

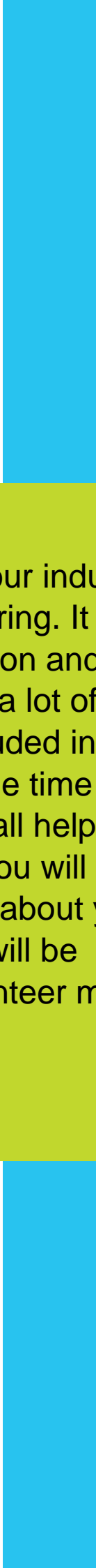
YOUR VOLUNTEER WELCOME PACK



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This pack is one part of your induction to BucksVision and volunteering. It is sent to you with a role description and application form. There is a lot of important information included in this pack, so please do take the time to read through everything; it will all help you to carry out your new role. You will receive more detailed information about your role(s) and the team you will be supporting from your volunteer manager as part of your induction.

WELCOME TO BUCKSVISION:

hello

We are delighted you want to volunteer with us!

We are BucksVision, your local society that provides support and services to blind and partially sighted people living in Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.

Founded in 1911, we recognise everyone's unique experience of sight loss; our mission is to make a positive difference to the lives of blind and partially sighted people in Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes, by providing support, advice, social activities, and the skills to enable them to reach their full potential and lead independent lives.

IN THIS PACK YOU'LL LEARN ABOUT:

- Who we are and who we support
- Volunteer policies and procedures
- Important and essential learning for volunteers
- How to become a volunteer

WITH YOUR HELP, WE
WILL REACH MORE
PEOPLE WITH SIGHT
LOSS!

ABOUT OUR WORK:

OUR TEAM

We have small staff team of who work alongside a wonderful community of volunteers who strive to make daily life better for people with sight loss.

OUR SERVICES

Throughout our long history, volunteers in numerous ways, contribute to the delivery of our services and activities, and help blind and partially sighted people in their communities to live full and independent lives; by joining our fantastic team of volunteers, you can truly have an amazing impact on many people.

ADVICE & INFORMATION: our team are available to answer questions about all aspects of sight loss.

RESOURCE CENTRE: staff and volunteers demonstrate equipment and daily living aids to people in our resource centres.

HOME SUPPORT SERVICES: Befrienders, Readers and Shoppers offer companionship and practical support to people so they can remain independent at home.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES: volunteer led clubs and activities across the county offer peer to peer support.

TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT: volunteers provide help and advice around technology.

POLICIES, PROCEDURES, TRAINING AND GUIDELINES:

BucksVision welcomes the opportunity to work with volunteers. We make every effort to ensure that you receive the appropriate support and feel valued so that you can realise your full potential as a volunteer. Our Volunteering Commitment outlines what you can expect from us while on your volunteer journey; and what we expect from anyone who volunteers for BucksVision.

WE COMMIT TO SUPPORTING YOU IN YOUR VOLUNTEERING BY:

- Providing access to induction, training, and other learning opportunities to help you develop and grow in your role.
- Being clear about the standards required to do your role and support you to achieve them, providing advice and guidance on your role and involvement with us.
- Ensuring you have regular contact with your volunteer manager to discuss all aspects of your volunteering.
- Communicating clearly, accessibly, and directly with you in your preferred format in a timely manner and helping you access and use online communication systems. Providing technology with accessible software and IT support to fulfil your role.

- Putting in place processes and guidance to ensure your safety and wellbeing when you volunteer with us and providing insurance cover while you are volunteering with us.
- Paying your expenses in a timely manner.
- Ensuring all our activities are inclusive and celebrate diversity.
- Addressing any complaints and difficulties or concerns fairly and promptly.
- Ensuring the confidentiality and security of all your personal information.
- Supporting you to find the right roles during your time with us.
- Ensuring you have an identified point of support during any investigations under our volunteering problem solving procedure and keeping you updated in a timely way.
- Your experience of volunteering with BucksVision to be as enjoyable as possible.

WE EXPECT YOU TO COMMIT TO:

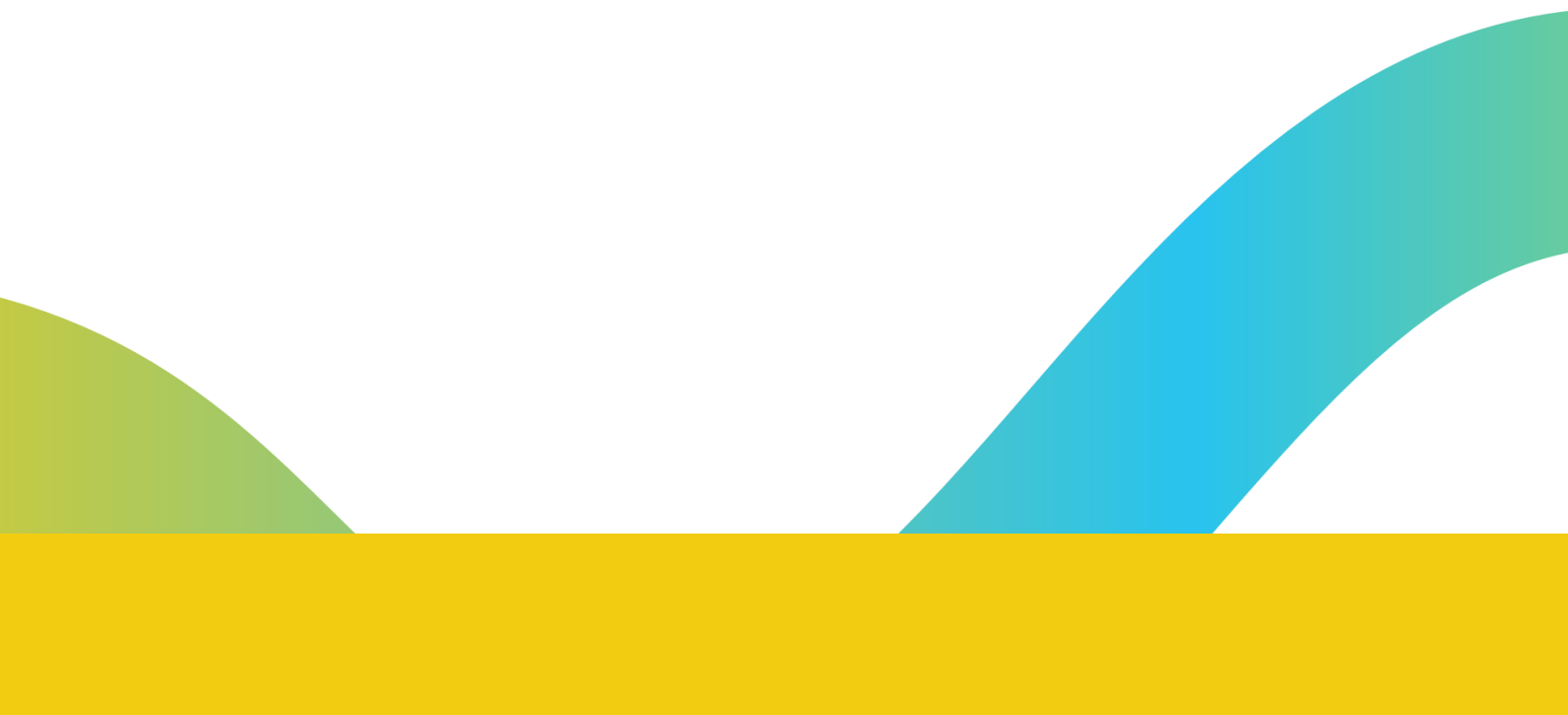
- Carry out your role to the best of your ability whilst working only within the boundaries and training of your role.
- Take part in reasonable training and follow guidance relating to your role(s).

- Keep up to date with information related to your role through training, meetings, newsletters etc and sharing your ideas using the communication channels that are available.
- Keep your personal data such as contact details up to date via your volunteer manager.
- Behave in a way which reflects our organisational values whilst volunteering for us.

THESE VALUES ARE:

- Led by blind and partially sighted people
 - Collaborative
 - Creative
 - Inclusive
 - Open
- Abide by our policies and service promises.
 - Be committed and reliable in your volunteering role(s), being a positive ambassador for BucksVision in everything you do.
 - Have regular contact with your volunteer manager to discuss your volunteering.
 - Undergo any additional checks required for your role.
 - Abide by safeguarding principles when working with vulnerable adults and children and behave responsibly regarding your own and others safety.
 - Act in a non-discriminatory and inclusive manner and understand that no form of harassment or discrimination will be tolerated.

- Respect and understand the need for confidentiality and keep any personal or sensitive information about BucksVision members, volunteers, or staff confidential and secure in line with our data protection policy and procedures.
- Abide by decisions made by our Board of Trustees and senior management team, and work with others to resolve any conflicts which may arise.



TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT:

At BucksVision, all staff and volunteers are expected to complete induction training prior to starting their role, and compliance training within three months of starting their role.

YOUR VOLUNTEER INDUCTION TRAINING:

Once you've completed your application form and we've obtained your references, we will invite you to Volunteer Induction Training. We understand that you'll feel more confident in your role if you've been well informed about what to do and how to do it.

During this induction, you'll learn the practical parts of your role, such as what you'll be doing, where and when, and who your main contacts will be.

Some roles require more specific training, which your volunteer manager will arrange.

SIGHT LOSS AWARENESS & SIGHTED GUIDING

You will learn to feel confident guiding blind and partially sighted people, as well as learning the skills you need to guide safely; you'll also gain an understanding of different eye conditions, and the practical and emotional impact of sight loss.

COMPLIANCE TRAINING

Every new volunteer and staff member is expected to complete our compliance training modules. These modules include:

- Privacy & Security Basics training
- Safeguarding training

You complete these modules in your own time by reading through the information provided.

We have other development and learning opportunities that you can access during your time as a BucksVision volunteer. You might find this suitable at the beginning of your role, or you might like to attend once you're more settled and interested in developing your skills further. Some examples of training that you can attend are:

- Refresher Training
- First Aid Training
- Dementia Awareness

FIND THE RIGHT VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU:

There is a wide range of volunteering opportunities available to you at BucksVision. The information below will provide you with a brief idea about some of the roles available, and what can be involved.

BEFRIENDERS

Befrienders offer companionship to blind and partially sighted people in their own homes; visits can also involve local trips together to coffee shops or places of interest. Visits are client led and can vary depending upon individual circumstances.

WHERE: Across the county

WHEN: Approximate volunteering hours required: 1–2 hours per week/month

READER AND SHOPPER SERVICE

Our Reader and Shopper service helps blind and partially sighted people to remain independent and supports everyday tasks we may take for granted.

READERS will visit a person in their own home to provide help with reading and writing. Sometimes this also includes 'social' reading, maybe a magazine or book that the person cannot access in another form.

SHOPPERS will help people to shop by providing sighted collect guiding and by acting as their eyes to help them make their purchases. Some of our clients ask for help shopping regularly, while others may request occasional help, perhaps to choose clothes or gifts.

WHERE: Buckinghamshire CC area only

WHEN: Approximate volunteering hours required: 1–2 hours per week/month

DRIVERS

Volunteer Drivers will collect a visually impaired person from their home and drive them to and from a BucksVision social club, bowls club, or other BucksVision activity. As this can be a regular or occasional activity.

WHERE: Across the county

WHEN: Flexible

SOCIAL GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES

There are nine BucksVision Divisions across Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes. Each division has a volunteer-run social club and/or activity group(s). Support is always required to help run these services, perhaps for a friendly chat, to support the groups chosen activities, or prepare refreshments.

WHERE: Across the county

WHEN: Approximate volunteering hours required: 1–2 hours per week/month depending on the area

If you're unsure about what role would suit you best and would like some help to find something you will really enjoy, please get in touch and we can help.

We are always open to hearing about new ways you can support us and utilise your skills and experience.

Each hour that you're able to volunteer for us provides that extra level of support for blind and partially sighted people who can often feel very isolated.

MICRO-VOLUNTEERING:

Small actions can make a big impact. BucksVision's new bite-sized inclusive volunteering opportunities; quick, easy-to-manage actions and tasks, giving you the freedom and flexibility to volunteer.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Micro Volunteer and Occasional Volunteers are part of our inclusive volunteering initiative, and do not involve tasks which require full volunteer induction and training. Here are some examples of our growing Micro Task opportunities:

MICRO TASK - SOCIAL MEDIA AMBASSADOR

Using your personal social media accounts (LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook), we will ask you to like, save and share our social media posts a few times each month with your networks.

MICRO TASK – EVENTS ASSISTANT

A successful event is all about the attendee experience; an Event Assistant will help the team create the best possible experience.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

How much time would I have to give? What skills do I need? How do I apply? Find out the answers to all these common questions about volunteering with us.

HOW DO I APPLY?

Look through the volunteer opportunities available in your local area or call us. When you have found a volunteering opportunity that interests you simply complete the application form or get in touch.

If you would like the application form in a different format (such as standard print, large print, braille, or audio) or if you have any questions about a role, contact us by email volunteering@bucksvision.co.uk or call 01296 487 556.

HOW MUCH TIME WOULD I HAVE TO GIVE?

Your volunteering time depends on you and which volunteer role you undertake for us. Some people volunteer every day, others volunteer for just a few hours per week, and some decide to volunteer for one-off events and activities.

We try to match your availability as far as we can and any time that you can give, no matter how small, is always very much appreciated.

WHAT SUPPORT AND TRAINING WILL I GET?

Volunteers are given support from their volunteer manager and colleagues. Our training includes an induction and sighted guiding, as well as any role specific training that you may need.

HOW CAN I HELP?

Volunteering roles can involve a wide range of tasks and activities. Such as administration, fundraising, and befriending. Look at our roles in this pack, or visit [Do-it](#) or our website.

WHAT SKILLS DO I NEED?

Some roles may need special or technical skills and knowledge, others may require good personal skills and abilities such as empathy and concern for the welfare of others.

In many cases however, the skills you will need can be developed while volunteering, with help from your volunteer manager and other volunteers and staff.

I AM BLIND, CAN I VOLUNTEER?

Yes! We encourage applications from diverse cultures and people with disabilities.

If you would like the volunteer application form in a format such as large print, braille, or audio or if you have any questions about a role, contact us by email volunteering@bucksvision.co.uk or call 01296 487 556.

I AM UNDER 18, CAN I VOLUNTEER?

Yes, you can, although a few of our roles do have age restrictions. Information about specific requirements can be found in each volunteering role description or you can contact us for more information.

WILL I BE PAID EXPENSES?

You will be entitled to reimbursement of all reasonable expenses so that you are not left out of pocket. We will ask you to produce receipts and travel tickets and complete a simple claim form.

CAN I VOLUNTEER WHILE CLAIMING BENEFITS?

Yes, volunteering does not affect your benefits and there are no limits to the amount of time you can volunteer if you continue to meet the conditions of the benefit you receive.

Get more information from the gov.uk website about volunteering and benefits.

WHO CAN BE MY REFEREES?

You will need to provide two referees, who can provide character references. They will need to be 18 or over and have known you for at least 2 years. They must not be a family member or partner nor live in the same household as you.

I WORK FULL TIME, CAN I STILL VOLUNTEER?

Absolutely, we have a range of flexible roles which work around full-time commitments.

GETTING STARTED:

You should complete and return the enclosed application form, either by email volunteering@bucksvision.co.uk, or by post (our address is on the back page), we can even provide you with a Freepost envelope.

You may already have a role in mind, or together we can look at the reasons why you would like to volunteer. Whether you are looking to take on a new challenge and learn new skills or simply just want to help; we want to make sure you get the most out of volunteering.

Some roles require a Criminal Records Bureau/Disclosure and Barring Service check, this is an Enhanced check, for working with adults.

BucksVision will not proceed with a new application if any of the following is highlighted on the Disclosure form:

- History of any form of abuse or attempted abuse of a vulnerable adult or child
- Any serious financial fraud or irregularities
- Any history of significant or habitual theft
- Other minor or spent convictions will be considered depending on relevance and risk in relation to the volunteering position.

We have an inclusive and flexible approach to volunteering, and this includes recruitment. We offer an experience that respects diversity, enables participation, removes barriers, and considers a variety of learning needs and preferences.

We intend, throughout your recruitment to keep you well informed, to be able to answer questions you may have in a timely manner, and to make sure you always know what will happen next. Volunteers are a crucial part of our organisation. We value their contributions, help and advice, and strive to create a positive volunteering experience from the start.

OTHER WAYS YOU CAN GET INVOLVED WITH BUCKSVISION:

There are so many ways to support us. Volunteering is an invaluable way of offering your support, but if you're speaking to someone who would be interested in supporting us in a different way, here are some other opportunities where we would welcome and appreciate supporters.

FUNDRAISE

There are lots of ways you can fundraise and make a huge difference – whether it is in your local community, at work, taking on one of our challenge events, or giving a one-off donation.

LEAVE A GIFT IN YOUR WILL

Our work is made possible thanks to the generosity and kindness of people leaving us a gift in their Will. Get in touch for advice on how to make a change to your Will.

DID YOU KNOW?

Fundraising is vital to BucksVision; without it, we couldn't offer the practical and emotional support that we provide for people living with sight loss.



THANK
YOU

Thank you for choosing to volunteer for BucksVision. We hope that you find your experience to be rewarding and you feel valued for your commitment.

With your support and involvement, we can continue to make daily life better for people with sight loss. We simply could not do it without our volunteers.

If you would like to discuss this pack or would just like a general chat about volunteering with BucksVision, please do not hesitate to contact our volunteer manager using the details below:

01296 487 556

volunteering@bucksvision.co.uk

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