

Herts Vision Loss

Charity Forum Event (30th June 2023)

Summary

On Friday 30 June, Herts Vision Loss (HVL) held our first Charity Forum event at Christchurch Baptist Church, Peartree, Welwyn Garden City.

The Forum brought our volunteers and service users together to socialise, participate in group discussions, provide feedback on HVL services and activities, and receive updates from the charity.

Before the event started, the group caught up with old friends and made new connections over refreshments.

The event began with a warm welcome from the HVL team, followed by introductions, an open discussion for participants to voice their thoughts and comments, a mindfulness activity, and updates about the charity. Afterwards, attendees had the opportunity to continue their discussions and have one-to-one conversations with staff over lunch.



Open Discussion: key topics, insights, and suggestions

Transportation and Travel

Lack of suitable transport options negatively impacts many service users' ability to attend HVL clubs and activities, particularly in rural areas.

There is a lack of information about assisted travel options for those attending hospital appointments in London.

Social Groups

Previous activities: in the past Sight Life members have enjoyed lunches, quiz events and have benefited from different groups collaborating and sharing information together.

Frequency: some Sight Life groups used to meet more frequently, but this has tapered off due to low attendance, transport issues or members moving to groups in other areas.

Volunteers: volunteers need to be notified of upcoming events as far in advance as possible to maximise their availability.

Communication: the best way to communicate with groups about upcoming events is by email, WhatsApp and text message.

Location: currently there is no Sight Life group running in Hitchin, Letchworth or Baldock and there is a lack of activities for those with sight loss in North Herts generally.

Promotion: when publicising Sight Life activities, it must be emphasised that groups are open to all, including those with a visual impairment.

Suggestions for future Sight Life activities:

Physical activity: carpet and lawn bowls, walking groups

Arts & Crafts: pottery, lace making, photography

Outdoors: gardening in allotments and community spaces

Classes: taster sessions and courses run by local colleges

Quizzes: quiz events offered in person and via USB

Outings: museums, theatre trips, jazz performances

The team at HVL would like to thank all who attended and supported the Forum Event.



