



# **MyVision** Oxfordshire

**Supporting Visually Impaired People**

## **Winter 2023**



**Donate to our  
Winter Appeal to  
help people like  
Humphrey  
continue their  
journey  
towards  
independence**

(Find out more about our  
Winter Appeal and  
Humphrey's story on  
pages 6 and 7)

**Above: Photo of Humphrey**

**MyVision Oxfordshire**

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# Upcoming Events

## Museums and Touch Tours

- **Visit to Pitt Rivers Museum:** 14th  
December

## ActivEyes Events

- **ActivEyes Pub Social:** 16th November,  
21st December

- **Visually Impaired Tennis:** 23rd  
November, 14th December

- **CyclAbility Cycling (formerly Wheels  
for All Cycling):** Tuesdays and Fridays

## In the Community

- **Oxford Technology Workshop:** 14th  
November

- **Blenheim Palace Lights Touch Tour:**  
4th December

- **Didcot Technology Workshop:** Date to  
be confirmed

- **'A Christmas Carol' Show and Touch  
Tour at The North Wall:** 16th December

- **Asda Wheatley Tin Collection:** 27th  
January

## At Bradbury Lodge

- **Festive Crafts with Kaz:**  
7th December

- **Well-being Drop-in Sessions:** Every  
Thursday

**For our social group schedule go to  
page 9 of the newsletter.**

# A message from Mark, our CEO

At MyVision Oxfordshire we regularly talk about what we do, it's even in our strapline - 'Supporting Visually Impaired People.' We can even break this down into the services we provide and what that support looks like. But we don't often stop to think about why we do what we do!

At our AGM this year, I reflected on my now three-year-old's discovery of the word 'why!' As you can imagine, this causes us no end of frustration at home. That said, questioning why we do things is so important.

I finished my update at the AGM by asking everyone to think about why the work of MyVision is so important, and therefore why they might consider donating to support visually impaired people. This was followed by some powerful stories, generously shared with us by those we have supported.

So once again I will ask you, whilst reading this newsletter

and particularly whilst you read about Humphrey's journey on page 6-7, to think about why you should continue to support the work of MyVision, whether by donating, volunteering, or encouraging from the sidelines. People like yourselves are incredible and do incredible things despite sight loss. I'm pleased at MyVision we can be a part of so many people's journey.

Lastly, thank you so much for your continued support, I want to wish you a Merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Mark





# Introducing Katie

.....  
Katie has joined our team as the new Volunteer Co-ordinator. Her role involves supporting our current volunteers as well as recruiting and training new volunteers who join the team. Katie has recently graduated from university and is excited to be beginning her career with MyVision Oxfordshire.

Katie, our Volunteer Coordinator



## Volunteering at MyVision

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Volunteers are so valuable in our organisation; our befriending service is run by volunteers and gives clients the opportunity to chat to someone on a weekly basis, either via the phone or in person.

Volunteers play a crucial part in our fundraising team, helping to organise and run a variety of events such as tin collections and organised walks. Our next tin collection will be at Asda Wheatley on 27th January. If you are free on that day, please get in touch!

Transport often prevents our clients from accessing events or being able to visit our resource centre. We are aiming to help combat this by recruiting volunteer drivers.

We are always so grateful for new volunteers, so if you have some spare time and any of these roles are of interest to you, please do get in touch at **[volunteers@MyVision.org.uk](mailto:volunteers@MyVision.org.uk)** or **01865 725595**.

5 volunteers seated at a table, smiling



# Children and Young People Update

• • • • •  
by Andy Smith

Over the spring and summer, we held some great events.

The first was a joint event with our friends at Berkshire Vision when we went to Science Oxford for a hands-on day in their discovery centre. We learnt about forces and pressure, and we also learnt about the wildlife around the centre including many small insects that thrive in the ponds.

We had a wet and windy day sailing at Farmoor Reservoir where some people got a bit more wet than others, but it was great fun, and the hot chocolate was greatly appreciated in the café afterwards.

We then had a change of weather and held a fantastic event at Falcon Rowing Club in Oxford on the river Thames where we tried out canoeing, kayaking, and rowing. This was a great

event, and everyone had a fantastic time trying lots of different water sports. The day concluded with homemade ice cream from the café.

An action shot of a 2 person kayak gliding through the water.



5 people in a row boat, moving across the water in-sync





# Winter Match Funding Challenge

**Will you help support visually impaired people in Oxfordshire by donating to our appeal?**

**Give today and double your donation!**

This winter, we are continuing our mission to support blind and visually impaired people in Oxfordshire. You can help us do this by donating to our Match Funding Challenge. Some of our generous supporters\* have pledged to match your donations. This means, for every £1 you donate, £2 will go towards services for blind and visually impaired people in Oxfordshire, up to a total of £3,000.

Your donation can help provide essential support, resources, and training that can transform the lives of people like Humphrey. Four years ago, Humphrey faced a life-changing event, which resulted in him receiving lifesaving surgery, losing his sight, and retiring from work, in a single day.

“I’m lucky to be alive” he said, yet the impact of visual impairment has been “quite dramatic”. “I can’t read on my phone; I can’t use the computer in fine detail; I had to retire; I also lost my hobbies, like woodworking. It has had a major impact.”

Humphrey found out about MyVision through friends after moving to Henley in 2021. He joined our Henley social group, where he has built connections with other visually impaired people in the area and been able to try new hobbies. He has joined the group members in making Easter cards, paper flowers, and creating a mosaic.

Humphrey working on a craft during one of the Henley Group meet-ups



Recently, Humphrey has started working with Jamie and Andreas from MyVision to learn more about assistive technology. Although Humphrey cannot read his phone, and struggles with his computer, they have helped him find solutions so he can remain connected with friends and family.

“It’s really helped. The ability of Apple phones to help is amazing, but it’s quite daunting to learn it without any instruction. During lockdown, my wife had to learn it off YouTube to then try to teach it to me. [At MyVision], however, it’s used more practically. My wife uses the phone normally and then has to switch the way she thinks for me, whereas [Jamie and Andreas] do it automatically since they use it that way anyway.”

**The support from MyVision has had a significant impact on Humphrey’s life.** To everyone who is thinking about donating to our Winter Appeal, Humphrey said, “Definitely do, it’s a must, without a doubt it’s worth it; MyVision is such a great supportive place.”

**Remember, every pound you donate to our Match Funding Challenge this winter will be doubled (up to £3,000). Your contribution will transform lives, empower individuals, and ensure that nobody faces the challenges of visual impairment alone.**

Donate now to help people like Humphrey continue their journey towards independence and double your impact. Scan the QR code, fill out the donation form, or visit:  
**[www.JustGiving.com/campaign/MyVisionWinterAppeal2023](http://www.JustGiving.com/campaign/MyVisionWinterAppeal2023)**

Thank you to Technique Web, BluePlanet, and our anonymous donors for providing the match funding for this appeal.



# Social Group Update

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Devante Claridge, our Community Engagement Worker for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse said:

“It has been a very busy season around South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse. In Wheatley we have now started a book club. We have continued our well-being classes in Didcot where we have done a number of crafts including finger painting and mosaics, as well as enjoying the lovely summer with wellbeing walks. We have been having more attendees at all the social groups as well as our other activities and touch tours.

Moving over to the Vale, we have had information days in Faringdon, Abingdon, and Wantage. We have now set up social groups in each of the towns. We look forward to a busy season ahead.”

Nathan Tree, our Community Engagement Lead said, “we have had some sturdy growth in the Headington Group and it has been really nice to welcome new members. We will be moving the Cowley Group to coincide with the drop-in sessions on Thursdays until spring. It has been really nice seeing so many people at the Museum Touch Tours and hope to see a lot more over the winter. We have a lot planned over the winter such as a tour of the Christmas lights show at Blenheim Palace as well as a visit to The North Wall for a production of ‘A Christmas Carol’ followed by a touch tour (go to page 2 for the dates). It would be good to see as many of our clients joining where possible.”



**The Henley Social Group  
enjoying a fish and chips lunch**



## Social Group Schedule

- Banbury: 7th December
- Abingdon: 27th November, 18th December
- Didcot: 8th November, 13th December
- Didcot Audio Book Club: 6th December
- Faringdon: 6th December
- Headington: 8th December
- Henley: 28th November, 19th December
- Thame: 16th November, 30th November, 14th December
- Wallingford: 20th November, 12th December
- Wantage: 22nd November, 20th December
- Wheatley: 30th November, 7th December



The Didcot Audio Book Club discussing one of their books

## Visually Impaired Tennis

Once a month, the ActivEyes group meets at the White Horse tennis centre in Abingdon to play VI tennis. Our coach, Sue, runs the sessions and her skills are put to good use trying to improve our game! It's always a fun session that ends with a match between attendees. Afterwards, we usually have a drink and a chat in the café. Come along and join us, it would be great to see you there. Contact

**ActivEyes@MyVision.org.uk** or **01865 725595** if you're interested

4 people posing with tennis rackets



## Farmoor Walk

Thank you to everyone who joined our walk around the Farmoor Reservoir in September!

It was so nice to catch-up with old friends and meet amazing new people, all while enjoying some fresh air on a beautiful day.



2 people posing by the reservoir

## Oxford Half Marathon

We would like to give a huge congratulations to Team MyVision for taking on 13.1 miles running through the streets of Oxford and raising over £629 for visually impaired people in Oxfordshire.

One of our runners in a bright yellow MyVision shirt



## Get Connected Workshops

Our workshops have been a practical exploration into the helpfulness of assistive technologies. We demonstrated how iPhone apps like Seeing AI can make everyday tasks like grocery shopping easier for individuals with visual impairments. We've had a very positive response with all attendees keen on receiving more training to utilise these tools. These sessions have highlighted the practical benefits of technology.

Go to page two of the newsletter to find out about our next workshops, and if you have any questions, contact us.

# Your iPhone's New Companion: Discover 'Point and Speak' at MyVision Oxfordshire"

.....

by Jamie Sargent

Dive into a world where your iPhone amplifies the unseen, thanks to iOS 17's updated Magnifier app, now featuring 'Point and Speak'. This remarkable feature transforms text interactions, reading aloud labels as you point your device. From the microwave buttons to laundry labels, every text becomes audible. Coupled with VoiceOver, it's a game changer for daily interactions.

Join us at MyVision Oxfordshire to explore 'Point and Speak'. Our team is thrilled to guide you through the new feature, ensuring you harness its full potential. While you're with us, delve into other accessibility features like VoiceOver and Zoom, each designed to add a layer of ease to your digital interactions. We can

help you make your iPhone more than just a device; by mastering these handy features you could turn it into your personal assistant that assists with countless tasks.

Your journey towards a more accessible everyday life is just a visit away. Discover, learn, and embrace the unseen with 'Point and Speak' at Bradbury Lodge.

If you are interested in finding out more about Point and Speak and witnessing its features in action, contact us at **info@MyVision.org.uk** or **01865 725595**.



A close-up of a person holding an iPhone



# Winter Match Funding Challenge

This year we are very lucky to have Technique Web, BluePlanet, and our anonymous donors who have pledged to match funding up to £3,000.

This means that for every £1 you donate, we will receive £2. Your contribution will have twice the impact, helping us reach even more visually impaired people in the county.

## Help us reach our target of £3,000!

Scan the QR code or go to  
**[www.JustGiving.com/campaign/MyVisionWinterAppeal2023](http://www.JustGiving.com/campaign/MyVisionWinterAppeal2023)**  
to donate

