



**Berkshire
Vision**



How we can help

Your local sight loss charity, providing practical and friendly support, social activities, adapted sport and much more across Berkshire.

Support Officers
Sports and Social Activities
Telephone Befriending
Realeyes Guiding
Employability Support

Equipment
Children & Families
Peer Support Groups
Tech Buddies
Living Well with Sight Loss

**We know that
sight loss can
be frightening,
but we are here
to help and
support you.**

Our wide range of support
can build your confidence and
independence and help you to live
life to the full.



Sight Loss Support Officers

Often a sight loss diagnosis will come as a shock and having an eye condition that has or will cause significant sight loss can be frightening. Our Sight Loss Support Officers can work with you at any time in your sight loss journey when you feel you would like their support alongside you.

For some people this is when you are first diagnosed but for others it can be much later when your sight deteriorates further or something else in your life changes. There's no wrong time to reach out and see how a Sight Loss Support Officer could help you, even if you're not sure what you might need help with.

Our Sight Loss Support Officers can work with you anywhere that you feel comfortable from your own home, to a local café, to a telephone call or video chat.

We can work with you to assess your needs and agree a support plan laying out how and when we can work together to help you. This could include aids and adaptations to help with everyday tasks and maintain or increase your independence; supporting you with technology including accessibility features and apps, and especially the tricky bits such as setting the device up in the first place; helping you to identify and access things you could do in your local community; provide a listening ear to talk about coming to terms with your sight loss; or linking you in with our partners for advice on benefits and allowances you may be able to claim, help with mobility both in your home and out and about, employment, debt advice, and a wide range of other issues.

Sports

Accessing mainstream sport can be difficult when you're living with a visual impairment but so important for both your physical and mental wellbeing. We offer a range of sporting activities for all levels of ability and levels of sight loss. Beginners are very welcome so why not try something new? Our sports sessions range from gentle exercise to kayaking, tandem cycling, golf, and much more. You don't need to be an aspiring Paralympian to get involved (but if you are, we have lots for you too!). Many of us were put off of sports at school but at Berkshire Vision our sports sessions are for having fun and spending time together whilst having a go at something you might have thought we couldn't do.

We can provide wheelchair accessible transport on one of our minibuses from your front door to our sporting sessions.



Social Activities

We offer a wide range of activities across Berkshire. These include museum visits, theatre trips with touch tours and audio-description, walks, boat trips, lunches and monthly social clubs across Berkshire.

We're adding new activities all the time so do get in touch to find out more or share your own ideas with us! We can provide wheelchair accessible transport on one of our minibuses from your front door to our social activities.



Remote Activities

We offer a wide range of activities remotely, which you can enjoy from the comfort of your own home, removing the need to travel. There's no need to have internet access or a device as you can dial in from any phone. Activities range from quizzes and coffee mornings to wine tasting and book club.

18-35 Group

Berkshire Vision's 18-35 Group is designed to provide social, leisure and sporting activities for young people with sight loss.

Activities are adapted where necessary and provide opportunities to socialise with others of a similar age.



Telephone Befriending

Being visually impaired makes someone far more likely to be socially isolated and we hate the idea of anyone feeling lonely! Our telephone befriending service will match you with a volunteer to call you each week (or however often works best for you) to make sure you have someone to talk to.

Realeyes Guiding

Our Realeyes volunteer guides can help you to practise a route, with the goal being that you can then do this on your own. This could be getting the bus, train or going to the local shop.

Your Realeyes volunteer guide will help you to learn the route and key information along the way which will help you build your confidence. A clear plan will be set so that you know what you are working towards and your guide will be certified as a level one guide so you can be confident they will be able to assist you.

Employability Support

Visually impaired people have so much to offer in the workplace yet only 24% are in employment. We can provide one to one support as well as offering employability workshops and support to help you enter training, work placements and employment.

Equipment and technology

We can help you with a wide range of equipment and technology which could help you increase or maintain your independence, both at home and out and about. Ranging from liquid level indicators to identify when your cup is getting full, to a reader that will read your post aloud to you - there's a device for most of the challenges daily life can pose.





Children and Families

Our Children, Young People and Families programme supports blind and visually impaired children across Berkshire as well as their parents/carers and siblings. If you are under 18, our activities are designed to encourage development across all areas, build your confidence and allow you to spend time with other children in the same position. We aim to provide a range of new experiences, challenging perceptions of what you can and cannot achieve!



Activities have included cooking, balloon modelling, accessible tech sessions with Apple, trips to the Pantomime with touch tours and opportunities to meet the cast, craft sessions, accessible outdoor tennis and footgolf.



Peer Support Groups

Sometimes just spending time with people in a similar situation who understand first-hand what you're going through can really help. Our peer support groups are here whether you're looking to gain insight or support where you may need it or just to meet and chat with other people in a similar position.



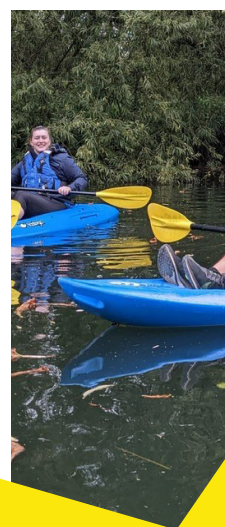
Tech Buddies

Our Tech Buddies, many of whom are visually impaired themselves, are here to help with any gadgets. They love a challenge! Whether you're thinking of getting your first smartphone or tablet, want to know more about the apps out there for people with sight loss, or are a tech-savvy whizz yourself but have a particular question, the Tech Buddy team are here.



Living Well with Sight Loss

In partnership with RNIB, we offer Living Well with Sight Loss courses. These are free, informal courses aimed to help you increase your independence, boost your confidence and enable you to connect with others to share experiences. Through our sessions you'll get practical advice, information and guidance on organisations, products and services out there to help you.



How to get in touch

To find out more about support, give us a call or send us an email. We would be delighted to talk to you.

Call: **0118 987 2803**

Email: **info@berkshirevision.org.uk**

Web: **www.berkshirevision.org.uk**

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