# Monthly What’s On E-Newsletter April 2025

Welcome to your monthly update of accessible services and events in Wiltshire and Swindon, covering April 2025.

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# Wiltshire Sight Events and Notices

## Eye Can Salisbury

Eye Can Salisbury almost here! 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](https://EyeCanSalisbury2025.eventbrite.co.uk).

## Could our Moving Forward Course help you or someone you know?

Our upcoming Moving Forward Course is designed to help people adjust to life with sight loss, build confidence, and learn practical skills for everyday life. Taking place over three online sessions in May, this course covers essential advice, accessible technology, and ways to stay active and independent.

Whether you are newly diagnosed, have been living with sight loss for a while but feel this course could help, or know someone who might benefit, these sessions provide valuable insights and practical guidance.

Each session is delivered by our experienced team – senior sight loss advisor, rehabilitation officer, and technology project coordinator – and provides an opportunity to ask questions and learn from others.

Course schedule

**Session 1 – First Steps: Introduction to Rehabilitation and Getting Out and About**
Monday 12 May, 2 pm to 3.15 pm
An introduction to living with sight loss, covering mobility, safety, and local support services.

**Session 2 – Bigger, Bolder, Brighter: Everyday Smart Access**
Monday 19 May, 2 pm to 3.15 pm
Discover simple tools and technology to help with reading, writing, and everyday tasks.

**Session 3 – Specialist Technology and Staying Social, Staying Active**
Tuesday 27 May, 2 pm to 3.15 pm
Explore specialist tech and find out about social and activity groups to help you stay connected.

We encourage people to attend all three sessions to get the most benefit from the course. However, if there is a particular session that interests you, you are welcome to attend just that one.

This course is open to anyone living in the areas covered by us and our partner charities, Wiltshire Sight and Insight Gloucestershire, who is looking to gain new skills and support. Each session is held on Zoom.

**How to register**
To book your place, call us on 01380 723682 or email info@wiltshiresight.org

Find out more about each session on the [Moving Forward event listings pages](https://www.sightsupportwest.org.uk/events/?tags=20).

## Connect Online with Virtual Hubs

Our Virtual Hubs are open to anyone affected by sight loss. Hosted on Microsoft Teams, training is available for newcomers.

**Join one of our hubs:**

* **Parent Support Group:** First Thursday each month at 7:30 pm.
* **University Students Group:** Fortnightly, Wednesdays at 7 pm.
* **Working Age Group (25–65):** Third Thursday of the month at 7 pm.
* **Young Adults Group (18–30):** Launching **5th March**, fortnightly at 7 pm.

Would you like to join? **Contact us –** 0117 322 4885 / info@sightsupportwest.org.uk.

## Digital Inclusion Project

We are about to launch our exciting digital inclusion project in Wiltshire and are looking for Technology Support Volunteers to join us in our mission to ensure that everyone has equal access to the digital world and all its benefits.

We will be running one-to-one tech sessions at our advice hubs across Wiltshire and Swindon, as well as offering standalone four-week training courses.

If you are comfortable navigating your way around a smartphone, smart speaker or tablet and willing to learn about all the different accessibility features and apps available and have the patience and empathy to share your knowledge with others, we’d love to hear from you!

For further information, contact Becs, our Volunteer Coordinator, on 07849 833 047, volunteering@wiltshiresight.org

# Wiltshire Sight Community Hubs & Socials

Our monthly advice hubs offer consultations with local advisors across the region. At a hub you can get tailored information and guidance and explore accessible aids. Most hubs also host social groups where you can meet others living with sight loss. Full listings are available on our website or by calling us on 01380 723682.[Click here for our website hub and social group listings.](https://www.sightsupportwest.org.uk/events/)

## Changes To Note for Upcoming Hubs

* Salisbury RC will be closed on the 8th April

# Events & Notices From Other Organisations

## Accessible voting – Wiltshire elections

Local elections take place on **Thursday 1 May** across Wiltshire, including for Wiltshire Council and Parish Councillors.

**Key deadlines:**

* Register to vote: by **midnight, Friday 11 April** – [register here](https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote)
* Apply for a postal vote: by **5pm, Monday 14 April** – [apply here](https://www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote)
* Apply for a proxy vote: by **5pm, Wednesday 23 April** – [apply here](https://www.gov.uk/apply-proxy-vote)
* Need photo ID? Apply for a **Voter Authority Certificate** by **5pm, Wednesday 23 April**

If you need help accessing your polling station or would like to discuss any accessibility requirements, contact Wiltshire Council on **0300 456 0112** or email **elections@wiltshire.gov.uk**

Polling station staff are there to help, and you’re welcome to bring a companion to assist you if needed.

## Take part in Retina UK's Sight Loss Survey

Retina UK has launched its 2025 Sight Loss Survey and is keen to hear from people living with inherited sight loss – especially young adults and people from diverse backgrounds.

The survey helps shape support services, secure funding, and influence NHS access to treatments like Luxturna. It takes around 40 minutes and can be completed online or by phone.

Deadline: Friday 25 April 2025
Find out more and take part: <https://retinauk.org.uk/event/sight-loss-survey-2025/>

## RNIB report explores motherhood and sight loss

RNIB has published the findings from their recent survey on the experiences of blind and partially sighted mothers. Many people welcomed the opportunity to have this topic explored, and the report highlights key insights and lived experiences.

You can read the full report and summary findings here:
[Read Navigating Motherhood with Sight Loss I Voice of the Customer report 2025 | RNIB](https://www.rnib.org.uk/professionals/health-social-care-education-professionals/knowledge-and-research-hub/reports-and-insight/navigating-motherhood-with-sight-loss-voice-of-the-customer-report-2025/)

You can also listen to a special podcast on the topic via RNIB Connect Radio:
[RNIB Connect / RNIB Research Explores Being A Mother With Sight Loss](https://audioboom.com/posts/8693760-rnib-research-explores-being-a-mother-with-sight-loss)

## Help RNIB improve post-diagnostic support

RNIB is collaborating with Thiscovery to research how post-diagnostic support for people with sight loss can be improved. They are inviting people with lived experience, family members, and professionals in the field to complete a short survey. Insights will shape future services across the Eye Care Support Pathway. To take part, visit: [RNIB Survey](https://bit.ly/4jZY7Rc)

## VICTA Science Fair

VICTA’s 2025 Online Science Fair is now live. Participants can explore a range of activities, including giveaways such as Amazon Echo Dots, Echo Show Kids, and Hot Wheels Braille Racers. Competitions and challenges are open in four categories, with £50 vouchers to be won. Families visiting a science centre can benefit from VICTA’s facilitated ticket offer. Full terms and conditions are available on the VICTA website [VICTA Science Fair 2025 - VICTA](https://www.victa.org.uk/victa-science-fair/) For more information, contact the Activities Team at sciencefair@victa.org.uk

# Leisure and Sporting Activities

## Wiltshire Sight - Swindon Audiobook Reading group

Monday 3rd March 2025 10:00am - 11:30am
Swindon Central Library, Regent Circus, Swindon, SN1 1QG

## Fitness and Friendship Clubs – Age UK Wiltshire

Friendly, sight-loss aware sessions for older adults, offering gentle chair-based exercise, social time with tea and biscuits, and relaxing tai chi. First session is free, £5 after (some locations free). Clubs run in Swindon, Salisbury, Chippenham, and Devizes. For accessibility support, contact your Community Sight Loss Advisor.

**More info**: Tracey – 07754 612 569 or fitnessandfriendship@ageukwiltshire.org.uk

## Swindon Blind Craft Club

Swindon Blind Craft Club meets every Tuesday between 10 am and 1 pm and is run by Lou Curtis at Swindon Blind Association, Craven House, 145 Victoria Road, Swindon, SN1 3BU. Parking available and bus stop opposite. Bring your own lunch. Carers welcome.

You can enjoy a wide variety of activities, including creating baskets, painting, and tile decoration! Get in touch with Lou if you want to come along and find out more: 07703 306 403.

## **Swindon Bats Sports & Social Club**

Swindon Bats have a fantastic variety of groups and events taking place including Ten Pin Bowling, Showdown, Coffee & Chat, Walk and Talk and more. Contact them at: info@swindonbats.org or call their Secretary Sue Mead on 07788150487. You can check their website for details of all their upcoming events and groups  [Swindon Bats Website](https://www.swindonbats.org/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.

## Devizes PHAB Group

(Physically disabled and Able bodied) an organisation which brings people with and without disabilities together. See their program of events at [Devizes PHAB meetings and events](https://www.devizesphab.co.uk/uploads/1/2/3/4/123478387/phabprogramme16apr2023.pdf)

# Support Groups and Courses

## Working Well with Sight Loss – Residential Course

**April 23–25 / Thomas Pocklington Hub, London / President Hotel**

Looking for work? Want to boost your confidence with job searching, applications, and interviews? Thomas Pocklington’s new residential course offers practical support in a relaxed, friendly environment. Learn essential tech skills, job search strategies, and interview techniques, plus explore the latest assistive technology.

Completely free – including accommodation, meals, and travel.

How to apply: Email employment@pocklington.org.uk with up to 300 words about yourself and why you’d benefit. For an informal chat, get in touch at the same address.

## Swindon Chat group

Last Tuesday of the month 5.15pm

Contact communityconnectionsouthwest@rnib.org.uk

# Audio Described Arts Events

## Salisbury Playhouse

Catch The Da Vinci Code on Thursday 1 May at 2:15pm and 7:30pm with audio description and a free touch tour (starting 60 minutes before each show). Follow Professor Langdon and cryptologist Sophie Neveu on a thrilling race across Europe to solve hidden clues in da Vinci’s artwork and uncover a powerful secret. This fast-paced adaptation of Dan Brown’s bestseller is packed with mystery and intrigue.

Book tickets and touch tours via the Wiltshire Creative Accessible Performances webpage, call 01722 320333 or visit the Playhouse box office (Malthouse Ln, Salisbury, SP2 7RA).

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Tel: 01380 723682, Email: info@wiltshiresight.org

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