

Vision Northumberland

InSight - Spring 2026



Dear Friends,

I hope this message finds you well and the wet and dreary start to our new year is now a distant memory!

Thank you for joining us for another edition of our newsletter. We've got plenty to share with you - updates, helpful resources, new activities and a few new ways to stay connected and enjoy the things you love.

As always, we're here to support you, keep you informed, and make sure you never miss out on what matters.

Best wishes, from all the Staff at Vision Northumberland

Welcome our new Digital Enablement Coordinator - Nathan!

We are very excited to announce that Nathan Miller will be joining us in March. Nathan will be coordinating our Digital Enablement Service in Northumberland, helping more people with sight loss use digital technology so they can stay connected and enjoy a better quality of life.

The service will deliver friendly one-to-one and small group digital support sessions. Nathan will be also be training and supporting volunteers, Digital Champions and Peer Mentors who can then share their knowledge with the wider sight loss community. If you need support from our Digital Enablement Service, or think you would like to volunteer, please get in touch.

Call us on 01670 514316 or email info@vision-northumberland.org

February was Low Vision Awareness month; lets find out more about what it actually means!

What is Low Vision?

Low vision means your eyesight is limited in a way that glasses, contact lenses or surgery can't fully fix, but you still have some usable sight. It can make everyday tasks like reading, recognising faces, or getting around a bit trickier. Lots of different eye conditions can cause low vision and it can affect people of any age.

Living with low vision can make everyday life a little more challenging, but it doesn't have to stop you from enjoying life to the fullest.

At Vision Northumberland, our Low Vision team are here to offer support, advice and practical help for anyone adjusting to changes in their sight. Whether it's tips for getting around safely, finding useful technology, or joining one of our friendly social groups, we can help you stay connected, confident, and independent. And you're never alone; our team is always happy to chat and listen.

If you, or someone you know, would like some support, please get in touch. Together, we can make life with low vision a little easier and a lot more enjoyable.

 01670 514316 or  info@vision-northumberland.org

Equipment Day

We will be holding our next Equipment Day on Friday 5th June 2026 at Reiver House, Morpeth.

More details to follow, but make sure you save the date!

Great News in Hexham!!

We are excited to announce that we will be holding monthly drop-ins at Adapt, Hexham.

A member of our team will be there to answer your questions and help you navigate the challenges that come with your sight and/or hearing loss. The café will also be open, so it's a fantastic opportunity to make new friends, have a change of scenery with a nice cuppa and a chat.

Our Low Vision Team will be there for the first 2 sessions with equipment to try and plenty of information and advice. Other services will follow, but please let us know if there is something particular you would like to attend such as our technology service or hearing support.

Our first dates:

- Thursday 30th April (10.30am - 2.00pm)
- Thursday 28th May (10.30am - 2.00pm)



Venue: Adapt, Burn Lane, Hexham, NE46 3HN

Everyone's welcome, so tell your neighbours, friends and family - anyone you think would benefit.

Chatter Box Cafe's Easter Lunch - FREE

Tuesday 31st March, 11.00am - 1.00pm

Reiver House, Staithes Lane, Morpeth, NE61 1TD

Selection of pies, quiches, sandwiches, hot drinks and desserts.

Volunteer transport is subject to availability and charge.

Booking is essential - call 01670 514316

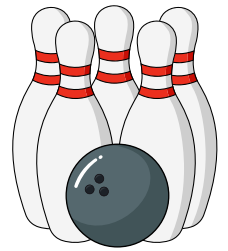


Camera Club Exhibition

Vision Northumberland's Camera Club is delighted to announce their latest photography exhibition at The Queens Head, Rothbury NE65 7RS.

If you're in the area between 1st April and 1st July, do pop in and take a look. The club would love to welcome you and share their members' wonderful work.

Accessible 10 Pin Bowling



Looking for a fun and inclusive midweek activity? Join Accessible 10 Pin Bowling at the Metro Centre!

They meet at Namco Bowl (Yellow Section) every other Wednesday at 11.00am for two games of ten pin bowling. Everyone welcome.

 Cost: £14.00 for two games


 Next meeting dates: 25th March, 8th April, 22nd April

For more information, please call Jo on 01670 514316


Over 50's Boccia

Looking for something different to do on Monday afternoons? Why not try your hand at **Boccia**?

Boccia is a fun, accessible sport similar to French boules and a great alternative to Crown Green Bowls. It's easy to learn, suitable for all abilities and a fantastic way to stay active.

 When: 3pm – 4pm, every other Monday

 Where: Cramlington Leisure Centre, NE23 6YB

 Cost: £4 per session

Upcoming dates: 16th March, 23rd March, 13th April

For more information, please call Jo Money.

Volunteering Spotlight

Our incredible team of volunteers is at the heart of everything we do. Their dedication and passion play a vital role in supporting our clients and helping to deliver essential services.



Volunteer Training

As part of our volunteering programme, volunteers can access training to enhance their roles or help them move closer to the jobs market, if that's their goal. With this in mind, our Volunteer Coordinator, Rachael, along with several members of staff, has recently completed training with Guide Dogs. This now enables Vision Northumberland to deliver 'Sighted Guide Training'. This practical and empowering course teaches someone how to safely and respectfully guide a person with sight loss while walking together. We're excited to offer this training very soon - so keep an eye out for upcoming dates!

Volunteering Opportunities

Vision Northumberland is currently looking for passionate volunteers to support our Cramlington and Ponteland SocialEyes group. As a volunteer group leader, you'll help create a welcoming, engaging environment where participants can connect, share experiences and enjoy social activities safely and comfortably.

No prior experience with visual impairments is necessary, we're just looking for someone with a friendly attitude, patience and a desire to make a positive impact.

If this sounds like you, please contact Rachael Bond on 01670 514316 or email rachael.bond@vision-northumberland.org.

Seeing the world differently: How Meta glasses are helping people with vision loss

Technology continues to make everyday life easier for people with sight loss. One of the newest tools making a difference is Meta smart glasses.

These glasses look like normal eyewear but include a small camera, speakers, microphones, and built-in AI. With simple voice commands, users can ask the glasses to describe what's around them, read printed text out loud or identify objects. They can read a menu without asking for help. Sort through post independently. Find the right tin on a supermarket shelf. Check which bus has just pulled up. Even navigate an unfamiliar place with a little more confidence.

Key benefits include greater independence, improved safety while moving around, easier access to printed information, reduced reliance on others and increased confidence in social situations. Meta glasses are not a replacement for mobility training or other assistive tools, but they can be a valuable addition.



Things to keep in mind

- Battery life may limit how long they can be used at one time.
- Internet access is needed for full features.
- Poor lighting can affect how well the camera works.
- Privacy should be respected when using the camera in public.

Sound too good to be true? Come and give them a try!

Vision Northumberland now have Meta Glasses available for demonstrations in our Low Vision Resource Library.

Call us on 01670 514316 to book an appointment.

Seated Exercise Taster Sessions

Vision Northumberland is teaming up with Smile Through Sport to deliver FREE seated exercise taster sessions this April. Founded by gold medal winning Paralympian, Stephen Miller, Smile Through Sport works to create opportunity and access to sport and physical activity for disabled people across the North East.

FREE Tasters:

Thursday 16th April, 1 - 2.30pm

at SocialEyes Ponteland, Merton Hall NE20 9PX



Friday 17th April, 10 - 11am

at Reiver House, Morpeth NE61 1TD

Friday 24th April, 10 - 11am

at Reiver House, Morpeth NE61 1TD

Everyone welcome, just come along.



Join us for Vision Zone Berwick

Our Low Vision staff will be at Vision Zone Berwick on:

Monday 13th April, 11am - 2pm at Berwick Library

Come and meet local sight loss charities, service providers, assistive technology experts and low vision specialists all in one place. You can also gain hands on experience with accessible products and technologies that can help make everyday activities and tasks easier.

Everyone is welcome, no booking needed. See you there!

100 Club News

We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who has bought shares in this years 100 Club. This quarter's lucky winners have now received their prizes. Good luck to everyone in the next draw.

Nov: 1st - MC 2nd - SK 3rd - MH

Dec: 1st - AW 2nd - MM 3rd - WM

Jan: 1st - JF 2nd - BS 3rd - AH

If you would like to join The 100 Club, call us on 01670 514316 or email info@vision-northumberland.org


Your Donations

Vision Northumberland works hard to get funding to provide the services and support needed by so many. If you can help us with a donation large or small, we would be so grateful. Donations enable us to continue the great work that our staff and volunteers deliver to people with a sensory impairment living in Northumberland.

If you are considering leaving a gift in your Will, no matter the size, it would help us fund important long-term projects that will make a deep and meaningful impact on many peoples lives. We recommend seeking professional advice when drawing up your Will.

Thank you

Contact Us

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