



Chief Executive's Column

I hope you all had a good Christmas and New Year. Once again we have a packed magazine this quarter which I hope you will enjoy.

Over the Christmas period and into January we have moved both our Bedford and Luton offices. I know this has caused some disruption to our services during this time and I

apologise for any confusion that has been caused to you. We had to move our Bedford offices because the old St Bede's school is being redeveloped into much needed sheltered housing. (Further details of the move are covered in the next article).

Whenever there is a move, either

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vision

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Contact 0115 9442317
www.enhancedvision.co.uk



Sight Concern Bedfordshire

T: 01234 311555

E: office@sightconcern.org.uk

Luton Central Library

T: 01582 655554

E: luton.services@sightconcern.org.uk

in our personal or professional lives, it will result in a period of readjustment.

There will inevitably be new ways of working introduced and some changes in the way we deliver our services. Most of these changes will be due to the nature of the new building we are in.

We would wish to minimise any

disruption and one of the best ways to do this is for you to let us know what is working well and any areas where we need to tweak our changes a bit.

So a big thank you for all the hard work put in by our staff and volunteers in Luton and Bedford during and after these moves and a very big “thank you” to you, our service users, for your forbearance during this time of disruption.

Meanwhile we have been running the low vision service in the Luton and Dunstable hospital for a few months now. We took over this service late last year on the basis that it would be a continuation of the existing service run from the hospital.



Nick Gibson – *Chief Executive, Sight Concern Bedfordshire*

Having had a few months running the service this way we feel we would like to make some improvements.

The first improvement we have made is to employ Maggie Ireland to be our Low Vision Service Co-ordinator for Luton. Welcome Maggie. Maggie was a volunteer with us so she knows the charity

well. The other change we would like to make, as we believe it will significantly improve the service, is to move the clinic from the hospital to our new premises in Union Street in Luton.

We have expressed our wish to do this to the Luton and Dunstable Hospital and hope to be having detailed discussions with them soon. However, we would first like to have feedback from you about this change.

The primary improvements we would like to make would be to bring the Luton service in-line with our Bedford Low Vision Service, which we have been running for some 9 years now, this includes increasing the appointment times

and having time spent talking to staff and volunteers about your condition and finding out what help and aids are available.

Please contact us regarding this issue and we will be happy to explain in more detail what we would hope to do once the service has been moved.

If you would like any further information on the services or work we are doing give me a call or contact one of our Resource and Information Centres. Thank you.



Nick Gibson
Chief Executive,
Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Our new premises in Bedford

Local Information

All Change at Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Its been like a merry go round at Sight Concern Bedfordshire recently. First our Recording Studio housed at the DRC returned back to its former Luton base, pending the Luton Stuart Street office move. Next, our Bedford office moved into new premises at Kings House, 245 Amptill Road, Bedford, MK42 9AZ. Then, with barely three weeks between the two, our former offices at Stuart Street moved to the first floor at 1 Union Street, Luton, LU1 3AN. Then, by the time you read this, they will also have taken on the ground floor as well. So, if we have sounded a little frazzled



recently, you will know why!

Please note that our Resource Centre in the Luton Central Library has remained fully staffed and available throughout and will continue to remain the point of contact for Luton service users. (Our Union Street location will be by appointment only).

Our new Bedford office continues to host one of our Low Vision Services. The resource centre is now housed in a larger room & will shortly be able to display a wider selection of aids for daily living and information. There's plenty of free disabled parking right outside the building's rear doors, and we've accessible ground floor toilet facilities and a lift to the first floor service. (You will be given instructions on which entrance to use when attending Low Vision Service as this may change in the future as building work continues).

New Bedford Opening Times

Mondays & Wednesdays –
by appointment only

Tuesdays & Thursdays –
drop in from 9.30am – 4pm

Fridays – closed.

We will also be holding a number of outreach Equipment Demonstration and Information events in local communities across

Bedfordshire. See below for details of some of these events.

Find us at:

**Kings House,
245 Ampthill Road
Bedford
MK42 9AZ**

Or ring us on: **01234 311 555**

Email: office@sightconcern.org.uk

Sight Concern Bedfordshire – Out and About

Sight Concern Bedfordshire will be joining an initiative by the Older People's Reference Group and Aragon Housing, to provide information and advice to adults living or working within Central Bedfordshire. By visiting rural locations across Central Beds we hope to reach as many people as possible to enable more to be informed of the many and varied services available that may assist them in their daily lives.

Please join us at one of the locations listed opposite on page 5.

As well as bringing information and a selection of aids to daily living out to a location near you, we would like to hear about what you want from us, so look out for us in the 'big pink Rave bus'. We look forward to seeing you soon!

JUST ASK...

Your input is our output



JOIN US ON THE RAVE BUS 2011



Would you like to receive information, advice and guidance from Central Bedfordshire Council, our partner organisations and a wealth of local voluntary organisations on social care, health, housing and many additional services?

Then please come along to any of the locations listed below and find out how we can help.

LOCATION	VENUE	MONTH/DATE
AMPTHILL	AMPTHILL FIRE STATION, Oliver St	FEBRUARY - Friday 18 th
BIGGLESWADE	MARKET SQUARE, TOWN CENTRE	MARCH - Friday 18 th
DUNSTABLE	ASDA CAR PARK	APRIL - Wednesday 20 th
FLITWICK	FLITWICK LEISURE CENTRE	MAY - Saturday 14 th (Aragon Open Day)
HOUGHTON REGIS	BEDFORD SQUARE / LIBRARY	JUNE - Wednesday 15 th
LEIGHTON BUZZARD	TESCO CAR PARK	JULY - Friday 15 th
SANDY	MARKET AREA, SANDY TOWN CENTRE	AUGUST - Friday 19 th
WOBURN	CAR PARK, OPPOSITE THE CHURCH OF ST MARY	SEPTEMBER - (Oyster Festival) Saturday 10 th
SHEFFORD	MORRISONS CAR PARK	OCTOBER - Friday 14 th
CADDINGTON	THE GREEN (nr the co-op)	NOVEMBER - Wednesday 16 th
ARLESEY	VILLAGE HALL	DECEMBER - Friday 16 th

Open from 09.00 - 2.30 (may vary at some locations)

Contact Diana Blackmun for more information

Tel: 0300 300 6647 | Email: diana.blackmun@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk



Design & Print by **fidelity** Ampthill | Tel: 01525 300001. www.fidelityprint.co.uk

An Invitation to You

Visually impaired people, their families, friends and carers are invited to join us at our Open Day to celebrate the launch of SCB's new Bedford venue.

The Open Day will take place on Tuesday, 10th May 2011.

Our Open Day will feature:

- Displays of aids and equipment, with opportunities to try out
- Stalls and suppliers
- Information about local services
- Refreshments
- Tours of our facilities
- Entertainment
- Staff and Guides on hand to show you around

There is plenty of free parking on site, however those who are able to use public transport are encouraged to make use of the Park & Ride service which stops right outside on the route into Bedford and is just a short distance from the stop and crossing point coming out of town.

**Don't forget
to change
your clocks!**



British Summer Time begins on

Sunday March 27th

Clocks go forward by one hour.

70's/80's Tribute Night

We would like to pass on our sincere thanks to The Sharnbrook Hotel for hosting the 70's/80's Tribute Night to raise funds on behalf of Sight Concern. £1,350 was raised on the night from ticket sales, a raffle and an auction. Thanks also to Simon Browning Opticians, Borneo Linnell, Tax Assist Accountants, Bodyflight, Boots Opticians, Custom Wills and Delta Force for their generous support with prizes.

Sue Clarke

Fundraising & Events Manager

Shillington Christmas Tree Appeal

Many thanks to all those who supported the Shillington Christmas Tree Appeal. A staggering £800 was raised by them! Thank you for all the work that went into organising this. We will be putting this sum towards developing a much needed new website. We hope to have further updates on this in our next newsletter.

Leisure

News from Bedford Borough Libraries

Some of you may be concerned about the future of the library service in Bedfordshire following all

the recent reports of library closures throughout the country. I can reassure you that there will be no change to the current situation in Bedford Borough in the financial year 2011/12. All libraries remain open as usual including the mobile and Library Link services. Savings will be made through a freeze on staff recruitment as people leave or retire and by a cut in the book fund.

Also, by the installation of some self-issue machines which will speed up the process for customers in a hurry. Obviously this is not ideal but better than closure and redundancy.

In Central Bedfordshire the mobile service is likely to be withdrawn in spite of public protest but Library Link will continue to serve residential homes, Day Centres and accommodation for older people where possible.

At Bedford Central Library we have been busier than ever, especially as a result of the media publicity surrounding libraries and the 'Save our Libraries Day' on February 5th. Public support is very important at this time so if you have not used your library recently do call in and use your ticket or rejoin. If you are concerned about the future of public libraries then please email, write or call your local councillor or MP.

Kate Mosse, author of *Labyrinth* and *Sepulchre*, said that: 'British libraries are the envy of the world. Their solid, brick and glass existence at the heart of our towns makes it clear how we, as a society, value writing and books and reading, that we believe in the principle of free and fair access to education for all'.

Libraries are the last remaining places where anyone can enter on an equal footing and be welcome. Parents with young children rely on them, they are a lifeline for adults with literacy problems, those trying to find a job, pensioners, those of us who need a quiet place to work, the 27% of people in the UK who do not have home internet and students who need somewhere to do their homework.' If you are housebound call **01234 276453** for the Library Link service.

Volunteers help with the delivery of books and other items to people who cannot get out to go to the library or we serve you from one of the vans.

(The library's series of Good Afternoon Talks are listed under the What's On Guide.)

Anthea Slark
Adult Services Manager, Bedford Borough Libraries



EFDS National Events Calendar 2011

DATE	EVENT	VENUE
26—27 February	Nationwide Junior Swimming Championships	Ponds Forge, Sheffield
25-26 March	National Junior Boccia Championships	EIS, Sheffield (rescheduled from 2010)
8—10 April	British International Disability Swimming	Ponds Forge, Sheffield
17 April	Virgin London Wheelchair Marathon	London
2—5 May	Festival of Sport—South	Stoke Mandeville, Aylesbury
13—14 May	Festival of Sport—North	Leigh Sports Village, Lancashire
11—12 June	National Table Tennis Championships	Grantham Meres, Grantham
25-26 June	Nationwide Junior Athletics Championships	Preston Sports Arena
TBC	National Open Snooker Championships	TBC
19—20 November	Nationwide Short Course Swimming Champs	Ponds Forge, Sheffield
TBC	National Junior Boccia Championships	EIS, Sheffield

Entry Forms can be downloaded 3 months prior to the event from the events website www.disabilitysport.org.uk. Or you can obtain a copy and information by calling 0161 953 2499



The English Federation of Disability Sport is a registered charity. CRN 1075180



Could you be a GoalBall Star?

Goalball GBR is looking for potential talent with the following characteristics to be fast tracked in time for 2012.

- Age range 16 to 30.
- Height Above 1.6 metres female and 1.7 metres male.
- Lifestyle Active in other sports or involved in weekly exercise
- Classification Maximum visual acuity of 6:60 or a field of vision 20 degrees or less.

If you as an individual feel that you

match the above criteria, please log onto www.goalballuk.com and fill in the Goalball 2012 Talent Questionnaire.

If you are a school or agency and have a number of potential talent meeting the criteria, then please fill in the Goalball Talent Invite Application.

Goalball is a fast-flowing, highly skilled team sport for visually impaired athletes and only the most competitive and committed will succeed!

Have you got what it takes to compete at the greatest games on earth?

Listening Books

The charity Listening Books provides an audiobook library service to visually impaired people across the UK as well as those who struggle to read books in the usual way due to a physical disability or learning difficulty. Thousands of fantastic titles are available across three easily accessible formats: MP3 CDs, internet streaming and downloads.

Membership fees usually begin at just £20 per year but, due to funding that the charity has received, they are able to offer a number of free membership places to people with a print impairment in the Bedfordshire area. To take advantage of this offer, please contact Louise Barling on **020 7407 9417** or email: lbarling@listening-books.org.uk.

The Listening Books library boasts fiction and non-fiction titles and covers many popular genres including crime, romance, historical novels, travel and biographies. For children and young people, the charity covers the National Curriculum from Key Stage 2 to A-Level and records many set texts and study guides inhouse which are unavailable elsewhere.

For more information on Listening Books, please visit www.listening-books.org.uk or telephone **020 7234 0522**.

Support

Macular Disease Society Change of Meeting Day

Please note that the Macular Disease Society Social Club have changed their Luton meeting times to the FOURTH Thursday of each month. They continue to meet at 1.30 – 3.30pm at St Mary's Church, Church St, Luton LU1 3JF.

'Early Onset Nystagmus' – back in print

A queue soon formed as volunteers worked to meet the demands of Open Day delegates who wanted to be amongst the first to have a copy of the reprinted "Early Onset Nystagmus: A Parents' Guide", produced by Nystagmus Network (NN).

The popular and very helpful book is back in print and available through the NN online shop. Although described as a guide for parents, many teachers, medical staff and others that work with those who have nystagmus find the book invaluable too.

For instance one teacher of the visually impaired who has been

looking forward to the reprint commented: "I have used the book in my previous job and would recommend it to parents."

Kath Williams, nystagmus network chair said: "Early Onset Nystagmus: A Parents' Guide is informative, positive, and authoritative! An essential 'bible' for all parents, and their children who ask the inevitable questions!

"Early Onset Nystagmus: A Parents' Guide" was written by a team of medical and scientific experts at Great Ormond Street Hospital in London. It answers over 90 questions such as How common is early-onset nystagmus? Can nystagmus be cured? and, Should I declare the nystagmus in a job interview?

The Guide is available from the NN website shop priced £6 for NN members and £10 for non-members. If you have any difficulty in placing an order please email info@nystagmusnet.org or phone **0845 634 2630**.

Nystagmus is characterised by an involuntary movement of the eyes, which often seriously reduces vision. Many people with this condition are partially sighted; some are registered blind. Nystagmus may be inherited or result from a sensory problem. In

some cases it occurs for no known reason and can also develop in later life.

Nystagmus Network

2011 Census

The Census occurs once every 10 years and is designed to count and identify the profile of the UK population. The next census is taking place on Sunday 27th March 2011 and it is important that as many people as possible complete and return their questionnaires. The amount of money that the local health, police, fire and council services has to spend on the community for the next 10 years will be based on the census statistics.

If you have a sight impairment, there will be a choice of materials. You will be able to:

- complete and submit your questionnaire online at www.census.gov.uk
- listen to the questionnaire and information leaflet online by downloading the audio clips in English and Welsh at www.census.gov.uk/2011accessibility (from February 2011)
- listen online to audio versions of the information leaflet in any of the most widely spoken languages in the UK (from February 2011)

- use a screen reader, such as JAWS, to read web pages and image alt tags (see below for further information about screen readers)
- download BrowseAloud software (see below for further information about BrowseAloud), and have our web pages read out to you. Please note this will only help people with mild visual impairment and literacy difficulties
- download a sample large print questionnaire in PDF format (from February 2011). The download version will be for guidance only and cannot be printed off to complete and return
- request Braille guidance booklets in English and Welsh from the census helpline
- request an easy read information leaflet through online help at www.census.gov.uk/2011accessibility or from the census helpline
- request a large print questionnaire in English or Welsh for completion through online help at www.census.gov/2011accessibility or from the census helpline. This will be posted to you with a reply-paid envelope for you to complete and return
- contact the census helpline to request a visit or seek further advice and information

The online questionnaire, online help and census helpline will be available from 4 March 2011.
HELPLINE: 0300 02 01 101

Screen readers

Screen readers are software programs that convert text into synthesised speech so that visually impaired people are able to listen to web content.

Screen readers, such as JAWS, SuperNova and Window Eyes, allow users to navigate through web content in many ways. The user can simply allow the screen reader to read everything from top to bottom, one line at a time, or they can use the tab key to navigate from link to link. They can also navigate from one heading to the next (if the web content has headings), from one frame to the next (if there are frames), or by other methods.

Screen readers can also be used by those who are both hearing and visually impaired, in which case text is converted into Braille characters onto refreshable Braille devices which have small pins that can be raised or lowered to form Braille characters which the user can feel.

2011 Census website content is designed and tagged to make it accessible to screen readers, enabling people to use these software tools to help them understand and complete their census questionnaire online.

BrowseAloud

To listen to the website with BrowseAloud, simply go to the BrowseAloud website and download the free software.

What is BrowseAloud?

BrowseAloud makes websites accessible to those who require online reading support, which is 20% of the UK population. It works by reading web pages aloud in a human-sounding voice. Simply hover your mouse pointer over the text to hear it read aloud.

What does BrowseAloud look like?

BrowseAloud options can be chosen from this easy to use toolbar. You can place this toolbar anywhere on your screen or hide it if you don't need it.



What will BrowseAloud do for me?

- Read web pages aloud in a human-sounding voice (includes websites, intranets, extranets, html, accessible Flash, alt tags)
 - Read secure web pages
 - Read PDF and Word document in their original format
 - Highlight each word as it is spoken to show you where you are on the page
 - Magnify text to your chosen font size and font style
 - Translate word-for-word

between English, French, German, Italian and Spanish

- Look up accurate dictionary definitions
- Convert text to MP3 Mask information on the screen to help you focus on a particular area

Who does BrowseAloud help?

BrowseAloud helps anyone needing online reading support. This includes people with dyslexia, mild visual impairments or whose second language is English.

How do I download BrowseAloud?

Download BrowseAloud from the BrowseAloud website:

www.browsealoud.com

If you need any more help, contact the BrowseAloud Support Team on:

- Tel: **+44 (0) 28 94 428 105**
- Email: support@browsealoud.com

Further information about assistive technology is also available from the RNIB.

Audio announcements at bus stops

RNIB have been working with sign manufacturers to enable electronic passenger information signs to play audio announcements for people with sight loss. The signs tell

passengers which buses are due and when they are expected to arrive. They update in real time. Their innovative talking sign system, RNIB React, can be linked to these signs and activated using a fob key. This new technology is already being used in a number of places, but they need your help to make this fantastic service available to as many people as possible. If you'd like to find out more, please contact RNIB's Business Development team on **01733 375 345**

Low Vision Service

We welcome Maggie Ireland to our staff team. Maggie will be working part-time providing the administration for the clinic which is currently being held at the Luton & Dunstable hospital.

SCB Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults (SOVA) Policy

The aim of SCB's SOVA policy is to promote good practice and to ensure all staff and volunteers make an informed and confident response to specific vulnerable adult protection issues. The policy states that:

- The welfare of the vulnerable adult is paramount

- All adults, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity, have the right to protection from abuse
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to quickly and appropriately
- All staff and volunteers working for Sight Concern Bedfordshire (SCB) have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer

Both staff and volunteers receive training and clear procedures are in place to ensure appropriate reporting takes place.

Recognising Abuse and Taking Action

Abuse, which is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights, can take many forms, including physical, sexual, psychological or emotional, (such as threats of harm or abandonment, being deprived of social or other form of contact, being prevented from receiving services etc), financial (such as receiving pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance), neglect, etc

What do you do if you are being abused or you suspect that someone you know may be the victim of abuse? Let us know or contact your local Safeguarding Adults Team as soon as possible.

Bedford: **01234 27 62 22** (out of hours emergency number is **0300 300 8123**)

Luton: **01582 54 76 59** (out of hours emergency number is **08702 385 465**)

Central Beds: **0300 30 08 122** (out of hours emergency number is **0300 300 8123**)

Sight Concern Bedfordshire's Anti-Fraud Policy

Introduction

This document sets out the policy and procedures of Sight Concern Bedfordshire (SCB) against fraud and other forms of dishonesty, together with the steps that must be taken where any of these practices is suspected or discovered.

It applies to Directors, staff and volunteers. Anybody associated with SCB who commits fraud, theft or any other dishonesty, or who becomes aware of it and does not report it, will be subject to

appropriate disciplinary action.

Statement of intent

SCB will continually strive to ensure that all its financial and administrative processes are carried out and reported honestly, accurately, transparently and accountably and that all decisions are taken objectively and free of personal interest. We will not condone any behaviour that falls short of these principles.

All members of the organisation have a responsibility for putting these principles into practice and for reporting any breaches they discover.

Volunteers Notice Board

The last few months have been full of upheaval and I would like to thank all the volunteers for their patience and adaptability during all the changes. Communication has been difficult at some points and volunteers have had to relocate, with all the transport planning and rearranging that entails. On top of this the bad weather before Christmas was very disruptive.

Language Skills

We are currently updating, who amongst our volunteers, is able to communicate in a language other

than English. This would be useful in promoting services more widely in the community. If you have the ability to write, speak and translate in another language please get in touch with me.

Luton Get Together

Barbara offered to host a Luton volunteer get together but it coincided with one of the dangerously icy nights in November and we had to cancel. Hopefully we can soon all get together in the new Luton venue.

Induction and SOVA training

In January there was induction training in Luton and there is a Luton Listening Skills course coming up in March. An excellent trainer, Barbara Grell, presented two sessions of Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults training in Bedford. Eighteen volunteers attended. They found the course extremely informative and Barbara's commitment to the safeguarding of vulnerable adults inspiring. A SOVA course is planned in Luton soon.

More volunteers needed everywhere

We need more volunteers everywhere but especially Dunstable and Bedford. Extra volunteers are required to support the clinic visitors now there are two Low Vision Services – one in Luton

and one in Bedford. This is a rewarding role, welcoming and supporting people as they meet the optometrist to find out more about services and aids that can enhance their lives.

You will also receive training so that you can demonstrate the use of common aids that can make such a difference to a person's independence and quality of life.

There are also some new and interesting roles, for which you will be given full training.

- IT Club Support at ComputerEYES at Luton Library
- Exhibition and promotions volunteers helping to promote SCB at events
- Visual Awareness Trainers

Talking Newspaper

The Talking Newspaper has gone through a number of venue changes over the last few months. Now all the reading and recording for the Luton and Leighton Buzzard newspapers is centralised at the new Luton premises at Union Street. Regrettably, the change of venue and timings has caused some readers to cease their volunteering.

The journey into the Luton office is too far in some cases and the new

timings have been difficult to fit around people's existing commitments. I would like to thank all the Leighton Buzzard Observer readers for all your dedicated commitment over the years.

New Volunteers

Welcome to:

Hyacinth and Pat –
Listening Post

Mary, Linda and Iris –
Home Visitors

Suzanne, Rameez and
Jefferson –
IT support

Laverne, Vilma and John –
Talking Newspaper Readers

Mary –
Administration

News & Views Copy Deadlines

Send all copy to:
sallymarlow@sightconcern.org.uk

SUMMER Edition
Friday 22nd April
Distribution mid June

AUTUMN Edition
Friday 22nd July
Distribution mid September

WINTER Edition
Friday 21st October
Distribution mid December

News & Views Advertising Deadlines

SUMMER Edition
30th May 2011

Enquiries/artwork to:
charliekenny@live.co.uk
tel **07804 038570** or
Sight Concern office
01234 311555.

Recycling

When you have finished with your News & Views magazine, perhaps you could consider passing it on to someone else or to your local GP's waiting room?

A D V E R T I S E M E N T

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Colour
Good Working Condition
£850

Telephone: **0167 260 765**

Optelec

We would like to thank Optelec for their generous support –
www.optelec.co.uk

Return Slip for News & Views feedback

March 2011

Please tick below if you would like to receive News & Views in a different format or to let us know what other services you would like to know about. You can also request a Gift Aid form or give us feedback.

Please send News & Views by:

Email. What is your email address? _____

Email is the cheapest format for us to communicate with you, if you are able to receive the magazine in this way.

- CD
- Tape
- Braille
- I no longer wish to receive

I would like to know more about the following Sight Concern Bedfordshire Services:

- Low Vision Service
- Talking Newspapers (Luton, Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard only)
- Resource Centres – equipment and aids for daily living
- Social clubs
- I. T. Support and training
- Accompanied shopping (Luton only)
- Listening Post – telephone befriending service

Continued over page

Please cut out and return

- Home Visitors
- Benefits and advice
- Talks & presentations
- Training – visual awareness, sighted guiding

For your comments, suggestions, questions or concerns:

- I would like to make a regular direct debit donation to Sight Concern Bedfordshire. (Donations via direct debit are the most cost effective way for us to receive donations).
- I would like to enhance the value of my donation at no further cost to myself via Gift Aid. Please send me a Gift Aid Form and further information.

Name:

Telephone no:

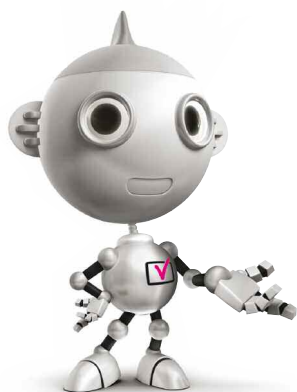
Address:

PLEASE RETURN TO:

Sight Concern Bedfordshire,
 Kings House,
 245 Ampthill Road,
 Bedford, MK42 9AZ



Important Information about Digital Switchover!



What happens at switchover? Here we outline some key dates and information for you:

Stage One:

- Analogue BBC Two signal will be switched off permanently on 30th March 2011.
- BBC digital channels including BBC Two extend to reach all areas for the first time.

Stage Two:

- Two weeks later on 13th April 2011, the remaining analogue channels are switched off permanently
- The remaining digital channels become available in all areas.

Deciding what you need to do:

1. If you currently have five channels or fewer on your television you will have an 'analogue TV'. You will need to convert to a digital TV or you will lose channels.

2. If you have Freeview, Top up TV & BT Vision Boxes you will need to RETUNE at both stages of switchover – if you don't they will lose channels.

3. If you have Sky TV, Freesat from Sky, Freesat or Virgin Media you will NOT NEED to do anything.

Help is available from the government via the Switchover Help Scheme.

They will:

- Help eligible people convert one of their TV sets to digital
- Can install what is needed in the home
- Explain digital TV clearly and simply
- Provide a range of support services if needed.

You will be eligible for help if you meet one of the following criteria:

- Registered blind or partially sighted
- You are aged 75 or over
- Have lived in a care home for six months or more
- You could get Disability Living Allowance, (DLA), Attendance Allowance, Constant Attendance Allowance or the the Mobility Supplement

Contact either the Switchover help scheme on **0800 40 85 900** or visit helpscheme.co.uk or contact SCB on **01234 311 555** for further information.

We have information packs, contact numbers and guides to explain the process and what you need to do.

Calibre Audio Library

Calibre Audio Library improves the quality of life for people with sight or other disabilities, who cannot read print, by bringing them the pleasure of reading through a free, nationwide postal service of audio books.

Calibre offer a choice of over 8500 titles, fiction and non-fiction.

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Registered charity no 286614

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Do you need help with a Will or Probate?

I can advise you, clearly and without any jargon.

Shirley Batten-Smith

Planet Wills
07804 038 570

The Gwennili Trust – don't let a disability stop you!

Irrespective of age or disability, yacht sailing is easily accessible through the Gwennili Trust. Whether a first time sailor or an experienced sea dog we have something for you. Our Sailing Programme ranges from simple day sails in the Solent on a wheelchair friendly catamaran to longer cruises to France and the Channel Islands on conventional yachts. Go to our web-site www.gwennili.org.uk or call our administration on **01488 658 330**.

FOR SALE

Talking Freeview Box – Second Hand Produced in collaboration with the RNIB, this Goodmans Talking Freeview Box allows users to access speech-enabled information to make navigation more user-friendly, which is particularly useful for blind or partially sighted people, the elderly or for those with severe dyslexia.

The Box enables the user to control the size of the on screen text and the way it is read out. So, for example a complete programme guide can be available audibly. Goodmans' Smart Talk Freeview digital box is supplied with a Plain English User Manual, (Crystal Mark approved) and will be supported by the Smart Talk website.

Cost £99 new. Now selling for £50

Contact **01582 655 554** for further details.

MARCH 2011

Monday 14th March: Good Afternoon Talk, Bedford Library. 'Wildlife and landscapes of East Anglia'. Photographer Barrie Mason brings to life our local environment. For further information about Good Afternoon Talks call Anthea Slark, Adult Services Manager, on **01234 71 81 78**.

Friday 18th March: 9.30–11.00am SCB Luton Social Club St Mary's Church, Church St, Luton, LU1 3JF. Talk by Annette Barnby, Advanced Practitioner / Facilitator Luton Adult Community Learning; 'Slips, Trips & Falls' – Raising awareness of looking after yourself, your home environment and tips and adjustments to avoid a fall that puts you in hospital for treatment. £1 plus optional raffle. Refreshments provided.

Friday 25th March: 9.30–11.00am SCB Luton Social Club St Mary's Church, Church St, Luton, LU1 3JF Talk on 'Birds and their calls'.

Sunday 27th March: British Summer Time begins.

Sunday 27th March: Census.

Monday 28th March: Good Afternoon Talk, Bedford Library. 'Flora, fauna and gardens of Madeira'. The island of Madeira is explored in glorious technicolor by Roger Skipper. For further information about Good Afternoon Talks call Anthea Slark on **01234 71 81 78**

Tuesday 29th March: 10am-3pm Optelec and Sight Concern Bedfordshire in the Committee Rooms at Hockcliffe Street Baptist Church, Delta House, Leighton Buzzard.

Thursday 31st March: Digital Switchover. Analogue TV will not work after this date.

APRIL 2011

Friday 8th April: 9.30–11.00am SCB Luton Social Club St Mary's Church, Church St, Luton, LU1 3JF. Talk by Mark Chapman – The role of a Community Support Worker at SCB. £1 plus optional raffle. Refreshments provided

Monday 11th April: Good Afternoon Talk, Bedford Library. 'God's Wonderful Railwayman'. Isambard Kingdom Brunel was the greatest engineer of the nineteenth century. He designed the Clifton Suspension Bridge and three great steamships. His most enduring legacy is the Great Western Railway. This is his story, as related by Geoff Hales. For further

information about Good Afternoon Talks call Anthea Slark on **01234 71 81 78**.

Friday 15th April: 9.30–11.00am SCB Luton Social Club St Mary's Church, Church St, Luton, LU1 3JF. Talk by Gary Roberts, Area Committee Support Manager & Neighbourhood Crime & Justice Co-ordinator. Gary will be able to tell us all we want to know about the work of Magistrates – I can guarantee you will enjoy his talk. £1 plus optional raffle. Refreshments provided

(Friday 22nd April: No Luton Social Club this week)

(Monday 25th April: Easter Monday NO Good Afternoon meeting today)

(Friday 29th April: No Luton Social Club this week)

MAY 2011

Monday 9th May: Good Afternoon Talk, Bedford Library 'Land of Ice and Fire'. Mike Knight introduces us to the geology, economics, history and lifestyle of Iceland. For further information about Good Afternoon Talks call Anthea Slark on **01234 718178**.

14th- 20th May: Adult Learners Week.

Monday 23rd May: Good Afternoon Talk, Bedford Library. 'Ancient Life in the Biddenham Loop'. Archaeologist Mike Luke tells us about discoveries which reveal much about past communities around the River Ouse. For further information about Good Afternoon Talks call Anthea Slark on **01234 71 81 78**.

JUNE 2011

Friday 3rd June: 9.30–11.00am SCB Luton Social Club St Mary's Church, Church St, Luton, LU1 3JF. Talk by Vicky Moore about the work of St Johns Ambulance. £1 plus optional raffle. Refreshments provided

1-7th June: Volunteers Week

13th – 19th June: National Eye Health Week – look out for information about SCB events in our next newsletter due out on 13th June.

NOTE: The information given in this listing is accurate to the best of our knowledge, however it always worth checking nearer the time before travelling to an event.

Do you enjoy theatre & the arts?

We're looking for someone living in the Luton/Beds area who is passionate about community engagement and who may be interested in establishing an on-line magazine.

You would need to be reasonable conversant on a PC, enjoy meeting people and interested in promoting the arts in your local neighbourhood.

You'll gain a huge amount of satisfaction in the role, and even make money whilst enjoying yourself.

So if you like the sound of this, give me a call for an informal discussion.

0800 85 65 686
ask for Paul.



Spa break in beautiful Austria!

Would you like to get away from the routine, the stresses and worries of today's lifestyle – even for just a short while?

Hermie Kandler is offering a few lucky ladies the exclusive opportunity of joining her on a fully chaperoned 6-night Spa break visiting Salzburg, in the heart of Austria and the birthplace of Mozart where you will experience the most exquisite holistic treatments, returning totally rejuvenated!

If this sounds good for you...

For more information go to the Hermieopathy web site:

www.hermieopathy.com or call and speak with Hermie Kandler on:
07979 151 000.

You will need to hurry as there are just a few spaces left!

What is Pat Testing??

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info@daynightpat-testing.co.uk
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About Us

We are an independent retailer of accessibility products for the blind and visually impaired. We specialise in screen reading products, screen magnification and voice recognition products. Our product range includes:

Screen Reading Products for PCs and Laptops

- Jaws (Standard and Professional)
- Window eyes
- System access

Screen Magnification Software

- Magic
- Zoom text

Mobile Phone Screen Readers

- Talks
- Mobile Speak –
pocket full PDA devices, smart phones

Mobile Magnification Solutions

- Mobile magnifier, pocket and for smart phones

Hardware Products

- laptops and notebooks
- Olympus recorders
- SIM-free mobile phones and PDAs

In Addition

We also provide the following services:

- one-on-one training or group training
- remote access technical support
(contract or one-off)

Contact

For more information, call us on **0116 273 0180** or visit www.sindhisystems.co.uk or email sales@sindhisystems.co.uk

Community Safety Contact Numbers:

North Bedfordshire Community
Safety Partnership **01234 221 881**

Bedfordshire and Luton Fire and
Rescue Service **01234 351 081**

Street lights, graffiti, abandoned
vehicles & fly tipping **0800 121 88 88**

Noise enquiries **01234 227266**

NHS DIRECT: For expert help & advice
on minor accidents, family illness or
medical emergencies **0845 46 47**

Luton & Dunstable Hospital
Casualty dept. **08451 27 01 27**

POLICE: 01582 40 12 12
**Please – only dial 999 in a
genuine emergency.**

Crime Stoppers **0800 555 111**

Anti-Social Behaviour: **01234 275 260**

Street Rangers: **01234 227 254**

DEADLINE FOR SUMMER NEWS & VIEWS Please forward your
advertising for inclusion in our Summer edition by **30th May, 2011**,
fao Charlie Kenny, email: charliekenny@live.co.uk – tel **07804 038570**
or Sight Concern office: **01234 311555**.

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Luton Central Library

St Georges Square, Luton,
Bedfordshire, LU1 2NG

T: **01582 655554**

F: **01582 515809**

E: luton.services@sightconcern.org.uk

Sight Concern Bedfordshire

Kings House, 245 Amptill Road,
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T: **01234 311555**

F: **01234 314888**

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