

## Future Building

With apologies for the deliberate play on words, I'd like to tell you about the special future that we are hoping to build at OAB. Our plans involve a range of much needed new services and also a new building. Many of you will already know about our aspirations to develop a new Resource Centre, as an annexe to our existing base at Bradbury Lodge.

The project is now well advanced, with the carefully considered design complete and planning permission approved. The new Centre will enable us to offer our existing services of advice, information, counselling and equipment demonstration in a much more accessible, suitable and welcoming environment. We will also be able to offer innovative new training courses in the use of computers and the internet – an area which is increasingly providing great opportunities for blind and partially sighted people – as well as practical courses in how to manage cooking and other household activities. You may be interested to know that one of the many reasons why we are

planning to offer these new courses is that they were among the most popular requests for new services which people made in the questionnaire which more than 130 of you replied to in March 2008.

There will also be a multi-purpose room, which will be available for group meetings and informal get-togethers of visually impaired people and their carers. The same room will enable us to deliver seminars in Visual Impairment Awareness for staff in the social care and retail sectors. Again, we have frequently been asked to provide courses like these by our supporters, so we are very excited by the prospect of doing so. The secure base that the Centre will provide will also enable us to take our services and equipment around the county with information and display days.

I'm pleased to report that fundraising is progressing well and with very generous support, we now have nearly half of the £700,000 that is our target. We realise that the economic

*Please turn to page 3*

**Don't miss the invite overleaf to what could be Oxford's charity event of the year!**

# A Special Invitation

to an exclusive charity dinner at the  
Randolph Hotel in Oxford  
on the evening of 15<sup>th</sup> October 2010  
from 7.00pm to 11.15pm.

An opportunity to join "Oxfordshires Finest" in a charity  
fundraising event on behalf of  
Oxfordshire Association for the Blind

This black tie event will begin with drinks in the Garden Room,  
followed by a 4 course meal and a talk by world renowned author  
Colin Dexter.

There will also be a charity auction and a raffle.  
Tickets will cost £50 per head and will be sold on a  
first come, first served basis.

## Tickets selling fast

For more information or to book your place please contact  
Judith Wood on 01865 725595

## The Oxfordshire Association for the Blind

*Registered Charity 273559*

**Bradbury Lodge, Gordon Woodward Way, Rivermead Park,  
Abingdon Road, Oxford, OX1 4XL.**

**Telephone 01865 725595 • Fax 01865 725596 •**

**E-mail : [vision@oxeyes.org.uk](mailto:vision@oxeyes.org.uk) • Web site : [www.oxeyes.org.uk](http://www.oxeyes.org.uk) •**

**Opening hours 9-4pm weekdays (24 hour message service)**

Chairman **John Hewitt** Vice-chairman **Adrian Hill** Treasurer **David Warr**

Director **Colin Cure** Administrator **Sarah Milrose**

Accounts **Michael Ling** Home Support Officer **Marian Small**

Welfare Group Officer **Mary Gregory** Information Worker **David Thompson**

Fund-raiser **Ben Allcock** Sight Advisory Desk **Judith Wood**

Volunteer Co-ordinator **Ana Novakovic** (*Wed and Friday.*)

Banbury Co-ordinator **Janet Payne**

*Your Newsletter is written, compiled, edited by David Thompson*

situation is very difficult at the moment and that there are frequent requests from other worthy charities for your support. Nevertheless, if you would like to support OAB in our aim to develop this valuable new facility for blind and partially sighted people in the county, we would be delighted to receive whatever gift you feel able to give.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank the Social and Community Services Department for all of their support recently and over many years. As many of you know, we work closely with their Visual Impairment Team, with the common aim of helping blind and partially sighted people to remain as independent as possible. I'm also grateful to the Department for providing the article on page 12 about the changes that are forthcoming in social care. It is hoped that these changes will provide some welcome benefits for some visually impaired people.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to invite you to our Annual General Meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> September, from 2 – 3.30pm, at the North Oxford Association Centre in Summertown. The AGM is a chance to look back over the progress of the last year and consider our plans for the future. Anyone can attend and will be very welcome, but it is only members who can vote. If you are a member and have a motion that you would like to propose, or nominations for the Executive Committee, would you please let me know more than three weeks before the meeting? Our speaker this year is Rasmeet Chadha, the Deputy Head of Optometry at the

John Radcliffe Hospital. I'm looking forward very much to her presentation.

As our Chairman John Hewitt says in his article this newsletter contains a brief summary of our Annual Report and Accounts. If you would like a copy of the full accounts, please do let us know and we will be happy to send it to you.

I began this article by referring to our "future building". I hope that soon, the new Resource Centre will be built and providing the base for the new services that we are so keen to provide. I would like, however, to thank all of those people who have helped to secure such a positive future for OAB. I'm thinking of the trustees, staff, group leaders, volunteers, and generous donors who have all played their part in helping us to become an important resource for blind and partially sighted people in Oxfordshire. Thank you. ■■■

## Our QR code



QR is short for Quick Response. The code, when scanned using a camera on a mobile phone will enable you to access the OAB Newsletter! For more information call David on 01865 725595.



# The Chairman's Report

I am very pleased to introduce this year's Annual Report and hope that you will find it of interest.

We have had another very busy year at OAB and I hope you will agree with me that it has been a year of further progress. Our overriding goal is to continue to expand and improve the service we provide for the visually impaired throughout Oxfordshire. Colin Cure, in his Director's Report, outlines some of the principal highlights.

We are very aware of the rather sober economic and financial background against which we are operating in the present financial year, but are continuing to strive to improve our services on the ground and aim to make progress in the development of our proposed new Resource Centre. This will enable us to demonstrate many of the aids to independent living as well as providing space for meetings, courses and social

events. I hope that you will support us in our efforts to finish raising the necessary monies to enable us to complete this project in the next year.

It gives me great pleasure to thank all the team which enables the OAB to operate effectively – our marvellous volunteers (without whom we could not achieve anything), our professional small team led by Colin, my fellow Trustees, our wonderful Patrons and Vice-Presidents. I know you will want to join with me in thanking them.

I have enjoyed my 3 years as Chairman of the OAB Trustees and look forward to supporting the new Chairman (to be elected at the AGM) in the challenges ahead. One of the pleasures has been to meet so many of you individually, at our Garden Parties and at the AGM. I look forward to meeting you this year on September 7<sup>th</sup>. John Hewitt ■■■

# The Director's Report

I am pleased to report another successful year for OAB. We continued our Information, Advice and Counselling services from Bradbury Lodge, the Sight Advisory Desk at the John Radcliffe Hospital and from our base in Banbury, to over 3,000 people in Oxfordshire. We also continued to provide Home Safety Checks and Telephone Reviews in collaboration with Social and Community Services, and further expanded the work made possible by our marvellous home visiting, administration and fundraising volunteers. We were pleased to work closely with, and support, the many clubs and groups for VI people, who offer vital social and recreational

opportunities for visually impaired adults and children. We also collaborated with several local and national agencies on a variety of projects to aid blind and partially sighted people in the county, and have started to provide Awareness Training for organisations keen to learn more about assisting people who have a visual impairment. Fundraising for our new Resource Centre, which will provide a host of new services for our clients, has started well and we now have nearly half of the target amount of £700,000. I would like to offer my sincere thanks to all of those readers of this report who have helped us, in one way or another, through another successful year. Colin Cure ■■■

# Steady as she goes

## The Treasurer's Report

The annual accounts show that the Association made a surplus in the year ended 31 March 2010 of £40,842.

The surplus on unrestricted funds was £34,352 bringing the accumulated figure on these funds to £389,371.

The Association can determine how these funds are spent, and the trustees have put aside £80,000 of this figure to be used on the annexe to the premises at Bradbury Lodge.

The remaining figure covers the Association's Reserves Policy of retaining sufficient monies to fund the cost of running the Association for a period of six months. In the current economic climate it is vital that sufficient funds are retained to meet this policy.

Restricted funds can only be spent on the purposes specifically identified by the donors.

The surplus for the year of £6,490 on restricted funds primarily represents donations and grants towards the building of the new annexe, less project costs not covered by specific donations/grants.

During the year the Association has

benefited from an increase of £7,801 in the value of its investments. Investments, however, cannot be guaranteed to always increase in value.

Fundraising for the annexe to Bradbury Lodge, together with the £80,000 put aside from general funds, has resulted in just over half of the costs being met. However, this leaves a further sum of approximately £250,000 needed to bring this plan to fruition.

As regards the general funds of the Association, the future will be challenging.

The Association is already aware of reductions in the level of Gift Aid that it will be able to reclaim, and that it will incur additional costs with increases to national insurance and VAT.

Maintaining and increasing income, including receipts from membership, donations and legacies, is therefore vital to the future of the Association if it is to maintain its current level of services to the visually impaired, and their carers, in Oxfordshire.

David Warr

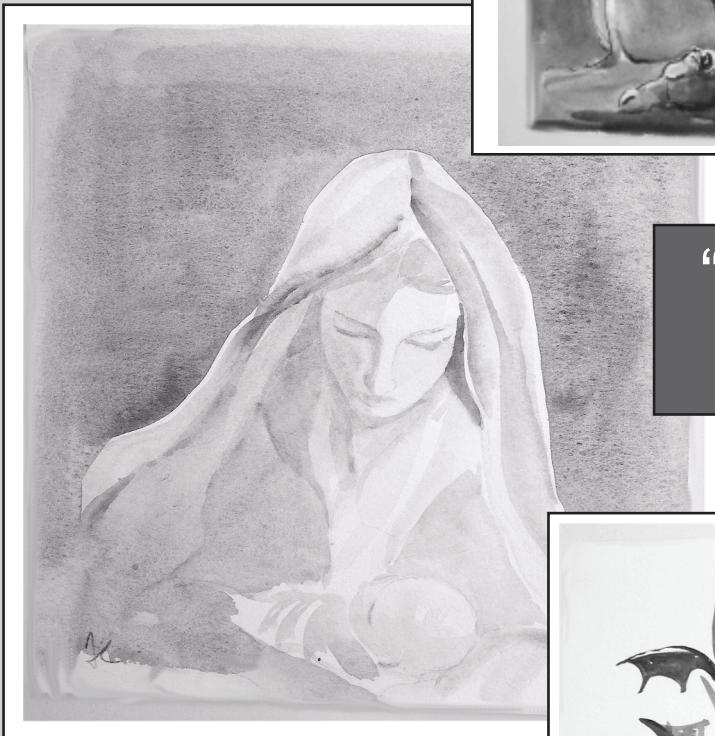


For a more detailed account please contact Mr Michael Ling on  
01865 725595

# Exclusive Christmas Cards

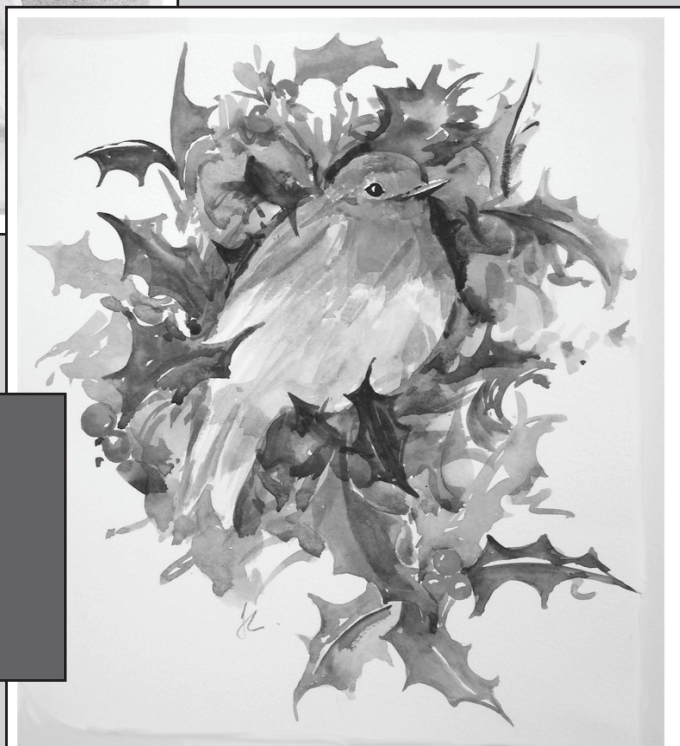
in aid of  
Oxfordshire Association for the Blind

“Sleepy  
Camels”



“Mother and  
Child”

“Cheerful  
Christmas  
Robin”



# Order your Christmas Cards now!

Just fill in this form or call us on 01865 725595

Our good friend, artist Frankie Cummins has designed and painted a brand new exclusive range of Christmas Cards. These cards are not available anywhere else and are highly sought after, so don't delay, order yours now to avoid disappointment. We are also able to offer "Vintage Variety Packs" of 5 assorted favourite designs for 50p and some old favourites are also available in packs of 10 for just £1.00! Please fill in the order form below and return to us at

Oxfordshire Association for the Blind,  
Bradbury Lodge, Gordon Woodward Way,  
Oxford, OX1 4XL

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Your address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Number of packs required	New Designs	Size	Cards per pack	Price
	Sleepy Camels	8 x 6	10	£4.00
	Robin in holly	4.5 x 4	10	£3.00
	Mother and child	4.5 x 4	10	£3.00

## Old Favourites

	Camels	Various	10	£1.00
	Partridge	6 x 4	10	£1.00
	Angel with Horn	6 x 4	10	£1.00
	Cows at manger	8 x 5	10	£1.00
	Variety Pack	Various	5	50p

I enclose a cheque made payable to OAB in the sum of \_\_\_\_\_

# Anyone for Canopys? Simon Cruden tells of a stunning holiday experience

There I was looking out over snow covered slopes, with miniature picture postcard villages dotted in the valley below, amongst conifer strewn slopes, preparing to run off the edge of the mountain into thin air with the canopy of the open parachute gently flapping above me, and I wondered how did it come to this?

My brothers had asked me to accompany them on a holiday to La Plagne in the French Alps, which just happens to be one of the largest ski resorts in the world. As I am registered blind I decided that whizzing down mountains with skis on might not be the best option for me so, amongst other things, I went tobogganing and sledging, I built an igloo and went skidooing. I also got hold of a map and did a lot of sight-seeing.

There was lots to see as I went on local transport and up and down mountains on cable cars. It was whilst I was enjoying a coffee and a terrific view from a mountain top café that I noticed people parachuting off the side of the mountain. I went over and saw a person literally run out into thin air beneath an open parachute canopy. I watched for a number of minutes as the descent was punctuated by thermals causing the parachute to rise before gravity took over and it finally disappeared silently down the valley. I immediately told my brothers about this and we all decided to have a go.

So here I was, strapped to a burly Parapenter, which is what the past-time is called, we ran in a tandem harness and the next thing I knew I was looking down on the white slopes rushing past beneath my dangling feet with nothing under them but clear mountain air. My pilot showed me how to control the parachute by pulling the strings to go left and right, we weaved across the face of the slope, occasionally rising as we hit a thermal. Eventually we landed in deep snow which was very welcome. It was a stunning experience and one of many memories I shall cherish. ■■■

## Get a bigger clock

At OAB we have a small selection of large print, high contrast wall clocks with thicker hands and larger numbers than most conventional domestic clocks, which some people may find easier to spot. In fact I am partially sighted and we have one in the office which I find very helpful! The smallest one is approximately 12 inches in diameter and costs £10.00. The large one is approximately 16 inches in diameter and costs £15.60. We also have a radio controlled version that sets itself, so it always shows the correct time, even when we change to and from BST! It is about 10 inches in diameter and costs £30. For more information please call Sarah or David on 01865 725595.



# When a little help could mean a lot

Our volunteer home visiting schemes have been running for many years and now, under the careful stewardship of Ana in Oxford and Janet in Banbury, have become an essential lifeline for some of our clients. Here Ana tells us a bit about them.

If you have problems with your sight and sometimes think it would be nice to have a bit of extra help or company, you might like to know about OAB's Volunteer Home Visiting Scheme. Trained volunteers visit people with sight problems, usually for about an hour a week.

The help they give depends very much on each person's wants and needs. Volunteers have helped people to put their utility bills on direct debit, get started with talking books, find a local lunch club and sort out transport to hospital appointments.

Some people with a visual impairment like to have someone to get out and about with – to the local shops or library or perhaps just for a walk – while others just want a bit of company, someone to share a cup of tea and have a chat with.

The people who visit are ordinary members of the community who

have a bit of time to give. The scheme operates mainly in Oxford, though we do have a more limited number of partnerships in Banbury too. All volunteers are checked by OAB (a police check and references) and do a training course before they start visiting.

If you're interested and live in Oxford, contact Ana, our Volunteer Coordinator. If you're in Banbury, speak to Janet. They will arrange to come and see you, have a chat about the scheme and give you a bit of time to decide if you would like a visitor. They'll return later to introduce the volunteer and keep in touch to make sure everything is going well.

If you are interested in the Home Visiting Scheme, or have any questions, please phone OAB on 01865 725595. ■■■

The work of the Oxfordshire Association for the Blind is assisted by funds from



# News from the North

Our OAB representative in Banbury is Janet Payne who also runs our information desk on a Wednesday afternoon (2pm to 5pm), at the Age Concern Centre, White Lion Walk.

## Profile of Jim Ellison

Those of you who have been on the VIP Walks will already have met Jim Ellison as he is, with his wife Ali, one of the Walk Leaders.

From an early age Jim who hails from rural Shropshire, was car crazy and planned to be a car restorer and repairer. The onset of Retinitis Pigmentosa in his teens meant that he had to choose a different career, in retail. Working in Birmingham, Leicester, and more recently Oxford, has meant clocking up countless miles on the railways despite his obvious restrictions as a VIP. His talent for communication and bringing out the best in people has led to him becoming the manager of several Austin Reed branches and he won their shop manager of the year award in 2009. At Austin Reed he met his wife Ali, who is also a talented shop manager, so they enjoy a healthy rivalry!

Jim is still potty about cars and has a Triumph Spitfire close to the end of restoration. Since the addition to the family of a mad springer spaniel he is a keen dog walker and has enjoyed a notable weight loss because of this, in spite of his coca cola habit. He is now jumpstarting the Petrol Heads group with Sarah Salcombe. ■■■

## Healthy Walks for VIPs

Last year's walks were very successful so we have organised some more,

Meeting Points, dates and times  
17<sup>th</sup> August Sainsbury's 11am  
16<sup>th</sup> September The Mill 11am

New walkers should arrive about 10 minutes earlier to register so that you are health checked to be covered by insurance and understand where you are going to be walking. Bring enough money for a drink afterwards – this is a fun social occasion! We can accommodate people who want to walk less than the two mile average circuit too. NB Walkers who register get a card which gives 10% off at Milletts! ■■■

## Help Desk

Don't forget that I am nearly always available on a Wednesday afternoon at Age Concern to demonstrate a small selection of gadgets, give information, or just chat if you want. Carers are also welcome –we know you need support and I can possibly help or just lend an ear. Janet Payne 075286888619; email

10 banburycoordinator@oxeyes.org.uk

# **Giving more easily and effectively**

by Michael Ling, *OAB Accounting Officer*

## **Gift Aid**

Gift Aid is a scheme to enable tax-effective giving by individuals to charities in the United Kingdom.

Gift Aid allows individuals who are subject to UK income tax to complete a simple, short declaration that they are a UK taxpayer.

Any cash donations that the taxpayer makes to their favourite charity, (OAB of course), after making a declaration, are treated as being made after deduction of income tax at the basic rate, and the charity can reclaim the basic rate income tax paid on the gift from Revenue and Customs.

So if you are a taxpayer please complete the gift aid form on the next page and let us claim a further 28% on top of each contribution we receive.

## **Standing Order**

If you want to make regular payments to us, why not take advantage of a standing order with your bank?

This can be used to make regular payments whether weekly, monthly, quarterly or annually.

Not only does it save you having to remember when you last sent anything to us, it also saves you the hassle and cost of writing cheques and posting them to us.

If you do wish to pay by standing order, please complete the standing order on the following page, but please remember to send this to OAB and *NOT* to your bank.

## **Support OAB become a member!**

You can show your support for Oxfordshire's best loved Visually Impaired charity by becoming a member. Your membership gives you mandate to vote at our Annual

General Meeting and gives us a greater voice in the county. Just fill in the form on the next page and help us to help you! Or telephone 01865 725595 for more information. ■■■

## **Our sincere thanks to all donors**

We are very grateful for all donations, whether given in support of the day to day running of the Association, or toward a specific project, or in memory of a loved one,

**Every donation very much appreciated. ■■■**

# Membership and donation

If you are **eligible**, please Gift Aid your payment by signing the declaration below. In **all cases**, please complete your name and address details. If you wish to pay by standing order, please also complete the separate form overleaf and return to us at:

**The Oxfordshire Association for the Blind,  
Bradbury Lodge, Gordon Woodward Way,  
Oxford, OX1 4XL.**

## Membership

Please tick the appropriate box/es

**Member**

(£5.00 annually)

**Friend**

(£20.00 annually)

**Life Member**

(£250.00)

## Donation

 £5 £10 £20 £50 £100

Other amount £.....

## Gift Aid

Please tick the appropriate box

Please treat this payment as a Gift Aid donation

Please treat all membership/donations that I make from the date of this declaration, until otherwise notified, as Gift Aid donations

I pay Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the tax that the OAB reclaims on membership/donations in the appropriate tax year. I will inform the OAB when this is no longer the case.

**Signed** .....

**Date**.....

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Postcode** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone** \_\_\_\_\_

# **OAB** Oxfordshire Association for the *Blind*

1877-2010

Helping blind people  
for 133 years

Registered Charity 273559

Bradbury Lodge, Gordon Woodward Way, Abingdon Road,  
Oxford, OX1 4XL.

Phone : 01865 725595 Fax : 01865 725596

## **Standing order instruction**

To the Manager:.....Bank plc  
at: .....

.....  
.....Post Code .....

Please pay to **CAF Bank plc, 25 Kings Hill Avenue,  
Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ**  
Sort Code **40-52-40**

For the credit of Oxfordshire Association for the Blind  
Account number is **00015471**

The sum of £..... (in words).....

on the .....day of .....20.....

and the same sum on the same day in each succeeding  
month / quarter / year (*delete as appropriate*) until further  
notice and debit my account number .....

**Signed** ..... **Date** .....

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Postcode** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Have you remembered GiftAid?**

## **Brian is Double National Finalist!**

Brian Fountain was one of the founder members of the Banbury Bowling Team, who made it to the national finals in Sheffield as part of the fourteen qualifying teams from each region. The Banbury group came a very creditable 9<sup>th</sup> out of 12 teams in the finals – well done to them and all of the teams who competed! Not content with this, Brian got through the regional Poker Championships and will play at National level in September. ■■■

## **Banbury Macular Disease Support Group**

We meet on the Second Thursday of every month from 2 to 4pm at Banbury Methodist Church, Marlborough Road, Banbury, OX16 5BZ. The meetings are open to anyone affected by central vision loss. Carers are welcome too! For further details please contact John Critchlow 01608 685293. ■■■

## **Banbury Blind Club**

Meets alternate Tuesdays 10.30am - 2.00pm at the WRVS Centre. Helpers are always welcome. For more information call Enid Smith on 01295 269568. ■■■

## **Versatile Versa**

As some of you may know, we have a range of handheld electronic magnifiers at our headquarters Bradbury Lodge on the Abingdon Road in Oxford. We are pleased to announce that Humanware, with whom we have been associated for over 15 years, have let us have another of their products to demonstrate to clients, this is “The Versa”.

With large, simple to use buttons and a large colour LCD display, the SmartView Versa is an easy to use electronic handheld magnifier that can magnify images up to 15X. The autofocus lets you hold the Versa at the optimal distance from the object, up to about 4 inches, allowing a bit of an “overview” of what you wish to see. Alternatively you can rest the Versa on the page, use the writing stand or flip out the handle for optimal viewing. It also has High contrast viewing modes – to see text and backgrounds in different colour combinations

As it is lightweight (7 oz, 200 grams) it is easier to carry and hold than some other devices and it can connect to a TV for increased magnification.

The main asset of this device is portability, it can be carried around to enlarge text in newspapers and magazines, on pill bottles and food packaging, things that are too small to read. Unlike optical magnifiers you can zoom in, alter colours and freeze frame what is on the screen. If you would like more information or would like to book an appointment to come in and have a look at the Versa, please call Sarah or David on 01865 725595. ■■■

# Social Services Self Directed Support

We are very grateful for this extremely interesting article from Oxfordshire Social and Community Services

## The personal touch:

An exciting change is about to take place in Oxfordshire for people who use social care and support services. The council is introducing a new, personalised way of supporting people and carers which is all about choice and control for the individual. Personalisation puts the individual in charge of their care and support, and over the available money to buy this support. This means that we can help find ways of continuing to do the things that matter to people even though their circumstances have changed.

## How it works?

First, the council looks into a person's situation. We also check if the person is eligible for a financial contribution from the council. We then calculate the personal budget based on the person's needs. The next step is for the individual to write the support plan which details how the care and support will be arranged. The council offers assistance to write the plan for people who want someone to help them. Once the council has checked and approved the support plan, the money can be used. The council continues to check whether the plan works well, and helps to change things when necessary. This process is called self directed support.

## Saving money:

Offering people choice can save the council money, reducing the pressures on public finances. We

discovered that people spend their personal budgets very carefully and often prefer things that are inexpensive or even free. Being creative and looking at different solutions can also save money by getting a better deal.

## If you are already receiving care:

Changing things that many people rely on is often difficult. That is why the changes will be introduced in stages from October 2010. If you are already receiving care and support from the council, you do not have to do anything. If you like the way things are, they will change only if there is a better way to do things. The council will contact you to see how you are and if anything in your situation has changed.

## Equipment:

Most equipment for home use by people with visual impairments is available on loan from the Visual Impairment Team, Social & Community Services in Abingdon following a specialist assessment of need. Your personal budget gives you more choice and freedom to decide what equipment you prefer to use. To find out more and discuss your equipment needs, contact your Rehabilitation Officer or speak to a duty officer in the team any morning on 01865 894935.

## Need information?

You can find a lot of information on the County Council website:

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/transformingsocialcare](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/transformingsocialcare)

We also have a website about self directed support in Oxfordshire: [www.takingcontroloxon.gov.uk](http://www.takingcontroloxon.gov.uk).

If you prefer to read about the changes in a leaflet, you can find the leaflet 'Adult Social Care is changing' in council offices, libraries and GP practices.

If you think you may need support and would like to discuss your situation please ring us on 0845 050 7666. You can also ring us on this number to ask for our leaflet to be sent to you.

**Are you a carer?**

Carers are crucially important in the care arrangements of individuals. They know the individual best and know what matters the most to them. We can carry out a carer's assessment to see what help and training the carer needs to cope with their role. You can ask for an assessment any time, even if you have had one in the past already.

To arrange a carer's assessment please ring 0845 050 7666 or visit our website [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/carers](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/carers).

## A Thank you to our Caring Councils

We regularly apply to the county's town and parish councils to ask that they may consider making a donation towards the work that we do with visually impaired people in the area.

Each year, roughly one hundred of these councils respond with a donation – from Abingdon and Didcot to Wheatley and Wooton – and these grants help us to continue providing the services that we do.

If you are a clerk or councillor reading this article who belongs to a parish that has made a donation to OAB in the past, please know that we are grateful to you. Thank you.

## Carers groups in Oxfordshire

Carers, of any age, living or working in Oxfordshire, can find support, advice and information from their local carers group

### North and West Carers Centre

27 Horse Fair  
Banbury  
OX16 0AE  
01295 264545  
[cc.nwoxon@dsl.pipex.com](mailto:cc.nwoxon@dsl.pipex.com)

### Oxford Carers Centre

174a Cowley Road,  
Oxford, OX4 1UE  
01865 205192  
[info@carerscentre.co.uk](mailto:info@carerscentre.co.uk)  
Website:  
[www.carerscentre.co.uk](http://www.carerscentre.co.uk)

### South and Vale Carers' Centre

5 Lydalls Road,  
Didcot, OX11 7HX  
01235 510212  
[carers@svcarers.org.uk](mailto:carers@svcarers.org.uk)  
Website:  
[www.svcarers.org.uk](http://www.svcarers.org.uk)

# Tribute to Philip Awdry, BSc MD FRCS FRCOphth

It was with great sadness that we learned of the passing of our dear friend and former President, Philip Awdry.

Philip was an unfailing supporter of OAB and, as many of you will know, a very accomplished surgeon.

Philip studied medicine at Cambridge University and then Ophthalmology at St. Thomas' Hospital in London, becoming a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons. He moved to become a Senior Consultant Ophthalmologist at the Oxford Eye Hospital and over the years successfully treated many patients with sight threatening conditions.

During his remarkable career he researched the effects of nutrition on eye disease in Africa and was able to recommend dietary changes which prevented sight loss for very many people.

Philip was also an accomplished sportsman, rowing for his college at Cambridge, playing Real Tennis and becoming a skilled fly-fisher. He enjoyed gardening and was also referred to as the "best dressed man in Oxford". In addition, he contributed tirelessly to the work of his local church in Headington.

Philip was known for his kind disposition, very positive outlook and good humour. He always

greeted challenges with a smile and was inspirational to many people. At OAB we will miss his generosity and unwavering support. Without Philip's efforts it is clear that we would not be in the favourable position that we are in today and we are very grateful for all his help. ■■■

## British Wireless for the Blind Update

In October 2009 British Wireless for the Blind bought in a new ruling that to be eligible for one of their players on free, long term loan a new client would have to be in receipt of a means tested benefit.

This rule applies only to new clients so if you have already been issued with one of their players and it needs repairing you can still have it replaced or upgraded without having to be on a means tested benefit.

For anyone applying to BWFB for the first time means tested benefits include the following: Income Support, Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Pension Credit, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit, Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit. ■■■

# Accessible Theatre just right for you

Gwen Cruden has kindly organised two more trips to audio described performances in Oxford

## Hairspray

Direct from the West End, the musical comedy with everything- the ultimate feel good show which has played to sold out houses around the globe.

Thursday 21st October, 7.30pm

Tickets £18.50 each

New Theatre, George Street, Oxford

Starring

Brian Conley and Les Dennis

## Cinderella

Written and Directed by Peter Duncan  
One of the best-loved fairytales of all time, bursting with boo, cheers, songs and laughter, this is one festive date you don't want to be late for!

Saturday 8th January, 2.00pm

Tickets £9.50 each

Oxford Playhouse,

Beaumont Street Oxford

If you would like to find out more call Gwen on 01865 373378  
Audio description comes through a lightweight headset and conveys the visual elements of a theatre performance, film or TV show – the action, the setting, how the characters are dressed, facial expressions, body language, lighting and visual jokes, etc. It comes during pauses in the dialogue and it's a bit like having a friend sitting beside you, "filling in the gaps". ■■■

## *Vision Impaired Visually Active*

VIVA is a group for visually impaired people with active minds, and meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 2.00pm in the North Oxford Association, Community Centre,

Diamond Place, Summertown, Oxford. We have an interesting and varied programme for the months ahead. Please note that there is no VIVA meeting in August.

### VIVA Programme 2010

August No meeting this month

Sept 14th Ann Spokes Symonds,  
Lessons from life

Oct 12th Ralph Wilkins talk My travels

Nov 9th 10.30am A visit to the  
Ashmolean museum.

Dec 14th Christmas lunch at  
Common Leys Farm

For further details ring Ron Sears on 01865 553063. ■■■

# 'Look Oxfordshire' Activities: August '10

Look Oxfordshire is the support group specifically for visually impaired and blind children in the county. Here is a list of activities for this month.

## **Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> August:**

**Thomley Hall, Worminghall:** A large adventure playground with art and craft rooms, free play rooms, music room, soft play room including a ball pool, a large well equipped outdoor playground with bikes and zip wire etc and a sensory room. [www.thomleyhall.org](http://www.thomleyhall.org)

Opens from 10am until 3.30pm. Bring a picnic.

## **Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> August:**

**Music Fun Day. Crowmarsh Village Hall.** All Welcome. Drumming zone, Morris Dancers, music with Sally (RNIB), Bouncy castle, Arts and crafts, Circus skills, live band and a BBQ.

£2 per person or £5 per family.

10.30am til 3pm

## **Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> August:**

**TVAP, Taplow:** Large indoor play areas including soft play room, music room, craft area, quiet area and sensory room. Large outdoor play adventure playground, sensory garden, play bus, bikes/trikes, a large sandpit and much much more! [www.tvap.net](http://www.tvap.net). Open from 10.30am until 3.30pm. Bring picnic. If the weather's nice bring swimming costumes for the paddling pool!

## **Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> August:**

**Oxrad Sports Centre, Oxford:** An integrated sports centre where we will have the sports hall for trampolining and a bouncy castle. We will also have use of the sensory room and spa bath. [www.oxrad.com](http://www.oxrad.com) Meet from 10am until 4pm. Bring swimming costumes and a picnic.

## **Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> August:**

**Trains at Prospect Park, Reading:** A chance to ride on a train around a purpose built track. 1.30pm – 4pm

## **Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> August:**

**Thomley Hall, Worminghall:** A large adventure playground with art and craft rooms, free play rooms, music room, soft play room including a ball pool, a large well equipped outdoor playground with bikes and zip wire etc and a sensory room. [www.thomleyhall.org](http://www.thomleyhall.org)

Opens from 10am until 3.30pm. Bring a picnic.

**To find out more or to book these activities or for more information about Look Oxfordshire call Julie Hinton on 01189 722322. ■■■**

## **Petrolheads**

Petrolheads is a newly set-up group following a visit to thrilling Gaydon Car Museum earlier in the year. It is open to anyone who is interested in motor vehicles and is visually impaired. Of course friends, family and carers are also welcome. We had a recent visit to the Witney motor show, and saw a wide range of vehicles from Mini Minor to Porsche and beyond! We met with local car enthusiasts who came up with some good ideas of places to go. We usually meet on the first Thursday of each month, although this may change depending on our event for that month. If you are interested, please contact Sarah Salcombe on 01993 771828 or e-mail [sarah.salcombe@fsmail](mailto:sarah.salcombe@fsmail) ■■■

### **Avoid disappointment Make an appointment!**

In order to give you the best possible service, we need to know you are coming to see us. Then we can ensure that the right person is here to give you the best possible help. So, we would be very grateful if you could please ring us on 01865 725595 and make an appointment!

## **VIBNO**

VIBNO is a group for the 18 –50 age group in Oxfordshire to meet socially and have fun.

We meet once a month on the first Wednesday of the month. We alternate between a meeting at a pub and then on the other month we do something completely different.

So if you are a VIP aged between 18 and 50 and want to socialise and have fun with people alike come and join us. Partners, friends and family are welcome to all events.

Since the last newsletter we have enjoyed playing Aunt Sally at the pub in Kidlington with Colin and David from OAB.

For more information and details of our programme please contact Nicola Pamphilon 01869 331778 or e-mail [flashnp@aol.com](mailto:flashnp@aol.com) ■■■

## **Wantage Blind Club**

A social club for partially sighted and blind people living locally. Meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month from February to December at the Wantage Day Centre from 3-5pm where members can socialise over afternoon tea. A raffle is held and there is often entertainment. There is also an annual outing. Transport is available by Special Transport Ambulance or in volunteer's cars. For more information call Hazel Aldred on 01235 765849.



## **Stay safe, stay put**

When one's vision is compromised, those DIY jobs that one used to take for granted take on another degree of difficulty.

Now help is at hand for older and disabled homeowners, living in the Vale or South Oxfordshire, to carry out small repairs or adaption's to their homes.

The Small Repairs Service run by Anchor Staying Put can help with small jobs that other contractors are unwilling to do.

The service has so far helped more than 4000 residents in the district with a whole range of work including: installing door and window locks, fitting grab rails, repairs to woodwork, fitting keysafes, changing taps and other small plumbing jobs.

The service also carries out a variety of other checks to ensure that smoke detectors are installed; that there are adequate security measures, and help in identifying any other potential hazards in the home.

Advice is free but if work is carried out you will be expected to pay the cost of materials plus labour at a charge of £15.00 per hour.

Anchor Small Repairs is supported by South Oxford District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council.

For more information or to request the service, please contact 01491 823895.

## **Sweet Electric Dreams**

Well, here we are, all flushed and suitably tanned from basking in summers glory, the roadside verges are brown and bare, heat haze shimmers over Oxfordshire and once again it is time to think about..... electric blankets?

Well it never hurts to be prepared and as well all know, making sure that the electric blanket is still safe to use is a very sensible thing to do. Oxfordshire County Council has helped organise free electric blanket tests around the county on the following dates:

**Didcot 4<sup>th</sup> October**  
**Witney 5<sup>th</sup> October**  
**Oxford 6<sup>th</sup> October**  
**Bicester 7<sup>th</sup> October**  
**Abingdon 8<sup>th</sup> October**  
**Thame 18<sup>th</sup> October**  
**Banbury 19<sup>th</sup> October**  
**Chipping Norton 20<sup>th</sup> October**  
**Oxford 21<sup>st</sup> October**  
**Wantage 22<sup>nd</sup> October**

This free service is very popular and so it is offered by pre-booked appointment only and on a first come, first served basis. So don't delay! To book your appointment call 01865 815607 and then you can look forward to a warm bedtime winter of bliss-content. (Apologies to Mr Shakespeare)

# Clubs and groups for VIPs in Oxfordshire

## Abingdon & District Macular Group

Daphne Baker 01491 835157

## Banbury Society for the Visually Impaired

Enid Smith 01295 269568

## Bicester Friends of the Visually Impaired

Mrs Peggy Clarke 01869 242290

## Carterton Social Club

Rosemary Gibbens 01993 846825

## Chipping Norton Friends of the Blind

Mary Gregory 01608 810899

## Didcot/Wallingford OAB affiliated

Pam Organ 01235 813391

Dorothy Drummond 01235 812614

## Faringdon representative

Jean Young 01367 241467

## Henley VIP Group

Mike Pooley 01491 628284

## Look Oxfordshire Support for families of VI children

Alison Baker 01235 868262

## Kidlington Macular Group

Tom Wright 01865 376482

Marita Ferrett 01865 373104

## Oxford Macular Group

Daphne Dorman 01993 811084

## Oxford Visually Impaired Club

Mary Gregory 01608 810899

## 'Oxpots' Pottery Class

Christopher Barry 01608 730407

## Thame and District Society for the Visually Handicapped

Norman Lilley 01844 261041

## Visually Impaired But Not Old!

Nicola & Kevin Pamphilon 01869 331778

## VIVA, North Oxford

Liaison Officer, Ron Sears 01865 553063

## Wantage Blind Social Club

Mrs Mary Greenfield 01235 764646

Secretary Hazel Aldred 01235 765849

## Witney Area Visually Impaired Group

Mandy Bishop 01993 706824

## Oxfordshire Social Services Sensory Impairment Team

A county-wide team of specially trained staff who can assess, advise, support, teach and inform people of all ages with sight problems:

Sensory Impairment Teams,

Oxfordshire Social  
& Community Services,  
Foxcombe Court,  
Wyndyke Furlong,  
Abingdon Business Park,  
Abingdon,  
OX14 1DZ

Telephone 01235 549395

### VI Team

Beverley Downs  
Kate Laybourne  
Elizabeth Jones  
Meg Jones  
Serena Glister  
Sue Miles

### Manager

John Fearn-Webster

Out of hours social services, emergency freephone 0800 833408.

## Dominos Pizza

I have fond memories of the family congregating to my Grandmother's house on Saturday afternoons pulling out the old green baize game table and playing dominos for matches in a smoke filled living room until teatime. This has come to mind because one of the best sellers recently from our centre at Bradbury Lodge are the excellent dominos! They are white in colour with black spots, which makes them easier to see for those of us with residual vision and, instead of being indented the spots are actually raised, which makes tactile identification much simpler. There are two sets of 28 and 55 pieces costing £7.50 and £8.50 respectively. For more information or to order call us on 01865 725595. ■■■

## Driving Blind?

Scientists are developing a car designed which blind people can drive. Non-visual aids include sensors indicating turns in the road via vibrating gloves. Puffs of compressed air on the face will alert the driver to obstacles and a vibrating vest to give feedback on speed, definitely unfeasible if you are at all ticklish! Other aids to be fitted include a steering wheel with audio cues and spoken commands indicating the car's direction. The prototype is expected to be publicly tested by a blind driver in January but don't worry, you won't have to stay indoors as it will take place on the Daytona race track in Florida. ■■■

## Raffle Results

This year's raffle was drawn by an anonymous OAB service user on the 12<sup>th</sup> of July. It was won by Mr Sydenham from Clifton who, as you can imagine, was "absolutely delighted" with the £200 cheque that he received. The second prize of £50 was won by a man who asked that he may remain anonymous and who kindly returned his winnings to OAB by way of a donation – a gesture which we greatly appreciate and are grateful for. The third prize of six bottles of wine went to a woman in Goring-on-Thames.

Unfortunately, a number of people returned raffle books to us with a note requesting that that we do not send tickets to them in the future but, crucially, without any address or contact details attached – meaning that we can not act upon their request. If you don't want to receive raffle books from OAB in the future, please contact us to say so. We do wish to respect your wishes.

We are pleased to say that, the raffle raised more than £2,000 for OAB and the services that we provide. We would like to thank every person who entered the competition or who sold their tickets to their friends, family and colleagues. Good luck for next year! ■■■

The chairman and  
executive committee invite you to the  
**Annual General Meeting**  
of the  
**Oxfordshire Association**  
**for the Blind**

at 2.00pm on

Tuesday 7th September 2010

at the  
North Oxford Association, Community Centre,  
Diamond Place, Summertown,  
Oxford, OX2 7DP.

Please note that nominations for office and resolutions must be  
made to us by Monday 16th August 2010

Car parking available, call 01865 725595 for more details

**RSVP**

*Please write your name on the dotted line and return to*

**Colin Cure, Director**  
**Oxfordshire Association for the Blind,**  
**Bradbury Lodge, Gordon Woodward Way,**  
**Abingdon Road, Oxford, OX1 4XL.**

*Or*

Telephone : (01865) 725595

*Or*

e-mail : [director@oxeyes.org.uk](mailto:director@oxeyes.org.uk)

I .....will attend the A.G.M.