



## Local Information – Area 3 (North)

**Patsy Slew**

**07825 330648**

Information provided by

**Herts Vision Loss – 01707 324680**

[Office@hertsvisionloss.org.uk](mailto:Office@hertsvisionloss.org.uk)

**Social Clubs** – Transport to clubs may be able to be arranged

### **Letchworth Macular Disease Support Group**

Meets at the Salvation Army Hall, Norton Way South, Letchworth SG6 1BH. 3rd Wednesday of the month. 1.30pm to 3.15pm

Contact: Gillian Richardson 01462 631165 or 07799 041638

### **Baldock Young at Heart Club** welcomes visually impaired people

The club meets on 2<sup>nd</sup> and last Wednesday 2pm to 4pm at Baldock Community Centre, Simpson Drive, Baldock

Contact: Susan 07506 422946 or Karen 07814 516436

### **Baldock Body & Soul Time**

Baldock Community Centre, Simpson Drive, Baldock.

Meet every Tuesday, term time only, 10-11.30am. Just turn up.

Please contact Elizabeth Niven – 01462 675543 if you'd like further information.

### **Knit and Natter Group Letchworth**

This group meets at the every Friday morning 10:00am – 11:30 at The Mrs. Howard Hall, Norton Way South, SG6 1NX, new members welcome.

Contact: Elvina Atkinson 01462 685362

### **St Nicks Knit and Natter Group Stevenage**

£2.50 entry which includes a hot drink.

Come and learn to knit, bring your own projects, take part in knitting for charity or just natter. Open to everyone. All levels welcome.

This group meets at the every Friday morning 10:00am – 12 noon at The St. Nicholas Community Centre, 59 Canterbury Way, Stevenage, SG1 4LJ. To find out more call : 01438 357715 or 07891 310778. You can even just turn up.

## **Renaissance Club for the over 50's Stevenage**

Wednesday 2-4pm, Community Centre Emperors Gate.

Activities, outings, speakers, raffles, entertainers, table games. Tea and coffee provided.

For more information and membership details call: 01438 230 554.

Funding provided by Stevenage Council.

## **Tea and Chat Stevenage**

Monday 10:30-12, Stevenage Central Library.

Bring your crafts or simply chat. Monthly speaker events.

For more information call: 03001 234049.

## **The Buntingford Senior Citizens' Club**

Are you new to Buntingford? Are you a senior citizen?

We meet every Monday afternoon at the United Reformed Church hall in Baldock Road (opposite McColls) at 1.30 p.m. 2 p.m. for tea/coffee and bingo, but also fun and laughter with like-minded senior citizens

For more info call Val on 01763 272019

## **The Link Up Lunch Club**

The club is held weekly in Knebworth's Village hall on Park Lane.

Every Wednesday, a hot and tasty two course meal is provided by our cheerful team of volunteers at a nominal cost of £5 per person

We have about 30-35 regulars we serve and a group of amazing volunteers, without whom the club could not function. New members are always very welcome to come along and join in the chatter and enjoy the companionship. Please arrive between 12:00-12:15.

For more information contact Jane Turner – 07743 138179

[jane.turner@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:jane.turner@blueyonder.co.uk)

## **Stevenage Talking Newspaper**

A totally free service for blind and visually impaired people who would like to listen to audio recordings of articles and letters from our local newspapers the Comet and the Royston Crow, as well as popular weekly and monthly magazines. We will send you a memory stick each week and can loan you a hand held media player to listen to the recordings.

Postage and return of the memory stick is free. We are always happy to welcome new listeners; give us a ring or email to find out more. Ian

Hanks, Chairman, 07981 442341, Email [snhtnews@gmail.com](mailto:snhtnews@gmail.com)

## **Townswomen's Guilds Hitchin**

Townswomen's Guilds is one of the largest women's organisations in the UK in the UK, with around 400 Guilds and 12,000 members. Guild members usually meet at least once a month to enjoy each others company, develop friendships, to get involved with events and crafts, to try new things and to campaigning on social issues

<http://www.the-tg.com/guild-search.aspx>

**Stevenage University of the third Age** (Qualifications, tests or examinations are not required) Are you free from full time work and family responsibilities? Would you like to spend time with other people who want to LEARN, LAUGH AND LIVE! And keep your brain cells active? Then come along and give us a try. We do not employ tutors or teachers we learn from and with each other. We cover a variety of subjects but if you can't find what you are interested in we will try to find like minded people to share it with. <https://u3asites.org.uk/stevenage/welcome>

## **U3A Hitchin – Learn Laugh Live!**

Make the most of life once you're no longer in full time work by exploring new ideas, skills and interests with us here at Hitchin U3A. It's local, sociable and friendly. <https://u3asites.org.uk/hitchin>

There are also U3A groups in Buntingford and Royston

<https://u3asites.org.uk/buntingford>

<https://u3asites.org.uk/royston>

## **Internet Club**

On the RNIB's website you can register to join web pals, comments on blogs and post comments for discussion.

[www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk)

Click on 'get involved', then, click on 'online community'

## **North Hertfordshire College: - Stevenage Campus**

Computer Studies:

Tuesday 1pm - 3pm learners and more experienced welcome.

Contact: Julie Jones: 01462 424239 (Central Enquiries)

## **Welwyn Hatfield CVS Community Car Scheme**

01707 273875

## **North Herts C.V.S Community Transport Scheme**

01462 689402

Community Transport Scheme covering Stevenage & North Herts.  
45p per mile. Medical appointments but also social activities such as clubs

**Age UK** 01707 386066, for help with filling in benefit forms.

**HertsHelp** 0300 123 4044, for help with filling in benefit forms.

[info@hertshelp.net](mailto:info@hertshelp.net)

**Sensory Services** 0300 123 4042



## **Information for people with sight loss**

### **Herts Vision Loss (HVL)**

Help people with sight loss in their homes and at eye clinics by demonstrating equipment in their office and at Sight Information Points around Hertfordshire. They offer help and advice to individuals and support local social clubs across the county.

Website: [www.hertsvisionloss.org.uk](http://www.hertsvisionloss.org.uk)

Email: [office@hertsvisionloss.org.uk](mailto:office@hertsvisionloss.org.uk)

Sight line 01707 324680

Opening Hours Monday - Thursday 9.00am - 4.00pm

### **Herts Vision Loss Counselling Service**

It helps to talk, especially when you are listened to!

Having a visual impairment can be difficult to come to terms with. You may experience a range of emotions including shock, denial, anger and a sense of loss. It may take you some time to accept your condition.

Please contact 07464 548618 or 01707 324680

[Earsforeyes@hertsvisionloss.org.uk](mailto:Earsforeyes@hertsvisionloss.org.uk)

### **Hertfordshire Sensory Services**

A specialist team of rehabilitation workers, deafblind workers, social workers and community care officers who provide information, advice, equipment and support to adults and children who have a sight loss. They do home visits and mobility training.

Web: [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/sensory](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/sensory)

Tel: 0300 123 4042

**Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)** Provides information, support and advice for anyone with a serious sight problem. Call the customer services number for equipment and games sales; enquiries; transcription and library services; magazines; Braille, Moon, large print and audio services.

Website [www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk) Email [helpline@rnib.org.uk](mailto:helpline@rnib.org.uk)  
Helpline 0303 123 9999

### **The Partially Sighted Society**

The Society has several information sheets to help understand the nature of some visual problems.

Website [www.partsight.org.uk](http://www.partsight.org.uk)  
Email [reception@partsight.org.uk](mailto:reception@partsight.org.uk) Tel 01302 965195

### **Blind Veterans**

We are here to support anyone who has served in the Armed Forces, or who has done National Service, and who is now living with significant sight loss.

If you would like free help, please phone our hotline on 0800 389 7979  
Email [supporter.services@blindveterans.org.uk](mailto:supporter.services@blindveterans.org.uk)

### **Macular Society**

Provides free information and practical support for those affected by central vision loss.

Website [www.macularsociety.org](http://www.macularsociety.org)  
Email [info@macularsociety.org](mailto:info@macularsociety.org) Tel 0300 3030 111

### **Age UK Hertfordshire**

Independent advice and support for older people  
Tel: 0300 345 3446 Monday – Friday 9am- 4.00pm  
Email: [info@ageukherts.org.uk](mailto:info@ageukherts.org.uk)  
[www.ageuk.org.uk/hertfordshire](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/hertfordshire)

**Herts Help** – General advice and help with form filling  
Tel: 0300 123 4044 [www.hertshelp.net](http://www.hertshelp.net)

### **Citizens Advice Hertfordshire**

Advice line Tel: 03444 111444  
[www.hcas.org.uk](http://www.hcas.org.uk) or [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

## **Reading**

Big Print Weekly Newspaper with TV and Radio Guide – from RNIB  
Tel 0303 123 9999

## **Audio National** Talking Newspapers and Magazines

Website [www.tnauk.org.uk](http://www.tnauk.org.uk)

Email [helpline@rnib.org.uk](mailto:helpline@rnib.org.uk) Helpline 0303 123 9999

## **Calibre**

Provides a free postal service of audio books for adults and children who are unable to read print. Website [www.calibre.org.uk](http://www.calibre.org.uk)

Email: [enquiries@calibre.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@calibre.org.uk) Tel 01296 432339

## **Amazon Audible**

Provides a talking book app which allows Enrolling in a 30 Day Free Monthly Trial with Audible gives you the opportunity to try the first month of an Audible membership without being billed

## **Radio 4 programme ‘In Touch’**

News, views and information for people who are visually impaired.

Tuesday 20.40 (8.40pm)

All previous episodes available online at [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk)

To contact email [intouch@bbc.co.uk](mailto:intouch@bbc.co.uk)

## **The British Wireless for the Blind Fund**

### **Loan of a radio or CD radio cassette player.**

Specially adapted audio equipment for the sight impaired. You may also be entitled to a free permanent loan of a radio or CD radio cassette player. Contact and ask about the British Wireless for the Blind Fund (BWBF) on 0162 275 4757 Website [www.blind.org.uk](http://www.blind.org.uk)

Email [info@blind.org.uk](mailto:info@blind.org.uk)

## **Phone features & Apps**

Vision accessibility features found on Apple smart devices like iPhone, iPad and iPod are Voiceover, Zoom, Magnifier, Light and Dark modes.

Amazon Alexa app

Seeing Eye GPS free app

Blind Square GPS app

Be my eyes free app

Voice Dream scanner and reader for iPhone/iPad

Seeing Ai (Microsoft)– free app that narrates the world around you - talking camera

Microsoft Soundscape – uses 3D audio technology to enhance your awareness of what is around you.

## **Information for adults who are registered Sight Impaired**

If you agree to being registered the certificate of visual impairment (CVI) form is completed by your consultant with yourself. Health and Community Services administers this register to help the government plan and deliver services for people who are sight impaired. You do not have to be registered to receive a service; but there are some concessions available:

### **Low vision clinics and visual aids**

If you require low vision aids such as a magnifying glass, you need to discuss this with your eye specialist or ask for a referral to a low vision clinic at the hospital or via your GP.

### **The Sensory Services Team**

This is a specialist team of rehabilitation workers, deafblind workers, social workers and community care officers who provide information, advice and support to adults who have a sight loss.

### **Support for Carers**

Most care in the community is carried out by families and friends. If you look after someone with an illness or disability and want to know more about support that may be available, please go to [www.hertsdirect.org/carers](http://www.hertsdirect.org/carers) or contact the Sensory Services Team, Adult Care Services on 0300 123 4042.

Severely sight impaired - reduction of 50% on the television licence fee available. Call the TV licence helpline on 0300 555 0286. They will ask for proof of certification to be sent to them. They can also backdate the discount to the date you first became certified.

The **Blue Badge Scheme** allows the driver to park in spaces reserved for disabled people. It is automatic for people with severe sight impairment. It



is administered by local authorities and can be used in any vehicle in which you are travelling. Contact the Sensory Services team  
Email: [contact@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:contact@hertfordshire.gov.uk) Tel: 0300 123 4042 for more information.

Free postage on items marked or labelled “Articles for the Blind”  
These can include books, papers and letters in large print (minimum font size 16pt), braille items and CDs, which have been prepared for blind or partially sighted people who require items in one of these communication formats. Call the Royal Mail Customer Service Centre on 0345 774 0740 for more information.

### **Free NHS eye test by an optometrist**

Tell the optometrist (also known as an optician) about your registration status before the eye test. The test is also free for anyone aged 60 or over. It is a good idea to have an eye test even if you’re registered as severely sight impaired or sight impaired. A sight test can help detect if you have developed another eye condition, such as cataracts. It can also make sure you have the right pair of glasses or contact lenses so that you can make the most of the vision you have. If you are unable to leave your home due to illness or disability, an eye test can be carried out at your home. Speak to your local optician to see if they offer this service. You may be able to get a voucher towards the cost of your glasses (check with your optometrist whether you qualify for a “voucher for complex lenses”).

### **Travel concessions:**

Please note: if you are aged 60 or above, some of the following concessions will be available to you because of your age and regardless of your disability.

The Disabled Person’s Railcard gives at least one third off the price of certain rail tickets for the cardholder, and an accompanying adult where applicable, in England, Wales and Scotland.

Call 0345 605 0525

Or visit [www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk](http://www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk) for further details.

You can get sighted assistance at the start and end of your rail journey. Contact the train operator you’re travelling with in advance to arrange this.

You will be able to get a bus pass that gives you free concessionary travel throughout the country.



## **Exemption from BT Directory Enquiry charges**

If you're not able to read or hold a telephone directory, due to your sight loss or other disability, you can get free directory enquiries via the enquiries number 195. Call 0800 587 0195 to request an application form. Your form will need to be countersigned by a professional who knows you, such as a doctor, nurse or other medical practitioner. You can use the free service whether or not BT is your telephone provider.

**Leisure concessions:** available to people with disabilities, or people receiving certain benefits, for various leisure and recreational activities.

Examples are:

A free ticket for a person accompanying you to participating cinemas if you are registered severely sight impaired or you are getting DLA, PIP or Attendance Allowance

Reduced price entry to museums, exhibitions, theatres and concert halls. Contact the venue for details of available concessions.