

# Wales Council of the Blind Roundup

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**Autumn 2015**

## **Blind Veterans UK 100 Years of Service**



In 2010, 22 year old Fusilier, Shaun Stocker, served in the Royal Welsh. When Shaun was involved in an IED explosion in Afghanistan he was badly injured and lost both his legs and his sight. He is pictured here with Thea Davies, who runs to raise much-needed funds for Blind Veterans UK. You can find out more about Thea's fundraising at [www.facebook.com/415miles](http://www.facebook.com/415miles)

Photo courtesy of Blind Veterans UK

### **Annual Wales Eyecare Conference**

### **In the supplement: All about nystagmus**



**NATIONAL EYE  
HEALTH WEEK**

MONDAY 21 - SUNDAY 27 SEPTEMBER 2015

**YOUR VISION MATTERS**

During **National Eye Health Week** charities, organisations and health professionals across Wales are joining together to promote the importance of eye health and the need for everyone to have regular sight tests. More inside...

# Power for life



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Our Target 60 initiative is a case in point, for when power interruptions occur its aim is to restore supplies within the first hour. This is a commitment our customers can depend upon.

To find out more about our plans for the future visit [www.westernpower.co.uk](http://www.westernpower.co.uk) or email [info@westernpower.co.uk](mailto:info@westernpower.co.uk). If you have a power cut – call our new emergency number 0800 6783 105

# In the supplement...

John Sanders, Executive Manager for the Nystagmus Network, is our guest editor for our supplement on nystagmus. In it, we are given a quick guide to the condition and how it affects people in their day-to-day lives. We hear from a parent of a child with nystagmus and from a young person giving her tips on how to survive school with 'wobbly eyes'. We are given a 'think piece' on a clinical pathway for nystagmus and John explains why the Snellen chart doesn't give the whole picture when it comes to measuring vision.

We are shown how there's a world of difference between early onset nystagmus in children and acquired nystagmus in older people. Children experience poor, but stable, vision. Adults who acquire nystagmus are more likely to see the world jumping around or, as one person puts it, 'I am like a drunkard and zombie and often when I walk I can feel one foot clumping in front of the other.'

We are told about events happening across the world to raise awareness of the condition and how optometrists can help people with nystagmus through a combination of advice and optical aids.

Nystagmus can affect other aspects of health and wellbeing, such as posture. This supplement gives an overview that is useful to social care professionals, optometrists, ophthalmologists and, most importantly, parents and children affected by the condition.

**Disclaimer:** the views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of WCB and, as much of the material is submitted by third parties, we cannot be held responsible for the accuracy of the information therein. We reserve the right to edit for publication.

# Blind Veterans 100 Years

When someone loses their sight, the effects can be devastating for the whole family, especially without the dedicated care, support and services to help them adjust.

Blind Veterans UK believes that no one who has served our country should have to battle blindness alone. That is why Blind Veterans UK provides free and lifelong support to vision impaired veterans and those who care for them.

Over its 100 years, the charity has acquired a lot of experience helping veterans affected by sight loss, helping over 35,000 throughout its history. In Wales the charity supports around 277 veterans but knows there are many more ex-Service personnel eligible for its help.

Fiona Trolley, Blind Veterans UK's regional welfare officer in Wales, said: "Blind Veterans UK is providing support and services to those affected by sight loss throughout Wales.

"Blind Veterans UK knows that when someone loses their sight, it affects them and their loved ones and that's why we're here to support the whole family. I am proud that as a charity we provide practical training, equipment and emotional support that individuals need to regain their independence and we help carers provide the best support possible for those affected by sight loss.

"We can also offer respite to veterans and their carers as well as recreational and social activities. For example there is a monthly luncheon club that meets in Barry which our beneficiaries really enjoy. It's important to me that carers feel they can come to us to obtain support."

One carer who has experienced first-hand the positive impact of the charity is Carol Massam. Carol who is 45 has been a carer to her veteran father George since 2005 when he lost his sight due to age-related macular degeneration.

"Being Dad's full-time carer can be a struggle especially as my health isn't the best but Blind Veterans UK is a marvellous charity and its support has made all the difference. They have really changed my Dad's life - in fact they've helped him to have a life.

"Our welfare officers are absolutely brilliant, anything you need they can help you, things like getting a talking watch for Dad. They've come to the house, and talking to them has been like talking to old friends: I can't praise them enough.

"We've also been on a couple of holidays to the Blind Veterans UK centre in Llandudno. Dad had some rehabilitation training and got to try new things like doing mosaics. He loved it and I got a chance to relax. The staff were brilliant and the best part was someone putting a meal in front of me every day. Without those little breaks you would go mad."

At each of Blind Veterans UK three centres, in Sheffield, Brighton and Llandudno, and through support at home, the charity provides equipment, training, rehabilitation and emotional support to help families, like the Massams, to cope.

The charity is reaching out to the tens of thousands of ex-Service men and women who are now battling severe sight loss, who could be eligible for support but who currently do not realise it. It doesn't matter when or how a veteran lost their sight, or when they served, Blind Veterans UK can help. If you care for a veteran with sight loss, or know someone who does, request Blind Veterans UK's free, lifelong support at [www.noonealone.org.uk](http://www.noonealone.org.uk) or call freephone **0800 389 7979**.

# WCB News

## Wales Eyecare Conference 2015

We are two years into the Eye Health Care Delivery Plan for Wales and this year's conference highlighted some of the work that is going on in optometry, ophthalmology, social care and the third sector to make access to eyecare and support more efficient in terms of resources, money and the patient experience. 'Prudent Health Care' is the term adopted to encapsulate four principles: co-production; caring for those with greatest health need first; doing only what is needed and without harm; and reducing inappropriate variation in service delivery. Resources in health don't match the rising demand for services given factors such as the ageing population, while the welcome emergence of new, but expensive, treatments puts additional pressures on the service.

But, as Vaughan Gethin, Deputy Minister for Health, pointed out, money is not the simple answer. To resolve issues around capacity, smarter thinking is needed to allocate resources more efficiently. We need better access and referral systems, better systems management, all underpinned by a stronger relationship between the providers and the service-users – the principle of co-production. One way of maximising resources – touched on throughout the day – is to give greater powers to the primary care sector – including high street optometrists – so that services such as post-operative follow-up sessions could be taken off the hospital waiting-lists and placed more conveniently in the high street. The Aneurin Bevan LHB Eye Care Health Group reported around 200 cataract post-op assessments happening in the community and 1,700 timely glaucoma follow-up assessments with 98% customer satisfaction.

Patient surveys show a preference for accessing this kind of support locally without the hassle of organising (often inaccessible) transport to and from the hospital. (In Powys, where a number of hospital treatments are given in England, a plan is in place to conduct post-operative assessments locally in optometrists' practices.) Other services, such as injections for wet AMD that could be carried out by non-medical staff, could happen closer to home. Optometrists can be used, as is happening in Hywel Dda LHB, to screen out unnecessary glaucoma referrals. Initiatives and adjustments like these will be necessary to adapt the health service to changing demographic and economic circumstances while, at the same time, utilising the best new technologies that get adopted, perhaps more quickly, in the private sector.

Rationalising waiting lists and patient flows is happening in various ways. Categorising patients into one of three priorities, however, is 'playing catch-up from historical lack of capacity', as Mike Austin put it in his presentation on planned care. Behaving reactively, rather than pro-actively, means services will never be ready for the pressures of the future. The data we gather must be used intelligently. David Murphy reported that retrospective data is being used in Abertawe Bro Morgannwg to map demand and the match between prediction and actuality is good, resulting in high quality planning of service delivery.

Co-production, being one of the four principles underlining the notion of 'prudent health care', involves service-users in the processes that determine the care they receive. It's easy to forget that there are real people with varied, individual needs when looking at cold data drawn from large populations. Mared Jarman and Megan John of UCAN Productions gave theatrical renditions of their own experiences as service users, focusing on the importance of registration and access to information and performed a humorous outline of the 'benefits' of being blind or partially-sighted.

The patient's voice was also heard from three individuals who had different experiences of the health service in relation to eye care. They reported that the clinical care they received was first class, but each highlighted different problems around communication. For Ziad, large print or braille are not useful so he pleaded for more electronic communications around appointments and, importantly, cancellations. Gareth told how he received his diagnosis in a letter and not face-to-face, which was a devastating experience. Rhianwen, herself a qualified medic, was told by her ophthalmologist to get registered with Social Services and 'seek another profession', a story that drew gasps of disbelief and disgust from the audience. 'Attitudes are changing, but they're a long time in coming.'

Ziad, whose eyesight vanished instantly on his way to work, wonders if the improvements in referrals being talked about today would have saved his sight. His optometrist diagnosed his condition shortly before his vision failed and the operation a week later happened too late to be effective. With more powers being granted to high street optometrists to make early interventions and referrals coupled with their private investment in the best technologies available, cases like Ziad's might become less likely in the future.

More information, including Powerpoint presentations, can be found at [www.wcb-ccd.org.uk/conference/conference.php](http://www.wcb-ccd.org.uk/conference/conference.php)  
More on Prudent Health Care at [www.prudenthealthcare.org.uk](http://www.prudenthealthcare.org.uk)



# **Wales Council of the Blind**

## **Regional Meetings**

### **West Wales**

The third meeting took place on 30th June at Carmarthen Bowling Club. Representatives from Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire attended. Gareth Morgan from Hywel Dda University Health Board came along to talk about how the Health Board are looking to improve services for people with sensory loss and to listen the views, experiences and questions from those present. The group was impressed by Gareth's commitment and enthusiasm towards this cause.

### **South East Wales**

Our first South East Wales Regional event took place in Newport on 14th July, 2015. Representatives from Monmouthshire, South Powys, Newport, Torfaen, Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent were invited to discuss and share issues that affect them which could then be channeled back through WCB to contribute to setting our priorities and work streams.

The event included a workshop session which focused on what was working well and not so well in their area, which generated some lively discussions and covered various topics such as the apparent gap in services and support for people of working age.

We were pleased that there was unanimous enthusiasm to continue with the regional group and we look forward to working together to improve services for people with sight loss.

# Palais de Dance

*WCB's Director, Owen Williams, was seen treading the boards with UCAN Productions last month. Arts Disability Wales' Maggie Hampton wrote this review of the show themed around stories of post-War Britain.*

The scene was set before the show. In the Sherman foyer, long tables were set out in street-party fashion and bunting and photos of post-War Britain were all around. The audience had been invited to dress in 1940s style, and quite a few of us did; it really helped to create a party atmosphere.

The theatre (Venue 2) straight away transported us into a post war *palais de danse*. The edges of the stage area were set with lots of little tables with a fringed lamp glowing on each one. The raked seating soon filled up and a few of the audience were able to sit at a table throughout the performance – my partner and I were two of the lucky ones, which made us feel part of the show.

As we went in, the actors were already 'frozen' in the performance space, all ready to dance – and dance they did. The costumes, hair and make up were all absolutely right for the period – I was born around this time, so I know! The spirit of post-war celebration was captured really well in the dance, but gradually little stories unfolded and we saw the grief, loneliness, longing, the damage caused by a long war for a generation used to 'putting on a brave face' and getting on as best they could.

I loved it all. The stories were all real, told to members of UCAN by visually impaired people who lived through the post-war years. The production absolutely did justice to those experiences. There was some beautiful acting and a few very powerful moments moved me to almost to tears. There was

some very welcome comedy too, which came at just the right time. And the music? Fabulous! Script, music, set, lighting, choreography and direction all worked splendidly together and the actors and musicians just made it all happen. I don't want to single out any particular individual as ALL were good. Very good.

Of the nineteen performers, seventeen were visually impaired. Did this make a difference? Yes I think it did. For a large company of visually impaired performers, choreography and direction must be very precise: the actors must then use that precision to their advantage and that is exactly what happened in Palais de Dance. There was a kind of visual symmetry and grit in the performances which brings something quite fresh to theatre. Palais de Dance was a real treat from start to finish. Thank you so much UCAN!

## **Sector News**

### **National Eye Health Week**

It's quite possible that you are reading this during National Eye Health Week (21st -27th September) when eye health organisations and agencies of and for people with sight loss are promoting messages to raise awareness of the need for visits to optometrists (high street opticians) to maintain eye health and avoid unnecessary sight loss. The website **[www.visionmatters.org.uk](http://www.visionmatters.org.uk)** tells you how you can take part and what others are doing to promote eye health during the week. Eye health is an issue all year round so keep the website in your favourites to visit at any time. Also, visit the website <http://www.eyecare.wales.nhs.uk/public-and-patients> if you have any concerns about your eyesight.

# **Disabled People's Manifesto**

Manifesto Calls to Action, developed by disabled people around Wales, aim to tackle the challenges faced by disabled people: the high proportion of disabled people in Wales compared to other nations and the lack of enforcement of their rights. This manifesto, through its calls to action, seeks to reinforce the Welsh Government's aspiration to create an *Enabling Wales* where disabled people, as citizens of a modern inclusive nation, truly experience their rights and equality, and are able to contribute fully to its social and economic success.

Following a series of consultations, 5 calls to action were agreed including the eradication of disability poverty in Wales by 2030 and the tackling of disability hate crime.

Contact Disability Wales via [info@disabilitywales.org](mailto:info@disabilitywales.org) or telephone 02920 887325 for more information.

## **Service to disabled train passengers needs to improve**

RICA, the organisation which carries out consumer research for disabled people, has produced a research report for the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) on the experiences of disabled people using their 'Passenger Assist' services. The booked assistance was received on only 62% of train journeys surveyed, with some booked assistance being provided on 27% of journeys. Passengers on 10% of journeys received none of the help that they were expecting.

The survey is based on 474 train journeys taken across the UK during the year to March 2015, of which 140 were made by people who booked assistance because of vision

impairment. It includes journeys made on trains operating in Wales such as Arriva Trains Wales and First Great Western. Although there were some positive comments, the report acknowledges that when assistance fails, it causes considerable difficulties for passengers and can impact on future journeys by affecting passenger confidence. So it is disappointing that 20% of passengers with vision impairment rated the assistance on their journey as poor or very poor.

You can read the report here:

<http://www.vision2020uk.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Rica-Passenger-Assist-Longitudinal-Study-Year-1-Summary-Final.pdf>. Further research is being done this year.

## **Creative Writing Competition**

The Seeing Ear, the on-line library for blind and print disabled people, is running a creative writing competition for children and young people aged 5 to 18 years who are vision impaired, have dyslexia or a disability that makes it difficult to read printed books. The winner can choose products worth up to £835 from the competition's sponsor, Dolphin, and there will also be prizes for runners up. Short stories and poems can be submitted.

For full details about the competition, including eligibility criteria, and how to enter, visit the Seeing Ear website, <http://www.seeingear.org/home/the-seeing-ear-creative-writing-competition-2015/>. The closing date is 31st December 2015.

## **Getting connected**

RNIB Cymru's digital inclusion project, Online Today, is offering local groups and societies the chance to find out more about the project.

We've got Digital Skills Officers based around Wales, and if your group or society would like an informal presentation or advice and information session then we would like to hear from you. Our Digital Skills Officers have a range of up-to-date equipment that we can bring for you to get hands on with technology. They'll advise on how you get on board with the digital age or re-connect with it if you've stopped using your laptop or tablet because of sight problems.

So if you'd like to set an e-mail account, join Facebook, do your banking or just catch up on old TV programmes on the net, then give Chris a call on 029 2082 8519 or drop us a line at [onlinetodaycymru@rnib.org.uk](mailto:onlinetodaycymru@rnib.org.uk). We'll organise a visit for your group as soon as we can.

(See below for information about RNIB Cymru's Switch On To Technology days)

## **Disability Information Day in Michael Sobell Sports Centre**

On Friday, 2nd October from 10.30 – 2.00, Rhondda Cynon Taf Council and Interlink are hosting a disability information day. For more information contact Maria Abson on 01443 846200.

## **Congratulations to Welsh VI Bowlers**

The Welsh Vision Impaired Bowling Team competed in the UK Indoor Championships at Nottingham between the 8th and 10th Sept 2015. They entered seven categories and came away with seven medals (1 gold, 3 silver, 3 bronze), scoring

the highest points tally they have scored for some years, showing the great progress the team is making.

Special congratulations to Wales Council of the Blind's trustee, Julie Thomas, winner of the gold medal, who is now the B2 UK Ladies Indoor Singles Champion. For more information about vi bowling, visit the new website of the Welsh Association of Visually Impaired Bowlers, <http://www.welshvibowls.org.uk/>.

# **Publications**

## **Guides for hotel owners and taxi drivers**

The Guide Dogs organisation has produced two new guides aimed at helping service providers understand the rights and needs of their vision impaired customers, whether or not they have a dog:

- 'Top Tips for Taxi Drivers' is a simple, eight point guide to giving a vi passenger a stress-free journey.
- 'Access to Hotels for Guide Dog Owners (and other blind and partially sighted people)' is a longer document which covers duties under the Equality Act 2010, plus more general advice on communication.

There are links to these guides on our website, or you can ring Guide Dogs on 0118 983 5555 or send an email to [guidedogs@guidedogs.org.uk](mailto:guidedogs@guidedogs.org.uk).

# Research reports from Pocklington Trust

The Thomas Pocklington Trust has produced a report 'Experience of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) for people with sensory loss'. It is based on the experiences of 14 people when going through the process for claiming PIP, the benefit which is replacing Disability Living Allowance. Although participants were generally satisfied with the outcomes of their claims, their experience of the application process was viewed as negative, characterised by inaccessible communications, inconsistent information from the Department of Work and Pensions, and long delays in responding to claims. The report represents Phase 1 of a larger research study, and although the sample size is very small, it does suggest areas for improvement, and provides a useful foundation for further work.

The Pocklington Trust has also published a research report 'Changes in vision in older people: causes and impact'. It found that older people from the poorest fifth of the population had an almost 80% higher risk of developing severe vision impairment than those from the wealthiest fifth, and that deterioration in vision over a two year period was related to decreases in income, quality of life and social activity. The research was based on data from the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing, which follows a large sample of older people over time. It also found that moderate and severe vision impairment was more likely to develop in people who smoked, had diabetes or had hypertension.

To both of these reports, visit the Pocklington website, <http://www.pocklington-trust.org.uk>, and look under 'Research reports'.



# Have Your Say!

## Welsh Government Consultations

Details of all WG consultations can be found on their website, <http://wales.gov.uk/consultations>. The following may be of particular interest to people with vision impairment:

- Improving opportunities to access the outdoors for responsible recreation (closes 2 October)
- Green Paper: Our Health, Our Health Service (closes 20 November)
- Draft Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill (closes 18 December)

If you would like a consultation document in a different format, email the document title and the preferred format to [CustomerHelp@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:CustomerHelp@wales.gsi.gov.uk) or call 029 2082 3683.

## Give your views to improve Social Services

If you live in Carmarthen, Blaenau Gwent or Wrexham, are vision impaired, deaf or deafblind, and have had contact with your local Social Services recently, Action on Hearing Loss Cymru and RNIB Cymru want to hear about your experiences. This request is part of a three-year, Welsh Government-funded project, to improve access for deaf and blind people to public services including housing, social services and health services. People's stories will be taken to

their local Social Services Department and used as examples to show how they can improve their service. Individuals can simply tell their story, or have the chance to be part of a focus group in their area. To find out more, please send an email to [TellUs@hearingloss.org.uk](mailto:TellUs@hearingloss.org.uk), or phone Andy Harris, Sensory Loss Engagement Officer at Action on Hearing Loss Cymru, on 029 2033 3034. They will be happy to take stories from other parts of Wales as well.

## **Inquiry into children with multiple needs & access to play opportunities**

Former Secretary of State for Education and Employment, David Blunkett, is going to chair an enquiry into the provision of play opportunities for children aged 0-5 with multiple needs in England and Wales, on behalf of deafblind charity Sense. Now Sense is calling for evidence from parents of these children, specialists from the disability sector and practitioners.

To find out more about the enquiry and how you can give your views, visit the Sense website, <https://www.sense.org.uk/content/case-play-inquiry>, or send an email to [playinquiry@sense.org.uk](mailto:playinquiry@sense.org.uk). The closing date for the submission of evidence is 27th November.

# Power for Life

Western Power Distribution (WPD) operates the electricity distribution network in the Midlands, South Wales and the South West. Put simply, our role is to ensure the power network of poles and pylons, cables, wires and substations – the infrastructure that we all rely upon to live our lives to the full – delivers electricity to our homes and businesses around the clock.

## **Power cut? Call our emergency number 0800 6783 105**

Sometimes power cuts can happen for reasons beyond our control. During a power cut we are able to help.

We know it can be particularly worrying if you rely on electricity for medical equipment or if you are elderly, very ill or disabled. If you depend on electricity for a reason such as using a nebuliser, a kidney dialysis machine, an oxygen machine, a ventilator – or any other reason – you should register with us.

WPD provides a FREE Priority Service Register, which helps us to identify customers who may need a little extra help during a power cut.

If you join our FREE Priority Service Register we can:

- Give you a direct number to call in the event of a power cut so you can get straight through to us.
- Agree a password with you before we visit you, so you feel safe.
- Provide special help, if needed, through the RVS (Royal Voluntary Service) or British Red Cross.
- Ring and tell you about planned interruptions to your electricity supply.
- Keep you as informed as possible in the event of an unplanned power cut.

To join, call **0800 9177 953**, or visit our website  
**[www.westernpower.co.uk](http://www.westernpower.co.uk)**

# Events

## **Inherited Eye Disease Patient Day**

Cardiff School of Optometry and Vision Sciences is hosting a 'patient day' for people with inherited, or genetic, eye disease. It will take place in the Main Lecture Theatre and Atrium of the school in Maindy Road, Cardiff, CF24 4HQ. It is being run by the school and Genetic Alliance UK with Wales Gene Park on Friday 8th January 2016 from 10 – 2.30. To express an interest in attending, please email Su Jenkins on [jenkinss33@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:jenkinss33@cardiff.ac.uk). There is no general parking available and limited disabled parking.

## **AFBP Mobile Resource Centre**

Action for Blind People (AFBP)'s Mobile Resource Centre will visit Merthyr and Swansea in October. Visitors can try for themselves the latest technology and gadgets intended to improve daily life for blind and partially sighted people, and AFBP's team will be on hand to demonstrate equipment and products, and to offer free and impartial advice on sight loss.

The Mobile will be at the Kier Hardie Health Park in Merthyr on 7<sup>th</sup> October, and outside Marks & Spencer in Swansea City Centre on 20<sup>th</sup> October. Both events start at 10am and end at 4pm.

# **North Wales Mobile Information Unit**

The North Wales Mobile Information unit will be out and about during the autumn. Please check Vision Support's website <http://www.visionsupport.org.uk/> for the full schedule. It is recommended that you ring 01745 338914 to confirm details before travelling.

# **Switch On To Technology exhibition and information in Llanelli and Abergavenny**

RNIB Cymru will be at St. Michaels Community Centre in Abergavenny on November 20th.

For more information call 029 2082 8518, email: [onlinetodaycymru@rnib.org.uk](mailto:onlinetodaycymru@rnib.org.uk) or visit <http://www.rnib.org.uk/onlinetoday>.

# **Glaucoma Support Group meetings**

The International Glaucoma Association (IGA) is organising support group meetings at Abergele Hospital on 19<sup>th</sup> October and 16<sup>th</sup> November. All meetings are held from 1.30 pm to 3.30 pm. For more information, ring Michelle or Hazel on 01745 44 86 30 extension 2439

There will also be a meeting on 2nd October at Cardiff Institute for the Blind, Jones Court, Womanby St, Cardiff. It

will include a talk by Eryl Williams from the Glaucoma Association about driving, and also an informal question and answer session. Refreshments will be provided. For any further information, please contact Ruth Rhydderch, Eye Clinic Liaison Officer, on 029 2074 6860 or by sending an email to [ruth.rhydderch@cibi.co.uk](mailto:ruth.rhydderch@cibi.co.uk).

Details of all IGA's support group meetings are on their website, [www.glaucoma-association.com](http://www.glaucoma-association.com) – click the 'support groups' option on the right hand side of the screen.

## **Digital Skills workshops in Swansea**

RNIB in Swansea has arranged IT workshops for people with macular degeneration at the School of Medicine, Singleton Hospital in Swansea. The sessions will help attendees to get online and use Kindles, Smartphones, Tablets (iPads/Android) and laptops. Details are:

- Thursday 24th September 1.30pm – 3.30pm Caswell Room;
- Thursday 26th November 1.30pm – 3.30pm Llangland Room.

To book a place, please contact Sue Neale, Eye Clinic Liaison Officer, by telephoning 01792 200390 or sending an email to [susan.neale@rnib.org.uk](mailto:susan.neale@rnib.org.uk). Places are limited, so early booking is recommended.

# **Eye Health event in Porth on 25th September**

As part of National Eye Health Week 2015, Communities 1st is organising an Eye Health Event on Friday 25th September from 1-3pm. It is aimed at the local community of Porth and beyond, and is designed to create awareness of vision impairment and to offer assistance and guidance. It also offers suggestions to improve quality of life, with advice on nutrition, digital skills, signposting, understanding of conditions and creating awareness of visual aids.

The event will be held at Porth Plaza, Foundry Place, Pontypridd Rd, Porth, CF39 9PN. For more information, ring Stephen Smith on 01443 497176 or email [Stephen.K.Smith@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Stephen.K.Smith@rctcbc.gov.uk).

## **VITAL Wales Regional Event for education professionals**

VITAL (Visual Impairment Touches All Learning) is a network of professionals working with children with complex needs and vision impairment. It is facilitated by RNIB but is mainly comprised of teaching and associated professionals working in schools, services, early years and health settings.

Members meet twice per year in regional focus groups to hear presentations and discuss current issues, and there will be a meeting in Wales (venue to be confirmed) on Friday 9th October. For information about VITAL, how to join, and how to book a place on the event, visit

[http://www.wcb-ccd.org.uk/single\\_post.php?var=1489](http://www.wcb-ccd.org.uk/single_post.php?var=1489)  
and follow the link to RNIB's website.

# **New College Worcester**

New College, the national residential college for young people aged 11 to 19 who are blind or partially sighted, is running the following events:

- Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> October 'Supporting students with vision impairment'. Aimed at Teaching Assistants who have recently started to work with vi students in a mainstream school and the parents of vi children, the event will cover topics such as adapting materials and the impact of vision impairment on learning. There is a charge of £30 per delegate but the event is free for parents.
- Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> October 'Outreach Open Day'. Aimed at educational professionals working with vi young people, and the parents of vi children, the event offers the chance to meet subject teachers, get hands-on experience of specialist equipment, and get practical support and advice on specific curriculum areas of your choice. There is no charge.

Places must be reserved in advance. To find out more and make a booking, telephone the College on 01905 763933 or book on-line at [www.newcollegeworcester.co.uk](http://www.newcollegeworcester.co.uk).

## **'Have a Go' weekend at RNC**

The Royal National College for the Blind is organising a 'Have a Go' activity weekend on 24th/25th October. It is free to young people aged 13-17 with a vision impairment, and activities on offer include sports, performing arts, and media production. An accompanying adult can stay over free of charge, and have a tour of the campus.

To book a place, visit the RNC website [www.rnc.ac.uk](http://www.rnc.ac.uk) and look under 'News and events', or telephone 01432 376 621.



# **Sight Loss and Accessible Environments Workshops**

**Session Dates: 21 October; 8 December; 11 February.  
10am until 4pm at RNIB Cymru Cardiff. Cost: £95**

This workshop will provide you with design guidance to meet the needs of older tenants and those with sight loss. The workshop is recommended for anyone involved in the Welsh Housing Quality Standards (WHQS); the Development Quality Requirements (DQR); Disability Facilities Grant; and Physical Adaptations Grants.

## **The workshop will cover:**

- Common sight conditions and design issues
- Understanding colour and tonal contrast
- Measuring colour contrast – (Light Reflectance Values)
- Building on lifetime homes and sustainability of design
- Understanding RNIB accessible design principles
- Recommended lighting levels at external and internal areas
- Developing attractive accessible kitchens and bathrooms for people with sight loss

This workshop will enable you to apply key design principles that will promote the safety, independence, dignity and wellbeing of your tenants.

For further details, charges and availability please contact [visiblybettercymru@rnib.org.uk](mailto:visiblybettercymru@rnib.org.uk) or David Watkins: 01792 325309

# Advertise in WCB Roundup.

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The focus for the next edition of Roundup will be WCB's future work programme.

# SMELL GAS?



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