



Oxfordshire
Association for the Blind

Newsletter

May 2018

What's in a name?

Quite a bit, I hear you say. I'd like to thank everyone who has been involved in our endeavours to find a new name for the charity. As I mentioned before, our present name has served us well over many years and now, after consultation with many members and other interested parties, we are looking to move forward with a new name that emphasises that we are there for all people with a sight impairment. We've had lots of great suggestions and offers of help with the re-branding which goes with the process. We've also had generous sponsorship from Morgan's Optometrists in Kidlington for a new video about our services. Altogether, we're trying to be as accessible and available to as many

people as possible. At the time of writing we're still considering all of the great suggestions and looking into the processes that we have to undertake to make the change. On a sad note, I have to report that Ellie Pearce, our excellent Volunteer Coordinator and Children, Young People and Families Worker has departed for pastures new. We are most grateful for all Ellie's hard work for us and wish her every success in her new role.

We are pleased, however, to welcome Laura Finnis, who is taking up the role of Children, Young People and Families Worker. Laura brings with her a wealth of experience of working with younger people and I know that she is keen to get started with a range of exciting activities.

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

Telephone: 01865 725595

Email: admin@oxeyes.org.uk

Website: www.oxeyes.org.uk

Opening Hours: 9am to 4pm Mon-Fri

I'd also like to congratulate Judith Wood, our Counsellor and Senior Sight Advisor. Judith has reached the top three in the BBC Radio 4 "All in the Mind" Series Awards.

The awards recognise outstanding contribution towards helping people through major emotional difficulties. Well done, Judith. This recognition is much deserved.

As many of you will know, Judith has worked very closely with the Oxford Eye Hospital, including more recently Consultant Ophthalmologist Gurjeet Jutley. Gurjeet has kindly agreed to do a series of talks at OAB about eye conditions. Gurjeet is also kindly raising funds for us by doing the gruelling 3 Peaks Challenge. There are details further on in this newsletter about both these items.

Finally, I'd like to thank all those of you who kindly renewed or took out membership of OAB recently. That is a great help to us. Welcome to the Association. If you have not joined or renewed recently and would like to do so, please give us a call. We'd be delighted to

speaking with you.

I hope you have a great Summer. Best wishes, Colin.

Addventure in learning

Add-venture In Learning is a registered charity which organises residential breaks for visually impaired adults who have a thirst for learning and enjoy socialising with other like-minded people. The organisation is run by a volunteer committee of both sighted and visually impaired people.

The courses are held in different parts of the country. A sighted guide assists each visually impaired person and guide dogs are welcome.

Accommodation can vary from hotels to outdoor centres or university halls. Participants must make their own way to the venue, but these are not usually far from a railway station. Course content varies according to the topic and may include talks and associated visits.

If you are interested in attending any of the breaks or would like to go on our mailing list then please contact Isobell on 07731 867931

phillipsisobell@yahoo.ie or Barbara on 01460 281226 mrickitt@hotmail.com .

You may like to visit our website

www.add-ventureinlearning.org.uk

We would love to hear from you.

Eye Condition Talk at OAB

As mentioned in Colin's introduction, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, Mr Gurjeet Jutley has kindly offered to present a number of talks at OAB about eye conditions. On Friday 15th June from 2pm to 3.30pm, Mr Jutley will be speaking about Glaucoma. If you would like to attend, please do give Colin a call. But hurry, places are limited. Here are some details of Mr Jutley's credentials:

Mr Jutley is a Consultant

Ophthalmic surgeon at the Oxford Eye Hospital, with subspecialty interest in glaucoma, trauma and complex cataract surgery. He completed ophthalmology training in the prestigious North Thames deanery, including five years at both Moorfields and Western Eye hospitals.

He is a lecturer at the University College London Ophthalmology MSc, author of the popular textbook 'Ophthalmology at a glance' and sets exams for the International Council of Ophthalmology. He has multiple international presentations, textbook chapters, peer-reviewed publications and has won five post-graduate prizes, including the Ethicon scholarship.

He is the lead for glaucoma at the Eye Hospital, offering minimally invasive glaucoma surgery (MIGS) and endoscopic cyclophotocoagulation laser treatments. Mr Jutley provides services for cataract surgery, medical management of glaucoma, laser treatments for glaucoma, conventional glaucoma surgery

(including both trabeculectomy and tube surgeries) and MIGS.

Memories of Ron

A tribute to Ron Sears: 9th December 1932 to 27th January 2018.

It is with much sadness that we learned of the passing of our dear friend Ron Sears. I first met Ron eleven years ago on my initial visit to the vibrant VIVA Club (Vision Impaired Visually Active). Ron was very welcoming and as Chairperson of the Club was clearly ensuring that the sight impaired members were being well catered for, with regular informative meetings and a friendly supportive environment. Ron was keen that he, the Club and OAB worked together for the benefit of sight impaired people. Ron was always available to give advice and help, and this was much appreciated given Ron's long experience of his own sight impairment and also his long career working as a fundraiser, with a large area to cover, for the Royal National Institute of Blind People. As a marker of his success, Ron was

the first fundraiser in the South West District to raise £100,000 in a year! Ron was a very dedicated and determined person who demonstrated what could be achieved in spite of total blindness. Ron travelled around extensively and I remember that when I arrived at OAB, he was the first blind person to be regularly sending me email messages and I often referred to this when giving talks about what sight impaired people are able to do. I enjoyed spending time with Ron and his wife, Margaret and I particularly liked his keen sense of humour. Most of all, I admired his determination to do everything possible to assist sight impaired people to have the best opportunities in life. I will miss him very much. Colin.

Meet Rosia

Hello. My name is Rosia Curtis and I recently joined OAB as a Fundraising Officer. I am mainly working on applications to trusts and foundations but I will also be involved in events, community fundraising and marketing. I've been working

here since November and I absolutely love it! OAB is such an inspiring organisation to work for and it is also exceptionally welcoming and friendly. Prior to joining OAB, I was working as a trust fundraiser for another local charity, and also as a freelance writer and editor. I still do some freelance work – mainly as a biographer for a company called Story Terrace. I also have two young sons who keep me busy!

I've previously worked for a number of charities. I've worked with people who are bereaved, with the traveller community and with adults with learning disabilities. However, I hadn't worked in the field of visual impairment before. I'm really appreciating learning more about it from staff and clients, and also learning about all the assistive equipment and technology that is available.

We are really busy in the fundraising team. There is a lot

happening and a lot is planned. I think it's a really exciting time for OAB as we begin our rebrand and seek to develop and expand a number of our services – technology training, support for children and families, and community outreach.

I really love writing and it feels like a privilege to write about all the great things that are going on at OAB (and even more so when we are able to get funding!). I'm really looking forward to our work as we go forward and I hope that we will have some big successes and developments to report on.

Thank you so much for making me feel so welcome!

Breaking news for AMD research

The first patients to receive a new treatment derived from stem cells for people with wet age-related macular degeneration (AMD) have regained enough vision to be able to read.

The study is a major milestone for the London Project to Cure Blindness, which was funded by the Macular Society in 2008.

The two patients who underwent the procedure, a woman in her early 60s and a man in his 80s, had wet AMD and declining vision.

The study investigated whether the diseased cells at the back the patients' affected eye could be replenished using the stem cell based patch. A specially engineered surgical tool was used to insert the patch under the retina in the affected eye of each patient in an operation lasting one to two hours. For more information contact the Macular Society on: 0300 3030 111

RNIB Living with sight loss course

- Have you or a family member been diagnosed with sight loss?
- Would you like to share experiences with other people in similar situations?

- Are you interested in finding out about services available to you?

Our free, informal, community-based courses and phone groups provide information, advice, support and practical solutions for people adjusting to sight loss and those close to them.

We aim to help you adjust to your sight condition, increase your independence and boost your confidence. You'll get the chance to meet and share experiences with others in similar situations.

Sessions include:

- Welfare rights
- Getting out and about
- Tips and gadgets for everyday living
- Assistive technology – computers, tablets, phones
- Eye health
- Wellbeing
- Leisure, hobbies and interests

Plus, you'll hear about a range of organisations and local

groups about services out there to help you.

It's taking place on **Thursday 7 and Thursday 14 June 2018, 10.00am to 3.30pm** at Oxfordshire Association for the Blind, Bradbury Lodge, Gordon Woodward Way, Oxford, Oxfordshire, OX1 4XL

You are welcome to bring along a family member or friend with you.

Book your free place today!

Call us on 0300 123 3933

Email us at

lwslenquiries@rnib.org.uk

Visit our website

[www.rnib.org.uk/
livingwithsightloss](http://www.rnib.org.uk/livingwithsightloss)

Audio Described theatre trip

Wednesday 20th June 7.30pm
HairSpray the musical will have an audio described performance at the New Theatre Oxford. Tickets are £14 each please call Gwen Cruden for more information: 01865 373378.

British Blind Sport Have-A-Go Sports Taster Day

Date: 25th June 2018

Time: 9:45am - 2pm

Venue: White Horse Leisure & Tennis Centre, Audlett Drive, Abingdon, OX14 3PJ.

This taster day will allow all participants to try out a variety of different sports, including archery, rock climbing, trampolining, roller hockey and others.

Booking in advance is essential.

The link for registration is: <https://>

[britishblindsport.wufoo.eu/
forms/w1blxjs10b1rt26/](https://britishblindsport.wufoo.eu/forms/w1blxjs10b1rt26/)

Alternatively, contact Alex Pitts, Participation Officer at British Blind Sport on 07929 356 428 or email

alex@britishblindsport.org.uk.

Gurjeet's challenge

Consultant Ophthalmologist Gurjeet Jutley will be taking on the gruelling 3 peaks challenge for OAB. Here is what he had to say about it: "At an early stage at medical school, I had a

passion for voluntary work. Whether organising fundraising events or helping build orphanages, helping those in need was the main reason I read medicine.

As my career progressed, I took the skills I accrued to use them in the most useful way possible. As a trainee surgeon, I volunteered in eye camps in India and worked in Bangladesh, affording insight into how satisfying helping those who have great need is.

More over, by engaging in conversations with these patients, I fully began to understand the impact of sight loss, both the physical and mental aspects.

I vowed I would give back as much as I could.

Since March 2017, I have been associated with the OAB. Initially through Ana and Mark, although now I feel as though I know the whole gang and am part of the family! The work they do is awe inspiring and

give hope/love to those who truly need it. It's my honour to have the opportunity to go to the oab and give monthly talks: the inner joy I get cannot be matched. I hope we can raise awareness and funds for the noble ideals the oab stand for through the three peaks challenge by two unfit doctors!

You can sponsor Gurjeet by going to: www.justgiving.com/fundraising/threepeaksoab or contact the fundraising team.

Dreaming Spires ten pin bowling

We have just qualified for the BBS Trios finals in Sheffield. We are the defending champions from last year. We will be starting our summer league soon. Come and join us at the bowling alley near the Kassam Stadium. All levels of bowlers are welcome. Why not come along and try a great sport. Contact: Kevin Pamphilon

01869 331778

OAB is assisted by:



Listening Learning Leading



OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL



Henley-on-Thames
Town Council

Why I'm leaving a legacy to OAB

Being a volunteer with Oxfordshire Association for the Blind has literally been an eye opening experience that has made me truly thankful for the wonderful gift of sight, which, like most people, I had always taken for granted. I realise that I am very fortunate. Not everyone will have the chance to meet OAB's inspiring clients. Not everyone will see first-hand the dedication and hard work that the staff put in to helping their clients live happy, fulfilled and normal lives. But there is something that everyone can do. Like me you can leave OAB a legacy in your will. It's quick and simple to do and will make a huge difference to the lives of blind and partially sighted people. Please don't wait until it is too late.

Jackie Orchard, OAB volunteer home visitor

Sculpture exhibition

We have been given special permission to touch and feel the sculptures that are on

display; access that is not normally available to the general public.

Prior booking is essential to qualify for the discount. Limited transport is being arranged from OAB.

Date: 27th June 2018

Time 12 noon

Venue: Asthall Manor, Asthall, Burford OX18 4HW

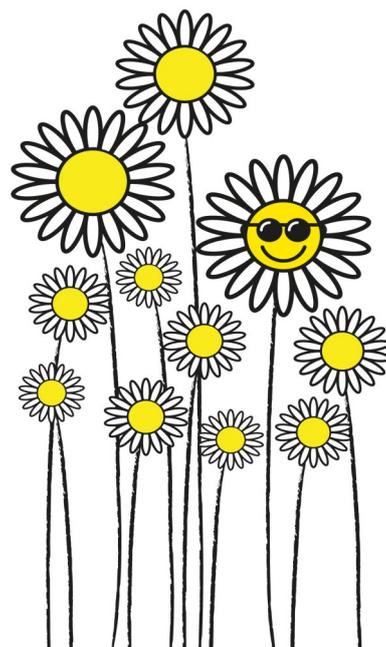
Cost: £5 (with the OAB group); £10 otherwise

Contact:

Guy Lawfull
(guylawfull@oxeyes.org.uk) or call OAB.

GDPR

You may have heard of the new General Data Protection Regulation. We are working to institute all of the appropriate procedures. We hope to be in touch with you in due course.



Summary of OAB services

OAB works to support sight impaired people and their carers, through:

Advice and Information – on any matter relating to sight impairment.

Emotional Support and Professional Counselling - to sight impaired people.

Specialist Equipment Demonstration - an opportunity to try things out.

Free 2nd hand equipment provision – we are often able to provide free of charge, electronically tested equipment which has been donated to us.

Sight Advisory Service at the Eye Hospital - information and signposting.

Home Visiting - home visits, in and around Oxford, Kidlington and Abingdon.

Social Groups - a chance to meet other people with similar difficulties.

Technology – information and training sessions in using new technology.

Radio/CD/Cassette Players – provision of sets to people who meet the criteria.

Practical Sessions – Opportunities for groups to learn together.

Children, Young People and Families – information and activity programme.

Newsletter – of useful information in large print and listening versions.

Training – for organisations in assisting a sight impaired person.

Local clubs and groups

Abingdon & District Macular Group – 01235 531857.

ActivEyes – 01865 725595

Banbury Macular Group – 01608 685293.

Banbury Society for the Visually Impaired – 01295 269568.

Chipping Norton Group – 01608 810899.

Didcot / Wallingford Visually Impaired Group – 01235 813391.

Dreaming Spires ten pin bowling – 01869 331778

Goring Macular Group – 01865 725595.

Henley Visually Impaired Group – 01491 628284.

Kidlington Macular Group – 01865 376482 or 01865 373104.

LOOK Oxfordshire – support for families of visually impaired children. 01189 722322.

Oxford Macular Group – 01993 811084.

‘OXVIC’ – Oxford Visually Impaired Club – 01865 725595.

Retinitis Pigmentosa Group - 01235 511044

Thame & District Society for the

Visually Impaired – 01844 212983.

‘VIBNO’ – Visually Impaired But Not Old! - 01869 331778.

Wantage Blind Social Club - 01235 764646 or 01235 765849.

Witney Area Visually Impaired Group – 01865 725595.

Witney Macular Group – 01993 771828.

Sensory Impairment Team

The County Council has an excellent team of specially trained staff supporting people of all ages affected by sensory impairment.

Their telephone no. is: **01865 894935.**

Carers Oxfordshire

Is a service for anyone who is caring for another person and would like some support. Their no. is: **0845 0507666**

