



**Oxfordshire**  
Association for the Blind

# Newsletter

November 2019

**Well done Team OAB!**



**See details  
of the Great  
Big Hospital  
Abseil on  
page 3**

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**Opening Hours: 10am to 3pm Mon-Fri**



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**FUNDRAISING  
REGULATOR**

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limited company (No: 07465300)*

## Message from the Chair of Trustees

Hello Everyone!

As the new Chair of Trustees at OAB, I'd like to welcome you all to this edition of the newsletter.

Firstly, I'd like to thank my predecessor, David Warr, for all

his hard work during the last 20 years. He has served as a Trustee, Vice Chair and Chair in his time with OAB and has now stepped down from the Board. David also oversaw the building of the Resource Centre and led OAB through some difficult times in the last few years. We all wish him well for the future.



With a departure comes a new arrival, and I invite you all to join me in extending a warm welcome to Gurjeet Jutley, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon at The Oxford Eye Hospital, who has joined our Board of Trustees. Gurjeet is always highly passionate about supporting all aspects of eye health and education. He has been an active fundraiser for OAB since he first started his position at The Oxford Eye Hospital; he has taken part in the Three Peaks Challenge and joined Team OAB in the abseil down the John Radcliffe Hospital in September.

As was reported by our Honorary Treasurer, Robin Birch, at the AGM, the financial situation at OAB has not been good for some time. We have been working hard to take steps to address this; some are progressing well while others have not produced the results that we were hoping for. We continue to explore every possible avenue to ensure that the provision of services by OAB remains as strong as ever and then expands over the coming years.

There are several ways that you, your family and your friends can help OAB: become a member of the Association, make a donation,

or make provision for us in your will. We are also continually searching for new volunteers to help deliver our services, so some of you may wish to help in that way. For more information on any of these, please contact OAB.

I know it's probably a bit early to say, but I will anyway:

Merry Christmas to all our readers!

I hope that you will all join me, the Staff, Trustees and Volunteers at OAB in looking forward to a really positive 2020.- Guy Lawfull

### **Well done Team OAB!**

Well done to Team OAB who took on the Great Big Hospital Abseil on 14th September! The team of 15 participated in the 100ft abseil off the edge of the John Radcliffe Hospital. They raised over £6,000 and money is still coming in! A big thank you to: Colin Cure, Gurjeet Jutley, Mark Upton, Nathan Tree, Ginny Matthews, Simon Cruden, Emma Tyreman, Teresa Burnage, Annette Hornsby, Steve Cunningham, Clark Lawfull, Brian Lawfull, Zoe Lawfull, Michelle Lawfull and Roger Chapman for taking part! It was a fantastic day, enjoyed by all!

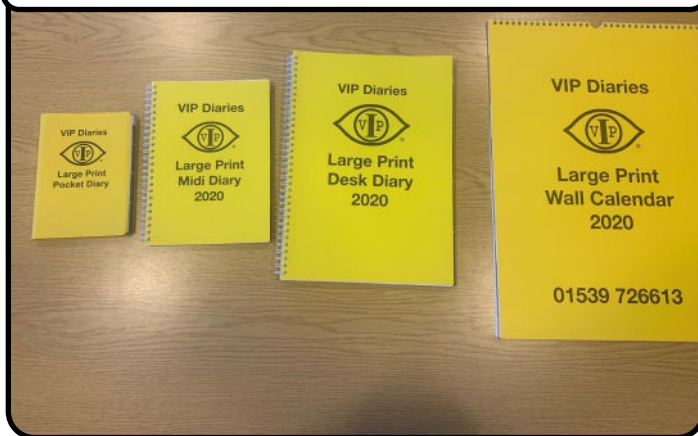
## Resource Centre update

*By Nathan Tree*

We have been very busy in the resource centre over the summer with lots of people visiting us and discovering all the wonderful visual aids and gadgets that we have available.

We are lucky to have been donated a range of different magnifiers and devices that can help in performing day-to-day tasks. If there is anything you need please get in touch. We will have a range of them out on display on December 2nd if you would like to come and find out more.

### Diaries & Calendars



Finally, we now have stocks of 2020 diaries and calendars ready to purchase

- A3 Calendar £7.00
- A4 Desk Diary £10.00
- A5 Midi Diary £8.00

- A6 Pocket Diary £6.00

To place an order or book an appointment to come in contact Nathan via the contact details on page 2.

## OXVIC - Summer Outing

*By Ali Carre*

Just a quick word to say a big THANK YOU to Oxford Garden Centre who made us all very welcome for the final OXVIC meeting and summer trip. They welcomed us with a display of scented, coloured and touchable plants as we entered the centre. The weather was very hot but they did their best to keep us cool. The food was delicious and the staff really lovely.

Afterwards, Betty Hallet said on the way home that it was the best day out she had been on in a long time. Sadly, the summer outing was the last official meeting of OXVIC, OAB are now running informal coffee mornings once a month.

It is with big regret that I am forced to leave due to ill health. I will miss everyone a great deal and wish you all well.

In memory of Betty Hallet who has sadly passed away, since our summer outing.

# Around the county

Below we have some exciting activities and events across Oxfordshire.

## Social activities

### **Bicester Coffee Morning**

Join OAB and Age UK for a relaxed and informal coffee morning on the 3rd Tuesday of every month 10am-11.30am at the Bicester Pop-in centre, Manorfield Road, Bicester, OX26 6EX.

### **Bicester Pottery Classes**

Suitable for anyone with a visual impairment plus your friends and family, £5 per session. For more information contact Jackie Roberts from Age UK on 07827 235 408.

### **Oxford Coffee Mornings**

Join us for a relaxed coffee morning at OAB's Bradbury Lodge, on the 3rd Tuesday of every month 10.30am-12.30pm. All welcome.

### **Didcot Coffee Club**

Come along and make friends at our Didcot Coffee Club, on the

2nd Wednesday of each month from 10.30am -12.30pm at the Cornerstone Arts Centre Nourish Café, 25 Station Road, Didcot, OX11 7NE.

## Sports activities

### **Blind Football - Oxford**

The University of Oxford have started blind football sessions for anyone who is interested in trying it out; come along every Tuesday 12.30-2.30pm (term time only) at the Acer Nethercott Sports Hall, Iffley Road, Oxford, OX4 1EQ.

### **VI Judo - Oxford**

Are you interested in trying Judo? The University of Oxford are hosting VI Judo every Tuesday 17.30-19.30 (term time only) at the Dojo, Iffley Road sports centre.

### **VI Tennis - Abingdon**

Our ActivEyes group meets on the last Thursday of every

month at the Vale of White Horse Leisure Centre. Pick-ups are available from Bradbury Lodge. Sessions run from 11am-12noon. Cost £3 per session.

## **Cycling - Oxford**

We meet on the first and third Friday of each month at Horspath running track with the Wheels for All sessions. Pick ups available from Bradbury Lodge at 10.30am, cost £3.

## **Relaxed Yoga - Oxford**

We're proud to have a Relaxed Yoga class every Wednesday, 11am, at OAB's Bradbury Lodge. Contact us to find out more.

We now have transport available from Banbury for various ActivEyes activities. To find out more about any of these sessions, or to get involved with other local activities, please contact us via the information on page 2.

## **Witney Talking News**

A registered charity based in Witney in West Oxfordshire, Witney Talking News (WTN), provides a free weekly talking news service to local people who

are visually impaired or who otherwise have difficulty holding or reading newspapers. Editions are posted free-of-charge.

Listeners receive a weekly USB stick loaded with around an hour of news recorded each Thursday evening from the Witney Gazette, the Faringdon Folly, the Chipping Norton News and a variety of other publications. This can be played back on the dedicated, simple-to-use playback units that are provided free of charge. They can also be played back on some newer talking book machines or on your own computer.

To find out more about The Witney Talking News service either go to [www.wtn.org.uk](http://www.wtn.org.uk) or telephone 01993 444 986



Image of a boombox audio player provided by Witney Talking News



# **The Great Brook Run**

**28th December 2019**



The world famous Chadlington Great Brook Run is  
back and better than ever!

Featuring: mud, water, mess, Great British Weather!  
and loads of fun!

The Tite Inn will be open all day for food and drinks.  
Bar snacks available until 2pm

Come and take part or just spectate - everyone's  
welcome

All proceeds go towards Oxfordshire Association  
for the Blind

Registration from 11am until 12.15, the race will start at  
12.30 from the Tite Inn, Mill End, Chadlington, OX7 3NY

**Go to [www.greatbrookrun.co.uk](http://www.greatbrookrun.co.uk)**

**for more details**

# Fun, Fears & Firs over the summer!

*By Laura Finnis*

Well, we certainly did have some fun together over the summer, especially when Kate Laybourne from the County Council's VI team fell from her canoe into the murky waters of the River Thames! We did laugh – after checking she was okay of course. Seriously, we paddled and laughed on the water at the end of July, rowing this time towards the city centre and skilfully (?) dodging the very many punts and bemused punters! Natalie and Bailey both chose to jump in at the end – but we all warmed up with some scrummy burgers from the Falcon Club's stall.

Then it was facing the challenge of a 12m high climbing wall! I can't really say I faced it, as I didn't face any challenges and I

could only marvel at the way the youngsters worked their way up. Honey was the star here, getting right to the top despite the task of having to feel for every foot and hand hold. Everyone did well and surpassed their expectations. It was great to be aided by the staff at Youlbury Scout Centre who also kept us amused! It is beautiful up there – with acres of woodland – and after lunch, we went to another part of the wood to whizz along the zip wire. I have to say this looked great fun but the children still had to keep their wits about them to work out how to get down at the end of the ride.

And on to a bit of peace and quiet at Harcourt Arboretum, another beautiful place to visit! We had our own little tour. We felt,



On the climbing wall

Canoeing on the Thames



Preparing for the zip wire



smelt and listened to parts of trees, pine cones, a bird's nest, leaves, flowers and birds in a really sensory experience.

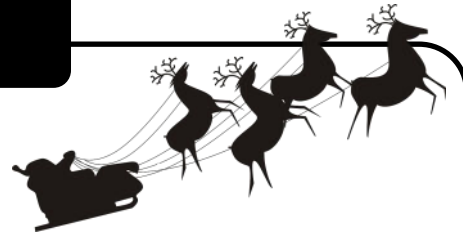
Thankfully it was a sunny day again and really very relaxing after all the activity of the other events.

We are always moving on, of course, and this

October half-term we will have been ten-pin bowling, drinking milkshakes, eating ice-cream as we learn how it's made at G & D's café and taking part in a story-telling session at the Oxford Story Museum. For further information on upcoming children's and young people's activities contact Laura for more details.

## Christmas is coming!

Christmas is just around the corner; below are few things OAB would like to share:



**Volunteer Christmas Party:** We could not run our services without our amazing volunteers. We want to say a big thank you by inviting all our volunteers to our Christmas party, on **Thursday 12th December 6pm-8pm** at OAB's Bradbury Lodge. We'll have mulled wine, mince pies and a Christmas quiz; places are limited so contact us to book your spot!

**Christmas stalls:** We're hoping to do a couple of stalls at different events and if anyone out there has a talent for any kind of craft that might sell well and would be happy to donate their handiwork to us, please do get in touch asap! Looking forward to hearing from you.

**Charity collection:** On Friday 20th December we'll be at Oxford train station holding a collection for OAB. If you're free to help out please get in touch; If not, but you would like to help with a future collection please let us know and we can add you to the list.

**Christmas openings:** Our office and resource centre will be closed from Friday 20th December and reopen on Thursday 2nd January.



# Fundraising

As you most likely know, it has been a challenging year for OAB. Below are a few simple ideas to support us that can make a huge difference! A big thank you to all those who continue to support us; without your support we would not exist!

## Join a local lottery



OAB are now registered with three local lottery schemes, Out of every £1 you spend 50p will go towards OAB and you could be in with a chance of winning £25,000 each week. The scheme is only available online but you can find the links below for more information:

- **Oxford Lottery**

[www.oxfordlottery.co.uk](http://www.oxfordlottery.co.uk)

- **Cherwell Lottery**

[www.cherwelllottery.co.uk](http://www.cherwelllottery.co.uk)

- **South Oxfordshire Lottery**

[www.socharitable.co.uk](http://www.socharitable.co.uk)

## Shop online and raise funds

If you're doing your online shopping this Christmas, try out Easy Fundraising; simply sign up to the website and find the online shop you're looking for, then Easy Fundraising will donate a small percentage of your order to

OAB. Go to:

[www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk)

## Recycle for good causes

We can take many old items off your hands and receive money for them, including: stamps, jewellery, watches, old mobile phones, tablets, laptops etc; contact us to find out more.

## Become a member

For just £10 a year you can become a member of OAB; this is a great way to support us on a regular basis.

## Standing order

You can also create a standing order to donate a fixed amount each month, quarter or year. Contact us to find out more.

## Take part in a fundraising event

Why not take part in a fundraising event for OAB, or encourage a member of your family to. Next year we're hoping to have a team of cyclists at Bike Oxford, a team of runners in the half marathon and another team of daring people taking on the abseil; you can also create your own event, a walk, a cake sale or coffee morning. Get in touch with us to find out how you can help!

## Take a collection tin

If you know of a local shop or take away that might take one of our charity collection tins, do let us know. This is a simple way for OAB to receive small donations and have a presence in the community.

## Donate to our Christmas Appeal!



Within your newsletter you should find our 2019 Christmas Appeal: why not consider donating to OAB and giving the gift of independence to someone with sight loss. You can also donate online by going to: [www.justgiving.com/oxaftb](http://www.justgiving.com/oxaftb) or contact us if you did not receive a form.

## Volunteer needed

Can you help? We're looking for a volunteer to help out at our sight advisory desk at the John Radcliffe Hospital. We are particularly looking for someone who can commit to a Wednesday each week. You will be there to advise people on all aspects of visual impairment and be a representative of OAB within the Eye Hospital. Full training will be given; we just ask that you can commit to one day a week. For more information please contact Mark Upton on the contact details on page 2.

## Ramble Tag

Have you heard of the ramble-tag guidance aid? This is a unique harness created for visually impaired people to be guided in more comfort. The harness has a strap to go around the guiding persons arm with a handle for the visually impaired person to hold. This is great for sports, crowded areas and walking longer distances. To find out more call Nathan via the details on page 2, or go to [www.rambletag.co.uk](http://www.rambletag.co.uk)





## Local Clubs and Groups

ActivEyes – 01865 725595.

Chipping Norton Group –  
01608 810899.

Didcot Coffee Club - 01865  
725595

Dreaming Spires ten pin  
bowling – 01869 331778.

LOOK Oxfordshire – support for  
families of visually impaired  
children - 01189 722322.

Oxford Coffee Morning – 01865  
725595.

Retina UK Group -  
01235 511044.

Thame & District Society for the  
Visually Impaired – 01865  
725595.

‘VIBNO’ – Visually Impaired But  
Not Old! - 01869 331778.

Wantage Blind Social Club -  
01235 764646 or 01235  
765849.

Witney Friends of the Visually  
Impaired – 01865 725595.

## Macular Support Groups

**Abingdon - 01235 531857**

**Banbury - 01608 685293**

**Goring - 01865 725595**

**Kidlington - 01865 376482  
or 01865 373104**

**Oxford - 01865 316245**

**Witney - 01993 771828.**

## Sensory Impairment Team

The County Council has an  
excellent team of specially  
trained staff supporting  
people of all ages affected by  
sensory impairment.

Their telephone number is:  
**01865 894935.**

## Carers Oxfordshire

A service for anyone who is  
caring for another person and  
would like some support.

Their number is: **0845  
0507666**

## OAB is assisted by:

