

Summer 2019



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AGM

There will be an Annual General Meeting of Warwickshire Vision Support on Friday 18th October 2019.

Details of time and venue will be provided when available.

Sight Village Central

Sight Village Central will take place on Tuesday 9th and Wednesday 10th July 2019 at Cranmore Park Conference and Events Centre, Cranmore Avenue, Solihull B90 4LF. Doors open at 9.30 am both days and close at 4 pm on the 9th and 3 pm on the 10th - the event is FREE to visit.

A full programme of seminars and workshops will take place on both days and full information will be posted on the website nearer the date.

For information about how to get to the venue, please go to sv@qac.ac.uk, qacsightvillage.org.uk or call one of the team on **0121 428 5041** - they will be happy to help!



Rosemary Went, Editor



Rosalie Visick, Co-editor

Editorial

Welcome to the Summer edition of Warwickshire Vision.

The 75th anniversary of the D-Day landings was commemorated on 6th June but the same week, beginning 3rd June, was Volunteer Week, when Warwickshire Vision Support celebrated Our Wonderful Volunteers.

Unfortunately it has only been possible to feature a handful of our many volunteers in this issue. Volunteers are the people who give their time to enable our Association to provide the charitable services that it does.

The image on the cover is of a glass paperweight and is shown a little larger than the object. The glass is clear, it has a raised rim round the edge and it is engraved underneath. Engraved in the centre is our logo - a pair of light blue, cupped hands forming the shape of an eye,

representing support, friendship and unity with a pupil in the centre representing vision and around the eye are the words Warwickshire Vision Support. Circling the logo are the words Volunteer Excellence Award. Each winner was presented with one of these paperweights together with a personal framed certificate. You can read about the services they are giving in the Volunteer Excellence Awards 2019 article.

In this issue there is a new section on Consumer Matters that provides information on the utility services.

We learn of VIPs achievements and raising our profile at Westminster.

If you would like to contribute to a Christmas edition please get in touch before the end of September.

We wish you a pleasant summer.

News from Warwickshire Vision Support

Phil's Blog

(from Phil Arkell, CEO)

Volunteer Excellence Awards

This edition of Warwickshire Vision celebrates our wonderful Volunteers and the amazing roles they perform on behalf of Warwickshire Vision Support. It is no exaggeration to say that our clubs, home visitor service and of course this magazine would not exist without the commitment and dedication of so many people, whilst our Support Centres, IT training and admin support would be impoverished without such a valuable contribution.

This year sees the inauguration of what will be our annual Volunteer Excellence Awards. This is our way of saying thank you and celebrating the generosity of spirit of so many people.

As with any awards, identifying the winners is always very challenging. We started with a very long list of deserving candidates and it was only after a series of meetings that we were able to whittle the numbers down. I am acutely aware that some very deserving people will be passed over this year but we plan to remedy this situation next year.

I would also like to say that we nominated two of our volunteers, Andrew Harris (IT trainer, Nuneaton) and Meryl Beck (Leamington Club and Support Centre) for external

Warwickshire CAVA (Community and Voluntary Action) awards in recognition of going the extra mile for those they support. We look forward to seeing whether they will be successful.

Volunteering for WVS

The facts and figures about the work of Our Wonderful Volunteers appears in the article of that name. In total, it is remarkable to think that about 19,100 hours are donated annually to our services. This is the equivalent of over 10 full time staff that would cost the charity almost £220,000 to employ.

It really is quite humbling to see just how much support we receive.

On behalf of the Trustees, Staff and Service Users, I want to say thank you to every one of the 243 Volunteers who support our activities. We really couldn't do it without you.

Volunteering Opportunities

Despite the incredible support we receive from our Volunteers, we still need to recruit more people. Some of our existing volunteers are approaching retirement, whilst our desire to develop new services creates new demand and sometimes a different range of skills.

If you know of anyone who might like to volunteer for WVS please ask them to contact us. We have many exciting opportunities.

Running for WVS

By the time this magazine is published, Louise Jelley, our Senior Vision Support Officer/Fundraiser will have completed the Two Castles Run and Liz Thiebe (Chair) and Richard Orme (Vice Chair) will have run the Leamington Half Marathon – all in aid of Warwickshire Vision Support. I would like to congratulate them on their exertions and thank everyone who has sponsored them.

WVS at Westminster

Warwickshire Vision Support was among a number of charities and businesses that joined forces to demonstrate to decision makers the power of, and opportunities for, assistive technology at the Leonard Cheshire Assistive Technology Showcase event hosted at Portcullis House, Westminster on 8th May. Attendees at the event included the Minister of State for Care, Caroline Dinenage MP, also local Members of Parliament, Mark Pawsey (Rugby and Bulkington) and Matt Western (Warwick and Leamington).

Assistive Technology is an umbrella term that includes a wide range of assistive, adaptive, and rehabilitative devices for people with disabilities and/or the elderly population with the prime objective of increasing independence and personal decision-making.

Warwickshire Vision Support promotes the use of assistive technology across all its services, ranging from liquid level indicators to reduce the incidence of scalding, through talking glucose monitors to help manage diabetes, to using tablets and smart phones to access information and keep in touch with loved ones.

Although the majority of exhibitors were manufacturers demonstrating their products, Liz Rosewell (IT Trainer) and Richard Orme (Vice Chair) were there to show the practical benefits that digital technology can bring to everyday life for people living with sight loss.

They pointed out that many of the people that Warwickshire



Vision Support helps feel cut off by digital technology. They cannot take advantage of online discounts, enjoy the convenience of online banking or keep in contact with friends and family through social media. We can give people the skills and confidence to break down the digital divide so they can remain independent and in control.

Mark Pawsey and Matt Western visited the Warwickshire Vision Support stall and were impressed by the technology on view and were very supportive of the IT training that the charity has offered to people living with sight loss in Warwickshire over the last 5 years.

Speaking after the event, Liz Rosewell said that it was a privilege to be able to demonstrate the life changing nature of modern technology.

If you want to learn more about how assistive technology can help you manage your sight loss, then why not visit one of our Vision Support Centres?

New year – New Roles!

Louise Jelley

As you all know I have been working for Warwickshire Vision Support since last March as the Fundraising Officer. At the beginning of April this year I was appointed Senior Vision Support Officer. My new role is in addition to my fundraising role. I am now responsible for supervising the Community Team and overseeing

all of the charitable services that our Vision Support Officers provide.

I will be working alongside Sue and Vicky who manage the Vision Support Centres, Del who has taken on a new role as Volunteer Co-ordinator and Liz who runs our Information Technology Training. The Community Team has a new member of staff who will be working from within the Vision Support Centres as a 'Supersaver,' promoting innovative ways for you to save money on your household bills. We have also recruited an additional Volunteer Co-ordinator and Assistant Vision Support Officers. You will see me out and about at the Vision Support Centres on a more regular basis when I am needed to cover staff absence or assist with a project. I look forward to seeing you all more.

Kate Perkins

I recently joined Warwickshire Vision Support as a Community Support Officer, with the unusual sub-title of 'Supersaver'. Hopefully over the next few months I will be WVS's 'Money Saving Expert' with my role being to research and publicise the best utility, phone, water deals as well as other local offers that are available to help you save money.

I live in Kenilworth and have two grown up children, my son is due to graduate from Durham University this summer and my daughter is hopefully going to start university



trying to help provide some money saving tips for everyone over the forthcoming months.

Joanne Swann

Joanne Swann, who has been one of our Admin Officers for over 8 years is leaving WVS. She is moving on to fulfil her ambition to work in the funeral industry. On behalf of everyone at Warwickshire Vision Support, we would like to wish Joanne all the very best in her new role.

High Sheriff visits Leamington Vision Support Centre

On Monday 15th April 2019 Clare Sawdon, the High Sheriff of Warwickshire, visited our Leamington Spa Vision Support Centre at Chandos Court. Clare who has been High Sheriff for the past year, has been actively involved with charities

this September depending on 'A' level results!

I have run my own part time dog grooming business for the past 12 years and have some very loyal customers who have been with me from the start. I have three dogs of my own which keep me busy; two elderly Lhasa Apso's, brother and sister Mabel and Monty, as well as a young Toy Poodle called Darcy who has been trained by my daughter and loves to do tricks and perform to an audience!

In my spare time I love to play tennis for Kenilworth Tennis Club, and with their flood lights and artificial grass I manage to play all year round. I also enjoy cooking, specifically baking and cake decorating and enjoy gardening although I am only a novice.

I am looking forward to the challenge of finding the best offers and



in Warwickshire and chose to come along and view our services in action.

Clare gave a brief talk about her background as a Justice of the Peace and her time as High Sheriff and then she met with beneficiaries who were having IT Training and those that were testing our different magnifiers with our Rehabilitation Team. We are very appreciative of the time given by Clare out of her busy schedule to come along and offer her support to our charity and our services.

Thank You Clare Sawdon -
High Sheriff of Warwickshire.

Open Forum - 10th April 2019

The Open Forum held in April at the Rugby Vision Support Centre was attended by members, volunteers, service users, staff and trustees.

Janet Hurrell introduced the Trustees and conveyed apologies from Liz Thiebe (Chair of the Board of Trustees). Judy Murdoch, Vice President, was also introduced.

Phil Arkell, CEO, had many new developments to report. Firstly he announced that the financial position had improved, and in the 2018-19 financial year the charity had generated a small surplus, while continuing to improve services. This surplus had been achieved by increased fundraising and reductions in expenditure.

Admin systems have changed from being paper based to an online cloud-based system, Charitylog. As

a result, referrals are now processed much more quickly, with a named worker being allocated straight away. It has also enabled better communication between the rehabilitation and community teams for an improved all-round service to users.

Over the past year we have provided a Rehabilitation Service to over 1,000 people. There are 2,342 people registered blind or partially sighted in Warwickshire, with 409 living in Rugby and many more that are still unregistered. We aim to reach VIPs as early as possible in their eye care journey as this means we can have a greater impact.

Support Centre attendance across the county has increased by 15 per cent in the last 12 months. Atherstone Support Centre has been replaced by pop-up support centres in Coleshill, Polesworth and Atherstone to better meet local needs and this is a service we plan to expand. Two hundred and eighty referrals each year to our rehabilitation or charitable services come from Vision Support Centres.

The Home Visitor Service has 92 people receiving home visits from 82 volunteers with each person visited receiving an average visit time of 40 hours per year. We are aiming to expand this service into south west Warwickshire to cover Alcester, Studley and Henley thanks to a grant from 'Healthy South Warwickshire'.

We now have 14 clubs with 222 members and 76 volunteers. The new club in Nuneaton is proving popular with around 20 people attending each meeting. We also have bowls and luncheon clubs.

Demand for the IT training sessions (IT4U) is rising and we are now running around 50 sessions per month. We have also been demonstrating new devices such as the In-Your-Pocket telephone. Our Vice Chair will be joining Liz Rosewell, our IT trainer at the Houses of Parliament in May to demonstrate equipment there.

We have Advice Desks at all eye clinics in Warwickshire to help people newly diagnosed with sight loss where we see over 200 people each month. This is a free service, which we are looking to expand if funding becomes available.

Phil thanked all volunteers present. Some have been volunteering with WVS for many years, in particular, one lady has been making tea and cakes since 1976 at the Alcester Club. In total there are about 250 volunteers working for the charity. A new staff role of Volunteer Co-ordinator has been created to give better support and training to volunteers and to recruit new volunteers so that we can continue to develop our services.

Looking to the future, we are aiming to provide more services for 'hard to reach' groups in Warwickshire, more support for economic well being

and more profile raising activities so that we are better known within Warwickshire.

De Montfort Talking Books has sadly closed. The remaining books will be sent to listeners who have requested them and any that are left will be donated to Vista Charity shops.

Phil finished by thanking the volunteers, staff and trustees for all their hard work and support over the past year. He then handed over to Louise Jelley to say more about fundraising.

Louise reminded us that while the Rehabilitation service is funded by WCC, everything else we do is financed by fundraising. She writes many grant applications to plead our case for funds, mostly to local organisations but also to national organisations such as the National Lottery and Postcode Lottery. We are always looking for corporate sponsorships and need members and volunteers with connections to organisations offering charitable sponsorships to mention WVS. In the past WVS has benefitted from a number of legacies and anyone in the process of writing a will was asked to remember us.

A number of community events have raised funds for WVS. Stratford Edinburgh Woollen Mill held a fashion show raising £300, the Salvation Army charity carol service in Rugby raised £350 and a craft fair in Leamington, for which WVS was

a nominated charity, raised over £1000. Last year we sold Christmas cards for the first time and we are currently looking for images of local scenes for this year's Christmas cards. We have taken part in the green token scheme at Asda and still have collection boxes in local shops and card boxes to keep at home for small change. We are part of the Amazon Smile system, so anyone ordering goods from Amazon is encouraged to register for that. Louise has entered the Two Castles race and is also looking for sponsors and finally our Chair and Vice Chair of Trustees will run the Leamington half marathon in aid of WVS. As well as fundraising, all these activities help to raise our profile in the community.

Following Louise's talk, questions were invited and the following topics were raised:

- Whether street collections are still worth doing. The reply was that even though amounts raised have reduced over the years, it all helps and also raises our profile.
- Whether the £1 donation for coffee could be increased. The reply was the donation will be kept at £1 but anyone wishing to donate more is welcome to do so.
- Whether we should ask people to order their Christmas cards in advance. The reply was that pre-ordering will be available around August/September.

The meeting was closed and was followed by informal discussion, when members had an opportunity to ask questions of the CEO and Trustees.

Robert Franklin

On Sunday 5th May 2019 the annual Rugby Sports Day for the Disabled was held at the Queens Diamond Jubilee Centre in Rugby. Robert Franklin, one of our service users who attends our Rugby Vision Support Centre, was awarded a trophy for 'Endeavour' for his participation in the Target Bean Bag competition.

Congratulations to Robert.



Health

Hallucinations

Charles Bonnet Syndrome is the name used to describe hallucinations. Hallucinations are illusions - seeing things that are not there. The hallucinations can take many forms, each unique to the individual, and when appearing for the first time can be frightening. To anyone who knows nothing of Charles Bonnet Syndrome the illusions might lead them to doubt their sanity. However, not only is Charles Bonnet Syndrome a recognized condition but there are coping strategies.

Some general 'brain shunting' strategies to help stop hallucinations when they occur

- If sitting, try standing up and walking round the room. If standing, try sitting. Walk into another room or another part of the room.
- Turn your head slowly to one side and then the other. Dip your head to each shoulder in turn.
- Stare straight ahead at the hallucination.
- Change whatever it is you are doing at that moment - turn off/on the television/radio/music.

Other strategies target the brain regions involved in hallucinations. These include

- Change the light level in the room. It might be the dim light that is causing the hallucinations. If so turn a bright light on or off.

- Blink your eyes once or twice.
- A specific eye movement exercise. When the hallucination starts, look from left to right about once every second for 15 seconds without moving your head. If the hallucination continues, have a rest for few seconds and then repeat the eye movements. You may need four or five repeats of the eye movements to have an effect but there is no point in continuing beyond this if there is no benefit.
- Shine a torch upwards in front of the eyes - NOT INTO THE EYES - and the light stimulates the cone cells - so the brain switches off the hallucination.

It is very hard and extremely wearing to have your life disrupted consistently by hallucinations - particularly if it is not easy to decide whether or not the image is created by your brain or is real. If you are in unfamiliar surroundings, please check the area before you move - just in case the dog/cat/person is not a hallucination.

If you find the hallucinations completely impossible to tolerate, ask your GP for advice - it may be possible to take medication, but there is always the probability of side-effects.

This is advice provided by Esme's Umbrella, a support group for people experiencing Charles Bonnet syndrome – **020 739 3299**

I Blink

A poem about Charles Bonnet Syndrome
Paul Bowler, Coleshill

The girl dances around my coffee cup
Blonde, petite in Lilliputian splendour
Pirouetting between the jammy dodgers
I blink

On the train home the backs of the two seats
Morph into the twin shrines of the Aztec temple
That I once saw on a trip to Mexico
I blink

Someone's put a scaffold around my fireplace
Workers busy building, sawing, hammering
Who said they could redevelop my lounge?
I blink

It's evening now, and I'm watching the news
As Roman soldiers march from the kitchen
Caesar wants to conquer my hallway, it seems
I blink

She's back again, as I turn out the light
Life size now. Too big to dance round a mug
I think, perhaps, she might be someone famous
I blink

Because the things I'm seeing are not real
And my brain is trying to fill in the gaps
Left by those in my vision, and because I'm tired
I blink

Because it was an overcast day in mid December
When even the sun seemed to be deserting us
And streetlights and ceiling lights were poor substitutes
I blink

Will I need to blink so much tomorrow?

Blood Pressure

There are at least 5 million adults in the UK who have raised blood pressure, one in three of whom remain undiagnosed.

You can help to lower your own high blood pressure by losing weight, drinking alcohol only in moderation, eating a healthy balanced diet that is low in salt, take more exercise and avoid too much caffeine. If you are prone to stress consider relaxation techniques and stop smoking. If you are a heavy snorer, mention it to your doctor, as disturbed sleep can raise blood pressure.

NHS advice is that everyone over 40 should have their BP checked at least once every 5 years, and more frequently if borderline or high.

Buy your own machine and record your readings two or three times a day over a week to get the best picture of what your BP is really like. Your pharmacist or GP practice can provide you with the parameters for normal blood pressure.

Try a dietary or lifestyle change before, or as well as, medication. Pills are a supplement to, not a substitute for, self-help measures.

The most commonly used drugs include those ending in -pine (e.g. amlodipine) and -pril or -sartan (e.g. perindopril and losartan), which work by relaxing blood vessels, and diuretics, which help by getting rid of fluid (e.g. bendroflumethiazide)

Sometimes high BP can be caused by medication. Anti-inflammatories such as ibuprofen and naproxen, steroids and the combined contraceptive pill and HRT can push it up in some women. Over-the counter cold and flu remedies can have a similar, albeit transient effect.

Stickler Syndrome

Stickler syndrome is frequently inherited from one parent. It is caused by mutations in several genes and is also known as hereditary arthro-opythmo-dystrophy, hereditary arthro-ophthalmopathy and Stickler dysplasia.

Marshall syndrome is very similar to Stickler syndrome.

Stickler syndrome is a group of conditions characterized by a distinctive facial appearance, eye abnormalities, hearing loss and joint problems. Faces can appear flattened, as the bones in the middle of the face, including the cheekbones and the bridge of the nose are undeveloped. Mutations of the genes of people with Stickler syndrome affect the production of collagens that provide the connective tissue in the body.

Many people with Stickler syndrome have severe short sightedness (high myopia). The condition has been divided into a number of Types.

Stickler syndrome affects an estimated 1 in 7,500 to 9,000 newborns.

OXSIGHT : Wendy's View

I was diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa when I was 7 years old. Retinitis Pigmentosa causes a loss of peripheral vision and a sensitivity to light. As a child I didn't want to be treated differently, I never talked about my eyesight at school but at the same time never felt as connected as other children. I was at times considered 'dangerous' with a hockey stick!

By the age of 30 my eyesight had deteriorated and my night vision was dreadful. "I used to bump into a lot of lamp posts". Even, when things became difficult for me at work I still did not want to admit to anyone that I was going blind. I didn't want to be labelled, I wanted a normal life.

When I left my job due to redundancy, I finally admitted that I needed help. Within a couple of months I was given Lily, my beautiful guide dog.

Earlier this year I was at the Nuneaton Vision Support Centre when a company called OXSIGHT visited. They demonstrated a pair of glasses called OXSIGHT Crystal. I tested a pair out and for the first time in years was able to see the heads and shoulders of my friends at the Support Centre.

I now have a pair of OXSIGHT Crystal glasses and they have made a real



difference to my life. Once I adjust them to the lighting conditions I 'zoom in' and have for the first time in years seen my grandson play football and the greatest gift of all has been to be able to see my youngest grandchild who is just over 12 months old.

To see the baby and my other grandchildren is the biggest benefit for me. I am no longer just seeing a dot of an image. The glasses have given me confidence and I look forward to being able to see more people and more places.

O X S I G H T

Do you have tunnel vision?

OXSIGHT smart glasses can enhance the remaining sight for individuals with a visual impairment, such as conditions that cause peripheral vision loss, for example Glaucoma, Diabetic Retinopathy, Retinitis Pigmentosa, Myopic Degeneration, and other degenerative eye diseases.

They have also helped people with a visual impairment caused following a stroke, such as homonymous hemianopia.



Following a successful visit to Warwickshire Vision in the spring, we wanted to share experiences from members who currently have the glasses and give more of you the opportunity to try them.

Please feel free to drop in to one of the dates below.

13 November - Rugby Vision Support Centre, 10am - 12pm

14 November - Nuneaton Vision Support Centre, 10am - 12pm

18 November - Leamington Spa Vision Support Centre, 10am - 12pm

19 November - Stratford-upon-Avon Vision Support Centre, 10am - 12pm

If you are unable to attend, please contact us for more information.

01865 580255 · care@oxsight.co.uk · oxsight.co.uk

WVS People

Our Wonderful Volunteers

When we access a service or receive a visit from a WVS Volunteer it is just one of the many thousands of interventions that WVS engages in over the course of a year. For all of us, the needs of the individual are paramount, but, as we celebrate the work of our Volunteers, it is right that we see the big picture, and just how extensively WVS does reach.

There are 2,342 people registered blind or partially sighted in Warwickshire, with many more unregistered. Over the past year WVS has provided essential services to over 1,000 people across the county, aiming to reach VIPs as early as possible in their eye care journey. The two largest service groups are home visits and club volunteers, accounting for over 80 per cent of our Volunteers donating 12,765 hours of their time annually.

The Home Visitor Service has 92 people receiving home visits from 82 volunteers with each person receiving an average of 1.5 to 2 hours per visit amounting to about 40 hours per year. Together with travelling time and resource planning, Home Visit Volunteering contributes over 4,000 hours per year. These Volunteers help with reading mail and checking use-by dates in the fridge as well as providing company. The aim is to expand this

service into south-west Warwickshire to cover Alcester, Studley and Henley thanks to a grant from 'Healthy South Warwickshire'.

The volunteers of our 14 clubs contribute around 8,500 hours annually in planning, hosting and transporting! The new club in Nuneaton is proving popular with around 20 people attending each session. Some clubs host special activities, such as bowling.

Vision Support Centre attendance across the county has increased by 15 per cent in the last 12 months. Atherstone Support Centre has been replaced by pop-up support centres in Coleshill, Polesworth and Atherstone to better meet local needs. WVS is planning to extend services to harder to reach clients in rural areas in the coming year as part of raising the profile of the charity generally.

Demand for the IT training sessions (IT4U) is rising and is being met by around 50 sessions per month.

There are 243 volunteers working for the charity across all the above services together with this magazine and in administrative support. A new staff role of Volunteer Co-ordinator has been created to give better support and training to volunteers and to recruit new volunteers so that services can continue to expand and develop.

Volunteer Excellence Awards 2019

Meryl Beck - Club, Vision Support Centre and Fundraising Volunteer

Meryl has been volunteering for 3 years at our Leamington Spa Vision Support Centre and is also a lynchpin in the volunteer team of the Leamington Club.

She plans the Good Companions entertainment programme and provides transport. She is also an active fundraiser for the club, helping at all the local supermarket collections.

Meryl has planned an outing for the Club on Toddington Railway for 30 VIPs and helpers. She has arranged mini buses for transport, booked the accessible carriage and arranged lunch. Meryl has gone the extra mile to make sure that no one is excluded, ensuring that the mini buses and train are accessible to wheelchairs.

Dave Bosworth - Club and Vision Support Centre Volunteer

Dave started volunteering just over 12 months ago after he brought his mum Joan to the Nuneaton Vision Support Centre and realised that he could make a difference by helping out. Dave is an integral member of the team, arriving early to set up and greet.

He is committed and enthusiastic and always willing to go the extra mile. When it was decided in October 2018 to start a VIP Club for people in

Bedworth and Nuneaton, Dave was one of the first to volunteer. Not only does he drive for this club but also provides support for other clubs.

Jenny Cobley - Stratford Club

Jenny started at the Stratford 'As You Like It' Club in 1994, firstly as club helper, but quickly became Assistant Chairperson then formally became Chairperson in 2001.

Between 2006 and 2012 every summer Jenny and her husband took a group of around 20 VIPs on holiday to the south coast, staying in hotels designed and adapted for the sight impaired. Jenny describes these holidays as 'tremendous fun'.

Jenny works tirelessly and professionally to run a very active and popular club and we are immensely grateful for everything that she does.

Hollie Hammond - Administration

Hollie came to WVS 3 years ago after meeting us at the Machen Eye Unit at Warwick Hospital, where she was volunteering at the time. She works with the Administration Team twice each week, helping with filing, archiving and mailshots but is always keen to get involved in other activities.

Hollie has represented us at Volunteer fairs and offered a helping hand with fundraising and our social clubs. This is alongside studying for a marketing degree. She is a very committed and valued Volunteer of

ours who always strives to help out in every way possible. Hollie has found WVS a rewarding and positive way to use her time and we are grateful for the effort and dedication she continues to give.

Bill Hannis – Shipston Club

Bill started as a driver for Shipston Club in 2001/2, and around 2006 was asked to become Chairman of the Club. He was also a member of the WVS Board for several years and was an organiser of the Centenary Celebrations.

Bill actively rallies the volunteers and club members and arranges street collections in order to raise valuable funds for the Shipston Club.

Bill has also been a club entertainer himself and given talks to a number of our other WVS clubs across Warwickshire. Bill continues to be the rock of Shipston Club, rallying around organising everyone and driving the VIPs to and from the club, for which we are immensely grateful.

Andrew Harris – Information Technology

Andrew has been supporting visually impaired people on behalf of Warwickshire Vision Support for over 3 years. He attends the weekly Nuneaton Vision Support Centre where he works on a 1:1 basis with individuals who want to learn how to access the internet, social media and emails and those that would like

to be able to use a mobile phone or access talking books and news.

In addition to volunteering for 2 hours a week at Nuneaton, Andrew also makes himself available to attend our other Support Centres (Rugby, Stratford and Leamington). He regularly takes telephone calls away from the Nuneaton Support Centre to help our service users with their devices and will also make home visits if additional support is needed.

Andrew has developed a website called Simply Informed – which provides information for anyone working in a visual impairment field to understand the basics of setting up smart phones, tablets and computers. There are links to other useful websites. Andrew has created and maintains this website in his own time.

Andrew's website: simplyinformed.uk

Bob Hessey -

Rugby Vision Support Centre

Bob has volunteered in Rugby Vision Support Centre since 2008, providing a very personal service to all our visually impaired members. Bob always makes new members feel very welcome and knows everyone by what they drink firstly, then their names, and has acquired the nickname 'Coffee Bob'. As soon as the doorbell rings he is there to welcome VIPs and make their drink, which is

often served before they have time to take off their coats.

When he has a spare minute he chats with the service users providing that much needed social and emotional support. Bob also provides fantastic support to the staff.

Lesley House - Nuneaton and Bedworth Home Visitor Service.

Lesley has been Rota Organiser of the home visiting service in Nuneaton and Bedworth since the very beginning, some 10 years ago. She is well organised and meticulous, a very committed volunteer. Lesley liaises with the volunteers to arrange the visits and also slots herself into the rota helping with the visits and getting to know the clients. By doing this she is able to match the right volunteer with the client depending on their need. She is very loyal, caring, and communicates well with the clients and volunteers.

Lesley is well thought of and valued by her team and most certainly by Warwickshire Vision Support for her time and dedication.

Sue Ling -

Kenilworth Reader Visitor Co-ordinator

Sue has been a volunteer with Kenilworth Reader Visitor Service for a number of years and recently became the Co-ordinator for the Service.

She is a conscientious and dedicated volunteer who adeptly organises the rota carefully matching volunteers

and service users ensuring that both parties have an enjoyable visit.

Sue is a huge asset to Warwickshire Vision Support.

Judy Murdoch - Volunteer (all areas)

Judy has played a fundamental role in Warwickshire Vision Support (or WAB as we were then known) since 1986. In fact there are not many roles that Judy has not taken on!

In addition to more than 10 years running the Henley Club, Judy was Chair of WAB for 3 years followed by a further 3 years as a valued Trustee. During Judy's tenure, with the support of her Vice Chair, Vaughan Rees, she made the difficult decision to sell our office building in Puckering's Lane, Warwick thereby saving WAB from potential financial ruin and releasing the resources upon which we still rely today.

Judy is a people person. She is a Home Visitor supporting those who are socially isolated, has given innumerable talks to our clubs about her extensive travels, and has organised the Annual Stratford and South Warwickshire lunch for the last 20 years.

In 2008, Judy was made Vice President of Warwickshire Vision Support, in recognition of her commitment and dedication to visually impaired people in Warwickshire.

Judy Roberts - Alcester Club

Judy has been volunteering at the Alcester Club since it was launched in 1976. Over the last 43 years, she has earned the Alcester Club a reputation for providing one of the best afternoon teas in the Charity - offering a wide selection of wonderful homemade cakes and sandwiches.

Judy is now taking time to focus on her family. She will be greatly missed by both members and volunteers.

Dr Siva - Rugby Home Visitor

Dr Siva started volunteering for the Rugby Home Visiting Service in 1996 and was soon asked to take on the role of Home Visitor Co-ordinator. She ran this until she retired as Co-ordinator a few years ago.

Dr Siva has visited and supported dozens of service users over the years and up until recently was supporting five separate VIPs in their homes. Dr Siva has provided resilience to a service when it is needed and her reliability and commitment is her strength. Dr Siva always goes the extra mile and demonstrates compassion and empathy with those most vulnerable in need of the greatest support.

Maria Smith - Leamington and Warwick Home Visitor Co-ordinator

Maria is a dedicated and passionate volunteer – nothing is too much trouble; she will always try to facilitate everyone's requests for their

visits. She co-ordinates two separate rotas always ensuring everyone has their visits as requested. Maria will always step in herself to provide additional visits should there be a shortfall during holidays.

She does an amazing juggling act matching the service users' availability with the volunteers, also taking into account their different interests and personalities.

As well as co-ordinating the Leamington and Warwick Rotas Maria is a Home Visitor in Stratford, demonstrating commitment and enthusiasm for Warwickshire Vision Support.

Rosalie Visick –

Co-editor, Warwickshire Vision

Rosalie has been Co-editor of Warwickshire Vision for nearly 20 years (originally WAB Mag.) During this time, she has spent thousands of hours assiduously researching articles, writing her own pieces, editing those submitted for publication and contributing to the audio production of the magazine.

Rosalie is a wonderful example of a person who shows that anything is possible if we put our mind to it. When she first joined the editorial team, Rosalie was registered partially sighted; she has since been registered blind and despite being 86 years young, she still makes an invaluable contribution to Warwickshire Vision.

Mary Wilkins - Atherstone Club

Mary became involved in Atherstone Club in the early 1990's when she joined a team of volunteers who were running a very successful club for visually impaired people. In the past 2 years, Mary has taken on the role of Club Leader/Co-ordinator and now runs the activities and ensures all the members enjoy the company and conversation provided on a bi-weekly basis.

Mary additionally supports many other voluntary organisations, and as a result in May this year was rewarded with a visit to a Buckingham Palace Garden Party, in recognition of her volunteer work and her positive impact on the local community.

Serving all blind and partially sighted people in Warwickshire



This Volunteer Excellence Award is Presented to:

Insert Name

In recognition of your outstanding contribution to services
for visually impaired people in Warwickshire

With sincere thanks

.....
Phil Arkell (Chief Executive)

5 Charles Court, Budbrooke Road, Warwick. CV34 5LZ. Tel: 01926 411331, Email: enquiries@warwickshire.vision, website: www.warwickshire.vision
Warwickshire Vision Support is the operating name of Warwickshire Association for the Blind. A company limited by guarantee. Registered in England and Wales No 6511954. Charity Registration No 1123220



Awardees from left to right: Hollie Hammond, Sue Ling, Judy Murdoch, Rosalie Visick, Meryl Beck and Phil Arkell CEO



Awardees from left to right: Lesley House, Andrew Harris, David Bosworth, Mary Wilkins and Phil Arkell



Maria Smith and Jenny Cobley



Dr Siva

Consumer Matters

The Priority Service Register

Are you

- A pensioner?
- A disabled person?
- Hearing or visually impaired?

Or do you have

- A chronic illness or long-term medical condition?

Then you may be entitled to sign up to the Priority Service Register of your network operator (Western Power Distribution which maintains the electricity lines and water supply to your home) and your current energy supplier.

There are a number of benefits to being entered onto the Register. You may be entitled to

- Advance notice if your energy supply is going to be interrupted
- Priority reconnection if your supply is interrupted
- Alternative facilities for cooking and heating whilst your supply is interrupted.
- Password protection scheme
- Regular meter readings if you can't read your meter
- Annual gas safety checks
- Free advice on being more energy-efficient
- Extra help to use your meter or appliances
- Having your meter moved free of charge if it's hard for you to use or read your meter

- Bills sent to a relative, carer or friend to help you check them
- Your bills and meter readings in braille, large print, audio tape, textphone or typetalk if you're visually impaired
- Help during an emergency such as a power cut.

Case Study

Client was referred by North Warwickshire Borough Council to Citizens Advice North Warwickshire. She had given up her job as she has severe mental health issues. She was struggling to pay her bills and had problems with her ESA claim. Her home was at risk as she had a mortgage that she could not afford. She had arrears with her energy supplier and had received poor advice from a local bank, which had compounded her problem.

Outcome - The client's ESA claim was resolved. Citizens Advice (CA) assisted her with switching to a new cheaper tariff and set up an arrangement with her supplier to pay off her arrears in an affordable manner. She has been entered on to the Priority Service Register with Western Power Distribution for additional services. They applied to the Big Difference Scheme (Severn Trent) and she is now receiving a discount, saving her approximately £300 per year. Following a complaint letter by CA to her bank, she received over £100 in compensation and

further assistance from the bank manager regarding her mortgage, which is ongoing. In addition they identified eligibility for the Warm Home Discount, which is a saving of £140 per year. CA continues to assist this client on other matters.

In a climate of financial uncertainty and reform, it can be challenging for a household to stay on top of its energy bills. Citizens Advice research shows that almost one in ten households fell behind with an essential household bill over a 12 month period.

Citizens Advice North Warwickshire has been making people aware of the savings that can be made by switching fuel providers or negotiating with existing providers by delivering a number of energy projects throughout the year. At present, in conjunction with funding from Western Power Distribution, it is promoting the benefits of the Priority Service Register and offering a 'drop in' service on Friday mornings.

Switched on Fridays

Citizens Advice North Warwickshire has set up a project in-house to promote its energy work. Clients can just 'drop in' to the office and receive initial help to find out if they can save money by changing to a cheaper tariff or supplier. Appointments can then be made to look at other energy issues like fuel debt, smart meters, and schemes including the Warm Home Discount and eligibility for the

Priority Service Register. They can also discuss how to make your home more energy efficient.

For energy advice in **North Warwickshire** contact **Lorraine Verrall** by phone on **01827 712852** or e-mail: lorraineverrall@nwcab.org.uk

There is a Citizens Advice in your area

Warwick District

10 Hamilton Terrace
Leamington Spa CV32 4LY
0300 330 1183

Bedworth

25 Congreve Walk CV12 8LZ
02476 494 393/0300 330 1163

Stratford upon Avon

25 Meer Street CV37 6QB
0300 330 1183

Rugby

1st Floor, Chestnut House
32 North Street CV21 2AG
01788 566 238/0300 330 1163

Nuneaton

23e Abbey Street CV11 5BT
02476 494 393/0300 330 1163

North Warwickshire

The Parish Rooms, Welcome Street
Atherstone CV9 1DU
01827 712 852

Accessible Smart Meters available now

Sue, Nuneaton

A partnership of RNIB, Energy UK (the trade association for the UK energy industry) and GEO (a smart meter display manufacturer) has produced

an accessible in home display unit that was due to be available from selected energy suppliers from June this year. (A smart meter sends details of your energy consumption direct to your supplier.)

The new accessible in-home display unit will have all of the features of a standard smart meter, plus accessibility features

- text to speech function for screen navigation
- adjustable volume for the text to speech function
- six large printed buttons with vibration that confirms a button has been pressed
- three coloured LEDs for indicating electricity usage
- LED push button to replay speech
- large clear typeface
- TFT (Thin Film Transistor) screen with high contrast colour scheme optimized for visual impairment and colour-blindness

There is no charge for having a standard smart meter or a new accessible in-home display unit installed.

Some energy suppliers now give the best energy deals customers who have a smart meter, so you may save more money on your energy bills in the future. Another benefit of having a smart meter is that you should always receive accurate energy bills - goodbye to estimated bills.

I recently helped someone to find the best energy deal, as their current deal

was due to expire and they would have been automatically transferred to the expensive standard tariff.

Their current supplier would not give the best deal available to them when using a price comparison website. However, before deciding to move to another supplier we contacted the current supplier, told them of the deal we had found, that we didn't really want to leave them, but unless they could offer a better deal we would have no option but to move suppliers. We were told that not all of their deals are on price comparison web sites. They have now offered a 12 month deal that betters any on their price comparison site. As this person already had a smart meter, the energy provider was able to take their meter readings and they were transferred to their new tariff the following day.

If you need help finding the best energy deal, visit your local Citizens Advice for free impartial advice and help. Remember to take your most recent energy bill with you.

If you ask your energy provider for one of the new smart accessible in house display units and they say that they do not have them, tell them they could get one for you if they refer to the article on the RNIB website: RNIB.org.uk – Accessiblesmartmeterssettohit homes

For more information about smart meters visit smartenergygb.org

Switching Suppliers

Sue, Nuneaton

From 1st May 2019 the energy regulator Ofgem has introduced new rules called guaranteed standards.

Energy providers who fail to meet the new energy standards will automatically be liable to pay compensation to their customers.

So, from 1st May consumers will receive at least £30 compensation for 'erroneous switches' (this may be when you've been transferred to another supplier without your consent) and delayed refund of credit balances of customers who have switched to a new energy provider.

The automatic compensation is designed to give customers peace of mind, knowing that they will be compensated if something goes wrong and be a wake-up call to energy suppliers. The minimum compensation is £30 with a maximum of £120 per customer.

Under Ofgem's rules suppliers must refund credit balances within 10 working days of a final bill being issued when you switch suppliers. Should the previous supplier fail to pay the £30 after the 10-day period they will be liable to pay an additional £30 to their former customer.

Sorry, if you switched suppliers prior to 1st May 2019 these new standards do not apply.

For further information on the new standards for automatic compensation for switching problems visit Ofgem.gov.uk

Ofcom Compensation

Sue, Nuneaton

Ofcom has introduced new rules for UK broadband and landline providers that are being phased in from 1st May 2019.

Customers who experience delayed repairs, installations or missed engineer appointments will be compensated without having to ask.

According to watchdog Ofcom there are 7.2 million cases every year where broadband or landline customers suffer delayed repairs, installations or missed appointments.

What can you expect?

- If an engineer does not arrive on schedule or cancels within 24 hours you will be compensated £25
- If a service stops working and is not fixed fully after 2 working days customers will be entitled to £8 compensation for each day
- For new services not started on time there will be a payment of £5 per day

BT, Sky, Talktalk, Virgin Media and Zen internet have all agreed to follow these compensation measures from April 2019. Hyperoptic and Vodafone will join the scheme later this year while EE plans to start paying compensation automatically in 2020.

This will mean that 95 per cent of the 7.2 million cases every year will be covered by automatic compensation, which should incentivise providers to act more quickly to avoid paying compensation and therefore drive up the standards consumers can expect to receive.

Visit Ofcom.org.uk

N.B.

Compensation is paid as a bill credit within 30 calendar days of the issue.

Thank you's

Sue, Nuneaton

Warwickshire Highways

My husband was returning home from the Nuneaton Vision Support Centre when he fell over on the footpath, as a tree root had lifted the tarmac and a small hole had just begun to appear. He was quite shaken up and bruised from hitting the footpath and the fall broke the case of his reading glasses.

I immediately telephoned Warwickshire County Council Highways Department. Firstly they wanted to make sure that my husband was not injured and then they took down the details of where he had fallen. At the end of the call I was told that the Divisional Surveyor would go out later that day to inspect and get a team to make good the footpath.

I must admit we didn't really think that the footpath would be repaired very quickly but to our delight,

on my husband's return from the Vision Support Centre the following week I noticed that the Highways Department had made good the footpath.

So if you should have a similar problem, telephone **01926 410410** and ask for County Highways and make sure you tell them of your sight impairment, so they can prioritise any works that may be necessary.

A big thank you to Warwickshire County Highways for going the extra mile.

Atherstone Library

My husband, who relies on talking books, recently asked if I could track down a copy of James O'Brien's 'How to be right.' So I telephoned Atherstone Library and asked if Warwickshire Libraries had a copy, or would they be able to tell me by searching their database if another organisation, such as Calibre, Listening Books or RNIB Talking Book Service, had a copy.

On searching their database nobody had got a copy, so they spoke to their central library service and agreed to purchase a copy of this talking book. It was purchased immediately and my husband has enjoyed listening to it.

He was amazed by the speed of this outstanding service and we would like to especially thank the staff at Atherstone Library for always being so helpful.

Features and Leisure

Blind sailor completes non-stop Pacific voyage

Paul Bowler, Coleshill

A Japanese man who lost his sight as a teenager has, according to the Japan Blind Sailing Association, become the first visually impaired person to sail non-stop across the Pacific Ocean.

Fifty-two-year-old Mitsuhiro Iwamoto, who lives in the United States, undertook the journey in his 40ft yacht, Dream Weaver, with the help of American Doug Smith, who acted as a sighted navigator during the voyage.

After leaving California on February 24th, Mitsuhiro and Doug completed the 8,700 mile crossing in a little under 2 months, arriving in the Japanese prefecture of Fukushima

on the morning of April 20th (Easter Saturday). During the journey Mitsuhiro steered the boat with the help of a talking audio compass and a Braille guide to the switch panel, while Doug provided him with information and advice on wind directions and potential hazards such as other boats.

The voyage was Mitsuhiro's second attempt at making the crossing. He had first tried to make the journey in 2013, starting from Japan, but had to be rescued by the Japanese military after 5 days at sea when his boat was hit by a blue whale and sank. However, in spite of this setback, he decided to attempt the crossing for a second time.

In order to prepare for his second attempt, Mitsuhiro competed in triathlon races, which helped him to learn how to swim in open water.



But fortunately his second voyage proved to be far less perilous.

Speaking shortly after his arrival in Japan, he told the country's Kyoto News that completing the crossing was a 'dream come true', and that he was the 'happiest person on earth'.

Mitsuhiro, who was born partially sighted but lost his sight at the age of 16, embarked on the crossing in order to raise \$40,000 for good causes, among them a charity that works to prevent diseases that cause loss of sight.

Blind Paralympian conquers London Marathon

Melanie Barratt has found success previously by winning gold, silver and bronze medals at the Atlanta and Sydney Paralympic Games. Now she has completed her first marathon in London along with her husband Richard.

The Kenilworth swimmer did this in aid of British Blind Sports, the organization that initially inspired Melanie to become actively involved when they visited her school.

Each year in the London Marathon, many participants registered blind in the UK apply to run the distance and can do so with the aid of a running partner free of charge by enquiring at disability@londonmarathonevents.co.uk

In light of her recent success, Melanie's blog is being used as part of the 'Coventry and Warwickshire

Year of Wellbeing 2019' which aims to inspire and encourage people to make better lifestyle choices and take steps in the right direction to take better care of themselves.

Melanie and Richard were runner number 35725 and managed to cover the 26.3-mile distance in 5 hours, 6 minutes and 41 seconds. Their efforts raised a combined amount of £2,613.26 through their Virgin Money London Marathon page and Go Fund Me, surpassing their initial target of £2,400 - all going towards the work of Blind British Sports.

Richard Turner – The Cheat

Phil Tilston, Magician

For over 25 years I have been performing magic. I am a member of The Magic Circle, the premier magic society in the UK. It means that I know good magic when I see it. Every year I go to the Blackpool Magic convention. It is the world's largest annual magic convention and over 3,500 magicians descend on the seaside town for a weekend of lectures and shows. Over the years I have seen many of the best magicians in the world. In 2018 one of the magicians performing at the convention was Richard Turner. He doesn't call himself a magician, but instead a card mechanic. This is mainly due to the fact that his act is primarily a demonstration of skill with playing cards, specifically with respect to the ways that gamblers

can cheat. Not surprisingly he is particularly well known for an act called The Cheat in which he plays the role of a 19th century riverboat gambler. He is regarded as one of the best (if not the best) card handlers today.

He was born in 1954 in San Diego, USA. At the age of seven he became infatuated with the TV show Maverick - a western, the hero of which is a gambler. His eyesight failed at the age of nine, following a bout of scarlet fever. The macula (the centre of the retina) of each of his eyes was completely destroyed, preventing forward vision, and the rest of his retinas suffered a condition he describes as a 'shotgun pattern' resembling and functioning as if they had been blasted full of holes by a tiny shotgun filled with bird shot. By the age of 13, his vision deteriorated to 20/400, twice as low as the level deemed legally blind in the State of California and, over the years, what little vision Turner possessed gradually deteriorated to the point where he presently sees little more than indiscernible shadows, and those only peripherally.

When he performs, he never tells the audience that he is blind. To those who know, this is particularly amusing when he performs a blindfold act. He also acts as a quality control consultant to the United States Playing Card Company (the largest manufacturer of playing

cards in the world) periodically being sent batches of playing cards to check that the texture, cut and degree of flex are correct.

His desire to not let his sight problems hold him back extends beyond magic. He also holds a 6th degree black belt in karate and has fought in hundreds of full contact fights.

Until now Richard has not been very well known outside of the world of magicians. He has recently received more exposure as a result of fooling Penn & Teller on the US TV show Fool Us. If you want to see Richard work with cards and see him shuffle the deck multiple times and then show the cards with all the aces, then twos, then threes etc. all grouped together, or if you want to see him demonstrate dealing 'seconds' (where the second card of the deck is dealt leaving the top card in place to deal into his own winning hand), or dealing 'bottoms' (where the bottom card of the deck is dealt into the winning hand) then google 'Richard Turner The Cheat' and you will find a You Tube link to his act, or google 'Richard Turner Fool Us' for his performance with Penn & Teller. However, I can assure you that even with two perfectly working eyes I still did not see how he does it!

Police Emergency?

Only call 999 if

- There's a danger to life
- You have immediate concerns for someone's safety
- A crime is happening/just happened or you see something suspicious that needs immediate attention
- There's a serious collision or blockage on the road.

Call 101 to

- Report crimes that have already happened
- Talk with police about an ongoing case
- Report non-emergency policing issues.

Police staff are trained to identify vulnerability as part of their decision making, they are asked to consider what are individual or community vulnerabilities and to identify how police and partners are best able to safeguard against harm. For the purposes of policing, Warwickshire police state 'A person is vulnerable if as a result of their situation or circumstances, they are unable to take care or protect themselves, or others, from harm or exploitation.'

This can include:

- Those unable to protect themselves due to drugs, alcohol or mental health
- Child in care, child abuse or neglect
- At risk of or victim of CSE (Child Sexual Abuse)

- Hate crime
- FGM (Female genital mutilation).
- Forced marriages, honour based violence
- Human trafficking/Modern day slavery
- Domestic abuse, stalking and harassment
- Repeat victim
- A distressed or upset caller.

What happens when you call 999?

All 999 calls are directed to call centres and will be answered by BT operators. They will ask which service you need. If no service is requested but anything suspicious is heard throughout the process, BT operators will connect you to a police call handler.

If you call 999 from a mobile it is always best to speak to the operator if you can, even by whispering. You may also be asked to cough or tap the keys on your phone in response to questions. If making a sound would put you or someone else in danger and the BT operator cannot decide whether an emergency service is needed, your call will be transferred to the Silent Solution system.

The Silent Solution system - 55

(from a mobile phone)

This police system is used to filter out large numbers of accidental or hoax 999 calls. It also exists to help people who are unable to speak, but who genuinely need police assistance.

You will hear an automated police message, which lasts for 20 seconds and begins with 'you are through to the police'. It will ask you to press 55 to be put through to police call management. The BT Operator will remain on the line and listen. If you press 55, they will be notified and transfer the call to the police. If you don't press 55 the call will be terminated. Pressing 55 does not allow the police to track your location.

What then?

When transferred to your local police force, the police call handler will attempt to communicate with you by asking simple yes and no questions. If you are not able to speak, listen carefully to the questions and instructions from the call handler so they can assess your call and arrange help if needed.

If you call 999 from a landline because it is less likely that 999 calls are made by accident from landlines, the Silent Solution is not used.

If, when an emergency call on a landline is received

- there is no request for an emergency service
- the caller does not answer questions
- only background noise can be heard and BT operators cannot decide whether an emergency service is needed

then you will be connected to a police call handler as doubt exists.

If you replace the handset, the landline may remain connected for 45 seconds in case you pick it up again. If you pick up again during this 45 seconds and the BT operator is concerned for your safety, the call will be connected to the police.

When a 999 call is made from a landline, information about where you're calling from should be automatically available to the call handler to help provide a response.

Speed Limits

Things have moved on a bit from the days when a man with a red flag preceded motor vehicles. This warned other road users of the motor vehicle. The Red Flag Act in 1865 limited motor vehicles to 4 mph in the country and 2 mph in cities. It continued until 1896.

Today motor vehicles are able to travel a lot faster than walking speed and there are many more of them. The emissions from the internal combustion engine cause pollution to our environment. In Greater London there has been a congestion charge since 2003 limiting the vehicles that enter the area.

Early motor vehicles were quite noisy, but today the internal combustion engine makes a lot less noise and electric vehicles are quieter still. When traveling at speeds below 12 mph they make no noise, but at higher speeds there is noise from the tyres.

Every year 25,000 people lose their lives on our roads. Nine in ten crashes are believed to involve some form of human error. It was 50 years ago that seat belts were brought in and their introduction made a difference by saving lives. Perhaps driverless cars will be safer.

In 2013 there were 3,500 electric vehicles registered in Britain, now there are over 140,000. The National Grid predicts that by 2030 there could be as many as 9 million vehicles on Britain's roads.

From July all new electric and hybrid models seeking approval in Europe will have to emit a noise when travelling at low speeds. It is expected that existing vehicles will be retrofitted with devices over a period of time.

Silent Vehicles

Modern petrol fuelled cars are far quieter than older vehicles. Electric cars are green, clean and make very little noise. When electric cars travel at 12 mph or less they can barely be heard.

The days of silence are numbered as a new standard has been introduced requiring all new electric and hybrid cars, seeking approval in Europe, to emit a noise when travelling at low speeds. It is expected that existing vehicles will gradually be retrofitted with devices. By 2021 all electric cards in the EU must have a noise emitter.

Driverless Cars

We have been led to believe that autonomous or driverless cars will be on our roads very soon. However, industry experts disagree with this prediction. Some of the problems to be overcome are for them to be affordable and hack-proof.

Politicians have been announcing that the arrival of driverless cars on our roads is imminent – they are suggesting 2021. However, a survey of 54 experts from the automotive industry indicates that the mass safe deployment of these vehicles on our roads is at least 10 years away.



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Audio Description

Audio Description (AD) is where there is a live verbal commentary on the visual elements of a production, delivered as a performance unfolds through headphones. AD is available on televisions, at theatres and at some sporting events.

There is recorded AD at some museums, galleries, heritage sites and cinema performances.

Here is a small selection from the audio-described tours VocalEyes provides

Sir John Soane's Museum

On Saturday 6th July at 10 am at
13 Lincoln's Inn Fields
London WC2A 3BP

where you can discover Sir John Soane, his family life and highlights from his extraordinary collection. Throughout the tour you'll also be given the opportunity to touch original artworks.

To book: **020 7440 4254**
emiles@soane.org.uk
www.soane.org

Old Royal Naval College

King William Walk, East Greenwich
London SE10 9NN

The centerpiece of the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site, the classical buildings of the Old Royal Naval College were designed by England's greatest architects. Following a major project to conserve the ceiling of the Painted Hall, it re-opened in March 2019, with

increased visitor facilities.

There is an audio-described guide to the Hall available on site. Guided audio-described tours can be arranged for groups and individuals on request, with at least 2 weeks notice.

To book **020 8269 4799**,
access@ornc.org
www.ornc.org

British Library Conservation Centre

on Tuesday 16th July at 2 pm at
British Library 96 Euston Road
London NW1 2DB

where you can find out about the behind-the-scenes work carried out to conserve one of the world's most significant collections. On this audio-described tour you'll meet the conservators and learn about some of the techniques used to care for the Library's collection

To book **01937 546546**,
conservationvisits-tours@bl.uk
www.bl.uk

If you would like to contact VocalEyes to find out at what other venues and performances they provide AD

Telephone **020 7375 1043**
enquiries@VocalEyes.co.uk



Warwickshire Vision is available FREE to all members of Warwickshire Vision Support
This publication is also available in digital audio, Braille and by email

For more information, please contact us

 **01926 411331**

Email: enquiries@warwickshire.vision

Website: www.warwickshire.vision

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Views expressed in Warwickshire Vision are not necessarily those of the management of Warwickshire Vision Support.



Dolphin

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For more information:
01905 754 577



Dolphin
Making a difference

Your Local Vision Support Centre is there to help you with all your sight needs



Leamington	Chandos Court Chandos Street Leamington Spa CV32 4YU	Every Monday 10 am - 12 noon
Nuneaton	Newtown Community Centre Newtown Road Nuneaton CV11 4HG	Every Thursday 10 am - 12 noon
Rugby	Rugby Baptist Church Regent Place Rugby CV21 2AG	Every Wednesday 10 am - 12 noon
Stratford-upon-Avon	The Christadelphian Church Rother Street Stratford CV37 6LU	Every Tuesday 10 am - 12 noon
North Warwickshire	'Pop-Up' events at multiple locations	Call 01926 411331 for more details

Warwickshire Vision Support
5 Charles Court, Budbrooke Road
Warwick CV34 5LZ



01926 411331

Email: enquiries@warwickshire.vision

Web: www.warwickshire.vision



www.facebook.com/Warwickshire.Vision.Support