



# Wakefield District Sight Aid

St. Swithun's Community Centre, Arncliffe Road, Wakefield, WF1 4RR

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President: The Lord St Oswald | Registered Charity No. 1140483

## **Hello everyone and welcome to our July 2026 newsletter!**

As usual, it's another bumper issue, with plenty of activities for you to get involved with over the next quarter! We are delighted to be visiting the National Trust property East Riddlesden Hall for the first time, and there is also an invitation to join us at the fantastic new Tenpin bowling alley at Trinity Walk! We took our children and young people's group there recently and everyone had a great time, so we thought we would offer the same for our adult group!

We also have an afternoon tea and craft workshop planned for August, a Macular information morning in October, and news of this year's panto trip, which will be here before we know it (oh, yes, it will)!

As well as our own activities, our friends at The Hepworth Wakefield have asked us to let you know that they are now offering sighted guided highlights tours from 11.15am – 12noon on the first Wednesday of each month, where you are invited to experience the permanent collection through voice and touch. This is an extended version of Highlights Tours where audio description and tactile experience are used to tell the story of the gallery and its artists. This is free for Wakefield residents. Booking is not required, just register at the welcome desk on the day of your visit.

We hope to see you very soon!

With warm wishes,  
**Hayley Grocock (Chief Executive Officer)**



*Young people at our bowling event at Tenpin Wakefield in June.*

## What's on at Wakefield District Sight Aid

All our events up to the end of October 2026 are shown on the calendar on the middle pages (p6-7). Here is a summary of what's coming up:



*People enjoying our Ridings coffee morning.*

**The Ridings coffee morning: 10am – 12 noon on the first Monday of the month, held at The Events Space, Middle Mall, The Ridings, Wakefield, WF1 1DS – outside M&S Food and Poundland.** The ground floor of the Blue car park at The Ridings is allocated for disabled visitors, but it is not free of charge. Blue badges can be used for free parking on-street and in nearby Council car parks.

*Please note, our Ridings coffee mornings are continuing as usual. There will be a sale of items made by our Art Beyond Vision group at our coffee morning on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November, including Christmas cards and gifts!*

**Horbury coffee morning: 10am – 12 noon on the second Tuesday of the month** (The Cluntergate Centre Café, Cluntergate, Horbury WF4 5DA). Our friendly group of Horbury regulars would love to welcome you to our regular gathering in this vibrant community centre!



*Members of our Horbury group.*

**Pontefract coffee morning: 10am – 12 noon on the fourth Thursday of the month** (at The Broken Bridge Wetherspoon, 5 Horse Fair, Pontefract, WF8 1PD). Come and join us for a cuppa and a natter. You can find us towards the back of the pub, near the toilets. If you are not familiar with The Broken Bridge, staff will be happy to help you find us.



*People enjoying our Pontefract coffee morning.*

**Cuppa and Connect! 10am – 12noon on the third Wednesday of the month** (at St. Swithun's Community Centre).

Please join us at St. Swithun's Community Centre for a friendly, warm, welcoming group for blind and partially sighted people of all ages. Enjoy tea, coffee and biscuits, plus a range of fun activities including games, quizzes, guest speakers, crafts and more. It's a great chance to relax, connect with others and enjoy some midweek wellbeing together.



*Our Cuppa & Connect group enjoyed a talk from the Friends of Waterton's Wall in March.*

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July: Equipment demo from Jason at VisionAid (see additional leaflet)

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> August: Talk from Pam Walters of Wakefield Badger Group, and reading from a new book *The Badgers of Walton Hall*

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September: Beetle drive

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> October: Spooky quiz with Quizmaster Michael!

Why not stay for a low cost, home cooked lunch in the Community Café afterwards?

**Wakefield evening social group: 5pm – 7pm on the fourth Thursday of the month** (held at Calder & Hops, 60 Northgate, Wakefield, WF1 3AP).

This friendly and informal evening meet-up of members of all ages would love for you to join them! A full food menu is available, including pub classics and light bites, alongside a full drink selection.

**Pontefract evening social group: 5pm – 8pm on the first Thursday of the month** (held at Iron Dram, 27a Ropergate, Pontefract, WF8 1LG).



*People enjoying our Pontefract evening social group.*

This growing and welcoming social group is looking forward to meeting you! The Iron Dram has a unique and charming vibe (please note there are a couple of steps to navigate).

**Art Beyond Vision: 1pm – 3pm every Thursday during term time** (in the Activity Room at St. Swithun's Community Centre).

*Dates are shown as ABV on the calendar on p6 - 7. The last group before the summer break will be on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> July. We will start again on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September. There will be no group on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> October due to the half-term break.*

Our informal, sociable, and fun sessions cover a variety of art and craft techniques for everyone to enjoy. All ages and abilities are welcome – no previous experience is necessary. We have long-time crafters, people who've not been creative since school, and everyone in-between!

Whether you are completely blind or have some usable vision, all techniques are adapted so you can create pieces to be proud of no matter what your level of sight or previous experience. We also provide tea, coffee and biscuits, because the social element is just as important as the creative side!



*Members of our Art Beyond Vision group.*

The group is run by a qualified teacher, alongside creative facilitators with lived experience of sight loss, so you can be sure of a supportive and understanding environment. All equipment and materials are provided. Come along and learn new skills, meet new friends, and enjoy a cuppa together.

One group member said, *“As a person with visual impairment, being able to meet people with similar eyesight problems and be creative together is wonderful. We feel like a team and we all help each other.”*

We ask for a voluntary contribution of £3 per session per participant. This helps towards the costs of equipment, materials, tuition, room hire, and refreshments.

To find out more, please contact Ruth on 07947 836267.

**Living Well with Sight Loss course (LWWSL): 10.30am – 2.30pm on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> and Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September at Lightwaves Leisure Centre, Lower York Street, Wakefield WF1 3LJ (opposite Wakefield Bus Station)**

Are you newly diagnosed, feeling nervous about navigating the world, or want to start getting out and about more? Feeling like you need a boost of confidence?

This free, informal, two-day course focuses on:

- "Out and about" - mobility, transport and concessions
- "In the home" - daily living skills and technology
- "Starting out" - CVI process and main eye care services
- "Looking after ourselves" - eye health, wellbeing, leisure and next steps



*A group of people at a Living Well with Sight Loss course.*

Recent course attendees have said:

*"I totally loved the course and by the end I felt so much more confident. Thank you."*

*"It's a great course and gives you all the information you need and having the right people speaking at the course really helps."*

Living Well with Sight Loss is a partnership between WDSA and RNIB, made possible with the kind support of Wakefield Council. You are very welcome to bring a sighted family member or friend with you.

Access to Lightwaves is step-free. Places are limited, so please contact the office on 01924 215555 and we will be happy to give you further information and book your place.

*Our next course after this will be in January 2027.*

## Calendar of events July - October 2026

<u>July</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>September</u>	<u>October</u>
1 We	1 Sa	1 Tu	1 Th Art Beyond Vision / Ponte Evening Group
2 Th Art Beyond Vision / Ponte Evening Group	2 Su	2 We	2 Fr
3 Fr	3 Mo Ridings	3 Th Art Beyond Vision / Ponte Evening Group	3 Sa
4 Sa	4 Tu	4 Fr	4 Su
5 Su	5 We	5 Sa	5 Mo Ridings
6 Mo Ridings	6 Th Ponte Evening Group	6 Su	6 Tu
7 Tu	7 Fr	7 Mo Ridings	7 We Macular info morning
8 We	8 Sa	8 Tu Horbury	8 Th Art Beyond Vision
9 Th Art Beyond Vision	9 Su	9 We	9 Fr
10 Fr	10 Mo	10 Th Art Beyond Vision	10 Sa
11 Sa	11 Tu Horbury	11 Fr	11 Su
12 Su	12 We Afternoon tea & keyring workshop	12 Sa	12 Mo
13 Mo	13 Th	13 Su	13 Tu Horbury
14 Tu Horbury	14 Fr	14 Mo	14 We
15 We Cuppa & Connect	15 Sa	15 Tu	15 Th Art Beyond Vision
16 Th Art Beyond Vision	16 Su	16 We Cuppa & Connect	16 Fr

16 In Art Beyond Vision	16 Su		16 We Cuppa & Connect	16 Fr
17 Fr	17 Mo		17 Th Art Beyond Vision	17 Sa
18 Sa	18 Tu		18 Fr	18 Su
19 Su	19 We Cuppa & Connect		19 Sa	19 Mo
20 Mo	20 Th		20 Su	20 Tu
21 Tu	21 Fr		21 Mo LWWSL day 1	21 We Cuppa & Connect
22 We	22 Sa		22 Tu Tenpin bowling trip	22 Th Ponte / ABV / Wakefield Evening Grp
23 Th Ponte / Wakefield Evening Grp	23 Su		23 We	23 Fr
24 Fr	24 Mo		24 Th Ponte / ABV / Wakefield Evening Grp	24 Sa
25 Sa	25 Tu		25 Fr	25 Su
26 Su	26 We		26 Sa	26 Mo
27 Mo	27 Th Ponte / Wakefield Evening Grp		27 Su	27 Tu
28 Tu	28 Fr		28 Mo LWWSL day 2	28 We
29 We East Riddlesden trip	29 Sa		29 Tu	29 Th
30 Th	30 Su		30 We	30 Fr
31 Fr	31 Mo Bank Holiday			31 Sa

## **Trip to East Riddlesden Hall National Trust, Keighley: Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup>**



*East Riddlesden Hall.*

**July 10.30am - 4pm approx.**

Join us as we visit an historic house and intimate gardens, a hidden oasis on the edge of a West Yorkshire town. A 17th-century manor house and historic Great Barn, telling the tales of the ambition, success and failure of those who lived and worked here.

We will set off by coach from the back of Wakefield Bus Station at 10.30am. We have been offered a touch tour of the hall, which will take approximately an hour, so we will split into two groups for this. During the rest of your visit, you are welcome to have lunch or tea and cake (or both!) in the tearoom, or you can bring a packed lunch and enjoy an al fresco lunch at one of their uncovered picnic benches. You can also explore the gardens. The intimate and peaceful green spaces will be abundant with cottage garden flowers. We will set off back to Wakefield at 2.45pm, aiming to arrive at the bus station around 4pm.

The cost of the trip is just £12 towards the cost of the transport, as the admission cost is covered by our Community Pass. All are welcome, including sighted companions. Places must be booked and paid for by Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July at the latest please.

### **Afternoon tea and beaded keyring/bag charm workshop:**



*Examples of beaded bag charms.*

**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> August 12.00 – 2.30pm at St. Swithun's Community Centre**

Come and join us for a delicious home-made afternoon tea of sandwiches, quiche, cakes, and of course the St. Swithun's signature scones, followed by a beaded bag charm/keyring workshop!

The bag charms are easy to make, and no previous crafting experience is necessary

(people who have made beaded pens with us will get the hang of this in no time!). You will be able to go home with a lovely gift for yourself or a loved one.

The cost is just £10 per person which includes all food and drink, as well as the workshop and craft materials. Pre-booking is essential and all places must be paid for by Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> August at the latest, please.

**Come tenpin bowling with us! Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 10.45am for an 11am start at Tenpin Wakefield, Trinity Walk, Wakefield, WF1 1QU**



*People enjoying tenpin bowling.*

Come and join us for a game of tenpin bowling at the brand-new Tenpin at Trinity Walk!

Located upstairs in the former Debenhams unit, there is a lift and step free access to the bowling lanes. The lanes are designed for all abilities, from experienced bowlers to first-time visitors alike. There are ramps to assist anyone who struggles with mobility, strength, or dexterity, by eliminating the need to lift or swing the ball, thereby offering a highly consistent, accessible way to play. There will also be sighted helpers available should you need assistance.

We will meet at the entrance at 10.45am and take the lift or stairs up to the first floor. You can bowl in your own shoes if these are clean, flat-soled, and closed-toe (e.g., trainers). High heels, boots, sliders, Crocs, and open-toed shoes are strictly prohibited for safety reasons and bowling shoes are available to borrow free of charge if yours are not suitable.

We are delighted to be able to offer this trip at a cost of just £2.50 per person. Places must be booked and paid for by Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> September at the latest, please. All are welcome, including sighted companions.

**Macular information morning: Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October 10.30am – 12.30pm at St. Swithun's Community Centre**

Come and join our experienced Sight Loss Advisor Nicola Ford for an information morning about all things macular. From spotting the symptoms, the different types of macular degeneration, to treatment options and coping strategies, and a bit about Charles Bonnet Syndrome, this informal, friendly session is for anyone who is living with macular disease and wants to find out more, or for those who simply want to connect with others living with a similar condition. We also welcome those who are caring for someone with macular degeneration.



*Nicola Ford, WDSA Sight Loss Advisor.*

The session is free and refreshments will be provided. Please book your place by calling the office on 01924 215555 as places are limited.

**Beauty & the Beast pantomime trip! Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 7pm – 9.45pm (approx.) at Theatre Royal Wakefield, 12 Drury Lane, Wakefield WF1 2TE**



We are so excited to share that we will be returning to the beautiful Theatre Royal Wakefield for this year's panto, Beauty & the Beast, on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December at 7pm! We realise it is only July, and we already can't wait!

We have booked 120 tickets as we are allocating half to our children and families group, and half to our adult group, so we will be taking everyone on the same night! We have therefore been allocated most of the first seven rows (A-G) in the stalls. These tickets are on the ground floor closest to the stage and are usually priced between £26 and £37, but we are delighted to offer them to WDSA members for just £15 each!

We need to have all seats booked and paid for by the end of September, so if you would like to come, please contact the office on 01924 215555

as soon as possible to book your place(s) and arrange payment. As always, sighted companions are welcome. If you have special requirements of where you need to sit (e.g. closer to front, further back, a particular side), please let us know and we will do our best to accommodate, but please remember we have families with small children that will need to sit together. We've never done an outing with this many people before, so if you're not fussy about where you sit then that makes our life much easier!

If you have not visited Theatre Royal Wakefield before or have any questions about accessibility, please feel free to ring the Box Office on 01924 211 311 and one of their friendly team will be happy to answer your questions.

We really hope you can join us (oh yes, we do!).

### **RNIB Talk & Support Wakefield Telephone Group: Thursdays at 10am**

There are currently three places available on a weekly Talk & Support telephone group run by RNIB. Several of our members are part of this group and they would love for more local people to join! These facilitated calls started during the Covid pandemic, and the members of this group have found the calls hugely beneficial for several years now.

If you are interested, please call the RNIB Helpline (0303 123 9999), say you would like to be referred to Talk and Support, and state you are interested in the Wakefield group that runs at 10am on a Thursday. If all spaces are filled on the Wakefield group, you can ask to be matched to another group.

### **Focus on fundraising:**

We are always grateful to anyone who wants to undertake a sponsored challenge to raise money for us. We would particularly like to thank:

- Alan Abson, a member of our Art Beyond Vision group, who raised a fabulous £122 from the sale of pieces he had made and by doing a sponsored walk at Thornes Park. Well done and thank you, Alan!

- Maria and Caitlin Robinson, who have been doing a sponsored 1 Million Steps in 100 Days challenge in memory of their Mum/Grandma Mary. To date they have raised a fantastic £226.25 between them! Thank you so much!

We are also grateful to local businesses who carry our collection boxes, which help us raise money from people's small change and raise awareness in the community of the fact we exist. This quarter we would particularly like to thank the customers of Crofton Express & Post Office, who raised a tremendous £89 from their collection boxes!

And finally, a huge thank you to former Councillor Maureen Tennant-King, who was Mayor of Wakefield for 2025 – 26 and chose to support us as one of her charities of the year. Our Art Beyond Vision creative facilitator Ania was delighted to accept a cheque from Maureen for £6,732.50 on behalf of the charity at our AGM on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, which will be going towards the continuation of our Art Beyond Vision sessions.

### **Helpline hours and office cover**

Our helpline number is 01924 215555 and operates 9.30am – 1.30pm Monday to Thursday (answerphone operational out-of-hours and at busy times). We only have three part-time staff and we all work flexibly. There will be occasions when there is no-one in the office at St. Swithun's, so visits to the office are by appointment only. Please ring in advance.

If you would like to learn how to get here via public transport, please ring the office and ask to book onto one of our route planning sessions, where a volunteer will meet you at Wakefield bus station and support you to make your journey.

### **Newsletter format**

The newsletter is available in large print, on audio CD or audio USB, in Braille, and via email. The newsletter is also available to download at [www.wdsa.org.uk/news](http://www.wdsa.org.uk/news). Audio USB subscribers, please remember to return your USB stick and reusable mailing pouch to us promptly as these are very expensive to replace. Thank you so much.