

OUR PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear friends

Spring has arrived at last and 2011 has got off to an exciting start with the agreement for the WBA to work together with Age UK and Wiltshire Mind as the WCIC, Wiltshire Collaboration of Independent Charities. In the current difficult economic climate and spending squeeze, working with other charities will help us give better services to our members. We will keep our individual identity and independence, but will share information and expertise to give local people a really good service.

In this issue you will find a flyer for the Bowood Dog Show and Country Fair, which is on Sunday 12th June. This event supports a number of local charities which I am involved with and last year raised £2866.66 for the WBA. I hope you can join us then for a wonderful day out.

Best wishes

Fiona Lansdowne

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ASSOCIATION NEWS

NEWS UPDATE FROM OUR GENERAL MANAGER

It has been a busy start to the year. I've been out and about with Maggie Hemmings, our Club coordinator, visiting some of our clubs and getting to know WBA members. We had an enjoyable lunch with Janet Marshall who runs the Warminster Club and her members in February and had time to discuss some of the issues they raised with us.



Our holiday to Llandudno on the 27th April to the 4th May is well under way and, as it is also the Royal Wedding weekend as well as the Llandudno Victorian Extravaganza, it should be very enjoyable. We have a few spare places still available. We are also planning a day out in Weston Super Mare in September to see the new Pier and we will give you more details in our summer newsletter.

I went to visit the Helpdesk at the Eye Clinic in the Great Western Hospital, Swindon in January with Richard Day. This is a really valuable service run voluntarily by Nicky Newport and John Monniot and gives information and help to people actually at the clinic. Whilst those in Swindon have this facility, many others throughout the county do not have this access to information and often wait a long time to hear about what is available. We are trying to address this delay by our Moving On programme. You can find the details on page 6.

If you are in or near Devizes on Sunday 1st May we are having a May Fayre and Fun Dog Show on the Green and we are hoping for fine weather and a good turn out. We would appreciate some extra help on the day, so if you are able to lend a hand, please let us know.

Lastly, we still have available a stock of large print 2011 wall calendars, desk and pocket diaries. If you would like any of these they are now on sale at half price.

Very best wishes,
Gail

LUCY'S LOTTO

As Lucy's Lotto approaches its first birthday we are pleased to report that we now have 134 members with a monthly prize fund currently standing at £66.



The monthly prize is based on 25% of the income. There is no limit on the amount of numbers you can have and we will draw the number here on the last Friday of every month.

Obviously the more members the more money in the prize fund. Lotto tickets cost just £24 which is just £2 a month.

If you haven't yet joined the lotto, fill in the form on pages 15-16 of this magazine and return it to us with your cheque or standing order form.

Recent winners are December No. 105, January No.134 and February No. 176.

WINTER RAFFLE

Many thanks to everyone who supported the New Year Draw, raising a magnificent sum of just under £2,000. The winning tickets were drawn by Julia Close, one of our trustees.



The winning ticket numbers were as follows:

(In numerical order not winning order): 167, 1138, 2120, 2296, 2363, 2365, 2374, 2641, 2755, 3861, 4119, 4442, 4500, 4669, 4707, 7159, 7167, 7323, 8795, 9245, 9314, 11032.

All money raised will go to support blind and visually impaired members throughout Wiltshire and Swindon. A complete list of winners is held at the office in Devizes.

ADVICE & SERVICES

RNIB TALKING BOOKS

For those members who get the RNIB Talking Books, there will be a change to the service from 1 April 2011. The service in Wiltshire will no longer be administered by the WBA but will run directly with the RNIB.



Any queries regarding 'daisy player' machines or membership will need to be made directly with the RNIB helpline on **0303 123 9999** or **08457 626 843**. Talking Books subscription costs £79 a year or may be free, with a referral from Wiltshire Council's or Swindon Borough Council's Hearing & Vision team.

The WBA would like to thank Mary Hawkins who has run the service for us since 1991 and we wish her well for the future.

RNIB Helpline – new opening hours

The helpline is now open from Monday to Friday from 8.45am to 5.30pm and closed on Saturdays.

ACCESS IT MAGAZINE

Access IT is the monthly magazine about technology for blind and partially sighted people. You'll find it useful whether you are just getting started with IT or are an experienced user. It's packed with articles about new services, the latest software, internet developments and what's happening with digital TV.



Available monthly on subscription in Braille and electronically, it costs just 66p per issue. To order contact the RNIB on **0303 123 9999** or email **shop@rnib.org.uk**

ADVICE & SERVICES

TALKING BUS STOPS

The WBA has a number of free special key fobs which will speak out the information on electronic bus signs. These bus stops give up-to-the-minute information when the bus will arrive and are found in some of our town centres.



If you would like one call us on **01380 723 682** or email **enquiries@wiltshireblind.org.uk**

DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE

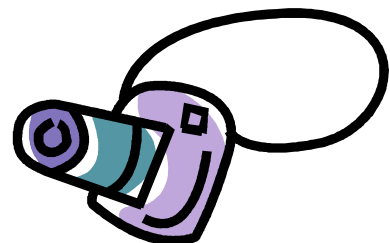
Changes to the DLA higher rate mobility component mean that some blind people will be entitled to more money from 11 April 2011.

To be considered for the higher rate, claimants must be under 65 on the 11 April 2011 and registered blind or certified as severely sight impaired (blind), although not everyone who is registered will qualify and every current claim will be reviewed.

If you are already getting the lower rate mobility component of the DLA you don't need to do anything as you will get a call from the Pensions, Disability and Carers Service to see if you are entitled to an increase. You will need your certificate of visual impairment (CV1 or BD80) or a consultants note. This will help speed up your claim.

STOP PRESS

We are looking for a good photographer to record our events. If you are a dab hand with a camera and would like to help please call **01380 723 682** .

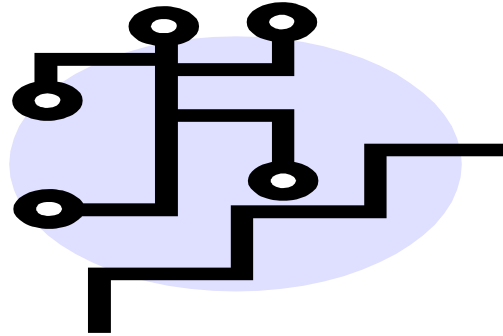


MOVING ON

A NEW TRAINING COURSE FOR VIP'S

The WBA has launched a new training course called **Moving On**.

The course is designed for people who have found out they are losing their sight and provides information and advice to help them meet this new challenge and make everyday tasks easier.



The course consists of six, three-hour weekly sessions that will include information and support through discussion groups and workshops, which are given by people who have either a personal experience or a professional understanding of visual impairment.

The course is free to visually impaired people and refreshments will be provided. Although the course is primarily intended for newly diagnosed VIPs, members who think it may be of benefit to them are welcome to come along.

Course start dates:

Salisbury: 9th May, 19th September
(Low Vision-Wessex Sight Centre)

Semington: 3rd May, 20th September
(Independent Living Centre)

Swindon: 5th May, 29th September
(Craven House)

If you are interested in attending a course and would like to book a place or would like some more information please contact Maggie Hemmings on **01380 723 682** or you can email **enquiries@wiltshireblind.org**

LEGACIES AND APPEALS

Everything we do to help local visually impaired people is made possible by the financial support of our members and friends.

Different people choose to help us in different ways, by setting up a direct debit to the WBA or by volunteering to help, for example. One of the least mentioned methods of helping, but one of the most important, is by making a gift to the WBA in your Will; by leaving your legacy to the charity.

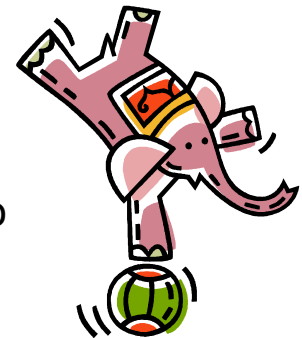
Legacies have already played a big part in helping us run our services and there are a number of services that we may not have been able to provide without the gifts that some supporters have left to us in their Wills. We are very grateful to each of those people for doing so and we work hard to honour their gift every day.

If any of you reading this would like to speak with someone about leaving a gift to the WBA in your Will, then please feel free to contact Gail Nugent on **01380 723 682**.

PINK ELEPHANTS

Most appeals are for money but this time our appeal is different.

We are sure that every one of you has occasion to go shopping and many of you will know your shopkeepers quite well.

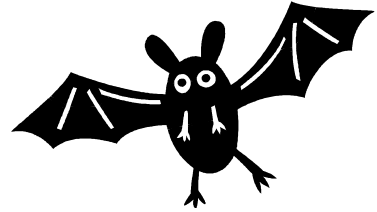


You can help by simply asking whether any of them would be willing to have one of our collection boxes 'Pink elephants'. All we ask you to do is get the name, address, telephone number and if possible the name of a contact. Then we will do the rest. We'll take the box and make all future arrangements.

Best sources are pubs and clubs, fish and chip/take-away shops, stationers, corner shops and some opticians. If you know of a place that would be willing to have one of our collection boxes please contact Annie Davis on **01380 723 682**.

SWINDON BATS

Congratulations to the **BATS** who have just celebrated their first birthday. Here **BATS** member Simon Bowen gives us an insight to the club and its activities.



We are a group of people who are blind and visually impaired, known as the Swindon Bats, but no need to worry or be scared. We meet every week to Tenpin bowl in a league of blind teams.



It's mostly for fun or a laugh but sometimes that's not how it seems, as boys will be boys the testosterone flows, and the egos grow.



A pin spotter guides us to lob it down, and tells us yes, yes, yes, no! We are up for a challenge or a match from anyone who dare.



But be warned, the pins are known to quiver, wobble and be scared. Sometimes we go to places of interest, and do fundraising things.



We have speakers about technology to show us what's available and what the future brings. There's men, women, some young and some old.



And believe it between us, I reckon some of them are dusty or sprouting mould. So what about the Tenpin bowling, do you fancy a kicking, sorry, a game.



We promise to go easy just remember, Swindon Bats are blind, but we are not tame. It won't matter if you get a strike, a spare or even just miss.



Come on, what's the worst thing that could happen, a split nail or maybe a bruise, Oh yes! sorry we forgot we're blind, and you might LOSE."

For more information call Trevor John on **01793 783 306**

CLUBS AS AT MARCH 2011

For more information, please call 01380 723682

DAY	CLUB	VENUE	TIME
MONDAYS	Devizes Social Club	Nursted Centre	11am to 3pm
MONDAYS	Warminster Social Craft	St John's Church Hall	2pm to 4pm
2nd MONDAY each month	Swindon BATS Sports & Social	Craven House	2pm to 4pm
TUESDAYS	Swindon Craft Club	Craven House	10am to 2pm
TUESDAYS	Trowbridge Social Club	The Halve	1.45 to 3.45pm
2nd TUESDAY each month	B/Avon Coffee Morning	Cedar Court	10am to 12pm
3rd TUESDAY each month	Cricklade Coffee Club	United Church Hall	10.30 am to 12pm
2nd & 4th TUESDAYS	Amesbury Social Club	Antrobus House	10am to 12.30pm
1st WEDNESDAY each month	Corsham Club	Holton House	10am to 11.30am
WEDNESDAYS	Salisbury Social/ Craft	The Friary	1.30pm to 4pm
WEDNESDAYS	Swindon /Social	Craven House	2pm to 4pm
2nd & 4th WEDNESDAYS	Highworth Social Club	Highworth Methodist Church	10.15am to 12.15pm
2nd THURSDAY each month	Chippenham Social Club	Munroe's Coffee Shop	10.30am to 11.30am
1st FRIDAY each month	Active Blind Social Club	Baptist Church Hall	10am to 12pm
FRIDAYS	Devizes Craft Club	Nursted Centre	9.00am to 1.00pm

MARCHING AT THE CENOTAPH

Trowbridge ex-serviceman Ron Jeffries was proud to be marching on Remembrance Day as part of a visually impaired military heroes group. Illness had prevented him the previous year but at last he was able to join the St Dunstan's blind and visually impaired charity.



“On arrival at Horse Guards Parade the coach was searched by sniffer dogs” Ron said.

“About 10.30 we were gathered into our positions for the Parade”.

“We were not able to see the Queen laying the wreaths on the Cenotaph but as we marched past the Queen we were ordered to do ‘eyes right’ and as we passed the Cenotaph, ‘eyes left’”.

“We marched down Whitehall and were ordered to do ‘eyes right’ again for Princess Anne who was taking the salute for the end of the Parade”.

Ron spoke to one of the Irish guardsmen who told him and wife Joan that he had not slept properly for a week, worrying about the Parade, hoping it would go well. It certainly did. Ron said, “I was honoured that I had been asked to go on this Parade to pay my respects to all those who had given their lives to make a better place for us all”.

105th BIRTHDAY CONGRATULATIONS!



The WBA sends its best wishes to Lilian Russell who celebrated her 105th birthday by dancing with Swindon Mayor, Rex Barnett.

Born in 1906, Lilian is still active and puts her longevity down to hard work, the occasional drink and the love and interest in her large family.

HOLIDAYS & ACTIVITIES

SEASIDE BREAK

Our first holiday of the year sets off for a week-long break at the seaside in Llandudno on Wednesday 27th April.

The Belmont Hotel is situated right on the sea front and has specialist accommodation for blind and partially sighted guests.



We still have a few places left on the holiday so if you are interested, please get in touch as soon as possible.

ACTIVITY WEEKEND



If you are looking for something more challenging, the WBA is planning an activity weekend later this summer.

Activities on offer include archery, abseiling, canoeing and much more. If you are interested in taking part, please get in touch and we'll let you have more details.

ANYONE FOR CRICKET

Blind Cricket England and Wales is looking for new players to set up a team in Wiltshire. They have recently started new clubs in Somerset and Berkshire and are keen to include players from our area as well.

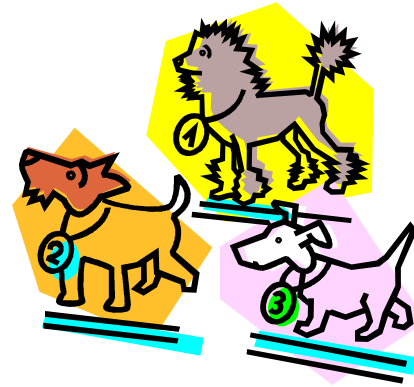
If anyone is interested contact John Garbett, Development director for Blind Cricket England and Wales on **07833 592 538**



EVENTS

MAY DAY FAYRE AND FUN DOG SHOW

On May Day this year the WBA are running a family fete with fun Dog Show. It will be a fun-filled day for all the family. As well as the Dog Show, there will be craft stalls, car boot, games, activities, displays, refreshments and much more.



The main highlight of the day will be the Dog Show, with classes such as: “Waggiest Tail”, “Prettiest Bitch”, “Most Handsome Dog” and “Best Sausage Catcher.” Christine Bodman, a qualified show judge, will award the prizes.

Entry fee will be £1 per class and registration will take place on the day itself from noon and judging will begin at 1pm.

We still have some stalls and car boot pitches available at a small cost of £10.

The WBA’s Fun Dog Show and May Fayre will be held on The Green, Devizes on Sunday 1st May 2011 from 11am. Entry to the fete will be free. For more details and bookings, contact the WBA on **01380 723 682**.

IN FOCUS

We are keen to get members involved with helping us improve our services, and events and activities.

With this in mind, we would like to set up a focus group, which will meet several times a year to have a say about how we can improve our services.



If you are interested in taking part call us on **01380 723 682**.

EVENTS

DRAGON BOAT RACE

We're entering a team in the Rotary Club of Chippenham Wiltshire Vale's Dragon Boat Race Day 2011 on Saturday 9 July with our corporate sponsor Avagio. Last year we came a fantastic third!



We need a team of 20 fit people to take part who are willing to row and raise sponsorship for the WBA, and we'd like to have 10 VIP's in the team. If you would like to take part or find out a bit more call Annie Davis on **01380 723 682**.

The Boat Race Day is a great family day out with a mini street fair refreshments and 'art in the park' exhibition. It all takes place along the riverside footpath in Monkton Park, Chippenham.

The WBA are running the bar this year and would welcome any offers of help on the day.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our AGM takes place on Wednesday, 20 July 2011 at Dauntsey's School in West Lavington, Near Devizes.

There will be plenty to do and see with a fantastic selection of low vision aids and craft stalls from our clubs.



The AGM will start at 12 noon and sandwich lunch will be served at 12.30 pm and tea later in the afternoon.

We would like to welcome all members to the event. For more information on the event call **01380 723 682**.

NATIONAL EYE CARE WEEK

National Eye Health Week takes place on 13-19 June 2011. 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. Why not hold a coffee morning for the WBA that week.



A FEAST FOR YOUR EYES

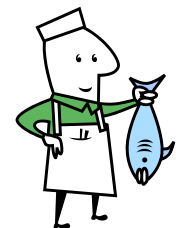
We often underestimate the impact that our diet can have on our health and our eyes are no different to the rest of the body.

◆ Leafy greens such as kale and spinach are packed full of lutein. Lutein is thought to play a major role in the health of the eye by helping to prevent damage to the macula, the central point of the retina needed for close work like reading and driving. Some studies have shown that lutein can help prevent the development of Age Related Macular Degeneration (AMD).



◆ Brightly coloured fruit and veg such as corn, orange sweet peppers, tangerines and oranges are rich in zeaxanthin, which is thought to prevent damage to the macula and help prevent the development of AMD.

◆ Oily fish like salmon, tuna and mackerel is rich in Omega-3 fatty acids which are thought to help decrease the risk of developing AMD and may slow down the progression of this condition.



◆ Broccoli is rich in vitamins A and C and lutein, and is thought to help keep our eyes healthy.

◆ Carrots have always been linked to the eyes and while they may not necessarily help you to see better in the dark, they are high in Vitamin A which is important for eye health.



LUCY'S LOTTO

I wish to apply for membership of **Lucy's Lotto**.

Please complete and return the form to the **Wiltshire Blind Association**, St Lucy's, 1 Commercial Road, Devizes SN10 1EH.

You will receive a confirmation letter that your membership has been accepted and be notified of your number/s.

Please ensure you fully complete the form below.

Remember that minimum membership is for 12 months (applicants must be over 18).

Start month:

I require **1** number or (enter the quantity of numbers) @
£24.00 per number for the year.

Name:

Address:

Town:

County:

Post code:

Tel:

Email:

I have enclosed a cheque or
postal order for

£

Or I have completed the standing order mandate (overleaf) to the
value of £

Signed:

Date:

For office use Allocated Numbers:

LUCY's LOTTO STANDING ORDER MANDATE

Donor details:

Name:	
Address:	
Postcode:	

Bank details:

Name of bank:	
Address:	
Postcode:	
Sort Code:	
Account Number:	

From the aforementioned account, please pay the HSBC Plc, Devizes Branch, Sort Code 40-19-16, Account Number 61406396 for the credit of the Wiltshire Blind Association the sum of:

Amount £:			
Amount : (in words)			
Annually on the		day of	until altered or stopped by me
Signature:			
Date:			

This form must be returned with the application form completed overleaf by the end of the month prior to the first month you wish to enter the draw. You can send back for free using our Freepost address (no stamp needed) to **Freepost RSAX-SXHH-TGER, Wiltshire Blind Association, Devizes SN10 1EH**