

MyVision Oxfordshire

Supporting Visually Impaired People

Spring 2025



A Ukrainian woman trying out a digital magnifier. She was here as part of a delegation to learn about our services.

**Green Walks, Upcoming Events, Brand the Bus,
Ukrainian Visit, and much more!**

MyVision Oxfordshire

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Upcoming Events

Museums and Touch Tours

- **Natural History Museum:** 13th March.
- **Ashmolean Museum:** 3rd April.
- **Blenheim Palace:** 2nd May.
- **Weston Library:** 8th May.

ActivEyes Events

- **ActivEyes Pub Social:** 20th March, 17th April, 15th May.
- **Visually Impaired Tennis:** 27th February, 27th March, 24th April, 22nd May.

In the Community

- **Windsor Castle Grounds Walk:** 20th February.
- **Oxfordshire Goalball Club Training at John Mason School:** 22nd February, 22nd March, 5th April.
- **Henley Get Connected:** 25th February.
- **Thame Get Connected:** 27th March.
- **Headington Evening Social Group:** 2nd April.
- **Nuffrile Place Garden Walk:** 10th April.
- **Glaucoma Support Group:** 25th April.
- **Abingdon Get Connected:** 28th April.
- **Bicester Get Connected:** 19th May.

Children and Young People

CYP Gaming: We have a gaming group for children and young people taking place every other Friday at our centre, Bradbury Lodge.

A message from Mark, our CEO

2024 ended with an extraordinary result for Chris McCausland. The blind comedian winning Strictly Come Dancing was a truly historic moment. Not only did he captivate the nation with his humour, charm, and determination, but he challenged perceptions about what blind and visually impaired people can achieve. His victory is a powerful reminder that with the right support and mindset, barriers can be broken, and dreams realised. Chris's journey wasn't just about dancing; it was about resilience and adaptability. For us at MyVision, his success resonates deeply - never underestimate what's possible, no matter the obstacles.

Looking ahead to 2025, MyVision plans to continue breaking down barriers for blind and visually impaired people across Oxfordshire. This year, we'll continue to focus on two critical issues: tackling digital exclusion, and reducing loneliness and isolation.

Access to technology is vital, yet too many visually impaired people are being left behind. Through our Get Connected project, we provide training and support to help people connect with loved ones, access essential services, and pursue education or employment opportunities.

Loneliness and isolation persist as significant challenges. To address this, we're expanding community outreach, developing our Green Walks, and growing our peer support networks and volunteer-led befriending services ensuring no one feels alone.

Inspired by Chris's achievements, we're embracing 2025 with confidence and determination. Together, we can make this a year of empowerment, connection, and progress for our community

Mark



Green Walks Groups.

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Didcot - Cornerstone Art Centre at 11am.

- 27th February, 14th March, 27th March, 11th April, 24th April, 9th May, 29th May.

Abingdon - Café Aroma at 11am.

- 24th February, 10th March, 31st March, 14th April, 28th April, 12th May, 30th May.

Banbury - Mill Arts Centre at 10am.

- 26th February, 12th March, 26th March, 9th April, 23rd April, 14th May, 28th May.

Witney - Market Square bus stop at 10:30am.

- 27th February, 13th March, 27th March, 10th April, 24th April, 29th May.

East Oxford - Flo's Café in the Park at 10am.

- 27th February, 27th March, 24th April, 22nd May.

Oxford - Meeting at 1:30pm: Bradbury Lodge 11th March, **University Parks** 8th April, **Jericho Canal Walk** 14th May .

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Celebrating One Year Of Green Walks

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January 23rd marked the one year anniversary of our first Green Walk! Over the past year, we've enjoyed exploring the county together, and the company of like minded people. We're incredibly grateful to everyone who has joined us on these walks and made them such a success. Keep an eye on the events calendar for upcoming Green Walk dates and join us for another year of outdoor adventures!



A photo from our first ever Green Walk in Didcot, 23rd January 2024 There is a group of people walking on a path.

Introducing Kiera Beykoa

We are delighted to welcome Kiera to the MyVision team. Kiera has joined us as the new Support Worker for Andreas, providing assistance with transportation and work related needs.

"I am excited to be here as I am able to support someone and make a difference in someone's life,".

We are confident that Kiera will be a valuable asset to Andreas and the MyVision team.



Introducing Martin Crouch



MyVision is welcoming Martin, our new part-time Community Fundraiser. Martin brings a wealth of experience to the role and he will be supporting your fundraising efforts, helping to organise events, raising funds, and building

awareness. His personal journey with sight loss has helped him gain a deep understanding of visual impairments, and he is passionate about using his own experience to support others.

MyVision has helped Martin view his sight loss differently, providing solutions to daily frustrations and proving that it doesn't have to limit your enjoyment and success in life.

Social Groups

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Oxford

Headington Social Group - Courtside Café in Bury Knowle Park from 10am - 11:30am.

- 28th February, 28th March, 25th April, 22nd May.

North Oxford Social Group - Common Ground Café, Little Clarendon Street, 10am - 11:30am.

- 6th March, 3rd April, 1st May.

West Oxfordshire and Cherwell

Bicester Social Group – Bicester Market Square at 11am.

- 10th March, 14th April, 12th May.

Carterton Social Group – The Beehive at 12pm.

- 24th February, 31st March, 28th April, 26th May.

Chipping Norton Social Group - The Theatre at 11am.

- 25th February, 25th March, 29th April, 27th May.

Kidlington Social Group - Stanly's Sweets and Treats at 11am.

- 17th February, 17th March, 21st April, 19th May.

South Oxfordshire

Didcot Social Group - Cornerstone Art Centre from 10:30am - 12:30pm.

- 12th March, 9th April, 14th May.

Didcot Wellbeing Course - Cornerstone Art Centre from 10:30am - 1:00pm.

- 11th March, 1st April, 6th May.



The Faringdon Group before watching an Audio Described Film

Didcot Audio Book Club - Didcot Library
from 10:30am - 11:30am.

- 2nd April.

Wallingford Social Group - Wallingford Library from 10:30am - 12:30pm.

- 17th February, 14th March, 29th April, 28th May.

Henley Social Group - Henley Library
from 10:30am - 1:30pm.

- 25th February, 25th March, 29th April, 27th May.

Wheatley Social Group - The Merrybell
from 11am - 12pm.

- 13th March, 3rd April, 1st May.

Thame Social Group - Thame Bowls Club
from 10:30am - 1:00pm.

- Contact Info@MyVision.org.uk for more information.

Vale of the White horse

Abingdon Social Group - Abingdon Library from 10:30am - 12:30pm.

- 24th February, 31st March, 28th April, 19th May.

Wantage Social Group - Wantage Library from 2:00pm - 3:30pm.

- 19th February, 19th March, 16th April, 21st May.

Faringdon Social Group - Faringdon Library from 2:00pm - 3:30pm.

- 12th March, 2nd April, 7th May.



A woman from the Didcot group feeling props and a pantomime.



The Thame Group meeting up for their Christmas lunch. They are sitting around a table, waiting for food with Christmas Crackers

For more information on our Social Groups, visit our website, or contact us at Info@MyVision.org.uk

Finding Independence and Community: Joseph's Journey with MyVision

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Four years ago, Joseph's life changed dramatically. He was blinded by a rare bacterial infection, which led to brain abscesses, causing irreversible sight loss and affecting his memory. He spent a year at the Carroll Centre in Boston, where he learned skills for navigation and how to use assistive technology like JAWS and Braille. Many of his teachers were blind themselves, helping him adapt to his new reality.

As part of his college degree, Joseph had the chance to spend a term studying in Oxford. Before moving to Oxford in September, Joseph researched local support and found MyVision Oxfordshire.

He knew the University wouldn't provide much support. He reached out to Katie, MyVision's Volunteer Coordinator, and was connected with David and Maureen, who provided mobility support and helped with essential tasks like grocery shopping. Their guidance gave him confidence navigating Oxford, especially in his early weeks.

A key turning point was meeting Andreas, MyVision's technology and equipment specialist, who helped Joseph improve his navigation skills using technology. Joseph describes him as a "godsend" for introducing him to Soundscape, a GPS app that allows visually impaired users to set markers and create safe, personalised routes. Because Andreas also lost his sight later in life, he understood Joseph's challenges and offered invaluable support.



Joseph saying goodbye to his dogs before leaving for the UK.



Joseph at the airport after arriving in the UK. He has his guitar with him.

Beyond practical help, MyVision gave Joseph a sense of belonging. He attended social groups, led by Nathan, including a touch tour at the Ashmolean Museum, where he explored artefacts from the Near East. These experiences helped him connect with others facing similar challenges, something he lacked in Arkansas, where he hadn't met any other blind or visually impaired people.

Joseph found Oxford remarkably walkable. With Andreas's assistance, combined with the city's walkability and readily available taxis, he was able to navigate Oxford independently. MyVision's proactive approach to inclusion and accessibility helped him feel more connected and like he wasn't in it alone.

"What's also been helpful is the community of fellow blind people who made me feel as though I wasn't in it alone. The blind people I met had jobs, they were students, and they were making the most of their lives. I hope I'm like that too. It was a good example of what I want to be."

Above all, Joseph expresses his deep gratitude to David and Maureen. Their support during his transition and time in Oxford was invaluable. "MyVision is an incredible organisation, and I am so thankful for it".



Joseph and Maureen together smiling at the camera.

Tech Update

Looking Ahead to 2025

As assistive technology continues to expand in capabilities and user-friendliness, MyVision Oxfordshire will remain committed to:

Growing the Get Online, Get Connected Project

We plan to expand our workshop offerings to cover advanced skills—like AI-based object recognition apps, accessible banking, and online medical services.

Reaching More Communities

Building on our success with traveling workshops, we aim to increase the number of rural venues we visit, ensuring no one feels left behind when it comes to accessible technology.

Offering Ongoing Clinics

Personalised clinics will remain a cornerstone for those who want to delve deeper into a particular device, troubleshoot unique issues, or keep pace with software updates.



A photo from the Chipping Norton Get Connected workshop. There are seven people sitting around a table.

MyVision Oxfordshire, Supporting Visually Impaired People In Ukraine

Did you know that every day, 9 people in Ukraine lose their sight due to the war? MyVision Oxfordshire recently collaborated with Blind Veterans UK and the World Health Organization to educate Ukrainian delegates on supporting individuals with visual impairment.

We shared insights into our services, including technology training, social groups, and counseling. The delegates experienced firsthand assistive technologies used by our clients.

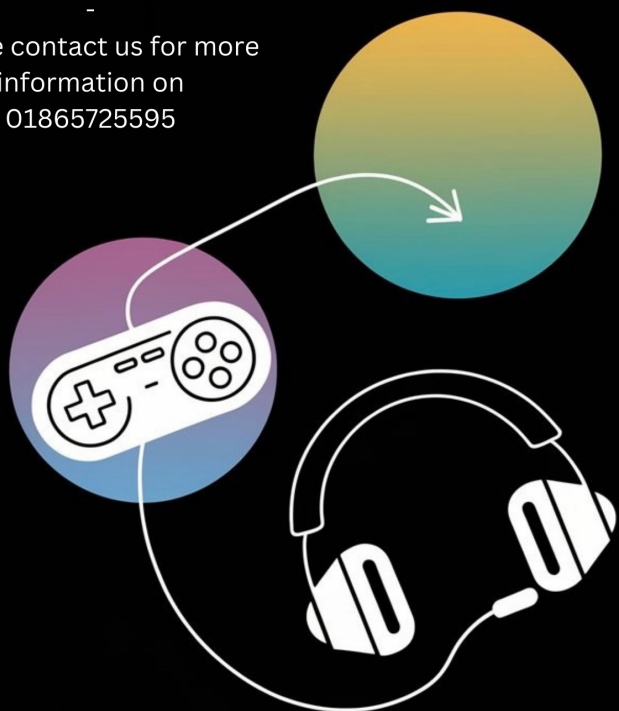


One of the Ukrainians learning to use a digital magnifier

Children and Young People's Gaming Group

Every Other Friday
From 16:30 - 18:00

Please contact us for more information on 01865725595



Children and Young People

We have a new gaming group for Children and Young people. In this group we will play games, code and design and develop new accessible games. The group meets every other Friday at our centre, **Bradbury Lodge**.

- 21st February, 7th March, 21st March, 4th April, 18th April, etc.

Contact
Info@MyVision.org.uk
for more information.

Brand the Bus is back, and we need your votes!

Brand the Bus is a competition held by Oxford Bus Company. The top prize is an advertising package worth £100,000, including a full advert on the side of a bus, smaller adverts on buses across the county, radio advertising on Get Radio, and being Oxford City Football Club's charity of choice for the 2025 season.

To be in with a chance of winning we need you vote! Voting is open now, and closes on the 1st April. Please share this with your family and friends, and ask them to vote too!

To vote, visit: www.oxfordbus.co.uk/vote-now, or scan the QR code below



in partnership with
Get Radio



Help Us Win, Vote For Us Today!



Supporting Visually Impaired People



Our Brand The Bus banner. On the left is a red background with the Brand the Bus log and Oxford Bus Company. On the right is a blue background with the words, "Help Us Win, Vote For Us Today", with an image of a bus. At the bottom in the middle is the MyVision logo.

Get Involved in 2025

2025 is shaping up to be a busy year! There are lots of opportunities for you to get involved and raise vital funds for MyVision Oxfordshire.

Firewalk 2025

This year's Firewalk, organised by Witney Rotary, will take place on 28th March 2025 at Chipping Norton Town Hall.

Skyline Skydiving

Ever fancied giving skydiving a go? Well, now is your chance! We've partnered with Skyline so you can set yourself the ultimate challenge, and raise money for MyVision at the same time! We have a group booking at Brackley Airfield on 12th July 2025, and we'd love you to join us.

Bike Oxford

Are you a cyclist, and want to set yourself a new challenge? Why not take part in Bike Oxford on 22nd June 2025? There will be a choice of four routes, 13, 25, 50 and 78 miles long. The weekend will also feature a Bike Oxford Cyclability ride - providing a safe opportunity for everyone to enjoy cycling with inclusive facilities and access to a fleet of adapted cycles to best suit individual needs.

Any other ideas?

If you have an idea of your own, or you'd like to get involved another way, let us know and we can help you get your plans off the ground! Contact Fundraising@MyVision.org.uk.



A photo from last years Firewalk. There is a large group of people standing around the fire.



A photo of two people skydiving. The MyVision logo is on the left hand side.

Become a Member

Membership is a vital part of MyVision; by becoming a member you are not only supporting our work with a regular donation, but you are strengthening our numbers and uniting us.

Our membership is about belonging, strengthening, and supporting MyVision. In return you'll receive an annual update specifically for members, access to members events and activities throughout the year, and a chance for your voice and vote to be counted at our AGM.

If you are interested in becoming an annual member (£20 per year) or a lifetime member (one payment of £250) we have enclosed more information, or you can visit our website:

www.myvision.org.uk/support-us/become-a-member/



Feedback Form, scan the QR code with your camera

Membership sign-up, scan the QR code with your camera



Tell us what you think!

Your feedback is incredibly important to us. We use what you tell us to help shape our services, and to let supporters, donors, and funders know how we are doing. We have enclosed a feedback form and a return envelope, and we would love for you to return this to us. It should only take a few minutes to complete. Alternatively, you can complete the form online.

If you have any questions, email Info@MyVision.org.uk or call 01865 725 595.

Thank you!

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We have to say "Thank You" to a lot of people! Over the last few months, supporters of MyVision Oxfordshire have been very busy and incredibly generous!

In December, we had a collection day at ASDA Wheatley and raised £281.15. We are very grateful to all our volunteers, and everyone who donated and stopped to talk to us on the day.

One of our supporters, David Hawkins, organised and hosted a wonderful Christmas Concert in Didcot. It was a lovely evening, with some amazing musical performances, and some fantastic cakes and raffle prizes. Thanks to David's hard work, the support of lots of volunteers, and to everyone who bought tickets, the event raised £896.71.

And finally, our Winter Appeal. We are really quite excited and overwhelmed to reveal that this year our appeal raised a whopping £10,775! Thanks must go to Daniel, for agreeing to share his story, all the match funders, and all those who donated.



Three of our volunteers at the ASDA bucket collection.



Vocalize Choir, one of the performers at the Christmas Concert.



A photo of Daniel sitting at a table. This was our Appeal photo.

VisionZone 2025

Solutions for Low Vision



Would you like to find out more about assistive technology, Support, Services, Groups and much more!

Our Vision Zone events bring together a variety of excellent services and charities covering your local area.

No matter what your sight loss condition we are here for you. Whether it's just to gain knowledge or hands on experience of new technologies, entry is free to our events, and our friendly staff will greet you with a warm welcome.

SAVE THE DATE!

Wednesday 25th June 2025 – 10 am to 2 pm

Mill Arts Centre, Spiceball Park, Banbury, OX16 2PA



0800 1456115

www.lowvisionshop.co.uk