

Summer 2018

Newsletter



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BucksVision



BucksVision143



Welcome

Steve Naylor
Chief Executive



I hesitate to say, “summer has arrived” as this might tempt fate. However, as I type this, the sun is shining, the birds are singing, and it is a beautiful day. I hope that the weather is similarly lovely when you read this.

I am delighted to welcome you to this edition of our quarterly Newsletter. As you will see from the Contents page opposite, we have lots of interesting articles for you to read.

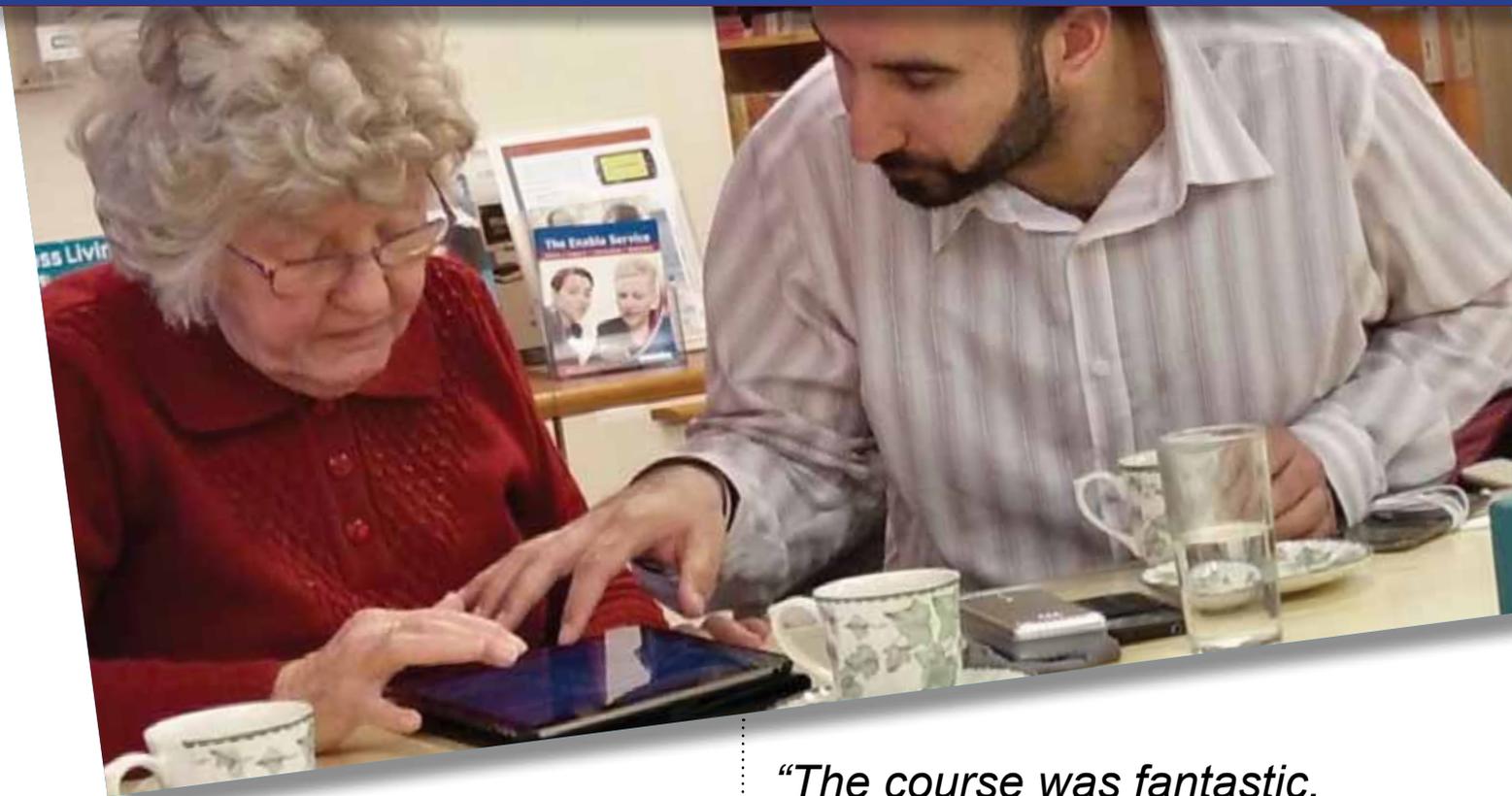
We celebrated the 30th anniversary of our office in Aylesbury and the recent refurbishment of our Resource Room in May, pages 5 and 6. This gave us the opportunity to reflect on the past 30 years, talking to colleagues from yesteryear, and to look forward to the next 30 years.

If you would like to visit our new Resource Room please contact us to make an appointment; we can demonstrate equipment and offer advice on what is available.

We are extremely grateful to all of you who support our work in some way and I am always delighted that this is recognised when Volunteers' Week arrives in June, see page 7. Thanks to all of you who give up your valuable time to help us.

Finally, I want to thank Ian Jenkins, who ran the Virgin Money London Marathon on our behalf this year, raising over £2,000, page 9. Well done, Ian, and sincere thanks from all of us at BucksVision, for your brilliant achievement.

Help with Digital Devices



RNIB's three year Online Today project comes to an end this summer and we held our last session in Bucks on 4 June.

Here are some of the quotes from members who attended the sessions over the last three years:

"Just to thank you very much for the Online Today course where I was introduced to a tablet and a smartphone. I found this MOST useful and have since got emails started on my Amazon Fire which to date I had only used to read Kindle books."

"The course was fantastic, Davinder is inspiring and I now know the potential and possibilities that are open to me. Davinder was really motivating and the course was really well organised. I am now going to get myself a smartphone and I am determined to use it and open up my world again."

I'm sure all of you who have attended over the past three years will join us in thanking Davinder Kullar for delivering the sessions and supporting people to access technology. His sessions were highly praised and we will miss his support.

However, we still intend to support people wishing to access digital technology and have been working on alternative ways of doing this.

Buckinghamshire Libraries

Bucks Libraries already run **Learn My Way** sessions and they were very keen to get involved with providing support to their visually impaired customers.

The library staff received training from Davinder and are delighted to be able to offer support at the following libraries:

**Amersham
Aylesbury
Buckingham
Chesham**

To access the support please contact the libraries to book a one to one session by:

Phone: 01296 382 415
Email: library@buckscc.gov.uk
Or by popping into the library

We hope High Wycombe Library will be added as a venue later this year.

Support in Milton Keynes

In Milton Keynes we have two trained volunteers who can provide one to one tuition on your devices.

Tuition will be available during the opening hours of the Milton Keynes Resource Centre (see below), and at other times as required.

If you would like to receive support from our volunteers please book a time by contacting us on:

Phone: 01296 487 556

Email: reception@bucksvision.co.uk

**MK Resource Centre
Peartree Centre
1 Chadds Lane
Peartree Bridge
MK6 3EB**

Opening Hours

Tues 1pm - 4pm
Wed 10am - 1pm

30th Birthday of Resource Centre

In 1985, **Les Morris**, Chair of BucksVision decided it was time that we had a dedicated space where we could offer cooking classes, demonstrate equipment and much more, to our visually impaired members.

He launched an appeal to raise money for a new building and with the support of local people, members and volunteers of the charity this dream was achieved in 1988 when our Centre in Meadowcroft opened.

Since then our office has continued to act as a base for staff, a place to view and try out equipment, run courses for members and generally support people with sight loss in Bucks.

On Monday 21 May BucksVision celebrated this fantastic achievement with a party to mark the Centre's 30th birthday.

BucksVision was delighted that the **Mayor of Aylesbury, Cllr Mark Willis**, as well as members, volunteers and staff past and present, including former Director, **Maureen Reeves**, came along to celebrate the occasion. There was a chance for everyone to catch up with old friends and to hear more about the history of the appeal.

We commemorated the efforts of member **Ken Parker** and volunteers from North West Division by presenting them with certificates. Ken raised money by jumping out of a plane, and North West Division organised numerous fundraising events.

Our longest serving volunteer **Joan Woodward** walked the 95 miles of West Highland Way to raise money and we recognised this by presenting her with a snapshot of archival records which feature Joan.



Joan and Ken cut our birthday cake before Steve Naylor, Chief Executive, and the Mayor officially opened our newly refurbished Resource Room, towards which Aylesbury Town Council had generously donated £1,000.

We were also grateful to receive funds from the Woodroffe Benton Foundation and Percy Bilton Charity.

“Our newly refurbished resource room means we can continue to support our members by being able to show them equipment and technology that can assist them in their day to day lives. We are grateful to everybody who was involved in the appeal and absolutely delighted that we could celebrate the 30th birthday of the Centre with a few of them today.”

Steve Naylor, Chief Executive

Volunteers' Week 1-7 June 2018

This year, we felt a week was simply not long enough to recognise the work of our volunteers, so we decided to extend celebrations over the month. Staff have been attending our clubs and activity groups and offering them practical help so we can experience more fully some of the roles our volunteers undertake.

Samantha, who attended several of our clubs, said:

“For my role, I spend a lot of time talking about our volunteer roles and promoting volunteering. To experience first-hand the warmth and kindness our volunteers offer, people who have given their time to enrich the lives of others, is inspirational.”

During the week we celebrated our volunteers by using social media to thank them.

**You can read these posts at:
Facebook/bucksvision
Twitter @Bucksvision**

We also spoke directly to two of our members who have been supported by our volunteers.

Sue attends one of our clubs:

“BucksVision volunteers are very kind and caring. They help by taking me to all sorts of events such as archery and to my social club and also to outings. They always take an interest in how I am and I'm sure they do the same for all other members.”

Beryl receives support from one of our Readers:

“As I can no longer read labels, signs and bar codes, having a BucksVision shopper enables me to browse and examine things I wouldn't have even thought of buying.”

Volunteer Recognition

We value and recognise the hard work our volunteers do and the many hours they devote to their role. We were delighted to be able to nominate the following volunteers for their special contribution to our work.

Stowe Gardens

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of women getting the vote the National Trust at Stowe launched a campaign to create a new temporary Temple of Worthies to include 15 women and one man (a reverse of the original Temple).

Community groups were invited to nominate local volunteers to be included in the Temple and we are delighted to announce that **Philippa Atkinson**, Vice Chair of North West Division, was chosen as one of the women.

Rather than a bust, like the original temple, Philippa will have a display representing her and her role as a volunteer for

BucksVision. The plan is for the temple to be displayed in September and we hope to take a group along to visit it.



Palace Garden Party

The RNIB were looking for nominations for a volunteer to attend one of the Buckingham Palace Garden Parties in June. We nominated a BucksVision volunteer, **Pam Warren**, for the work she has put into SE Division's craft and activity clubs

Pam attended with her husband, John, who also volunteers for BucksVision and they both had a lovely time.

London Marathon / Showcase



Ian Jenkins completes the hottest Virgin Money London Marathon on record.

Congratulations to **Ian Jenkins** our marathon runner who completed the Virgin Money London Marathon in 5 hours, 18 minutes and 13 seconds. It was a very hot day and he did very well to finish.

Ian raised a fantastic total of £2,001, which goes up to £2,351 when Gift Aid is included.

Well done Ian and thank you for raising so much money for BucksVision.

BucksVision Showcase

Don't forget our Arts and Crafts Showcase launches on 27 July at the Meadowcroft and Quarrendon Community Centre.

The event is open to everyone so why not come along and enjoy the day. You can view the fantastic creations that have been entered into the competition; enjoy entertainment; and watch and participate in craft demonstrations.

To find out more give us a call on 01296 487 556. We look forward to seeing you on the 27 July.

Frithsden Vineyard Visit

Sixteen of us had the most wonderful day out visiting Frithsden Vineyard near Berkhamsted on 6 June.

Nestled in a very picturesque country village, Frithsden is in a lovely location; and we had perfect weather as we toured the vineyard with our excellent host, Simon Tooley. We learnt all about the growing, grafting, pressing and bottling of white and sparkling wines made on site. Remember the names Rondo, Solaris and Phoenix!

After the tour we all took our seats in the tasting bar/café to sample each of Frithsden's very refreshing wines, although I do believe one person had a hole in their glass as the wine seemed to disappear rather quickly! Then we all tucked into a very delicious ploughman's lunch before heading off to the Vineyard shop, which was full of one-off original items as well as all that lovely wine!

Altogether a truly beautiful day which was summed up by one of our members who said, "it would have been wonderful even without the wine."



Our volunteer, Kusam, shows Linda part of a vine.

Blind Veterans

Blind Veterans UK is the national organisation for ex-Service men and women with severe sight loss.

The charity, which believes that no one who has served our country should have to battle blindness alone, provides blind and vision-impaired veterans with the free services and lifelong practical and emotional support they need to lead full and independent lives.

Blind Veterans UK was founded in 1915 and the charity's initial purpose was to help and support soldiers blinded in the First World War. But the organisation has gone on to support more than 35,000 blind veterans and their families, spanning the Second World War to recent conflicts including Iraq and Afghanistan.

Today, Blind Veterans UK provides free services and help to veterans no matter what the cause of their sight loss, be it due to accidents, illnesses or medical conditions such as macular degeneration.

One of the veterans the charity supports is 74-year-old **John Barron** from Milton Keynes.

John joined the Army Boy Service aged 15 and retired 27 years later, aged 42. During that time he was posted to a variety of locations including Germany, Bahrain, Singapore and saw active service in Yemen and Northern Ireland.

It was six months after leaving the Army that John was made aware of his condition. Following a routine eye test he was referred to an eye specialist who diagnosed him with glaucoma.

John says:

“It was a real shock to the system as I hadn't noticed any problems at that point. The decline was gradual until around four years ago when I was registered as partially sighted and lost my driving licence.

In the last year my eyesight has worsened significantly. I've been using my torch more when the light is poor



and I'm now reliant on my magnifier for reading.

I got in touch with Blind Veterans UK and they invited me to an introductory week at the Brighton centre.

The accommodation was top notch, there was a real camaraderie with the other veterans and the staff were so helpful, I couldn't praise them enough. They encourage you to get involved, but at your own pace, so everyone feels comfortable.

Later I went on an arts and crafts taster course where we did acrylic painting and woodwork. I didn't think it was going to be my sort of thing, but I loved it so much I went back for the full art week.

The staff picked up that I

particularly enjoyed the acrylic painting and a couple of weeks later a box full of easels, paints and brushes arrived at my door, courtesy of Blind Veterans UK! I couldn't believe it!"

Blind Veterans UK has a dedicated community team in Buckinghamshire who provide support including training, equipment and social events for vision-impaired ex-Service men and women in the local area.

If you, or someone you know, served in the Armed Forces or did National Service and are now battling severe sight loss, find out how Blind Veterans UK could help by calling 0800 389 7979 or visiting www.blindveterans.org.uk/support

Our Trips down to the Farm

Kirsty Wood writes about a lovely day our members enjoyed at Abbots View Alpaca Farm.

On Tuesday 24 April BucksVision's members, volunteers and staff visited Abbots View Alpacas Farm for one of our Experience Days. We met and got to stroke alpacas, sheep, pigs, piglets,

Louis the baby lamb (after the new Prince) and goats. We also got to feed the sheep which was a great experience.

BucksVision would like to thank Joe, James and their volunteer Julia. We all had a wonderful time and really enjoyed our visit.





Back in 2012, BucksVision visited College Farm in Long Crendon as part of the national LEAF scheme; the visit was featured on BBC Radio 4's In Touch programme.

Six years later we decided to make a return trip and on 24 May eleven of us arrived at the Farm. Despite it being a rainy morning, everyone turned up and were welcomed by Claire with a lovely cup of tea/ coffee and some very tasty homemade biscuits.

By the time we made our way outside the rain had thankfully stopped and we started our

tour of the farm. We got to say hello to some curious bulls, saw a sheep being sheared (including a chance to feel the wool), fed some friendly chickens, stood in a field surrounded by very noisy sheep and were lucky enough to see a newly born calf whose mother was still birthing its twin! And in honour of our visit one of the twins was named "Optic".

We finished our visit with some honey tasting, including an unusual ivy honey and College Farm's own honey.

A big thank you to Claire and her team for making us feel so welcome.

Legacies and Wills



Did You Know?

Your priority will be to ensure your loved ones are provided for when you die, but, if you don't have a valid Will, the courts may take decisions for you when you die.

Writing a Will is the only way you can guarantee how your assets are shared amongst your family and friends. People often assume that their spouse or partner will be the main beneficiary of their estate but the court may decide otherwise.

It also lets you decide who should look after any dependents that you leave

behind and a professionally written Will can save the beneficiaries of your estate paying unnecessary tax through careful inheritance tax planning.

You may also consider leaving a donation in your Will to BucksVision to help us continue to support blind and partially sighted people in Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.

How to leave a legacy to BucksVision, if you don't have a Will

1. List everything you own, including property and investments
2. Name an executor (usually a family member) who will ensure your wishes are carried out
3. Name those people you want to benefit from your Will
4. Name the charity you wish to benefit from a legacy
5. Your solicitor will write up your Will for you as a legal document

The Goodwill Partnership

How to add BucksVision to your existing Will

1. Your solicitor will add BucksVision to your existing Will
2. Alternatively, purchase a codicil and fill it in with our charity number, 1147814

the Goodwill Partnership

The Goodwill Partnership was launched in 2009 to offer low-cost, home-visit Will-writing services for charities' donors. More than 50 participating charities are listed, including BucksVision.

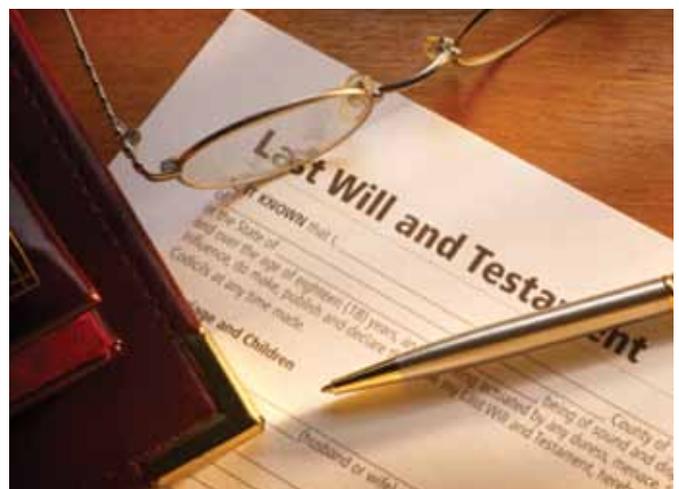
Wills prepared by The Goodwill Partnership are provided by a panel of solicitors who specialise in estate and probate law and are regulated by the Law Society.

The service includes a free, no-obligation home-visit consultation from a professional Will counsellor.

- **£125 + VAT for a single Will**
- **£125 + VAT for a second Will for your Spouse or Partner**

For a small annual administration fee, The Goodwill Partnership will provide free replacement and updated Wills as often as you require, plus legal advice for you and your executors from the panel solicitors who provide and store your Will.

To arrange an appointment please use details below:
Phone: 0844 669 6148
www.thegoodwillpartnership.co.uk



Family Day

Our joint Family Day with VICTA and Sight Concern Beds was once again a fun and successful day.

For the third year running we were blessed with beautiful weather. This meant everyone could enjoy being outside. The younger children had fun on the bouncy castle and slide while the older children enjoyed the activities Caldecotte Xperience had to offer, including climbing, crate stacking, caving, zorbing and archery.

Everyone also had the chance to take part in a slightly trickier treasure hunt. Being the

weekend of the Royal Wedding and FA Cup, it was themed around these events. The answer was *Windsor Castle* and the first family to win got the pick of the prizes, and chose the fantastic scented craft set to enjoy.

Our thanks to *Sight Concern Beds* team who staffed the BBQ, completed the food prep and cleaned up afterwards; we were very impressed! And thanks to the Tesco community team who once again staffed the tea tent and put together wonderful goody bags for the children to take home.



The Archers



On 16 May BucksVision members, volunteers and staff lined up, at the Whiteleaf Bowmen's field near Lacey Green, to have a shot (or several) at archery.

We had about five rounds trying to score as many points as possible and our Robin Hood member that day, without a doubt, was Adam Khan. We then had a go at firing at balloons which was reasonably successful and went off with a bang!

Whiteleaf Bowmen were extremely professional and patient with us all and must have wanted us there as it was our second time working with them. **A big Thank You to Ivan Young, their fun shoot organizer and everyone else involved.**

Keeping in Touch

Do you enjoy hearing from us? BucksVision would like to keep you informed about our services and activities.

We currently send out:

- A quarterly newsletter
- Information on our services and invitations to activities local to you.

However, if you would like to change what information you receive from BucksVision please get in touch with us on:

01296 487 556

reception@bucksvision.co.uk

We can send out information in various formats including:

Braille

Audio (CD & USB)

Large Print

Email

And we can send different information in different formats e.g. your newsletter on a CD but invitations to our activities in Large Print. **Please contact us today to discuss your communication preferences.**

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**