**Monthly What’s On E-Newsletter for January 2024**

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# Monthly What’s On Guide

Welcome to your monthly update of local accessible services and events across Wiltshire and Swindon.

In this update we have primarily included dates for January, there are some events that are later in the year to give you time if you need to plan ahead. Next month’s guide will be sent out at the end of January 2024.

# Contact Us

For more information on any of the services or events organised by Wiltshire Sight, please call 01380 723682 or email: info@wiltshiresight.org

Also follow us on [facebook@wiltssight](https://www.facebook.com/wiltssight) to keep up to date with what we are up to.

# Wiltshire Sight Events and Notices

## We say a sad farewell to our Community Sight Loss Advisor Alison

Our Community Sight Loss Advisor Alison, who covers South Wiltshire, will be leaving Wiltshire Sight in January to move to a new city. She has been such an invaluable part of Wiltshire Sight and we are very sad to see her go, but we wish her every success for this new chapter in her life. Alison says:

“I will be leaving my role as Sight Advisor for South Wiltshire on the 18th January.  My husband has been offered a new job and we have decided to move.

I have enjoyed meeting so many wonderful clients in my nearly 5 years working at Wiltshire Sight.  Many of you will have been to one of my hubs in Amesbury, Warminster and Tisbury as well as my weekly visit to the Wiltshire Sight Charity shop in Salisbury.

I wish you all lck going forwards, Alison.”

Best of luck Alison, you will be missed.  The Hubs and Resource Centre in Salisbury will now be under the care of a new advisor who we will introduce you to in February.

## Seeking Trustees

Wiltshire Sight is currently looking for interested people to join our Board of Trustees. The Board meet four times a year, either in person or on Zoom, to review progress and finances and ensure the organization is moving in the right direction. We would welcome any members of the sight loss community who are interested in being part of the team – if you would like a brief chat about what is involved, please do give us a call and ask for Mike, or email and we can send you a role description.

## ****Your Local Hub May Have Changed****

Please note that some of our hubs have changed, either the time, day, venue or availability to drop in. Please check details of your local hub before attending, you can either check our website or see the listings in this newsletter. [Website listings of hubs and social groups](https://www.sightsupportwest.org.uk/events/)

## ****New charity shop and Resource Centre in Trowbridge!****

We are delighted to announce that on the 8th of December at 9.30 am we will be opening a fantastic new Wiltshire Sight Hub in Trowbridge. There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony at 9.30 am before we open for the first time and between 4 and 5 pm we are having drinks and nibbles and would love if you could come along to celebrate with us.

The hub will be a charity shop combined with a fully equipped resource centre. We are situated in the centre of Trowbridge at 27B Fore Street, Trowbridge, BA14 8EW.

Our new charity shop will be open Monday to Saturday 9 am to 5 pm, Sundays 10 am to 4 pm and will be full of high-quality women’s, men’s and children’s clothing, books, homeware, toys and bric-a-brac for purchase. It has been made accessible for people with sight loss having wide pathways, high contrast colours for the till area and door frames, and a till system which can be used by visually impaired volunteers. The shop will raise income to fund our services across the region.

Our resource centre will be open on Friday the 15th of December for sight loss advice by pre-booked appointments – please call us to book (please note this is the new venue for the Trowbridge Hub).

We are very excited about our third Wiltshire Sight charity shop and are incredibly grateful to everyone who has helped us make this happen – our supporters, our volunteers and those who have generously donated such high-quality items.  As a small local charity, we rely on your support, so please keep your donations coming.

Additionally, we are looking for volunteers to help us with the shop, so if you or anyone you know is interested in volunteering, we’d love to hear from you, either call us or email our Volunteer Coordinator Becs becs.thurgur@sightsupportwest.org.uk

## Blindingly Funny Comedy Night

Our partner charity, Sight Support West of England, proudly present **Blindingly Funny** – an evening of comedy, confessions and compassion.

It will be held at the wonderful Tobacco Factory in Bristol, on the evening of Tuesday 6th of February from 7.30pm.

There is a fabulous line up of 5 acts – the best comedians you may have never heard of, poetry perfection and proof that you don’t need to be blind to be funny though it helps! The acts are:

* Louise Leigh, Bristol based comedian who will be the magnificent MC.
* Si Deaves, who is a writer and podcaster as well as being described as one of the country’s most original undiscovered performers.
* David C Johnson – he has been described as Bristol’s answer to John Hegley.
* Lizzy Lenco – We don’t often think of blindness as funny – but that doesn’t stop the lovely Lizzy! Think disability, heavy metal and cream cakes – that will give you the idea!
* Jake Donaldson, who is headlining on the Blindingly Funny night, describes himself as visually impaired and perpetually anxious. However, this does not stop him being a sex-magnet and supremely funny.

Tickets cost just £15 and are available from the Tobacco Factory Theatres website on the link below or you can call them on 0117 902 0344. [Buy tickets to Blindingly Funny on The Tobacco Factory Theatres website](https://tobaccofactorytheatres.com/shows/blindingly-funny/)

Buying a ticket for Blindingly Funny is one of the many ways you can support the important work of Sight Support West of England. Tickets to this event would also make a fantastic Christmas present!

### There’s ****even more!****

You also have the chance to win a pair of tickets to see superstar Sarah Millican at the Bristol Beacon on Friday the 5th of July 2024 – see our dedicated page by clicking the button below or buy your tickets on the night!

[Sarah Millican raffle – win 2 tickets!](https://www.sightsupportwest.org.uk/get-involved/raffle-sarah-millican/)

**We hope to see you on the night and please help us by spreading the word!**

## Wiltshire Sight Closure Over Christmas

Over the Christmas break our office in Devizes will be closed from the end of Friday on the 22rd of December and will reopen on Tuesday the 2nd of January 2024. Hubs will also not take place during this time.

## VIP’s Calendars and Diaries Available

We are taking orders for large print A4, A5 and A6 diaries and A3 calendars for 2024. These calendars and diaries are designed specifically for visually impaired people.

6 Pocket Diary £6.50

A5 Midi Diary £8.50

A4 Desk Diary £10.50

A4 Jumbo Diary £21.00

A3 Portrait Calendar £8.00

A3 Landscape Calendar £8.00

If you would like to order a calendar or diary, you can do so by calling us when we are open again on the 2nd of January.

## Would you like to help shape our work over the next few years?

We are looking for blind or partially sighted people in the West of England to join our Client Advisory Group. The Client Advisory Group focuses on reviewing our services, ensuring feedback from service users informs our planning and development. We know that our work has the most impact when it is led by blind and partially sighted people.

The Group is friendly and informal and meets over Zoom every 6 to 8 weeks. If you are interested in knowing more about the Group and potentially getting involved, we would love to hear from you. For more information see our website [Our Client Advisory Group - Sight Support West of England](https://www.sightsupportwest.org.uk/who-we-are/advisory-board/), call us or email Glenda.prall@sightsupportwest.org.uk

# Wiltshire Sight Community Hubs& Socials

Here is a listing of our community hubs and social groups coming up this month. Find all up to date information on our website at [Events - Sight Support West of England](https://www.sightsupportwest.org.uk/events/eye-can-bath/) (please note our website is shared with our partner charity Sight Support).

**Hubs** – At our Sight Loss Advice hubs you will find information, guidance, and advice. Our Sight Loss Advisors can demonstrate a variety of assistive equipment and technology. They have lighting, magnifiers, talking watches, liquid level indicators and much more, so please think about coming along. For some hubs you will need to book an appointment but others you can just pop along, check each hub listing for more information.

**Social Groups** - Some of our Hubs have a volunteer led social group running alongside them, and some social groups take place independently of a hub. Our social groups are a place where people with sight loss can come together, share experiences, swap tips and tricks for living with sight loss and most importantly chat, relax, and enjoy each other’s company. Our groups are run by lovely volunteers who will make you feel welcome. Sight loss doesn’t have to mean being isolated, so why not come along to one of our friendly social groups.

## Amesbury Sight Loss Advice Hub – Appointment Only

Evergreen Court Community Café, Archers Way, SP4 7YT

2nd Wednesday of month, 10am to 12pm: 10th January 2024.

Appointment only, contact us to book.

## Bradford on Avon – Appointment Only

Wallington Hall, Church Street, BA15 1LN

1st Wednesday of the month, 10am to 12pm: 3rd January 2024 Appointment only, contact us to book.

## Calne Sight Loss Advice Hub & Social Group - closed for December.

Calne Leisure Centre, White Horse Way, Calne, SN11 0SP

4th Thursday of the month: Closed for December, 26th January 2024.

* Drop in to see your advisor between 10.30am & 11.30am.
* Appointments available – contact us to book.
* Social group at this hub between 10.30am & 12.30pm.

## Chippenham Sight Loss Advice Hub & Social Group.

Community Hub, Borough Parade, SN15 3WL

2nd Wednesday of the month: 10th January 2024.

* Drop in to see your advisor between 10am & 11am.
* Appointments available – contact us to book.
* Social group at this hub between 10am & 12pm.

## Corsham Sight Loss Advice Hub & Social Group

The Pound Arts Centre, Pound Hill, SN13 9HX

2nd Tuesday of the month: 9th January 2024.

* Drop in to see your advisor between 10am & 11am.
* Appointments available – contact us to book.
* Social group at this hub is between 10am & 12pm.

## Cricklade Sight Loss Advice Hub – Appointment Only

Cricklade Library, High Street, Cricklade, SN6 6AE

3rd Tuesday of the month 10.30am to 12.30pm: 16th January 2024. Appointment only, contact us to book.

## Devizes Resource Centre – Appointment Only

Devizes Resource Centre, St Lucy’s Sight Centre, Browfort, Bath Road, Devizes, SN10 2AT.

Our resource centre is available every Wednesday for appointments, contact us to book yours.

## Devizes Social Group

Devizes Resource Centre, St Lucy’s Sight Centre, Browfort, Bath Road, Devizes, SN10 2AT.

1st Tuesday of each month, 10.30am to 12.30pm: 2nd January 2024.

## Highworth Sight Loss Advice Hub – Appointment Only

Highworth Community Centre, The Dormers, Highworth, Swindon SN6 7PQ. Use Rear Entrance for level access, large car park at rear of building.

2nd Wednesday of the month 10.30am to 12.30pm: 10th January 2024. Appointment only, please contact us to book.

## Malmesbury Sight Loss Advice Hub & Social Group

Malmesbury Town Hall, Cross Hayes, SN16 9BZ

2nd Thursday of the month: 11th January 2024

* Drop in to see your advisor between 10am & 11am.
* Appointments available – contact us to book.
* Social group at this hub between 10am & 12pm.

## Marlborough Sight Loss Advice Hub & Social Group

The Jubilee Centre, 28 High Street, Marlborough SN8 1LW.

2nd Tuesday of each month: 9th January 2024.

* Drop in to see your advisor between 10am & 11am.
* Appointments available – contact us to book.
* Social group at this hub between 10am & 12pm.

## Melksham Sight Loss Advice Hub & Melksham Community Tea

Riverside Club, Bath Road, SN12 6LP

1st Thursday of the month: 4th January 2024.

* Drop in to see your advisor between 1pm & 2pm.
* Appointments available – contact us to book.
* Social group at this hub between 1pm & 3pm.

## Pewsey Sight Loss Advice Hub – closed for December.

Bouverie Village Hall, North Street, SN9 5EQ

4th Tues of the month, 10.00 to 12.00am: 23rd January 2024.

* Drop in to see your advisor between 10am & 11am.
* Appointments available – contact us to book.
* Social group at this hub between 10am & 12pm.

## Royal Wootton Bassett Sight Loss Advice Hub – Appointment Only

Royal Wootton Bassett Library, 11 Borough Fields, Royal Wootton Bassett, Swindon SN4 7AX.

3rd Monday of the month,10.30am to 12.30pm: 15th January 2024. Appointment only, please contact us to book.

## Salisbury Sight Loss Resource Centre

Wiltshire Sight Hub, 23 Catherine Street, SP1 2DQ.

Our Resource Centre in Salisbury is available for appointments, 10am to 4pm on Tuesday 2nd, 9th and 16th of January. From the 22nd of January the day will change to every Monday – appointments are available 22nd and 29th of January 10am to 4pm. Please contact us to book.

## Salisbury Coffee & Convo – New Venue & Time

First floor of Salisbury Library, Market Walk, Salisbury, SP1 1BL.

3rd Wednesday of each month from 10.30 am to 12.30 am: 17th January 2024.

## Swindon Central Sight Loss Advice Hub – Appointment Only

Swindon Central Library, Regent Circus, Swindon, SN1 1QG

1st Tuesday of the month, 10.15am – 1.15pm: 2nd January 2024. Appointment only, please contact us to book.

## Swindon Audiobook Reading Group – Day & Time changed

Swindon Central Library, Ground floor, Regent Circus, Swindon, SN1 1QG.

Usually held on the 1st Monday of each month, 10 to 11.30 am: due to the Bank Holiday in January the Audiobook Reading Group will instead be held on Monday 29th Jan. There is no reading group in February. Back to normal on Monday 4th March 10 – 11.30am.

## Tisbury Sight Loss Advice Hub – Appointment Only, Closed for December.

Nadder Leisure Centre, Weaveland Rd, Tisbury SP3 6HJ

4th Thursday of the month, 11am to 1pm: 25th January. Appointment only, please contact us to book.

## Trowbridge Sight Loss Advice Hub, Appointment Only – New Venue

Wiltshire Sight Charity Shop, 27B Fore Street, Trowbridge, BA14 8EW.

For December: 15th December, appointments available, please contact us to book.

From January our new Resource Centre will be available every Friday for appointments, contact us to book yours.

## Warminster Sight Loss Advice Hub – Appointment Only, Closed for December.

MS Therapy Centre, Bradbury House, The Avenue, Warminster BA12 9AB.

4th Thursday of the month, 2.30pm – 4.30pm: 25th January. Appointment only, please contact us to book.

## Wroughton Sight Loss Advice Hub & Social Group

St Joseph’s Church Hall, Devizes Road, Wroughton SN4 0RZ. 1st Wednesday of the month: 3rd January.

* Drop in to see your advisor between 10am & 11am.
* Appointments available – contact us to book.
* Social group at this hub between 10am & 12pm.

# Events From Other Organisations

These events and notices are from other organisations. Please check with the contact given that the event is going ahead as planned. Sometimes changes need to be made to dates and times at short notice, so it is best to check with the organisation before the event takes place.

# Local Support Groups and Courses

## Retina UK Bristol, Bath & Wilts Peer Support Group Meeting

This Peer Support Group provides a welcoming, safe and friendly opportunity for people to meet up to share experiences, tips and information.

“It would be great to hear your thoughts and ideas for any future potential speakers, activities or places of interest you would like to visit when we start to meet in-person in Spring 2024.”

Meetings are held online via Zoom every 2 months.

[Retina UK Support Group link to register](https://retinauk.org.uk/event/bristol-bath-wilts-local-peer-support-group/)

## Sighted Guide Training from Guide Dogs

Sighted Guide Training from Guide Dogs continues into next year.

Guide Dogs offers a range of free sighted guide training, for people looking to learn the basics of guiding adults with sight loss. There are sessions available for the general public, for friends and family of people with sight loss, and for organisations. There is a handy quiz on the website to help people select which session suits them best: [www.guidedogs.org.uk/sightedguiding](http://www.guidedogs.org.uk/sightedguiding) You can also contact Guide Dogs on 0800 781 1444 – booking available into 2024.

# Leisure and Sporting Activities

## Bowls Club in Chippenham

The Bowls Club in Chippenham are running a weekly indoor bowls club for people with sight loss and other disabilities.  Taking place at North Wilts Bowls Club in Chippenham (near Sainsburys) each Friday 4-5pm, September - Easter.  Coaching is given.  The contact for this club is Maureen on 01249 657228.

## Free Pilates Classes

Based in Woodbrough, SN9. Emma is looking to offer free Pilates classes to people who are blind / partially sighted. Contact Emma 07971 880695. Limited spaces available.

## Disability Bowls Wiltshire

“We are a group of people with various impairments including visual and other physical/mental limitations. The group meet each Saturday in Swindon all through the year to play the sport of Lawn Bowls from social roll ups up to international competition. Our aim is to turn disability into ability by enabling all to play the most accessible sport that exists. We have 4 fully qualified coaches to teach and support anyone every step of the way on their chosen path.”

For more information, please contact Richard Carey using the below details:

rlrc1995@icloud.com 07999003000

## RNIB Social Groups in Swindon

RNIB have two social groups held in Swindon, run by an RNIB member of staff and a volunteer. At these social groups you can relax, chat, and have a tea or coffee.

* 3rd Thursday of each month 11 am to 1 pm.

 Craven House, 145 Victoria Road, Swindon, SN1 3BU

* 4th Tuesday of each month, 5.30 to 6.30 pm

 Pausa Coffee Shop, Dunelm, St Margarets Retail Park,

 Oxford Road, Swindon, SN3 4ES

For more information contact Bernice Cocking on 07761328571 or via email Bernice.Cocking@rnib.org.uk

## **Swindon Bats Sports & Social Club for the Visually Impaired**

Swindon BATS meet for bowling:

1. every Wednesday afternoon 12.15 pm
2. every Thursday 6.45 pm

They meet at the Ten Pin Bowling Centre, Shaw Ridge, Swindon the cost is £5 for 2 games.

Anyone interested in playing should contact Sue Mead by email or phone beforehand to book a place: SueMead@outlook.com or 07788 150487.

They also have a social group which meets at Craven House in Swindon from 2 to 4 pm every other Monday afternoon.  On these occasions they play skittles, indoor kurling and sometimes speakers are organised.  This gives visually impaired people the chance to talk amongst themselves about anything and everything from what’s in the news to how they cope with visually impaired life.

## Find a Sensory Walk near you

Sensory walks allow you to use your senses to connect with your surroundings and Sense have partnered with [**Ordnance Survey**](https://updates-sense.org.uk/6RW-8AFYT-A1ZIP7-559AJL-1/c.aspx) to help you find and follow an accessible route, as you go.

The walks are designed for people with complex disabilities but can be enjoyed by anyone. You can go alone or in a group, you don’t need any specialist equipment and the walks can be any length you like.

You can go on foot, use a wheelchair or walker – sensory walks are inclusive for all. [Find a sensory walk near you - Sense](https://www.sense.org.uk/our-services/arts-sports-activities-for-disabled-people/sensory-walks/find-a-sensory-walk-near-you/?utm_campaign=13924181_Sense%20Active%20Newsletter%20-%20May%202023&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Sense&dm_i=6RW,8AFYT,A1ZIP7,Y339I,1)

# Wiltshire Local Notices

## Swindon Dial-a-Ride

Swindon Dial-a-Ride service provides a door-to-door transport service for people of all ages with limited mobility who are unable to use ordinary buses. The driver will give you any help you need to get on or off the vehicle, they have been designed for easy access and are wheelchair accessible. [About us | Dial A Ride](https://www.dialarideswindon.org.uk/dial-a-ride) Call 01793 616050 or email transport@dialarideswindon.org.uk to register with them.

# Local Audio Described Arts Events

## Salisbury Playhouse

Wiltshire Creative provide an audio description service and touch tours on their own Wiltshire Creative in-house productions at Salisbury Playhouse. The following dates are planned with audio description:

* King Arthur: A Legendary Comedy

Saturday 16th March 2.15 pm

# Online Notices / Support Groups / Webinars

Our information about online resources from other organisations has moved to our website. Please follow the link to find information about support groups / webinars / online social groups / surveys / resources and events that might be of use or interest for anyone living with sight loss.

[Online Resources From Other Organisations -Wiltshire Sight](https://www.sightsupportwest.org.uk/resources/online-resources/)

# End of document

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Wiltshire Sight is a registered charity no 1119462. Registered Office: St Lucy’s Sight Centre, Browfort, Bath Road, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 2AT