



# Oxfordshire

Association for the Blind

## Newsletter

August  
2016

### Special Speaker



**Professor Susan Downes**

I'm delighted to inform you that our speaker at this year's AGM, on 7th September, is Professor Susan Downes, Consultant Ophthalmologist at the Oxford Eye Hospital. Book your place now, while spaces are available! As you may know, Professor Downes is a leading expert on Ophthalmology, and Macular Disease in particular,

and her talk is sure to be very interesting. Details of our AGM are on the back page and we would be delighted to see you there.

I'm also pleased to report that our services are continuing to expand. We are increasing the membership of our active persons' group, ActivEyes and I'm particularly looking forward to our upcoming ramble and the sailing afternoon. I'm also looking forward to our Children and Young People's activities including handling the exotic animals of the display from Crocodile World here at our Resource Centre.

There are quite a few changes regarding the team to inform you about. Caroline Ludden our Volunteering

# Index

- |          |  |           |  |
|----------|--|-----------|--|
| <b>1</b> | Director's Article   | <b>9</b>  | Blind Veterans UK, VIBNO                                       |
| <b>2</b> | Index and OAB contact details  | <b>10</b> | Oxford Rotary Club 5km Fun Run                                 |
| <b>3</b> | Directors Article  | <b>11</b> | Oxford Rotary Club 5km Fun Run, Legacy Gifts                   |
| <b>4</b> | National Eye Health Week, Audio Book Club, Saturday Opening, Annual Raffle | <b>12</b> | Dreaming Spires Tenpin Bowling, Can You Help?, Bowling Bonanza |
| <b>5</b> | Land's End to John O'Groats  | <b>13</b> | SODC Article : FirestarterBattery?                             |
| <b>6</b> | The sky is the limit   | <b>14</b> | Clubs and Groups   |
| <b>7</b> | Smartphone and Tablet Workshop, Have you had your PIP letter yet?          | <b>15</b> | Sensory Team and Carers Info                                   |
| <b>8</b> | Accessible NHS Information, Audio Described Performance of the Commitments | <b>16</b> | AGM Invitation   |

## Oxfordshire Association for the Blind

*Registered Charity No.1140556 and Company Limited by Guarantee No. 07465300*

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### **Opening hours 9.00am - 4.00pm weekdays**

**Chair** : Adrian Hill; **Vice-chair** : David Warr; **Treasurer** : George Little;  
**Director** : Colin Cure; **Client Services Manager** : Mark Upton;  
**Fundraising Manager** : Laura Howdill; **Administrator** : Gail Webb;  
**Accounts** : Michael Ling; **Group Welfare Officer** : Mary Gregory;  
**Information Worker** : David Thompson;  
**Senior Sight Advisor** : Judith Wood; **Fundraiser** : Tess Simpson;  
**Advice Worker** : Angela Howard; **Development Worker** : Ana Novakovic.

*Your Newsletter is compiled and edited by David Thompson  
We are extremely grateful to Neil Stockton at Radio Cherwell  
for his assistance in producing the audio edition of this Newsletter*



## Director's Article

Co-ordinator/Fundraiser has moved on to work with another forward looking charity in Birmingham. Rebecca Benney our Fundraiser will also have moved on by the time you are reading this. Rebecca is trying her hand at a range of tasks, including gardening contracts, which she enjoys. We are very grateful to Caroline and Rebecca who have worked very hard and successfully for OAB and we wish them both well in the future.

I'm pleased to inform you that Laura Howdill, who worked with us on the successful project to fundraise for the, then new, Resource Centre, has returned to us as our new part-time Fundraising Manager. We welcome Laura back and hope that she will enjoy her new role with us. Also, by the time you are reading this, Angela Howard our Advice Worker, will have returned from maternity leave. Mother and son, Dylan, are doing well and it will be great to welcome Angela back. On a personal note, I would

like to thank everyone who sponsored me for the final leg of my "Land's End to John O'Groats by coast" cycle ride. I finally reached John O'Groats on Mid-Summers' Day. It was a great feeling to get there and I'm very grateful for all your support.

And lastly, I'd like to let you know that I have been kindly awarded a sabbatical by the Trustees. I'll be working until the end of September and then returning at the end of August next year. I'm looking forward to the opportunities that the break will bring – you've guessed it, that will include more cycling around the coast of our beautiful nation – and to coming back fresh to look at the new challenges that we'll be attempting. In my absence, Ana Novakovic, will be stepping into my role. I know that Ana will receive lots of support from our excellent team and our services will continue to flourish.

I hope to see as many of you as can make it at the AGM.

Best wishes, Colin. ■■■

## National Eye Health Week

The seventh annual National Eye Health Week (NEHW) will take place 19 – 25 September 2016. Once again, eye care charities, organisations and health professionals from across the UK are joining together to promote the importance of eye health and the need for regular sight tests for all. OAB and the other organisations for people with sight impairment in Oxfordshire will be involved during the week in the national effort. We are also hoping to gain the attention of the local radio and newspapers. If you want to find out more for yourself the website address is: [www.visionmatters.org.uk](http://www.visionmatters.org.uk)



## Audio Book Club

If you enjoy reading, whether audio books or print, come and join us at the next OAB audio book group. We meet on the last Wednesday of the month, to discuss the latest book and more. For more info call Angela on 01865 725595. ■■■

## Saturday Opening

We have been having regular Saturday openings for the past few years and intend to continue, if required. However, we have decided to do this on an appointments only basis. So, if you would like to come and visit us, please let us know so that we can book a slot for you. Please be aware that if we do not have any appointments booked for an open day, then we may decide not to open. Our Centre will be open on Saturday 17th September from 9.30am to 12.00pm. Call us on 01865 725595 . ■■■

## Annual Raffle

The annual OAB Raffle draw will take place this October and in this edition of the newsletter we have included some raffle tickets. We would be most grateful if you could support our raffle and if you would like us to send you more books of tickets, please call or email us to let us know how many you would like or, if you would prefer not to receive any tickets. ■■■



# Land's End to John O'Groats by coast by Colin Cure

As I mentioned in my introductory article, I am most grateful to all of those who kindly supported me for the last leg of my cycle ride from Land's End to John O'Groats.

It has been a wonderful experience. I set off from Land's End over 10 years ago and most years I've completed successive stages around our beautiful coastline. I've been joined by different friends on most stages, so I've had plenty of company. The cycling has been tough from time to time. Perhaps the toughest being the roller-coaster hills of the final stage, particularly up the west coast of the Highlands. Mind you, the rewards, in terms of the spectacular scenery – huge mountains, crystal clear lochs and golden beaches – made it all worthwhile. I've met some very friendly people and learned a lot about the nation – the little museum about the Transporter Bridge in Newport, South Wales, was a delight. I've also been privileged to see some special wildlife, including



Colin at John O'Groats

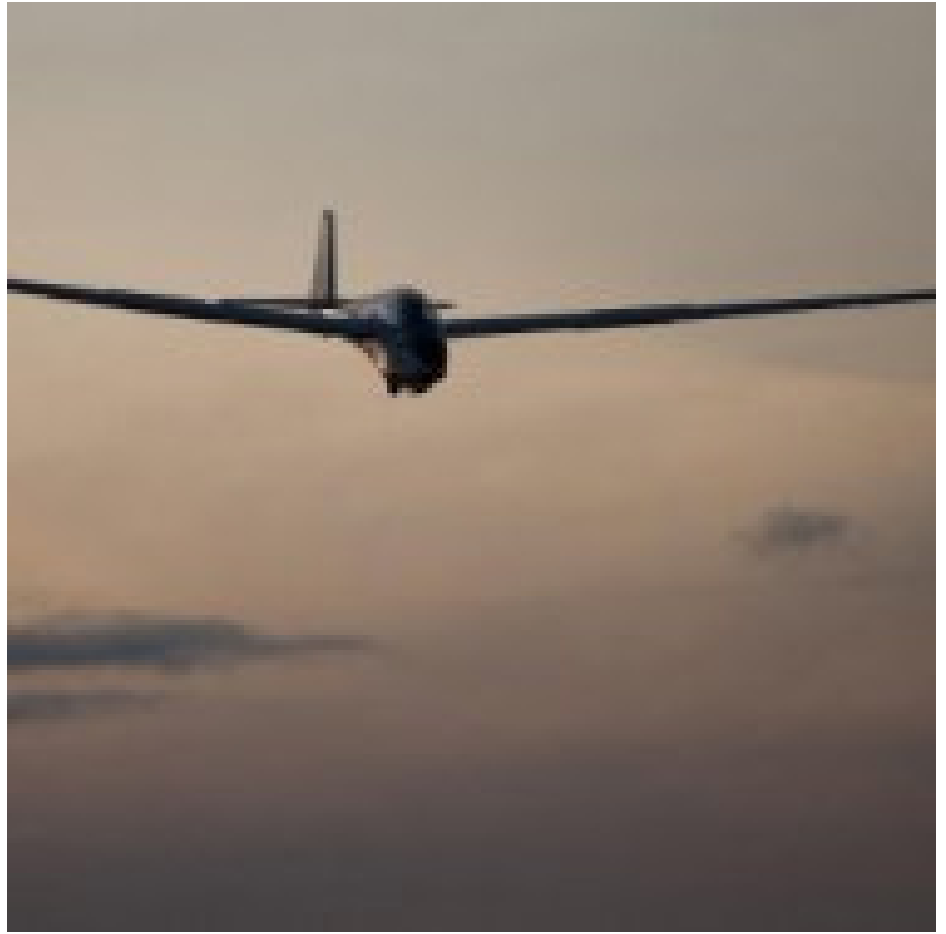
seals, dolphins, otters and eagles. It's difficult to pick the highlights, as it was all so enjoyable. Two contrasting highlights, however, would be coming in to Liverpool on the Mersey Ferry from the Wirral, and cycling along the remote Ardnamurchan Peninsular in Scotland.

Before you ask, yes, I am planning on continuing around the coastline. I've already started, if I count the 17 miles down to Wick, after taking the photos at John O'Groats. Only about 2,000 miles to go! ■■■

# The sky is the limit.

On the afternoon of 23rd June, in an old airfield near Banbury, Alison Miles was preparing to embark on her first tandem gliding experience.

Alison has been involved with OAB for over 20 years and has very limited vision. This was



A glider descending

her first time going up in a glider and the thought of floating in the air without an engine did not phase her.

Alison was helped in to the seat with the pilot sat right behind her, he reassuringly told Alison “stay close to me, I’ve got the parachute!..” Once everything had been checked and they were ready to go, the glider was helped in to the air by a small plane, a few minutes

later they released the rope and that was it, they were on their own. This was one of the most peaceful and calm experiences Alison has ever had with no engine sounds or noise around them. After some time they gently floated back to earth and Alison put her feet firmly back on solid ground. “I would do it again and again”, Alison exclaimed, “next up I want to try a tandem skydive!” ■■■

# Smartphone and Tablet Workshop

Are you interested in finding out more about tablet computers and smartphones and how a visually impaired person can access them? We are teaming up once again with RNIB to hold an Online Today workshop here at OAB. The workshop includes a walkthrough of how to access a mobile phone without using your vision, plus a hands on session with a tablet or phone. The workshop will be held at OAB on Wednesday 5th October 2016 at 10.30am. To book a place please contact Mark Upton on 01865 725595 or email [markupton@oxeyes.org.uk](mailto:markupton@oxeyes.org.uk) . ■■■



An i-phone

# Have you had your PIP letter yet?



## Personal Independence Payment

As you may be aware DLA has changed to PIP. The roll out of this change is happening gradually around the country. Some people have already been through the process. The important thing is to respond to the letter when it arrives in the post. Once you have responded it may take some time for them to get back to you, but the important thing is that the process has begun. If you have any queries about PIP you can contact: The Royal National Institute for the Blind, RNIB helpline: 0303 123 99 99 or The Department of Work and Pensions, DWP helpline: 0800 917 2222. ■■■

## Accessible NHS Information

The Standards Committee for Care Information, known as SCCI has approved the NHS England accessible information standard (1605). Since 1 April 2016, healthcare providers must identify and record how their patients need to be communicated with and from 31 July 2016 these records should be in place and all healthcare providers must provide information in a format their patients can read: enabling blind and partially sighted people to manage their own health with the same levels of privacy and independence that sighted people may take for granted. If you require information in an alternative format, or know someone who does, the relevant GP (ie yours or theirs) will need to be notified about which format is required. For more information call us on 01865 725595 and ask for David. ■■■

## Audio Described Performance of The Commitments

The Audio Described Performance of The Commitments will be taking place on Wednesday 11th January 2017 at the New Theatre, Oxford at 7.30pm. Tickets will be at a standard rate of £15.00 each and can be booked through Francesca on (01865) 320774 or in person from the box office. The tickets that have been reserved for this are rows J and K in the Stalls 16-30,

Michael Bethell  
Business Development  
Manager  
New Theatre, George  
Street, Oxford, OX1 2AG  
m i c h a e l b e t h e l l @  
theambassadors.com  
Direct Line: 01865  
320776 ■■■



## **Blind Veterans UK**

**Blind Veterans UK is a registered charity established in 1915 to offer assistance to ex-Service personnel with a visual impairment. The aim of the charity is to encourage and assist its members to overcome their impairment and maintain the quality of life that they so richly deserve. To meet this aim, the charity provides:**

- rehabilitation and training in employment and independent living skills**
  - assistance towards the provision of welfare, medical and housing support to members, their families and widows or widowers**
  - a nursing and residential care home and training centre at Brighton and Llandudno**
  - a training centre at Sheffield**
- For more information call Blind Veterans UK on 0800**

**389 7979. ■■■**

## **VIBNO**

**VIBNO is a group for the 18 – 50 age group in Oxfordshire to meet socially and have fun. We meet on the second Wednesday of the month. Our meetings include having a drink and a chat at a pub, dining, playing skittles and Aunt Sally and visiting places of interest. Since the last newsletter we have enjoyed a drink and a catch up at the Black Horse Pub in Kidlington and enjoyed pizzas at the Red Lion Pub, Kidlington. We had a great time at the Six Bells Pub, Kidlington where we played Aunt Sally followed by sandwiches and chips, we were joined by members of their Aunt Sally team who played with us and took on the challenge of wearing simulation glasses to give them an experience of being visually impaired. Partners, friends and family are welcome to all events. For more information and details of our programme please contact Nicola Pamphilon 01869 331778 or e-mail : [flashnp@aol.com](mailto:flashnp@aol.com)**

**■■■**

# Fundraising Update

## Oxford Rotary Club 5km Fun Run



**Some of the OAB Fun Run Team**

We would like to thank all those who took part in this year's Oxford Rotary Club 5km Fun Run as part of the OAB team.

This year we were fortunate to have a number of visually impaired children take part – several running alongside



**Some of the OAB Fun Runners in action!**



**More OAB Fun Runners!**

siblings and other family members - as well as runners from the Social Services Visual Impairment Team, OAB staff and family members.

It was a fantastic event with a great atmosphere and real team work as, despite the hot weather, everyone managed to complete the course and had fun at the same time! Much hard work was put in beforehand in training, preparation and raising funds and together the team have raised in excess of £1,200 - an incredible result! ■■■

## Legacy Gifts

We've just been informed about another generous legacy, which has been left to OAB, by a kind lady who was a long term supporter of our work. We are sorry for the passing of a generous friend to OAB and very grateful that she was minded to leave a gift in her Will. In recent years, legacy gifts have enabled us to continue to expand our services to sight impaired people, throughout the county and beyond. I've just waved off a group of our clients who were going tandem cycling. It's this sort of enjoyable and confidence building activity that we've been able to set up because of the generous forethoughts of our supporters.

If anyone is interested in leaving a gift to OAB in their Will and would like to talk to us about the benefits that this can bring, please do give Colin a call on 01865 725595. Thank you. ■■■



# Dreaming Spires Tenpin Bowling

In May we qualified for the BBS triples in Sheffield, after finishing 2nd in our division. We played some excellent bowling through the league which lasts over 5 months.

On the day we were up against some very powerful teams and we finished in 10th place. This was very disappointing as we played well in the league phase. We all had some good scores through the day. We are now playing in the summer pairs' league and are trying to qualify

## Can You Help?

Volunteer Transport Coordinator required for the Henley Visually Impaired Group. The group meet at the Rotherfield Greys village hall on the first Tuesday of each month and from next year we need a person who will telephone our 20 members asking if they wish to attend our meeting and then co-ordinate volunteer drivers from our list to collect and return. The volunteer does not need to attend the meetings. For more details, please contact Mike Pooley 01491 628284 or email: michael.pooley1@homecall.co.uk ■■■

for the finals being held in Sheffield in November.

We meet on a Wednesday afternoon, fortnightly, at the Kassam Stadium. Why not come along and play a great sport, we are a friendly team. It does not matter on your level of sight, it is how well you bowl. Contact Kevin Pamphilon 01869331778. ■■■

## Bowling Bonanza

On Sunday 4th September a bowling tournament for visually impaired people will be held at Thame bowling club, which is situated on Queens Road. There will be twelve teams of two, playing three matches between ten and one, and three more matches between two and five. The tournament has been set up by Thame Lions Club to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the International Lions. Also to raise money for the Blind Veterans Charity and the Calibre talking book service. There is no entry charge and refreshments will be served. Please come along and support them and see how well visually impaired bowlers can play.

Bob Gerhardt ■■■

# Firestarter Battery?

We are grateful to South Oxfordshire District Council for this edited article from their Outlook magazine ■■■

It's easy to think that just chucking things in your grey and green bins means they'll ultimately end up in the right place. Unfortunately not – putting some items in the wrong bin can actually be dangerous. Earlier this year, lithium batteries put in a grey bin caused one of our waste trucks to catch fire. Luckily no-one was hurt, but we did have to close the street while the fire was put out and there was a knock-on effect to the day's collections – all because

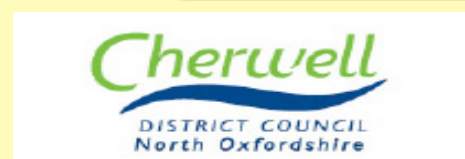
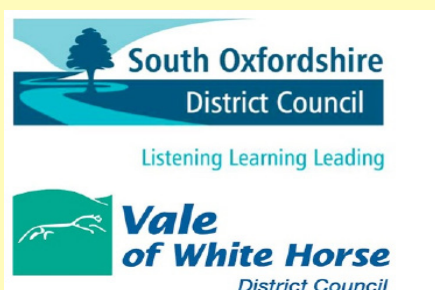
of one laptop battery. We have a battery recycling service you can use right on your kerbside – just put any batteries you need to recycle in a clear bag (a sandwich bag is perfect) on top of your green bin on your recycling day. If you have bigger batteries, like laptop ones, just put them out in a carrier bag next to your grey bin on your rubbish day. We'll take them away. For more information call us on 01235 422422.



The work of the Oxfordshire Association for the Blind is assisted by funds from



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# Clubs and groups for VIPs in Oxfordshire

## Abingdon Macular Group

Eleanor Dangerfield  
01235 531857

## ActivEyes

Guy Lawfull 01865 725595

## Banbury Macular Group

John Critchlow 01608 685293

## Banbury Society for the Visually Impaired

Enid Smith 01295 269568

## Carterton Visual Impairment Group

Rosemary Pearse 01993 841383

## Chipping Norton Friends of the Blind

Mary Gregory 01608 810899

## Didcot/Wallingford

Pam Organ 01235 813391

## Goring Macular Group

OAB 01865 725595

## Henley VIP Group

Mike Pooley 01491 628284

## Look Oxfordshire Support for families of VI children

Julie Hinton 01189 722322

## Kidlington Macular Group

Tom Wright 01865 376482  
Marita Ferrett 01865 373104

## Oxford Macular Group

Daphne Dorman 01993 811084

## Oxfordshire Retinitis Pigmentosa Group

Peter Jackson 01865 873246

## “OXVIC”

## Oxford Visually Impaired Club

OAB 01865 725595

## “Oxpots” Pottery Class

Angie 01865 373251

## Thame and District Society for the Visually Handicapped

Jean Mander 01844 212983

## “VIBNO”

## Visually Impaired But Not Old!

Nicola & Kevin  
Pamphilon 01869 331778

## “VIVA”, North Oxford

Liaison Officer  
Ron Sears 01865 553063

## Wantage Blind Social Club

Mary Greenfield 01235 764646  
*Secretary*

Hazel Aldred 01235 765849

## Dreaming Spires Ten Pin Bowling Club

Kevin Pamphilon 01869 331778

## Witney Macular Group

Sarah Salcombe 01993 771828

# Oxfordshire Social and Community Services Sensory Impairment Team

A countywide team of specially trained staff supporting people of all ages affected by sensory impairment

**Manager John Fearn-Webster**

## Visual Impairment Team

**Beverley Downs**

**Kate Laybourne**

**Meg Jones**

**Serena Glister**

**Jessica Brown**

Senior :

**Elizabeth Agar**

Telephone 01865 894935

[visual.impairment@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:visual.impairment@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## Hearing Impairment Team

Zelda Yarker, Catherine Thurbin,  
Ben Smith

Rebecca Nolan,  
Mark Cove

Senior : Neelam Ahmed

Telephone 01865 894925

SMS - 07713329501

## Sensory Impairment Team

Abbey House

2nd Floor

Abbey Close

Abingdon

OX14 3JD

**Out of hours social services, emergency freephone 0800 833408**



## Carers Oxfordshire

### A service for all carers



To make it easier for Carers to access support

To listen to Carers' needs

To give information, advice and support to Carers

**Please telephone 0845 0507666**  
Or email [carersoxfordshire@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:carersoxfordshire@oxfordshire.gov.uk)  
Or go to [www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk](http://www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk)



The Chair and Executive Committee invite you to the  
**Annual General Meeting**  
of the



**Oxfordshire**  
**Association for the Blind**



at 2.00pm on  
**Wednesday 7th September 2016**

at the

North Oxford Association Community Centre,  
Diamond Place, Summertown,  
Oxford, OX2 7DP.

Please note that nominations for office and resolutions must be  
made to us by Friday 26th August 2016

Car parking available, call 01865 725595 for more details

**RSVP**

Please write your name on the dotted line and return to:

**Oxfordshire Association for the Blind,  
Bradbury Lodge,  
Gordon Woodward Way,  
Abingdon Road, Oxford, OX1 4XL.**

Or

**Telephone : 01865 725595**

Or

**e-mail : [admin@oxeyes.org.uk](mailto:admin@oxeyes.org.uk)**

**Thank you**

I  will attend the A.G.M.