# Monthly What’s On Guide

Welcome to your monthly update of accessible services and events in Bristol, Bath & NE Somerset, and South Gloucestershire. This update mainly covers August 2024.

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# Sight Support Events and Notices

## Bristol Eye Can Exhibition

We are busy organising and planning our next exhibition.

Eye Can Bristol will be held on 9th October from 10am at BAWA, 589 Southmead Rd, Bristol, BS34 7RG.

The event is free to attend and is a one stop shop for all things sight loss related. There will be a wide range of suppliers demonstrating equipment and assistive technology designed to make life easier for anyone living with sight loss. It’s a great chance to try them out and find what works best for you. You will also find local and national organisations offering helpful services. In addition, there will be a range of interesting talks held throughout the day. You can pre-register your place by calling us or using our [Eye Can Bristol Eventbrite sign up page](https://eyecanbristol2024.eventbrite.co.uk/)

This event is sponsored by: [Optelec](https://lowvisionshop.co.uk/) and [Humanware](https://www.humanware.com/en-united_kingdom/home)

## Summer Raffle

We're holding a Summer Raffle, and tickets are now available! You may have received some with the latest issue of Visible magazine. Our goal is to raise over £3,000 for our community sight loss service.

To buy tickets, you can:

* Call our office
* Visit our [Summer Raffle webpage](https://www.sightsupportwest.org.uk/get-involved/raffle/)
* Use the return envelope included with Visible to mail us your ticket stubs and payment. Put your name and postcode or phone number on the first ticket; we'll handle the rest. If it's tricky, just send them back with the letter, and we'll fill them in.

We partner with Wiltshire Sight and Insight Gloucestershire for this raffle. If you live in Bristol, BaNES, or South Gloucestershire, you can choose to support our local efforts.

Want to sell more tickets? Contact our office, and we'll send you some.

Good luck!

## Tech Courses

We have a selection of tech courses and sessions taking place this summer:

### Tech Discovery, Have a Go Session

Wednesday 21 Aug 10-12pm @ Broadmead Baptist Church, Union Street, BS1 3HY

Curious about what technology is available to help you independently keep reading and stay connected to friends, family, and your community. Come and try Smart speaker, Tablets, electronic reading aids.

Sessions will also take place at the following sight loss advice Hubs in August. Please call us on 0117 322 4885 to book.

* Thursday 1st August 10-12pm in Kingswood
* Monday 5th August 11-1pm in Henleaze
* Wednesday 7th August 2pm-4pm in Bath
* Thursday 8th August 10-12pm in Yate
* Friday 9th August 10-12pm in Midsommer Norton
* Tuesday 13th August 10-12pm in Thornbury
* Wednesday 14th August 11-1pm in Whitchurch
* Friday 16th August 10-12pm in Keynsham
* Wednesday 21st August 10-12pm in Broadmead

### Beginners Smart Phone and Tablet Training –September.

We will introduce you to the core skills of using a touch screen device. Learn how to navigate around a device and the features which can make it more accessible to you. Be part of the digital world emailing, messaging, using a digital assistant, and helpful Apps. Our 4-week training will take place:

* Mondays In Henleaze
* Tuesdays in Bath
* Wednesdays in Broadmead
* Thursdays in Kingswood

### Contact to book for the Tech Courses

For any of the tech courses or sessions listed above, contact Sam Edwards for more information or to book your place on 0117 322 4885 or sam.edwards@sightsupportwest.org.uk

## Could you represent us?

We are receiving more requests for charity representation at events like awareness talks, cheque presentations, and charity engagements. We're also looking to run fundraising stalls at community events like fairs and information days.

We'd love to hear from you if you're interested in helping, whether it's suggesting events, manning a stall, representing us at ceremonies, or becoming a Volunteer Speaker delivering talks to community groups about your personal story as well as increasing audience understanding of visual impairment and the work and impact of Sight Support (training and support are provided).

To learn more, contact Becs at 07849 833 047 or email volunteering@sightsupportwest.org.uk

# Sight Support Hubs and Social Groups

Our sight loss advice hubs provide a space for consultations with your local advisor, offering information, guidance, and advice on equipment and technology. You can explore a selection of helpful aids, and many hubs also offer tech support and training from trained advisors or volunteers. Additionally, most hubs host social groups where you can meet others, share tips and tricks, and enjoy a chat.

For full details of our sight loss advice hubs and social groups, see our website which has the latest information, or you can call our office on 0117 3224885. [Click here for our website hub and social group listings.](https://www.sightsupportwest.org.uk/events/) You can put your postcode in the search bar to find your nearest hub.

## Changes To Note for Upcoming Hubs

* From September, the Henleaze hub will take place the 1st Tuesday, the 3rd of September, rather than the 1st Monday.
* The Yate social group will not be running throughout August, we will update you once a new venue / day and time has been organised.

# Events & Notices 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.

## University of Bath - Research Opportunity

There is an exciting research opportunity exploring social support for young adults with visual impairment with the University of Bath. The project hopes to explore how the social needs of young adults with a visual impairment are addressed within support groups and how these networks impact their social identities. Willing participants will be invited to confidential interviews held online or over the phone.

Participation criteria include being aged 18-25, being enrolled in a social support group or network, and having lived experience of visual impairment. Please contact the main researcher, Adam Nesbitt, via email: ajn63@bath.ac.uk to enrol.

## Free Alexa Device from British Wireless for the Blind Fund

People living with sight loss can apply for a free Echo Show or Echo Dot device from the British Wireless for the Blind Fund. To qualify, they need to receive certain disability or income-related benefits and have an internet connection at home. Apply for a free Alexa device here: [Referrals - British Wireless for the Blind Fund](https://blind.org.uk/referrals/)

## Cancer Improvement Collaborative Project

The Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Cancer Improvement Collaborative seeks visually impaired participants who have received cancer care in this area for focus groups. Participants can share their experiences to help improve the cancer care pathway. Contact shamim.kholwadia@nbt.nhs.uk or call 07766 220104 if you or a loved one had this experience.

## Schedule of events at The Bristol Braille Innovation Centre

Inviting Braille users interested in 2D electronic Braille on the Canute Console. Events: July 20 (Music, Gaming), Aug 17 (Programmers), Sep 14 (Maps), Oct 5 (Requests, E-Braille). Travel expenses may be covered by Bristol Braille Technology. Contact stephanie@visionthroughsound.co.uk or bbtenquiries@bristolbraille.org

## Sensing Nature – volunteer guides wanted

Volunteer guides at Westonbirt National Arboretum help visitors explore the tree collection, offering multi-sensory "Sensing Nature" walks on Fridays from April to September. Westonbirt are looking for volunteers with varied sensory perceptions, especially those with visual impairments. Volunteers, committing to two 3-hour shifts per month, receive extensive training, mentorship, and support. Enthusiasm for nature and people is essential. Contact the volunteer office at volunteer.westonbirt@forestryengland.uk or 0300 067 4847 for more details and to apply.

## Historic Textiles Research Project

The University of the West of England, Bristol, is digitising historic textiles, focusing on stumpwork embroideries from The Holburne Museum. The project, led by Dr Xavier Aure Calvet, aims to create tactile reproductions for visually impaired audiences. Contact Dr Calvet at xavi.aurecalvet@uwe.ac.uk to join the two focus groups (October and early next year) that will evaluate these reproductions.

## Improving experiences of the NHS for visually impaired people

“Do you get the support you need from the NHS?

Many Visually Impaired (VI) people report being unable to get information such as appointment letters or Patient Information leaflets from their local NHS services in a format they can read and understand independently. Reports also suggest difficulty accessing NHS premises with sometimes inappropriate or even no support from clinical and non-clinical staff when they arrive.

The West of England Sight Loss Council (SLC) and North Bristol NHS Trust (NBT) are working to improve this, and they need your feedback to track progress.

If you've had an appointment or visited NBT sites like Southmead or Cossham Hospitals in the past year, please share your experiences by completing a confidential questionnaire. No personal details are required.

Ways to complete the questionnaire:

* Online: [Microsoft Form: Audit of Visual Impairment Awareness and Support at North Bristol NHS Trust](https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=tVkocm0TkU-bLK_RD7ZUnQ9IPaUjVYRJj-WWFFLhNzZUQ1ZYWDVDSFdLMlQ1V0o2MTVKVE9GMkZMUC4u)
* Request different formats: print, large print, Word version, email content, Braille, or by phone with a Patient Experience Team member.

To request a questionnaire, email Emily.ayling@nbt.nhs.uk or call 0117 414 4573.

Return your responses via:

* Post using a stamped, addressed envelope provided
* Email to the address above
* Braille by post with an "Articles for the Blind" label provided
* Telephone using the number above

Your feedback is vital to improving NHS services for VI people. Thank you.

Heather Armstrong, West of England SLC, Emily Ayling, Head of Patient Experience at NBT”

# Local Leisure and Sporting Activities / Events

For a list of regular sport and leisure groups that don’t change each month and offered by other organisations, please see our website: [Regular sport and leisure groups webpage](https://www.sightsupportwest.org.uk/sport-and-leisure-groups/)

## Exciting opportunity to try a climbing competition

* Inclusive and accessible climbing routes
* Social event with an option to compete against other Paraclimbers
* Prizes and podiums

At TCA Mothership, Bristol on 2nd August from 6pm

Please book here: [Paraclimbing competition booking form](Paraclimbing%20competitions%20booking%20form)

Contact james.rudge@hotmail.co.uk for more details

## New Emersons Green and Surrounding area audio tour

The Emerson's Green Audio Tour offers a free 3.7-mile walk with audio narration on local history, including mining and royal connections. Starting at Emersons Green Library, the 90-minute tour covers 14 points of interest. **Available until September 31,** 2024. Visit [Emersons Green Audio Tour webpage](http://www.emersonsgreenaudiotour.com) for details**.**

## VIP Reading Group – Bristol Central Library, College Green

The reading group, for visually impaired people takes place on the last Thursday of every month from 10.30 till 12. New members are welcome.

Audio books are chosen by members mainly from RNIB’s talking book service so it’s helpful if you have already signed up. The next books are:

* 29 August - A Month in the Country by J L Carr.
* 26 September – Brooklyn by Colm Toibin
* 31 October –The Outsider by Albert Camus. Or L’Etranger for those who want to read it in French

For further information please email vibookgroup.bristol@gmail.com or ring Katharine Seymour at the Central Library on 07880 069877

# Support Groups and Courses

For a list of regular support groups offered by other organisations that take place locally and online, see our website: [Webpage for regular support groups and services](https://www.sightsupportwest.org.uk/support-groups-and-services/)

## Retina UK Groups

**Men’s Peer Support Group**

Thursday 22nd August 7pm - 8.30”pm

**‘Talking’ Tech Peer Support Group**

Thursday 29th August 7pm - 8pm

Register now on this link [Retina UK Peer Support Group](https://retinauk.org.uk/event/bristol-bath-wilts-local-peer-support-group/)

Call 0300 111 4000 or contact Mark.Baxter@retinauk.org.uk for more information.

## Living Paintings - Are you ready for an Olympic Summer?

The 2024 Olympics and Paralympics are just around the corner and Living Paintings have a range of sensory experiences to bring the rich history and visual spectacle of The Games to life through touch and sound. You can order a free pack full of sensory learning experiences, tactile images and audio-guides from a host of Olympic and Paralympic superstars from the [Living Paintings Celebrating the Olympics webpage](https://livingpaintings.org/celebrating-the-olympics-and-paralympics)

## Living Well with Sight Loss Phone Group.

Four sessions – 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th August at 11am

Four sessions – 19th, 21st, 26th and 28th August at 11am

For more info and to register contact:

George.Hinton@rnib.org.uk / 07711 188292

Bernice.Cocking@rnib.org.uk  / 07761 328571

Tricia.Sail@rnib.org.uk / 078439 79975.

# Local Audio Described Arts Events

## Galleries and Museums

### Arnolfini Gallery

Saturday 3 August from 10 – 11am described tour of Adébayo Bolaji’s solo exhibition In Praise of Beauty and work by Nengi Omuku: The Dance of People and the Natural World

Sighted guides available. Complimentary tea and coffee served in the [café bar](https://arnolfini.org.uk/cafe-bar/)  Free event. But please email community@arnolfini.org.uk to book a space.

### Bristol Museum and Art Gallery

**Audio Described Tour and Art Workshop for Families**

5 August, 10:15am – 12:30pm

A fun event exploring the artwork of Constable in Bristol! For visually impaired children and parents / carers. Led by Charlotte Whitten and Bristol Museum staff. For children aged between 5 - 12 years. Older and younger siblings welcome.

[Eventbrite link - Family Tickets](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/constable-in-bristol-audio-described-tour-and-art-workshop-for-children-and-families-tickets-928495614377?aff=oddtdtcreator)

**Audio Described Tour for Adults**

28 August, 6:00pm – 8:45pm

Celebrating John Constable’s iconic painting The Hay Wain, currently on loan from The National Gallery. There will be an opportunity to handle items from the museum’s collection linked to the exhibition.

[Eventbrite link - Adult Tickets](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/constable-in-bristol-truth-to-nature-audio-described-tour-tickets-928515403567?aff=oddtdtcreator)

Email steven.bradley@bristol.gov.uk or call 0117 922 3571 with your contact details and reason for calling.

### Royal West of England Academy

Saturday 10 August from 10.30am - 12.30pm. This tour will explore three exhibitions, Rasheed Araeen: Conscious Forms, Windrush: Portraits of a Pioneering Generation and Valda Jackson: Miss Polly (25 May - 11 August 2024).

There will be certain artworks available to touch during the tour and it will conclude with discussion and refreshments.

To book: email: ellen.pye@rwa.org.uk or call 0117 973 5129 and say whether you will bring a sighted companion or need a volunteer guide.

### Art on Mondays, Victoria Art Gallery, Bath

Meet monthly at Victoria Art Gallery for coffee, biscuits, and a talk by curatorial staff or a visiting speaker on exhibitions and topics from their collections. Sessions run from 10am to 11am. Meet at the Accessible Entrance on Bridge Street.

**Upcoming talks:**

* 9 Sep 2024 at the Roman Baths: Meliha Hussain on "Bathing Beauties"
* 21 Oct 2024: Dr Michael Rowe on 18th & 19th-century antique moulded China.

To book, call 01225 477232.

## Theatres

### Bristol Hippodrome

* 31 July – Disney’s Aladdin
* 21 August - Come from Away – Musical about 7000 air passengers grounded in Canada during the wake of 9/11
* 27 September – Rambert Dance Company in: Peaky Blinders the Redemption of Thomas Shelby
* 11 October – An Inspector Calls
* 21 November – Mary Poppins
* 2 January – Goldilocks and the 3 Bears

Book touch tours separately. Contact Access for All service - email bristoladmin@theambassadors.com or call the access booking line 0333 009 5399 for tickets

### Bristol Old Vic

* 1 August – King Arthur – A comic retelling of the legend
* 26 October – Reverberation – A powerful play about loneliness and longing. Originally set in Connecticut and now restaged in London – this is its European premiere
* 16 November – Never let me Go based on the novel by Kazuo Ishiguro
* 1 December – The Little Mermaid

Contact the Box office on – 0117 987 7877

### Bath - Theatre Royal

* 16 August - Sister Act
* 18 December and 11 January – Snow White

Contact the box office on 01225 448844

**Be part of the first Theatre Royal Bath Radio Play Project!**

Join Theatre Royal Bath / Engage's Radio Play Project this August and September. Led by BBC Radio 4's Paul Dodgson, you'll learn to write or perform in a short audio play, produced and recorded with Theatre Royal Bath Engage actors. No previous experience is needed!

For more information and joining info, contact Katherine Lazare at 01225 823433 or visit [Theattre Royal Radio Drama Project webpage](https://www.theatreroyal.org.uk/events/play-back-writing-radio-drama/)

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