



Wakefield District Sight Aid

35 Peterson Road, Wakefield WF1 4DU

01924 215555 – admin@wdsa.org.uk – www.wdsa.org.uk

President: The Lord St Oswald Company No. 7432897 Registered Charity No. 1140483

Hello everyone and welcome to our Spring 2024 newsletter!

We hope this newsletter finds you well and having enjoyed the Easter break.

As usual, the newsletter is packed with exciting news, and we very much hope that we will be seeing you at some of our events over the next few months. In particular, we'd like to draw your attention to:

- The launch of our new Pontefract coffee morning! This will be starting on Thursday 25th April, from 10am until 12 noon, at the Broken Bridge Wetherspoon, and will take place on the fourth Thursday of the month thereafter. We hope to see you there!
- Our celebration event at our Ridings coffee morning, on Wednesday 15th May, at which Ed Anderson CBE, HM Lord-Lieutenant of West Yorkshire, will be presenting us with our King's Award for Voluntary Service. All are welcome!
- Our Annual General Meeting, which will be held in The Old Court Room at Wakefield Town Hall at 11am on Wednesday 5th June.
- Our seaside trip to Bridlington, on Wednesday 12th June.

We hope to see you at one of our events very soon!

With warm wishes,

Hayley Grocock (Chief Executive Officer)



CEO Hayley holding a sign that reads: Sight support means a fuller, happier life.

Charity news! Wakefield District Sight Aid celebrates after receiving £424K of National Lottery funding to support people living with sight loss across the Wakefield District!

We are delighted to share the wonderful news of this new funding from The National Lottery Community Fund, which distributes money raised by National Lottery players for good causes and is the largest community funder in the UK.

This will enable us to ensure sustainability for our current services over the next five years and the freedom to be able to increase capacity and expand our service offering.



National Lottery Community Fund logo

Hayley Grocock, Chief Executive of Wakefield District Sight Aid, says: "We're delighted that The National Lottery Community Fund has recognised our work in this way. Now, thanks to National Lottery players, we will be able to ensure the continued provision of vital services for blind and partially sighted people in our communities. This is important because it helps people build their confidence, feel better connected to the sight loss community, and improve their mental health. Through our work, people feel more able to cope with the challenges that life throws at them and are better informed about the support available and how to access it."



Team members and service users at a coffee morning.

Luke Scholey, volunteer, and Chair of Trustees at Wakefield District Sight Aid, says: "To have certainty over our sustainability for the next five years is amazing, giving us the opportunity to grow and develop as well as continuing to provide all the great services we currently offer. Being registered blind myself, the charity has had a direct, positive impact on my own life, and it is a great honour and privilege to be a volunteer helping the charity to grow and adapt to the changing needs of the community we are here to serve."

Charity news! King's Award celebrations on Wednesday 15th May!



*The King's Award for
Voluntary Service logo*

As you'll probably be aware, in November it was announced that Wakefield District Sight Aid has been given The King's Award for Voluntary Service in recognition of the tremendous contribution that our volunteers make towards our work. To mark this wonderful achievement, we would love to invite you all to the official celebration event at our Ridings Coffee Morning on Wednesday 15th May.

Please come and join us in the Events Space at The Ridings, where we will be presented with our crystal award and certificate by Ed Anderson CBE, HM Lord-Lieutenant of West Yorkshire. The coffee morning takes place between 10am and 12 noon. We don't know the exact time of the presentation itself, but we are hoping that Ed will be able to join us for most of the morning and it would be wonderful to have as many volunteers and members there as possible to be part of the celebrations!

Charity news! Activities for children and young people!



The Powell Family Foundation logo

We are thrilled to share that thanks to some funding from The Powell Family Foundation we will be starting a new programme of activities for children and young people with vision impairment and their families! We held an amazing trip to Gravity at Xscape Castleford in March and can't wait to organise more events during the coming year.



Children at our recent trip to Gravity.

If you have a child living with sight loss, or know someone who does, please get in touch with us on 01924 215555 to find out more. This work is a partnership with our colleagues at the Children's Sensory Impairment Team at Wakefield Council, and we are so grateful for the team's kind support of this work.

What's on at Wakefield District Sight Aid

All our events up to the end of July 2024 are shown on the calendar on page 12. Here is a summary of what's coming up:

The Ridings coffee morning 10.00 – 12.00 on the first Monday and third Wednesday of the month held at The Events Space, Middle Mall, The Ridings, Wakefield, WF1 1DS – outside M&S Food and Poundland. There



People enjoying our Ridings coffee morning.

is plentiful disabled parking at The Ridings, but it is not free of charge. There is on-street parking and Council car parks nearby where Blue Badges can be used.

Please note there will be no Monday coffee morning in May due to the Early May Bank Holiday, and Monday 1st July will be a Demo Day rather than a coffee morning (please see below).

Horbury coffee morning 10.00 – 12.00 on the second Tuesday of the month (The Cluntergate Centre Café, Cluntergate, Horbury WF4 5DA). Our small but perfectly formed Horbury group is ready to welcome you!

Evening social group (ESG – formerly the younger members social group) 17.00 – 19.00 on the fourth Thursday of the month (held at Calder & Hops, 60 Northgate, Wakefield, WF1 3AP). This friendly and informal evening meet-up welcomes members of all ages and is looking forward to meeting new members!

NEW! Pontefract coffee morning! 10.00 – 12.00 on the fourth Thursday of the month at The Broken Bridge Wetherspoon, 5 Horse Fair, Pontefract, WF8 1PD. We are delighted to launch our brand-new outreach event for the Pontefract area, starting on Thursday 25th April! Come and join us for a cuppa and a natter! Hot drinks are less than £2 and are refillable for free all day! The Broken Bridge has step-free access and is very close to Pontefract bus station. The breakfast menu is also available until midday for anyone who fancies a full English or one of their many delicious vegetarian or vegan options!

Equipment Demonstration and Advice Day: 10.00 – 13.00 on Monday 1st July in The Events Space, Middle Mall, The Ridings, Wakefield, WF1 1DS – outside M&S Food and Poundland. Joining us will be Jason from Vision Aid, who will have a range of assistive equipment for demonstration (please see their advert on p10 - 11). Also joining us will be Ann Marie from Healthwatch Wakefield, to get your views and experiences of health and social care; the team from Open Country, who will share how they can support you to access and enjoy the countryside; and Sarah and Debra from Citizens Advice, who will be able to provide advice on benefits, energy bills and lots more. We will also have an Art Beyond Vision table where you will be able to participate in some of the techniques that the groups have been learning, so do come along and have a go! *Final Demo Day date for 2024: Monday 4th November.*

Annual General Meeting: 11.00 – 13.00 on Wednesday 5th June at The Old Court Room, Wakefield Town Hall, Wood Street, Wakefield WF1 2HQ All members, stakeholders, supporters, and friends are welcome to join us for our AGM. This is an opportunity to celebrate our achievements over the past year, hear about our future plans, and ask questions of the staff team and Board of Trustees. Tea and coffee will be served.



Participants at our Art Beyond Vision course in the Treacy Hall [photo credit: David Lindsay, photosbydavid.co.uk].

As usual, we will conduct the formal business of the AGM first, and then hear from our guest speakers. We are delighted that our President, Lord St. Oswald, will be joining us. We will also hear from Ruth, Ania and Tom, who have been delivering our Art Beyond Vision project. Volunteers Luke and Julie will also be sharing their experiences of attending the Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace in May as part of the celebrations for our King's Award! We hope you can join us.

If you are planning to attend, please RSVP by ringing the office on 01924 215555 or emailing Hayley on ceo@wdsa.org.uk by Thursday 23rd May. This ensures we are catering for the right number of guests.

Seaside trip to Bridlington!

We are thrilled to be running a coach trip to Bridlington on Wednesday 12th June! We will be leaving central Wakefield (behind the bus station on Borough Rd/Providence Street, WF1 3AQ) at 09.00, picking up in Pontefract (on the Horsefair, outside the Pontefract Royal Mail Sorting Office, WF8 1AA) at 09.35 and onwards to the Harbour at Bridlington.



Service users on a trip to Bridlington in 2023.

You will then be able to spend a few hours in Bridlington as you wish, and we will depart Bridlington at 16.00 with the aim of being back in Wakefield for around 18.00. Please note, there is no itinerary for the day - we do not arrange specific activities and we don't make a group booking for lunch. This is so that people can do as they please in pairs or small groups and choose to eat when and wherever they wish.

The cost of the trip to cover the transport is £22 per person. The coach is fully wheelchair accessible and has a toilet on board. Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Sighted companions are welcome and, if you need a sighted guide, we strongly recommend you bring someone with you as we cannot always guarantee availability of sighted guides on the day. However, if you need a guide and can't bring anyone with you, please let us know and we will do all we can. We do hope you'll be able to join us!

Living Well with Sight Loss course (LWWSL)

This free, two-day course aims to help you increase your independence, boost your confidence, and connect with others to share experiences. Whether you are newly diagnosed, facing a change in circumstances, or simply want to start enjoying life more, Living Well With Sight Loss delivers practical advice, useful information and resources available across the Wakefield District.



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

Living Well with Sight Loss is a partnership between WDSA and RNIB, made possible with the kind support of Wakefield Council. Our next course will provisionally be taking place on Monday 24th June and Monday 8th July at Lightwaves Leisure Centre, Lower York Street, Wakefield WF1 3LJ (opposite Wakefield Bus Station). 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.

Art Beyond Vision

The next phase of our fully accessible creative programme, Art Beyond Vision, will be starting on Thursday 6th June and running for six weeks (time tbc). The weekly workshops will be taking place on the first floor of our office building here at 35 Peterson Road.

Unfortunately, we do not have step-free access to the first floor, so you will need to be able to manage a flight of stairs (we will be able to provide support and guiding).



Facilitator Tom with course participant Jean [photo credit: David Lindsay, photosbydavid.co.uk]

Places are very limited and will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. We are hoping to secure more funding for this work, so if you can't make it to this course, please let us know you are interested in future courses, and we will be pleased to add your name to our waiting list.

Cost of living support



The rising cost of living is a big concern for everyone right now. Please don't struggle alone.

Thanks to some grant funding, we have a limited emergency fund available to help blind and partially sighted people who find themselves in financial hardship. We can help with unexpected expenses, sudden increases in bills, or one-off emergency costs.

For a confidential discussion about your situation, please contact Hayley on 01924 215555. We can also refer you to other organisations such as Citizens Advice, who can assist with issues such as welfare benefits checks, debt support and housing advice, to make sure you're receiving all the support available to you. Staff from Citizens Advice will also be available at our Demo Day in July.

Technology news: Apple accessibility sessions

Did you know that the Apple store in Leeds offers a variety of sessions to help people get the most out of the accessibility features on their devices? Whether you're new to Apple or need a refresher on the latest products and features, these sessions will get you up and running.



Get Started: Accessibility Features for Vision Loss

Duration: 90 minutes

Discover how those with vision loss can learn different ways to interact with Mac, iPhone and iPad. We'll explore assistive technologies like Zoom, Text to Speech and Magnifier, and practise using Dictation to turn spoken words into text. Bring your device or we'll provide one.

Get Started: Using VoiceOver for Mac

Duration: 90 minutes

Discover how those who are blind or have low vision can use VoiceOver to navigate their Mac. We'll show you how to use basic commands and gestures to search webpages, create notes and access VoiceOver keyboard help. Bring your device or we'll provide one.

Get Started: Using VoiceOver on iPhone and iPad

Duration: 90 minutes

Explore VoiceOver for iPhone and iPad. For those who are blind or have low vision, VoiceOver lets you hear a description of what's happening on

your screen. You'll learn how to use basic gestures like swiping and tapping to navigate your device, adjust Speaking Rate, and customise VoiceOver in Settings. Bring your device or we'll provide one.

For sessions with amplified sound, hearing loop technology is available on request.

The Apple Store is located at Trinity Leeds, Albion Street 209, Leeds LS1 5AR. To find out more about the sessions and book on, you can call them on 0113 251 1000, or contact Ian Morris by email at imorris@apple.com. You can also visit <https://www.apple.com/uk/today/groups/trinityleeds/?sn=R372>, select Accessibility, then 90 minutes. Select the session you are interested in and the date/time that suits you. When it asks for group size, the minimum is 3. Just select this even if it will just be one or two people attending.

Newsletter format

The newsletter is available in large print, audio CD or USB, and in Braille. We can also send you a copy by email. Please contact the office on 01924 215555 to request a different or additional format. For our audio subscribers, please don't forget to return your mailing pouch and USB stick (if you receive one) so we can use them for the next newsletter. The mailing pouches cost us £2.58 each and if we don't receive them back then we don't have enough to send out next time. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Volunteers

Without volunteers, much of our work would not be possible. We are particularly looking for telephone befrienders and helpers at our outreach events

(especially our new Pontefract coffee morning). If you or anyone you know would be interested in joining our friendly team, please contact Nicola Ellis (Finance and Outreach Manager) on 01924 215555 or operations@wdsa.org.uk, for an informal chat or to find out more about the roles on offer and how you can help.



VisionAid invite you to join us at the WDSA Demo and Advice Day

Explore the latest solutions with our friendly and knowledgeable specialist, Jason Shaw.

**Mon 1st
July
2024**

10:00am - 1:00pm

The Events Space

(Middle Mall, by M&S Food and Poundland)

The Ridings, Wakefield, WF1 1DS

We are the largest independent low vision and blindness solution provider in the UK.

We are passionate about assisting every person to find the best possible solution for their unique needs.



Wearable Solutions

- Hands free magnification allows users to watch TV, cinema, see loved ones' faces, cook, play cards etc.
- Ideal solution for practical tasks
- Some devices offer colour detection, facial, barcode & money recognition
- Easy to use and comfortable to wear



Eye 5: Our most glasses-like wearable

**If you can't make it on the day, don't worry!
Please just call us to arrange a free in-home demonstration**

Freephone 0800 002 5555



Call VisionAid for your free catalogue: 0800 002 5555



Video Magnifiers

- Handheld, transportable & desktop
- **Replace all your magnifying glasses**
- **Adjustable magnification: 2x to 150x**
- Read **faster** and more **comfortably**
- **Colour & contrast enhancement**
- **Near, self & distance** viewing options



Text-to-Speech

- When magnification is not sufficient
- Push **one button** to have **post, magazines, books, newspapers** etc. read to you with **natural, clear voices**
- **New! OrCam Read 3** - an all in one solution that can even read **handwriting out loud!** • **Pocket-sized**



Wearable Solutions

- **Hands free magnification** allows users to **watch TV, cinema, see loved ones' faces, cook, play cards** etc.
- Ideal solution for practical tasks
- Some devices offer **colour detection, facial, barcode & money recognition**
- **Easy to use** and **comfortable** to wear



New! Eye5: Our most glasses-like wearable

VisionAid
Independent Family Business Est.1996

Freephone:
0800 002 5555
www.visionaid.co.uk

Calendar of events April - July 2024

April	May	June	July
1 Mo Easter Mon	1 We	1 Sa	1 Mo Demo Day
2 Tu	2 Th	2 Su	2 Tu
3 We	3 Fr	3 Mo Ridings	3 We
4 Th	4 Sa	4 Tu	4 Th
5 Fr	5 Su	5 We AGM	5 Fr
6 Sa	6 Bank Hol. Mon	6 Th	6 Sa
7 Su	7 Tu	7 Fr	7 Su
8 Mo	8 We	8 Sa	8 Mo
9 Tu Horbury	9 Th	9 Su	9 Tu Horbury
10 We	10 Fr	10 Mo	10 We
11 Th	11 Sa	11 Tu Horbury	11 Th
12 Fr	12 Su	12 We	12 Fr
13 Sa	13 Mo	13 Th	13 Sa
14 Su	14 Tu Horbury	14 Fr	14 Su
15 Mo	15 We Ridings	15 Sa	15 Mo
16 Tu	16 Th	16 Su	16 Tu
17 We Ridings	17 Fr	17 Mo	17 We Ridings
18 Th	18 Sa	18 Tu	18 Th
19 Fr	19 Su	19 We Ridings	19 Fr
20 Sa	20 Mo	20 Th	20 Sa
21 Su	21 Tu	21 Fr	21 Su
22 Mo	22 We	22 Sa	22 Mo
23 Tu	23 Th Pont/ESG	23 Su	23 Tu
24 We	24 Fr	24 Mo	24 We
25 Th Pont/ESG	25 Sa	25 Tu	25 Th Pont/ESG
26 Fr	26 Su	26 We	26 Fr
27 Sa	27 Bank Hol.	27 Th Pont/ESG	27 Sa
28 Su	28 Tu	28 Fr	28 Su
29 Mo	29 We	29 Sa	29 Mo
30 Tu	30 Th	30 Su	30 Tu
	31 Fr		31 We