



# **Middlesex Association for the Blind**

Supporting people with sight loss since 1922

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# **OUTLOOK**

**SPRING / SUMMER  
EDITION 2024**

**Barnet/Brent/Ealing/Enfield/Haringey  
Harrow/Hillingdon/Hounslow/Richmond**

This free MAB Outlook Magazine is produced in Print,  
Braille, USB and Email

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## **Mission Statement**

The Middlesex Association for the Blind aims to support people who are blind or partially sighted to lead independent lives. The Association achieves this through the local provision and delivery of a range of high-quality services, advice and information to people across nine London Boroughs.

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## Message from our CEO Valerie Hill



Summer is in the air and brings us some much needed warmth and sunshine. Hopefully, we can all embrace the outdoors and recharge our batteries over the next few weeks.

MAB is busier than ever, now supporting close to 600 residents across nine boroughs.

Our mobile workers, whether Home Visiting support workers, IT trainer or counsellor, work tirelessly to deal with a steady influx of referrals. Our Mobile Resource Unit is visiting new venues to reach as many of you as possible. Together with our wonderful and resilient Head Office team, they ensure smooth continuation of our services. My heartfelt thanks go to all our staff for their hard work and continued dedication.

The support we receive from you throughout the year is instrumental in helping our team and valued volunteers fulfil our mission of mitigating the impact of sight loss. We could not deliver our services without your help, whether you are an individual, a local authority, trust or philanthropy. I thank you all for supporting MAB.

I hope 2024 has been kind to you all so far and will continue to bring some happiness as we enter the second part of the year. I wish you all the best.

## **Donations, Wills and Legacies – Avoiding Mess After Death...**

### **Did you Know?**

If you don't draw up a Will, the state will decide who inherits your money and your possessions. And if things took an unexpected and tragic turn for you, everything you own would go to the Treasury. (Except if you lived in the Duchy of Lancaster, in which case it would be the King, not the Treasury who would get your unclaimed estate. And if you lived in Cornwall and you pass away with a Will, you would be sending your unclaimed assets to the Prince of Wales).

Read on to learn more about why you should draw up a Will, and to ensure you don't make the Royal Family any richer than they are already!

### **So, Why Should you Draw Up a Will?**

The short answer is that it should help to avoid the mess which could result after your death if you don't.

If you die without a Will, then you are considered to have died "intestate". The result of this is that the state decides who inherits your money and your possessions. What happens will depend on which relatives survive you, but generally speaking if you leave a spouse and children, your spouse will inherit your personal possessions and the first £325,000 of your estate, as well as half of the remainder. The remaining 50% will go to your children, and they could have to pay tax on that amount.

This may be exactly what you want to happen. But it also may not be. You may not want your estate to be divided up in those portions. You may want your children to inherit more or less, or you may want your spouse to inherit more or less. You may have a partner who you aren't married to, a common law spouse, step children, friends, or charities that you would like to inherit some of your wealth. If you die intestate, none of these people will be able to inherit anything.

So, the one big advantage of drawing up a Will is that you get to decide who inherits what.

## **What about the Executor of your Estate?**

Another major advantage is that you get to decide who will be the executor of your estate. The executor is the person who is legally responsible for carrying out the instructions in your will, and handling your estate. It is preferable that this person is someone who you trust, who you know will handle your estate professionally and most importantly, someone who you know will keep your interests and the interests of your beneficiaries, in mind.

If you don't make a Will and appoint an executor, then the beneficiaries of the estate will have to apply to become administrators of your estate, and there is an order of entitlement that they have to apply for to do this. Unless there is clear agreement about this appointment, you risk creating conflict between family members about this appointment.

## **Buried or Cremated?**

Drawing up a Will also gives you the opportunity to express your wishes about your funeral arrangements and whether you would like to be buried or cremated. You can leave more specifics about your funeral in a letter of wishes, but your Will, which can become a document viewed by the public, can at least give you the option of stating whether you want to be buried or cremated.

## **When Should you Draw Up a Will?**

It is never too early to draw up a Will, particularly if you have children who are dependent on you. Drawing up a Will also means you get to decide who will be the guardian of your children should you and the children's other parent both pass away unexpectedly. The risk you take in not drawing one up is that your children could be looked after by someone you wouldn't necessarily approve of.

On the other side, as you grow older it can also become too late to draw up a Will. Most solicitors will advise people to draw up a Will while they still have Testamentary Capacity. This means you have to be over the age of 18, and be *compos mentis*. In other words, still of sound mind. Being *compos mentis* is a condition that can ebb away sooner than you expect, particularly

in a country where we have more and more dementia occurring in our older population. If you are elderly, and if the beneficiaries of your estate doubt that you made your Will with full testamentary capacity, they can oppose the Will and once again, a messy situation can result. It is therefore important to make your Will while you still have all your faculties, and before you need to involve medical people to confirm that you do indeed still have Testamentary Capacity.

As you can see, depending on your personal situation, there is a lot to consider when you make a Will. But wait, there is even more...

### **What is Best for your Children?**

The law says that children can inherit at 18 years old. But you may want your children's inheritance to be held back in Trust for a longer period. You may want your children to work first to establish themselves without your assistance, or you may feel that their marriages are vulnerable. Writing a Will enables you to choose when you would like your children to inherit their portion of your estate.

You may have members of your family who are incapacitated and who would not benefit by getting their inheritance outright and upfront. Drawing up a Will enables you to appoint a trustee who will look after the finances they inherit, and ensure that they are taken care of. If they already receive benefits, you want to be sure that any inheritance they receive doesn't jeopardise the support they are currently receiving from the state. A good solicitor will help you with options to overcome all these challenges.

### **What about Tax?**

As mentioned in the second section of this article, if you die intestate, without a Will, your children will have to pay tax on the portion of their inheritance. Inheritance is broadly charged at 40% of anything above £325,000. There are many ways of reducing this inheritance tax and if you draw up a Will, then the solicitor should be able to help you to draw one up that is tax effective. There are options where you can make use of spouse

and charity exemptions to reduce the amount of inheritance tax that will be paid out by your estate.

### **What about Joint Assets?**

Joint assets normally pass to the surviving partner. So, if you hold a bank account or a property with a partner, if you die, your share of the money in the account or your share of the property (if it is held in joint names as beneficial joint tenants) will go to your partner. This is all good and well if the partner is your spouse. But what happens if you have a business partner with whom you have a bank account or a property? Would you want them to inherit your share of these assets, or would you want them to go to your family members? Drawing up a Will enables you to ensure that joint assets are distributed appropriately, and that you don't deprive your children or your preferred beneficiaries of aspects of their inheritance.

### **What about Life Policies?**

If you die without a Will, and the proceeds of your life policies are payable to your estate, then they could be taxed at 40% along with the rest of your estate. If you put your life policies into a Trust, this should help to reduce the amount of inheritance tax that will be pay on your death.

### **What about Pensions and Death and Service Cover?**

Generally, pension funds and death in service cover passes outside the Will and free of inheritance Tax but you still need to complete appropriate Memoranda of Wishes to ensure that your intended recipients benefit.

Writing a Will, and planning for these payouts effectively, will enable you to choose where these payouts go. It may for example make more sense in terms of tax and real money, if these payouts were to go to your children or your grandchildren, rather than to your spouse.

### **What about the Deed of Variation**

If you write a Will that leaves your estate to be divided equally between your children, then they can choose, if they are all in agreement, to alter that Will. They may for example be able to make changes to the Will, that will enable them to reduce

inheritance tax. So as an example, one child could rather choose for his portion to go into a Trust he has established for his children, rather than for the money to come directly to him. If you have written a Will then the adult beneficiaries automatically have a right to this Deed of Variation and it can make the process of tying up your estate simpler. If you die intestate leaving infant children inherit then they cannot complete a Deed of Variation.

### **Also... Beware...**

There was an act passed in the UK in 1975 that says that certain categories of people can make a claim against your estate if you haven't made provision for them in your Will. These could be spouses, former spouses, common law spouses, , infant children, adult children or people who were financially dependent on the deceased. All of these possibilities need to be considered when you write up a Will. It is best to guard against there being any conflict around your estate and to prevent any such disputes arising and drawing up a Will makes this possible.

### **So, Who can you Approach to Draw Up your Will?**

Depending on how complex your situation is, you may want or need more or less expertise. Ideally you want a specialist who is registered with the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners (STEP) and who will be able to understand your particular situation. You will want this person to be able to make recommendations that will help you to create a Will that will not leave a messy situation for anyone to have to deal with after you have passed away. And obviously, you will want to know how to make your Will tax effective, so that whoever you leave your money to, whether it be family, friends or a charity, they don't pay tax unnecessarily.

### **What do We Offer as MAB?**

At MAB, we have partnered with two companies that offer a Free Will Writing Service. If you are visually impaired they will send a solicitor to your home to help you to draw up a Will. After your discussion, they will go back to their office to draw it up, whereafter they will send it to you for you and two witnesses to sign.

The companies are: Octopus Legacy (0800 773 4014) and Kwil (0800 061 4934). Both of these companies also offer an online service.

As long as you use the code MABFREE, you will not be charged for drawing up this will. All that we ask is that you consider giving us a Gift in Your Will in this process.

### **Lasting Powers of Attorney**

The solicitor who comes to your home may also talk to you about drawing up Lasting Powers of Attorney. These provide that if you become incapacitated and lose your mental or physical faculties, that somebody else can sign for your financial and property needs and/or in relation to your health and wellbeing issues.

**NB: Please note that our Free Will Service does not cover drawing up Lasting Powers of Attorney, and if you make use of this Service you will have to ask the Solicitor what they will charge to do this.**

### **And What about the Royals?**

I can hear you all asking this now... I mentioned in the beginning of the article that if you didn't draw up a will, all your earthly possessions could end up in the hands of the Treasury, the King or the Prince of Wales.

There is a law in the UK called Bona Vacantia, which says that if you pass away without a Will, and if you have no relatives, close or remote who could inherit, then this law takes effect. It also takes effect if you do have a Will, but if all the beneficiaries of your Will, all die at the same time. So, if for example, your whole family is tragically killed in the same accident, and you have no remote relatives, all your earthly possessions will go to the Treasury, the King or the Prince of Wales. They will not go to your friends or your favourite charities.

I don't know what you think, but in my opinion regardless of if you love or hate Treasury and the Royals, this is good motivation to Draw Up a Will. I would far prefer my good friends or my favourite charity to inherit my estate in this case, than for it to end up in the coffers of the State, the King or the Prince of Wales.



# DONATIONS WELCOME

## Thank You!



**Thank you for supporting us. With your Financial Gift, we can help people who need us. Losing sight can be terrifying and anxiety provoking. With your help, we can enable people who have a Visual Impairment to maintain their Independence and regain their Mental Wellbeing.**

**Call 020 8423 5141 to Donate by Phone.**

**Go to [www.aftb.org.uk](http://www.aftb.org.uk) to Donate Online.**

**Or Scan the QR Code on the right.**



**LORD'S TAVERNERS**  
Empowering young people through cricket



Super 1s give young people with a disability the chance to play regular competitive cricket, while improving confidence and independence.

### Contact Details

Fivefields, 8-10 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W 0DH

[contact@lordstaverners.org](mailto:contact@lordstaverners.org)

[www.lordstaverners.org](http://www.lordstaverners.org)

**IT Support Services**



**Struggling with your energy bills?**

Our Green Doctors can help you:

- Reduce energy usage
- Install energy saving devices
- Tackle energy or water debt
- Priority Services Register

**The call is free**

**THE SERVICE IS FREE**

This project is funded by UK Shared Prosperity Fund and delivered by Green Doctors, part of Groundwork London- a charity that helps people save money, stay warm, and use less energy.

-

**Tomasz Szuberski**

## Home Visiting Services

**Kamila Reynolds – Ealing**

**Alison Bicknell - Harrow**

The technology is going so well! Tomasz says I have picked it up remarkably well for a person my age. He is a very good teacher, very clear. I am using a Blindshell phone particularly for blind people. I am now involved in Lazarus – a satnav, and I have also learnt everything to do with the BBC, Ipods and talking newspapers. Next I am going in for a SMART TV which will be better for me being partially sighted, and the internet is on it too. I didn't think I would learn at my age, but I seem to have done so! I am well pleased with him. Independence – Yes! And this was the main thing. It introduced me to the internet. Reduced social isolation – definitely - I can now get in touch with people much more easily. Mental wellbeing – it has helped me with my mental wellbeing as I am more independent.



**Service User Testimonial:  
David – L. B. of Ealing**

Very good training. Nowadays I can use my mobile and my email. It has linked me up with people. It is very useful for me to gain confidence. I am doing my emails by myself now,, I am also learning on a computer, but I can read and send my emails on my phone. Independent – yes. Isolation – I can do everything ... mobile usage was very limited, used to be stuck... still learning to send an email. Can send Whatsapp messages... know how to block and ... more social contact yes. Better mental wellbeing – yes, feel more in control of your life and affairs. Tomasz is very calm and very helpful.



**Service User Testimonial:  
Dipti – L. B. of Harrow**

## MAB Services and News

We are pleased to introduce the MAB Team:



**Valerie Hill**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Patricia Odina**  
Operations Manager



**Catherine Holtzhausen**  
Fundraising Manager



**Shahin Toopchian**  
Bookkeeper / Admin Assistant



**Tomasz Szuberski**  
Mobile IT Trainer



**John Monkhouse**  
Employment Services Officer



**Nasreen Akhtar**  
Office Administrator



**Maggie Dawson**  
Braille Tutor



**Shayan Syed**  
Mobile Resource Unit Project Manager



**Raheel Razvi**  
Rapid Response Counsellor



**Bina Padia**  
Barnet Support Worker & Coordinator



**Rita Shah**  
Brent Support Worker & Coordinator



**Kamila Reynolds**  
Ealing  
Support Worker  
& Coordinator



**Ruth Gaskin**  
Enfield  
Support Worker  
& Coordinator



**Caroline Adamson**  
Haringey  
Support Worker  
& Coordinator



**Alison Bicknell**  
Harrow  
Support Worker  
& Coordinator



**Joanne White**  
Hillingdon  
Support Worker  
& Coordinator



**Kasia Cieplak**  
Hounslow &  
Richmond  
Support Worker  
& Coordinator

HEAD OFFICE  
VOLUNTEERS

**Hasmukh Mehta**  
**Marc Hill**

LEAVERS

**Ainy Rubio Belenguer**

From all of us at MAB, thank you for your valuable contribution and all the very best for the future. We are very grateful for the hard work and dedication of all our team members, past and present and thank them for always striving to make a positive difference to the lives of people with a visual impairment.



This is a free online resource dedicated to helping people live better by seeing better. They recently published an educational guide to navigating the internet for individuals with low vision or blindness. Our free resource covers the built-in tools that make sites more accessible for people with vision loss. Please take a look: [nvisioncenters.com/internet-accessibility-guide/](https://nvisioncenters.com/internet-accessibility-guide/)

## London Blind Ramblers

Do you live in London, enjoy walking but find it difficult to do so on your own? If so then London Blind Ramblers could be for you. We are a group of both blind and partially sighted people, varying in age from our 20s to 80s who meet most weekends from March to October, normally on a Saturday or Sunday. We usually meet at an underground / mainline station within the freedom pass area and team up with a local rambling group who host the walks for us and provide sighted guides for our members.

Most walks are 6-8 miles so you do need a reasonable level of fitness and sensible footwear / walking boots. You should also be comfortable travelling independently by train/tube to the starting point of the walk. We encourage members to take their own packed lunches with them to enjoy during the walk in a more tranquil setting away from the hustle and bustle of everyday London life, but close to essential facilities!

So if you'd like the opportunity to visit new places, meet new people, and maybe resurrect that New Year's resolution to get fitter why not contact us via email at

**[enquiries@londonblindramblers.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@londonblindramblers.org.uk)** or visit our website **[londonblindramblers.org.uk](http://londonblindramblers.org.uk)** for more information. Please note you do need to book onto our walks, usually about a week in advance in order to ensure there are enough sighted guides for all who attend.



The image shows a Facebook post from 'Volunteering Barnet' (22 h). The post text reads: 'If you have great tech skills, we have a wonderful volunteering opportunity for you! The Middlesex Association for the Blind is looking for a Digital Inclusion IT Volunteer to visit people with sight loss in their homes. You will provide support and training on a variety of Assistive technologies such as talkback facilities, Alexa, Siri, touch typing or online shopping. An incredible opportunity for the right person to make a tangible difference - and some great friends! Apply here: [https://barnetvolunteers19.co.uk/\\_/opportunity/10221145](https://barnetvolunteers19.co.uk/_/opportunity/10221145)'. Below the text is a photo of a smiling man wearing headphones, sitting at a desk with a laptop. A caption over the photo says: 'Digital Inclusion IT Volunteer with The Middlesex Association for the Blind. Support Assistive technologies for people with sight loss.'

**COST OF LIVING  
CRISIS CAMPAIGN –  
RESOURCES AVAILABLE  
For further  
information please  
contact your  
Borough Support  
Worker / Volunteer  
Coordinator**

## \*OTHER NEWS

# **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

**You can Make a Real Difference!**



## **Interview with an Enfield Volunteer**

### **Can you tell us a bit about yourself and how long have you been Volunteering with MAB?**

I am a 55 year old, part time dentist, who lives in Enfield and I have been Volunteering with MAB for 3 years.

### **What motivated you to Volunteer for us?**

About 5 years ago, I was diagnosed with a macular hole and had to undergo eye surgery at Moorfields eye hospital. It was diagnosed at a routine eye examination at the opticians. I had no idea. I received amazing care at the hospital and my eye sight has been restored. During all those hospital visits, I was surprised to see at the outpatient's clinic so many people with a wide range of eye conditions and sight impairment - all ages, all backgrounds. This experience motivated me to Volunteer.

### **What kind of support do you give to the Client?**

Twice a month, I visit my clients and take them shopping, go out to a cafe garden centre, or do any errands in or outside their homes.

### **What do you enjoy most about the role?**

I enjoy hearing their stories and knowing how much they appreciate the visit.

### **Any interesting anecdotes you would like to share?**

If you are interested in Volunteering, just sign up and have a go. After a day's training course, you will be given a client and a support leader. It is truly fulfilling and it will add to your life as much as it adds to theirs.

**BARNET | BRENT | EALING | ENFIELD | HARINGEY  
HARROW | HILLINGDON | HOUNSLOW | RICHMOND**

## Andrew Jones and the London Marathon

Fortunately, Andrew Jones isn't one of those people who thinks that simply because he has run the London Marathon with a sight impairment, that everyone with a sight impairment should do likewise. *"I understand that people are in different mental places, and that some people would have more obstacles to overcome than I have had."*

But if you are someone who wishes that you could get out and do more than you are doing, it is worth listening to Andrew's story, and hearing his advice which extends to all activities, not just to marathon participation.

Andrew has Retinitis Pigmentosa, a fact that he discovered when he was 17 years old. *"I knew that one day I would lose my sight completely, so I had time to create a career, buy a home, have a family and establish myself in the world."*

Andrew knows he had an advantage in that he never thought he wouldn't run. He just accepted the fact that he would be able to do so. But that doesn't mean he was always running to marathon standards. When he was younger, he would watch the London Marathon every year, and thought that one day he would like to do it, but it took him a long while to get there.

When I chatted to Andrew, I mainly wanted to find out what obstacles he has faced in his running career, and how he has overcome them.

### **So how did Andrew manage to run with a Sight Impairment?**

*"I have always felt that there isn't anything wrong with my legs,"* Andrew explains. *"I think early on I used my running to fight against my sight loss. I enjoyed the fact that the people I was running past were sighted, and I could outrun many of them."*

Initially, when his sight wasn't too bad, Andrew would run with a group of friends in the evenings. They would wear high visibility clothing, and with a headlight Andrew could more or less see where they were going. At that stage he would also run during the day by himself.

He ran the Silverstone Half Marathon alone in 2006 unintentionally. He had organised a guide, but they hadn't communicated well enough, so they failed to find each other in the crowd. Encouraged by his girlfriend, (now his wife), Amanda, Andrew ran the race anyway. That was the last time that he ran by himself. *"I love running,"* Andrew explained, *"but there is no point in being unsafe. The chances are just too high that you could run into a bus stop or a lamp post and knock yourself unconscious."*

At that point Andrew faced a choice – stop running, or start running on treadmills. When you talk to Andrew you can hear how running brings him a feeling of freedom. He joked about how when he used to run along an area where there was a wide pavement, even if it was raining, he would feel like Sylvester Stallone in the Rocky movies – moving in a world of quiet focus with a sense of invincibility... he didn't want to give up that feeling. So, although he didn't like the idea of the treadmill, it was better than not running at all. Andrew then joined a gym to use the treadmill, and at the same time found that the instructor at the gym was keen to take him out on guided runs regularly. *"Running through the parks in London early in the morning and watching the sun come up... that was a special experience."*

The next obstacle Andrew faced was that the Instructor who took him running left the gym. Andrew kept going to the gym to use the treadmill, but it became an unsociable and isolating experience. He did some sums and realised that he would be better off buying a treadmill and running at home, and that without the gym fees, the treadmill would pay for itself in 6 years. This worked for a while, but eventually that also felt limited, as he didn't get to speak to anyone.

One of the significant moments in his running experience was taking his family to do the Black Park Park run. *"We arrived 10 minutes before the start, and I informed the organisers that I was visually impaired, and asked for a guide. Within minutes they had found someone to accompany me... If anyone who reads this article is keen to start running, I would really encourage them to consider doing a park run. There are so many of them, and they are likely to be able to find a guide for you, particularly if you*

*email them to let them know in advance that you are coming. Sometimes there are obstacles, but they can be overcome. If there isn't a guide, I have found that you simply need to keep showing up and eventually they find a way to help you."*

Park Run is a global organisation which started in the UK. There are many Park Runs across London taking place in local parks. They all start at 9am on a Saturday morning. They are always welcoming and there is often a café which will get frequented. The events are always free and you can walk, jog, or run at whatever pace is comfortable.

Andrew now runs with the UK Chapter of Achilles International. The group is set up to help people with disabilities to take part in sport. They meet in places like Stratford, Paddington, Battersea Park and Green Park. They have many volunteers who act as sighted guides. The group is for all ages, all disabilities and covers all possible paces. If any MAB Service Users are wanting to get more active Achilles is very open and inclusive. *"We meet on a Thursday evening at 6pm at a local station where sighted guides can provide assistance to anyone who needs it to make their way to the venue for that evening."*

*"I don't get to run on my own at all anymore,"* Andrew explains. *"And I realise now what a privilege that is. There are people who run whole races, even marathons, all on their own. I always have someone to talk to now, and we support and encourage each other."*

### **And what about the Marathon? I can hear you readers asking... How did that go?**

Andrew has actually run the London Marathon four times. He speaks a lot about the support he gets along the way. *"In 2005, the support was great,"* Andrew says. *"In 2011, the year before the Olympics, the support was also really good... then in 2021 when I ran, it was the first time I used a tether and had a high visibility vest with BLIND RUNNER and my name written on my vest. I started in an early wave, and everyone in that wave ran ahead. So, at times I was running with a relatively open road in front of me. The bystanders were 5 people deep and there was barely a moment in the whole race when there weren't crowds of people cheering me on, calling out my name and my guide's*

*name. Six or seven miles in there were tears in my eyes. My guide wisely said to me, 'Put it all into your legs!'"*

This year, 2024, Andrew ran with a guide who had never run a marathon before. He signed up to guide Andrew. Andrew warned him that when they ran over Tower Bridge, he would need to drop the tether and take his guide's arm, as from experience he knew that the cheering would be so loud then, that he wouldn't be able to hear the guide speaking to him. *"You feel like Mo Farah running in the Olympics!"*

Andrew is passionate about encouraging other people with a visual impairment to take part in sport. His advice is simple:

1. Just start doing something.
2. Don't bite off more than you can chew.
3. Just leave the house for a walk, either on your own, with your cane, your dog, or accompanied.
4. Start from where you are, not where you want to be.
5. Don't think you can't do it. There is a lot of support out there now. At Park Runs in particular, there are loads of people willing to guide you. (And it is worth noting that Park Runs are also for people who want to just walk...)
6. Keep showing up – people will help you overcome obstacles.
7. The guides get something out of helping you – don't deny them the opportunity to assist you.
8. There are many organisations who will help people with disabilities to take part in sport:

Park Run - [www.parkrun.org.uk](http://www.parkrun.org.uk)

British Blind Sport - [www.britishblindsport.org.uk](http://www.britishblindsport.org.uk)

Metro Blind Sport - [www.metroblindsport.org](http://www.metroblindsport.org) and the group that Andrew runs with, [www.achillesinternational.org](http://www.achillesinternational.org)

And lastly, Andrew adds, *"If you do want to try running, then it is worth investing in a pair of good trainers."*

Our thanks go to Andrew Jones for the time he gave us to create this article and to Alex Guberman, Andrew's MAB Volunteer, who made us aware of Andrew's achievement.

Andrew Jones Service User	London Borough of Hillingdon	Alex Guberman Supporting Volunteer
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# Enfield Vision

## **Founded to Promote the Wellbeing of Visually Impaired People Living in Enfield.**

We are a group of visually impaired people determined to improve the environment and to reduce the everyday problems of blind and partially sighted people. We are registered with the Charity Commission as an organisation with the specific aim of promoting the wellbeing of visually impaired people living in Enfield.

**We hold a "Drop-in Morning" on the third Thursday in each month at Park Avenue Resource Centre, Bush Hill Park, Enfield.**

- To facilitate the Drop-in activities, a management committee member and volunteers will be present to assist our Visually Impaired visitors.
- If you wish, you can take part in seated keep fit exercise by a qualified fitness reflexologist.
- A member of Sensory Impaired Team from the London Borough of Enfield will also be present to provide specialist advice and urgent response to Visually Impaired people's queries.
- Middlesex Association for the Blind Representatives will also be present to provide specialist advice, support and signposting to where information and specialist equipment can be purchased.
- No appointment is needed. Refreshments served. Come for a chat. You will be made very welcome.

### **We also offer:-**

- Free Braille Lessons each Friday morning.
- Weekly Bowls Matches in association with Enfield Visually Impaired Bowls Club.
- Free IT Training.
- Arrange Trips to the Theatre & Places of Interest.

**For more information, contact us using details below**

Community House  
311 Fore Street  
Edmonton N9 0PZ

Email: [information@enfieldvision.org.uk](mailto:information@enfieldvision.org.uk)  
Website: [www.enfieldvision.org.uk](http://www.enfieldvision.org.uk)  
Tel No: 020 8373 6260 (leave a message)

## Rapid Response Counselling Service – All Boroughs

Raheel Razvi

The Counselling has been very helpful. Raheel has a rare talent, and I know this, as I used to be a life coach. Life coaching and counselling need to be 80/20, which means that the client should be able to do 80% of the talking, the counsellor only 20%. The counsellor is supposed to do a lot of listening, so that the client can work out what they need to explore about their situation. Raheel gets this right. He has also put me in touch with Ruth, who has helped me to make applications for Dial-a-ride. The other MAB person who has helped me is Bina. She is very sweet and welcoming. I have been to two of the coffee mornings that Bina organised and I will continue to go. She has even asked me to speak at a coffee morning and I will be speaking about the women pilots who made a great contribution in WW2. Their contribution has been undervalued.



**Service User Testimonial: Ms J**

There is nothing that can be done for me regarding my eyesight, so it has been very helpful to talk to Raheel about this. I don't have any relatives I can talk to, as I am on my own, and my neighbours all go off to work during the week. I don't want to intrude on them during the weekends. So having Raheel has been very helpful. He is extremely kind, and has listened to me.

**Service User Testimonial: Ms E.**




## THE MOBILE RESOURCE UNIT ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY DEMONSTRATIONS



For more information on Assistive Technology; How to Prevent and Manage Sight Loss and more, Please Visit our Mobile Resource Unit. For full details, Including Venues and Dates for the MRU, please

Visit our website [www.aftb.org.uk](http://www.aftb.org.uk) or Call **020 8423 5141**

### Eye Matter - Multi-Activity Peer Support Group for People with Visual Impairment Zoom Online & Monthly Meet-Ups

Cookery	Poetry	Chair Yoga	Book Club
Audio Described Zumba Sessions		Sailing Day & Picnic Break	Neurobics, Aerobics for the Memory
Tate Modern Audio Described Tour		Audio Chair Yoga	
Sports Taster Days		Drama Improv.	
Social Gathering			
Quiz Time	Mental Health Wellbeing Group	Discuss & Swap Survival Hacks	Listen & Sing Along

**For more information contact Suzie at Eye Matter  
Call 07968 722664 or email [eyemattervi@gmail.com](mailto:eyemattervi@gmail.com)**



**Middlesex Association for the Blind  
EMPLOYMENT SERVICE**

**A CLEAR VISION TO EMPLOYMENT  
COURSE  
2023**




**SAVE YOUR SPACE**

**CONTACT US FOR MORE INFO  
020 8423 5141**

**EMPLOYMENTSERVICE@AFTB.ORG.UK**



## A CLEAR VISION TO EMPLOYMENT

<b>MAB Board of Trustees</b>		
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**MAB Barnet Volunteer – Lawrence Pitt  
with the 60th Mayor of Barnet, Tony Vourou**



I am a keen cyclist. In the autumn of 2021, just after Covid lockdown, I saw a MAB advert in a Barnet Bike Shop window asking for Volunteers to assist with a Trike Ride in Ealing for visually impaired people. I enrolled, then became involved in assisting at Coffee Mornings in Barnet and Ealing and visiting a blind lady to

help read her Post. I find MAB a friendly, sympathetic and often fun organisation to be involved with. The other Volunteers and the MAB Team have always been very welcoming. I also want to make special mention of my fellow Volunteer, Corinne, with whom I entertain the clients, with interactive songs, dance and comedy. I was honoured to be given an award by Barnet's Mayor as recognition for my work, but, in reality, all Volunteers deserve such an Award.

## MAB VIP Social Clubs

The meetings are a chance for people to get together and make new friends. Through socialising at the clubs, people who are new to visual impairment are inspired by the people they meet. It is an opportunity to share challenges and victories, and to make social connections that go beyond the life of the monthly meeting. We currently run Monthly Clubs in all 9 Boroughs:

### Barnet



Our Barnet VIP Club runs from **11AM to 1PM**, on the **last Thursday** of every month at **St Margaret's United Reform Church, Victoria Road, Finchley, N3 1BD**

### Brent



Our Brent VIP Club runs from **10.30AM to 12.30PM** on the **first Monday** of each month at **the Brent Bridge Park Community Leisure Centre Brentfield Harrow Road NW10 0RG**

### Ealing



Our Ealing VIP Club Coffee Morning runs from **10.00AM to 1.00PM** on the **third Thursday** of each month at the **William Hobbayne Centre 1 St Dunstan's Road W7 2EY**



Our **Ealing Trike Club** usually runs from **10.00AM to 1.00PM** on the **last Wednesday** of the month (**March to October only**) in **Walpole Park Mattock Lane W5 5EQ**

## Enfield



Our **Enfield VIP Drop-In Centre** runs from **10:30AM to 12:30PM** on the **third Thursday** of each month at **The Park Avenue Centre, 65C Park Avenue, Bush Hill Park, Enfield EN1 2HL**

## Haringey



Our **Haringey VIP Club** runs from **2.00PM to 4.00PM** on the **second Wednesday** of each month at the **Winkfield Resource Centre 33 Winkfield Road, Wood Green N22 5RP**

## Harrow



Our **Harrow 'Open Eyes' VIP Club** runs from **10:45AM to 12:45PM** on the **last Wednesday** of each month at the **Wealdstone Library 38 - 40 High St Wealdstone HA8 7AE**

## Hillingdon



Our **Hillingdon VIP Club** runs from **10.30AM to 12.30PM** on the **last Thursday** of each month at **Christ Church, Redford Way, Belmont Road, Uxbridge UB8 1SZ**

## Hounslow



Our **Hounslow VIP club** usually runs from **1.00PM to 3.00PM** on the **last Thursday** of the month at **The British Legion Whitton Road, Hounslow TW3 2DB**

## Richmond



Our **Richmond VIP Club** runs from **10.30AM to 12.30PM** on the **fourth or last Monday** of each month at **Duke Street Church Living Meeting Room Duke Street Quadrant Road Richmond TW9 1DH**

For more details about our **Social Clubs**, please visit our website [www.aftb.org.uk](http://www.aftb.org.uk) or call **020 8423 5141**

## CONTACT NUMBERS

### BOROUGH COORDINATORS' CONTACT NUMBERS

Borough	Name	Telephone No.
Barnet	Bina Padia / Rita Shah	07594 625215 07510 127893
Brent	Rita Shah	07510 127893
Ealing	Kamila Reynolds	07387 101631
Enfield	Ruth Gaskin	07858 311410
Haringey	Caroline Adamson	07754 875175
Harrow	Alison Bicknell	07387 101632
Hillingdon	Joanne White	07387 101630
Hounslow & Richmond	Kasia Cieplak	07511 826892

### SENSORY SERVICES TEAM CONTACT NUMBERS

Borough	Telephone No.	Borough	Telephone No.
Barnet	020 8359 5000	Harrow	020 8901 2680
Brent	020 8937 4300	Hillingdon	01895 556 633
Ealing	020 8825 6230	Hounslow	020 8583 3100
Enfield	020 8379 1001	Richmond	020 8891 7971
Haringey	020 8489 8900		

## Contributing to Outlook

We welcome contributions to the newsletter. Please send your Articles to Patricia Odina ([patricia@aftb.org.uk](mailto:patricia@aftb.org.uk)).

This edition of Outlook is produced by:

### Middlesex Association for the Blind

Suite 18 Freetrade House Lowther Road Stanmore HA7 1EP

[info@aftb.org.uk](mailto:info@aftb.org.uk) \* 020 8423 5141 \* [www.aftb.org.uk](http://www.aftb.org.uk)



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**A big  
thank  
you**  
for all your  
help and support.



A big Thank You to the Management & Community Champion Team at Morrisons Supermarket Honeypot Lane, Queensbury London NW9 6RN for allocating Free Car Parking Spaces to MAB Service Users and Staff.

Our sincere thanks to the following for allowing us place **MAB Collection Boxes** on their premises:

**Joe's Bake & Bite**

5 Queensbury Station Parade HA8 5NP

**Bath Road Pharmacy**

115-117 Bath Road Hounslow TW3 3BT

**Seven Oaks Court**

Copsewood Way Northwood HA6 2TW

**Harris & Hoole  
Coffee Shop** 24 King Street Twickenham TW1 3SN

Special thanks also to our Volunteers for their continued support.



Established in 1999

Many thanks to the

Magnifier Company for their Free Sample Magnifiers for our Service User demonstrations. They offer a selection of Magnifying Glasses, Fresnel Lenses, Magnifier Lamps, Loupes, Linen Testers and Low Vision Aids. For more information; [www.magnifyingglasses.co.uk](http://www.magnifyingglasses.co.uk).



To the Management & Community Champion

Team at Tesco Superstore, Ballards Lane, Finchley N3 1XP – A big Thank You for your continued support of our VIP Barnet Monthly Coffee Mornings.



Thank you to Barnet Copthall Leisure for hosting MAB Monthly Activity Days.



Jobs for the Disabled



**To all our Trust, Foundation, Borough & Corporate Donors  
~ Without you, we would not exist ~  
Thank you for your continued support!**

