  
Our tears, our pain and heartache,  
Impossible to disguise.

Now you have been taken from us,  
We stare at this gaping void,  
We pray to God you have been  
laid to rest,  
Our George, Our Son, Our Boy.



“One blind soldier has so far returned to us and has been provided with work. It is particularly hoped that all friends will at once communicate with the Secretary if a Soldier returns to their Village with his eyes affected.

It is most important that not a moment should be lost in teaching such a man a suitable trade and this we are fortunately able to do at St. Dunstan's free of charge.”

### **Fourth Annual Report of the Bucks Association for the Blind 1915**

“The Association has undertaken as far as lies in its power to assist soldiers blinded, and also those who have defective sight owing to the hardships they have encountered on Foreign Service.

It is particularly desirable that all such cases should be reported at once to the Hon. Secretary in order that no time should be lost in seeking special advice, which is so often the means of saving sight.

So far seven soldiers with defective sight have returned to their former occupations, and others are receiving special treatment in Hospitals and in their own homes. One man, through the kindness of Sir Arthur Pearson, is at St. Dunstan's learning a blind trade.”

### **Fifth Annual Report of the Bucks Association for the Blind 1916**

“The War conditions have made it impossible to hold normal social gatherings for the Blind. These are much missed, and it is hoped that they may be resumed as soon as the train service and other conditions make it possible.”

### **Seventh Annual Report of the Bucks Association for the Blind 1918**



## Did You Know?

**There are over 300 BucksVision volunteers delivering services across Bucks and Milton Keynes.**

- We currently have 36 volunteer opportunities for people to get involved in.
- Volunteers support patients at eye clinics and staff at office and events.
- They also run a total of 25 clubs across the county including social groups, craft clubs, walking, tandem, ballroom dancing and yoga groups.

If you would like to find out more about our clubs please give us a call on **01296 487 556** and we will be happy to discuss activities in your local area.

Upcoming activities for some of the social clubs include:  
*Barbara Freeman (singer)*  
*Richard Martyn, "My life in law"*  
*Jeff Rozelaar, "Bagels and Bacon"*

## Local News

### South East

South East (SE) Division had a "**Sports Day**" on 3 July at SportsAble in Maidenhead. It was a battle between Boys and Girls, with the first event being Archery. The Girls triumphed after the second round.

After a lovely picnic lunch provided by SE Division the group had a go at the Paralympic sport of Boccia. It was not an easy sport to play but the girls continued to triumph and were the ultimate winners of the day.



### Milton Keynes

The Rotary Club of Bletchley recently invited volunteer and community heroine **Padma Cheriyan** to talk about her campaigns to help blind and partially-sighted people overcome the difficulties they face in everyday life.

Padma, who won an MK Women Leaders award last year for her outstanding contribution to the community, told club members about the isolation that often occurs when people have to leave work, stop driving and give up many social activities due to failing eyesight. Kelvin Hack, acting president of the club, says "We were really

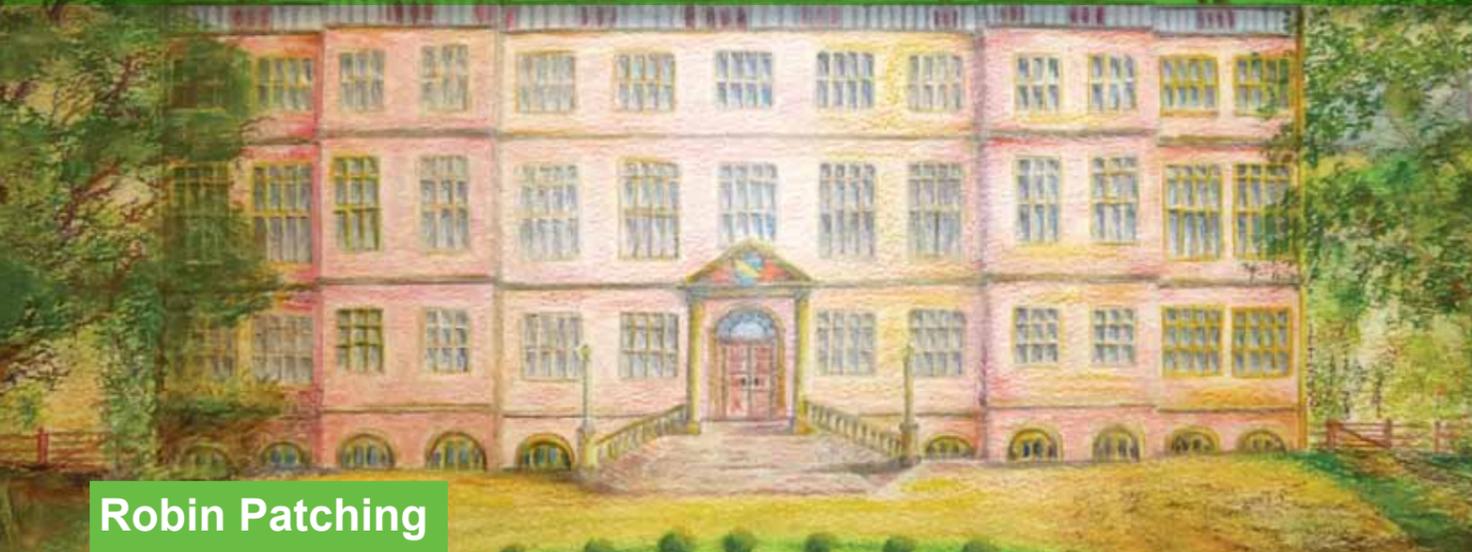
impressed to learn that Padma has set up yoga, tai chi and even ballroom dancing classes for local blind people to give them a fresh interest in life.

We also learned about her ongoing campaign to get a new "beacon" navigation system up and running in CMK's shopping centre, so that visually impaired people can be independent and find the shops they are looking for via their mobile phones."

*The Rotary Club of Bletchley is currently seeking new members, so if you are interested in joining this friendly group please visit their website:*

[www.rotaryclubofbletchley.org](http://www.rotaryclubofbletchley.org)

# Local History by Local Artist



Robin Patching

**Salden House was built by Sir John Fortescue in 1566, replacing the existing Manor of Salden, near Mursley, four miles south-west of Bletchley.**

Sir John was the second cousin of Queen Elizabeth I and became MP for Buckinghamshire in 1588. He also served as Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1589-1603.

Salden House cost £33,000 to build (approx. £7.7M today). It was a red brick mansion set round a courtyard. Local clay was used for the bricks and, to maintain the vast supply, eleven brick camps were set up around the site.

The Manor had a series of stained glass windows depicting the coats of arms of the Fortescues and their connections.

Sir John died in 1607. His family monuments can be seen in the chancel of Mursley Church. Sadly, the Fortescue star waned and the great house fell into ruin. All that remains is a farmhouse which is now a private dwelling.

**Note from the artist**  
*The painting of the house was executed from a pen and ink drawing as printed in "The History of Milton Keynes and District" by Sir Frank Markham. Details were transcribed from other mansions which were built and popular in that period.*

## 2019 Diaries

Now is the time to order your 2019 diaries and calendars. The price list for them is below:

Size	Cost £
A6 pocket diary	5.75
A6 insert only	5.30
A3 wall calendar	6.25
A4 desk diary	9.45
A5 midi diary	7.65

Call or email the office to order your diary or calendar today.

Tel: 01296 487 556

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

## Opus **NEW!**



British Wireless for the Blind have introduced a new device to their range which showcases new technology.

The Opus is a DAB/FM radio but it is also much more... with Bluetooth audio streaming from a smart device, USB recording and playback, the Opus has a large easy-to-read LCD display with zoom function.

Its 10 one-touch radio station presets and built-in battery charging means **Opus really is more than just a radio.**

The Opus is available on free loan if you meet the criteria or currently costs £190 (excl. VAT) to purchase.



# Useful Contacts

● **Bucks Integrated Sensory Service (BISS) - 01296 479 970**

For support dealing with sight loss at home in Buckinghamshire.

● **Sensory Advice Resource Centre (SARC) - 01908 401 135**

For support dealing with sight loss at home in Milton Keynes.

● **RNIB - 0303 123 9999**

Advice and support with all aspects of sight loss.

● **Macular Society - 0300 3030 111 (Helpline)**

Information and support for people with macular conditions.

● **Age UK Bucks - 01296 431 911**

● **Age UK Milton Keynes - 01908 550 700**

Support for older people to help them achieve and maintain independence and wellbeing.

● **MK Reader Service - 01908 231 123**

Support with reading and shopping in Milton Keynes.

● **Talking News Federation - 01793 497 555**

Information on local talking newspapers.

● **British Wireless for the Blind - 01622 754 757**

Radio sets on free loan for people who meet the criteria.

● **BucksVision - 01296 487 556**

● **143 Meadowcroft, Aylesbury, HP19 9HH**

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