Monthly What’s on Guide for January 2025

Welcome to your monthly update of accessible services and events in Gloucestershire covering January 2025.

We’d like to wish you a wonderful Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year! We look forward to welcoming you to one of our events, hubs, or social groups in 2025 and continuing to support you in the year ahead.

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# Insight Gloucestershire Events and Notices

## Join Our Team: Relationship Fundraiser

We are seeking a Relationship Fundraiser to play a key role in securing the financial success and stability of our charity. This exciting and varied role includes writing funding applications, developing corporate partnerships, organising fundraising events, and supporting volunteer fundraisers.

Based in Gloucestershire, the role involves travel across the county to meet supporters and attend events, as well as regular attendance at our Cheltenham office. Occasional travel to our partner offices in Devizes (Wiltshire) and Bristol will also be required.

We welcome applications from experienced fundraisers, those looking to advance their careers, or individuals with transferable relationship-building skills from other sectors. The salary is dependent on experience £25,000 - £30,000.

**To Apply**: Send your CV and a cover letter outlining your suitability to info@insight-glos.org.uk with the subject line ‘Application for Relationship Fundraiser’. Applications without a cover letter will not be considered.

For more information, including the Job Description and Person Specification, visit our [Work For Us webpage](https://www.sightsupportwest.org.uk/get-involved/work-for-us/)

**Closing Date**: 5pm, Monday 13th January.

Insight Gloucestershire is committed to equality and diversity and welcomes applications from all backgrounds. If you’d like to discuss the role informally before applying, please contact us.

## Connect online with our Virtual Hubs

Are you looking to meet others who truly understand the challenges and experiences of living with sight loss? Our Virtual Hubs offer a welcoming and supportive space to connect, share, and chat with people who "get it."

These online groups, run in partnership between Sight Support West of England, Wiltshire Sight, and Insight Gloucestershire, are open to anyone affected by sight loss across the regions we serve. Facilitated by volunteers with lived experience, the groups meet regularly on Microsoft Teams – and if you’re new to Teams, don’t worry, training is available to help you get started.

**Groups You Can Join:**

* **Parent Support Group**: For parents of visually impaired children up to age 25. Already running – meets fortnightly on Thursdays at 7:30 pm.
* **University Students Group**: For over-18s studying at Level 4 or above. Starts 15th January – meets fortnightly on Wednesdays at 7 pm.
* **Working Age Group (25–65)**: Starts 16th January – meets the third Thursday of each month at 7 pm.
* **Young Adults Group (18–30)**: *S*tart date to be confirmed – let us know if you’re interested!

Once signed up, there’s no need to book for each session – simply join when it suits you. Whether you want to meet new people, share experiences, or simply have a chat, our Virtual Hubs offer a flexible and friendly way to build connections from the comfort of your home.

**To sign up or find out more**, contact us and let us know which group you’re interested in – we’d love to welcome you!

## New Nailsworth Community Hub Launching in January

We’re thrilled to announce the launch of a new Nailsworth Community Hub, providing access to our Community Sight Loss Advisor support service.

**Location**: Mortimer Rooms, Old Market, Nailsworth, GL6 0DU
**Launch Date**: Wednesday, 15th January 2025
**Monthly Schedule**: 3rd Wednesday of each month

* **Drop-in Session**: 10am – 11am
* **Social Group**: 10am – 12pm
* **Appointments**: Available for tailored advice

Whether you need guidance, want to connect with others, or simply stop by for a chat, we’d love to welcome you to this new hub. For more details or to book an appointment, please contact us.

## Seeking Trustees

Insight Gloucestershire 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 organisation 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 Silvey, or email us and we can send you a role description.

# Insight Gloucestershire Community Hubs and Social Groups

Our sight loss advice hubs provide a space for consultations with your local advisor, offering information, guidance, and advice on all things sight loss related. You can explore a selection of helpful aids at the hub and your advisor can suggest what equipment and technology might be useful to help you meet the challenges sight loss can pose. Additionally, some 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 01242 221170. See our [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

Our offices will be closed from 1.30pm on the 24th December and will reopen 2nd January 2025.

* **Dursley Community Hub**: Please note that the hub is cancelled for **December**.
* **Christmas Closures**: The following hubs will be closed during the Christmas period (**24th December – 1st January**): Gloucester, Stroud, Cheltenham, Chipping Campden, Bishops Cleeve, and Bourton on the Water.
* **New Hub in Nailsworth**: Mortimer Rooms, Old Market, Nailsworth, GL6 0DU. 3rd Wednesday of each month. Drop in between 10am to 11am. Social group runs from 10am to 12pm. Appointments Available

# 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.

## RNIB Autumn Survey

RNIB is seeking feedback from adults with sight loss on a range of important topics, including getting around, personal safety, employment, family, and relationships.

This feedback will help RNIB improve the support available to blind and partially sighted people across the UK and ensure it focuses on what matters most.

To take part, complete the Autumn 2024 survey by visiting the link below before the closing date on 20 December 2024:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LWJFYHP>

For those unable to complete the survey online and who have not yet registered to participate, RNIB invites you to call their Helpline on 0303 123 9999. Advisors will assist by completing a registration form and arranging a follow-up call to ask survey questions on future topics.

## Shape the Future of Assistive Technology with Hope Tech Plus

Hope Tech Plus is an assistive technology company dedicated to creating innovative solutions that empower blind and partially sighted individuals. Their products are designed with input from real users through research and testing – and they need your voice to make a difference.

By taking part in a **short, confidential survey**, you can share your experiences of accessing assistive technology. Your feedback will help improve access to these tools and provide greater support for the visually impaired community.

**Take the survey here:** [Hope Tech Survey](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeczuzRDLv5yWHjYCrnUS99CBieCxOsEHzhtPy4WbClNasjew/viewform?usp=sf_link)

Would you like to contribute even further? Hope Tech Plus is also inviting individuals to share their personal stories and experiences with assistive technology. If you’re interested in helping shape the future of these vital tools, contact Laura directly at **Laura@HopeTech.Vision**.

Your input is invaluable, and Hope Tech Plus will share the survey results soon – thank you for supporting this important work.

## 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/)

# Local Leisure and Sporting Activities / Events

## Hook and Loop Collective VI family Winter Social Walk

For families with a visually impaired child and / or parent.

Date & time: Sunday 19 January, 10am-12pm

Access: travel support available

A relaxed and fun walk to keep everyone connected in the winter months. We will end with a hot chocolate – marshmallows and cream included!

If you haven’t joined us before, this is a great way to connect with other families, meet our team and find out more about the events we offer. Recommended age for children is 7-14 years but events are for the whole family to enjoy, so younger and older siblings are welcome too!

Find out about our other family events here: <https://hookandloop.org.uk/vifamilyevents/>

## Gloucestershire Growlers

The group aim to give visually impaired people in and around the county the opportunity to take part in sport and create an environment where they can socialise with people who truly understand the daily impact of having a visual impairment. Although the group aim play to win, team spirit is more important than results and the group pride themselves on their unique “Growler camaraderie!

Although finished for the season, they are organising two indoor sessions at Gloucestershire’s Nevil Road ground in January and March of next year.  If you would like any more information contact Phil Gingell at bristolbluephil@googlemail.com

## 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)

# Support Groups and Courses

## See Differently Support Group

An 18+ support group for the blind and visually impaired, along with their family members and / or carers. Come along to chat, socialise and maybe play a few games or two.

Takes place every other Tuesday, 1-2.30pm

Location: The Redwell Centre, Matson, GL4 6JG

Email Harvey on: seedifferently@hotmail.com

## Stroud Visually Impaired Club

Meets on the first Thursday morning of the month in Sherborne House, Stonehouse.  Members come from the Stroud area and Cam and Dursley. Transport maybe available.

Please contact Celia on:

07770 146536 / 01452 864645 or email: celiakelly1961 for more information.

## Macular Groups

See list below, but please contact before attending, as groups may have an alternate venue, or an outing planned.

Call **0300 30 30 111**

### Gloucester Macular Group

Meet on the first Wednesday of each month, 10am to 12pm at Gloucester Deaf Association, Colin Road, Barnwood, GL4 3JL

### Cheltenham Macular Group

Meet on the third Wednesday of each month 2pm to 4pm at Christ Church, Malvern Road, Cheltenham, GL50 2JH

### Stroud Macular Group

Meet quarterly, 10am to 12pm in March, June, September and December

At Stroud Hospital, Trinity Road, Stroud, GL5 2HY

### Relaunching Cirencester Macular Group

Meet on the Third Monday each month, 1:30pm to 3pm Starting Monday 16 December

At the Churn Project, 14-16 The Waterloo, Cirencester, GL7 2PY.

Please contact 07432 700 478 for more information

# Local Audio Described Arts Events

## The Everyman Theatre in Cheltenham

* **Chicago** – Thursday 23rd January 2.00pm
* **The Girl on the Train** – Thursday 27th March 2.00pm

All performances include a Touch Tour on stage at 11.30am.

For Chicago and The Girl on the Train, bookings must be made directly with the theatre. To secure your tickets or for further details, contact Sally-ann at 01242 695574 or sally-ann.rhodes@everymantheatre.org.uk

Would you like to stay updated about future theatre trips? Join our Insight Gloucestershire mailing list to be notified of upcoming events – call us to be added.

# Online Notices / Support Groups / Webinars

We have some information about online support groups / webinars / social groups / resources and events that might be of use or interest for anyone living with sight loss.

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

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