# Sight Support West of England Children and Young People What’s On E-Newsletter

Welcome to your monthly update of accessible services and events in Wiltshire, Bristol, Bath & NE Somerset, and South Gloucestershire. This update mainly covers February 2025.

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# Contact Us

For more information on any of the services or events organised by Sight Support, please call 0117 322 4885 / 01380 723682 or email: [info@sightsupportwest.org.uk](mailto:info@sightsupportwest.org.uk)

# Sight Support Events and Notices

**Virtual Hubs**

Are you looking to connect with others who understand life with sight loss? We understand that living with sight loss can feel isolating, but finding others who understand can make all the difference. That’s why we’re launching our new virtual hubs to help you connect with people who share similar experiences in a welcoming and supportive environment.

As a partnership of three sight loss charities – Sight Support West of England, Wiltshire Sight, and Insight Gloucestershire – our new hubs are open to people affected by sight loss across all the areas we cover. Each group will meet regularly on Microsoft Teams and be facilitated by volunteers with lived experience of sight loss. Training is available if you’re new to Microsoft Teams.

**Upcoming Groups:**

* **Parent Support**: For parents of visually impaired children up to age 25, meeting fortnightly on Thursdays at 7:30 pm.
* **University Students:** For over-18s (studying at Level 4 or above), meeting fortnightly on Wednesdays at 7pm.
* **Working Age** (25–65): Third Thursday of each month at 7pm.
* **Young Adults** (18–30): Starting date to be confirmed.

To join, simply let us know which group interests you. Once you’re signed up, there’s no need to book for each session, and attendance is flexible - you’re welcome to attend whenever you wish. It’s an opportunity to meet new people, share, learn, and build connections without pressure or obligation – all from the comfort of your home.

**Eye Can Salisbury**

Our partner charity, Wiltshire Sight, invites you to Eye Can Salisbury. It will be held on Wednesday 2nd April 2025, 10 am–3 pm at Salisbury Guildhall. The exhibitors will have the latest in technology and equipment on display and you will find local and national organisations offering services for blind and partially sighted individuals. Talks will also be held throughout the day. To pre-register either call us or you can book on Eventbrite: [Eye Can Salisbury 2025 Tickets, Wed 2 Apr 2025 at 10:00 | Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/eye-can-salisbury-2025-tickets-1204994714629?aff=oddtdtcreator)

## 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](mailto:volunteering@sightsupportwest.org.uk)

## Sight Loss Advice Hubs

For a listing of our community sight loss advice hubs coming up this month, please visit our website, a link is provided below. You can drop in for information, guidance, and advice. We can demonstrate a variety of assistive equipment and technology. We have lighting, magnifiers, talking watches, liquid level indicators, and much more, so please do pop by. No appointment is necessary for many of the hubs.

Click this link [Community Sight Loss Hubs](https://www.sightsupportwest.org.uk/events/?tags=6)

## Knowledge Hub

Don’t forget we have lots of resources on our website in our knowledge Hub. We have articles on a wide range of topics related to living with sight loss, from how to avoid scams to coping with the emotional impact of sight loss and much more. We have various articles offering tips and tricks on different areas too. Find out more by following this link [Our Knowledge Hub](https://www.sightsupportwest.org.uk/resources/)

## Keep us updated

Please remember to update us if any of your contact details change so we can keep our records up to date.

# 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.

## Access Sport

Join Access Sport’s 2025 Youth Board and Voice Groups

Applications are now open for young people aged 14–25 to join the National Youth Board or Youth Voice Groups in London, Bristol, and Manchester. These roles ensure youth voices shape Access Sport’s work, supporting disadvantaged and disabled young people through advocacy, fundraising, and project planning.

Youth Voice Groups focus locally, contributing to events, facilities, and inclusion projects. Participants gain training, development opportunities, and event invitations. Meetings are held quarterly (online / in-person), with travel costs covered.

To learn more or for help applying, contact Sophie at [sophie.epsley@accesssport.org.uk](mailto:sophie.epsley@accesssport.org.uk) or Alex at [alex.claydon@accesssport.org.uk](mailto:alex.claydon@accesssport.org.uk)

## All Aboard Watersports

This summer All Aboard Watersports will be running a Rowing Taster Day at their centre in Baltic Wharf, Bristol. It’s designed for 12 – 29 yar olds looking to try a new sport. Sessions are fully supported by professional instructors. We are holding a coffee morning in March for anyone interested to meet the instructors and find out more. Get in touch with Jemma on 01173 018 158 or email [centremanager@allaboardwatersports.co.uk](mailto:centremanager@allaboardwatersports.co.uk) to learn more.

## Guide Dogs My Time To Play

Guide Dogs My Time to Play is for children aged 0-4 with a vision impairment and their parents, carers and siblings. It’s a free service delivered by Qualified Habilitation Specialists that helps children with a vision impairment develop a broad range of skills through play.

If your child has a vision impairment, they may need to learn about and explore the world in a slightly different way. Habilitation is a specialist support that recognises those differences. Working with you we can help your child develop confidence and practical skills towards independence from an early age. Please visit the following webpage for further information. [www.guidedogs.org.uk/getting-support/help-for-children-and-families/early-years-development-and-habilitation](http://www.guidedogs.org.uk/getting-support/help-for-children-and-families/early-years-development-and-habilitation)

Alternatively, you can call our Guide Line on 0800 781 1444 and a member of the team will take your details.

There are virtual groups running regularly and we have some groups starting in our area in January with one already running in Bristol this half term.

* Guide Dogs My Time to Play – Weston-Super-Mare

Vision North Somerset 3 Neva Road, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 1YD.

Weekly sessions on Friday mornings:7th/14th/21st February 2025 10:30am - 12pm. Siblings welcome.

To book or enquire further please email: [Lucy.Hill@guidedogs.org.uk](mailto:Lucy.Hill@guidedogs.org.uk)

* Guide Dogs My Time to Play – Bath

Bath Central Library, Podium Centre, Bath, BA15AN.

Fortnightly sessions on Friday Mornings: 7th/21st Feb, 7th/21st March & 4th April 2025. 10am-12.00pm. Siblings welcome.

To book or enquire further please email: [Rachel.scammell@guidedogs.org.uk](mailto:Rachel.scammell@guidedogs.org.uk)

## BLOC Inclusive Climbing

Starting on Wednesday 8th of January, BLOC are running weekly Clip 'N' Climb sessions aimed at d/Deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent children and young people aged 4-17 years.

Here is the key information:

- Weekly Wednesdays, 5-6pm

- BLOC Climbing Centre, New Gatton Road, BS2 9SH

- Children and young people aged 4-17 years

- £7.50 per session

To find out more please see BLOC's website here:

[Special Educational Needs and Disability Session | Bloc Climbing](https://blocclimbing.co.uk/booking-kids/special-educational-needs-and-disability-session/)

And to get in touch to see if this session suitable for you (your young person) and discuss how we can best support you within the session, please email [info@blocclimbing.org.uk](mailto:info@blocclimbing.org.uk)

## Strawberry Line Cycles

The Strawberry Line Cycle Project have started up group rides for people with additional needs.

Sessions are free of charge and riders can use our bikes or trikes. Find out more or book on by emailing [Strawberrylineprojects@gmail.com](mailto:Strawberrylineprojects@gmail.com)

[INCLUSIVE CYCLING | Strawberry Cycles](https://accesssport.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=01c05c95704dd40a6e36e4770&id=f7543681af&e=47e16734b2)

## Free cricket sessions

We are super excited to let you know about Golden Hill Cricket club's inclusivity sessions

* When - Sundays 10am -11am
* Who - Aimed at and inclusive to disabled and/or neurodivergent children and young people
* Where -Shine Sports Hall, Henleaze, BS9 4DT

The Golden Hill coaches are experienced at supporting disabled and neurodivergent children and young people so will adapt the session to ensure everyone is supported and is having fun!

For more information please contact Russ [russ.fry@goldenhillsports.com](mailto:russ.fry@goldenhillsports.com)

## Royal National College For The Blind (RNC) - Have a Go Activity Weekend

For young people aged 13 to 17 with a visual impairment and their families with FREE accommodation for everyone!

Families spend two days at RNC with young people attending sessions led by staff. They can try sports like goalball and cricket, or showing their creativity with music and cooking workshops. While parents receive a guided campus tour and receive funding and EHCP advice and information from our Placement Caseworker. Everyone gets provided with free food and on-site accommodation for overnight.

For more information click [here](https://www.rnc.ac.uk/form/9)

* RNC – Activity Week

RNC are hosting a residential activity camp for young people aged 14 to 17. The residential will be held at The Royal National College for the Blind campus but will involve activities off campus in the local surrounding areas.

There will be range of different activities on offer such as:

* VI Sports
* Trip out to local activity centre
* Bowling and Pizza evening

The residential is designed to encourage young people to socialise and develop independence skills alongside having fun!

If you are full of energy and like to try something new, come and get involved and meet people of a similar age group.

For more information click [here](https://www.rnc.ac.uk/form/14)

## New Tennis Sessions - David Lloyd Long Ashton

* For d/Deaf, disabled and neurodivergent children and young people
* Ages 5-16 years
* Weekly Thursdays (term time)
* 4:15-5pm (ages 5-8 years) / 5:15-6pm (ages 9-16 years)
* David Lloyd, Long Ashton, Ashton Road, Bristol BS3 2HB
* Sign-up to the sessions here:[http://bit.ly/DavidLloydterm1](https://accesssport.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=01c05c95704dd40a6e36e4770&id=2b161030ab&e=47e16734b2)

## Super 1s - Free Inclusive Cricket Session

All disabilities welcome age 12-25

**Bath**

WHEN: Wednesdays, 5.30pm - 6.30pm (September – May)

WHERE: Hayesfield School, Broughman Hayes Campus, Bath BA2 3QX.

**Weston-Super-Mare**

WHEN: Thursdays 6pm - 7pm (September - May)

WHERE: Health & Active Living Skills Centre, Loxton Road,

Weston-Super-Mare, BS23 4PD

CONTACT: Steve Gass [steve.gass@somersetcricketfoundation.org](mailto:steve.gass@somersetcricketfoundation.org)

<https://www.lordstaverners.org/how-we-help/>

## RSBC (Royal Society for Blind Children)

**Calendar of activities**

You can join a range of different activities and there are even some your whole families can get involved in too! We have something for everyone to get involved in! Click on the link to find out more [rsbc.org.uk](https://www.rsbc.org.uk/calendar-of-activities/?_gl=1*1cy8lkh*_up*MQ..&gclid=EAIaIQobChMIzJjn2_y3hgMVCphQBh3iKAPmEAAYAiAAEgLPwvD_BwE)

## Redcatch Park Tennis

* For d/Deaf, disabled and neurodivergent children, young people and adults.
* All Ages
* Weekly Saturdays
* 12.30pm -1.30pm
* Redcatch Park Tennis Courts, Bristol, BS4 2RF
* Sign-up to the sessions here: [https://tinyurl.com/redcatch](https://accesssport.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=01c05c95704dd40a6e36e4770&id=4fd3009920&e=47e16734b2)

## VICTA

Are you learning Spanish? Why not join our online sessions with ONCE and practice with Spanish students!

• When: Saturday 1 February and Saturday 10 May 2025

• Who: 12-17 year olds

• Location: Online

• Cost: Free

ONCE (Spanish National Organisation of the Blind) and VICTA are giving students in Spain and the UK the opportunity to practice their language skills virtually.

This is perfect for those learning Spanish at school or those looking to practice their spoken language skills in a supportive environment. In return, you will help Spanish students with their English language development and it’s a great opportunity to connect with and find out about another culture.

Our first session is on 1 February 2025 so make sure you sign up soon to avoid disappointment!

For more information, please click [here](https://www.victa.org.uk/victa-calendar/once-spanish-sessions/)

### VICTA – Legoland

Join VICTA at LEGOLAND Windsor for a day of exciting science workshops!

* When: Saturday 15 March 2025
* Who: 10 to 13 years
* Location: Legoland Windsor, Winkfield Road, Windsor, SL4 4AY
* Cost: £20
* Closing date: Friday 14 February 2025

VICTA is heading to LEGOLAND Windsor in March with a lucky group of 10-13 year olds for a day of science based workshops (all involving LEGO!).

Located in the exclusive Education Centre, work together in a team to solve the challenges presented by the LEGOLAND STEM Education Team. Take your first steps into learning about science with unique LEGO sets as you discover your inner scientist or engineer. Start the day with the LEGO Robotics workshop where you will build and programme your interactive robotic LEGO model. After lunch, get stuck into the Rollercoaster workshop – discover and investigate how gravity, friction and air resistance can affect the speed of Rollercoasters. Earn a special LEGO certificate of achievement and ‘Pop Badge’ upon completion of both workshops!

Finish your ultimate LEGO adventure with an exploration of the theme park and the many rides on offer supported by VICTA staff and volunteers.

To apply for your child's place and find out more about the day, please click [here](https://www.victa.org.uk/victa-calendar/legoland-science-day-10to13/)

## RNIB – Shape and Share Online Events

**Shape and Share online events – open to all the family!**

Our online events are open to all the family and provide an opportunity for children with vision impairment and their families to meet others whilst developing new skills and of course having fun! The events usually involve crafts, quizzes and even baking and families are sent packs in advance so they can get fully involved on the day. You can find a full list of our events here:  [Family Support and Events | RNIB](https://www.rnib.org.uk/living-with-sight-loss/supporting-others/parenting-a-child-with-a-vision-impairment/family-support-and-events/)

## British Wireless For The Blind

New devices for children

We are thrilled to kick off the year by offering some fantastic new audio devices for children and young people. You can see our latest range for young people below.

**Voxblock starter pack**

This a screen-free, easy-to-use audiobook player makes learning and listening fun and engaging. Slot in your audiobook and press play. No need for apps, downloads, or setups.

Our [Voxblock starter pack](https://blind.us21.list-manage.com/track/click?u=94c9d8901ba29d204032d3da1&id=f6655a94d7&e=8a632ad524) comes with three audio books and a set of POGS kids headphones.

**My Little Morphee**

This screen-free sleeping device and sleep sound soother features stories and guided meditation sessions created by sleep specialists. [My Little Morphee](https://blind.us21.list-manage.com/track/click?u=94c9d8901ba29d204032d3da1&id=869441249d&e=8a632ad524) promotes deep relaxation, enabling children to fall asleep quickly and serenely.

# Local Audio Described Arts Events

## Bristol Hippodrome

* 6 February – Only Fools and Horses (Age 8+)
* 8 March – Matthew Bourne’s Swan Lake (Age 8+)
* 12 June – War Horse (Age 10+)
* 16 July – Moulin Rouge (Age 12+)
* Book touch tours separately. Contact Access for All service - email [bristoladmin@theambassadors.com](mailto:bristoladmin@theambassadors.com) or call the access booking line 0333 009 5399 for tickets

## Bristol Old Vic

* 1 March – A Good House (Age 14+)
* 29 March – Romeo & Juliet (Age 12+)
* 31 May – The Beautiful Future is Coming (Age 12+)

For more details and to book - ring the Box office – 0117 987 7877

## Bath - Theatre Royal

The Midnight Bell – 21 May –Performed by Matthew Bourne’s dance company. It’s set in the pubs and fog-bound streets of Soho and Fitzrovia during the 1930s**.**

Tickets and information on 01225 448844. Make sure you are subscribed to the Theatre’s Access List.

Note: Bookers for AD performances will receive a link emailed, beforehand, with audible pre-show notes. Hearing devices can be collected from all bars when the house opens - half an hour before the show. Demonstration models available to practice with.

## Salisbury Playhouse

* The 39 Steps – Thursday March 6th at 2.15 and 7.30pm.

Experience the hilarity and suspense of The 39 Steps, Patrick Barlow’s award-winning stage adaptation of Hitchcock’s classic spy thriller. Four actors play over 150 characters in this fast-paced comedy full of daring antics, romance, and mystery. A whirlwind adventure not to be missed!

There will be touch tours for both shows. Tickets can be booked online at Wiltshire Creative Accessible Performances webpage , by phone on 01722 320333 or in person at The Playhouse.

Please remember to book your Touch Tour as well as your tickets. Touch tours are free but do need to be booked!

# Online Support Groups and Course

## RNIB – Parent Pathways First Steps Course

Our Parent Pathways First Steps sessions continue to be extremely useful for parents and carers whose child has recently been diagnosed with vision impairment. The course aims to support families and provide information at the early stages of diagnoses.   You can find a full list of dates for courses throughout the year and the booking link [here](https://www.rnib.org.uk/living-with-sight-loss/supporting-others/parenting-a-child-with-a-vision-impairment/living-well-with-sight-loss-parent-pathways/)

## Royal Society For Blind Children (RSBC)

RSBC runs [Connecting Families groups](https://wcb-ccd.us11.list-manage.com/track/click?u=25c133fb85be32275b8e9d18d&id=2d9b959ea9&e=f52967d25d) for parents and carers of children with a vision impairment.

## Nystagmus Network

Nystagmus Network runs a [virtual support group for parents/carers](https://wcb-ccd.us11.list-manage.com/track/click?u=25c133fb85be32275b8e9d18d&id=dda60750c1&e=f52967d25d) 

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Tel 0117 322 4885, Email [info@sightsupportwest.org.uk](mailto:info@sightsupportwest.org.uk)

Sight Support is a registered charity no 1178384. Registered Office: St Lucy’s Sight Centre, Browfort, Bath Road, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 2AT