Kent Association for the Blind

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KAB Connect

Spring 2024



Mobility training with first steps

KAB's Children's Mobility Worker, Nicola, has been working with Henry and Elodie using different mobility aids. Taking their first steps is an exciting time, so we want to ensure it's done as safely as possible. Nicola suggested trying different walkers, to locate obstacles in their path. Follow us on Facebook to keep up-to-date with their progress!

This is an advert and not a KAB recommendation. KAB is not able to advise on the suitability of a product, without discussing your individual needs with you. If you would like independent advice before making a purchase, please contact your local Rehab Team.

PROFESSIONAL VISION SERVICES LTD

Low Vision Drop in Days

Professional Vision Services Exhibitions

Monday 25th March at the King Charles Hotel
Brompton Road, Gillingham, Kent ME7 5QT

Wednesday 24th April at the United Reform Church
20 Widmore Road and Glades Place,
Bromley, Kent BR1 1RY
(Please go to the Duncanson Room at the back of the building)

Event times 10am - 2pm each day

Come along to one of our low vision drop-in days, where we will be demonstrating all the latest technology and equipment for the visually impaired. No need to book, just come along.





Professional Vision Services 90 Walsworth Road, Hitchin SG4 9SX (01462) 420751

Welcome to our latest issue of KAB Connect, which features some tips on labelling items, mobile phones and a list of upcoming Roadshows.

Sight Matters Exhibition



Wednesday 2nd October
Maidstone Leisure Centre
10am - 3pm

We are delighted to announce the return of our Sight Matters Exhibition! This popular event showcases services, new technologies and equipment from a wide range of exhibitors. It provides the perfect opportunity for people with sensory impairments across Kent to meet face-to-face with companies and organisations to find out more about how they can support their daily needs.

Join us anytime from 10am to 3pm. No booking required.

Get creative with labelling

To make it easier to distinguish between items, such as bottles that look the same or tins of food, here are some useful tips to get you organised. Some of these items may be available on free long-term loan from your Local Authority, following an assessment of need by KAB.

- **Elastic bands**
  This very handy item is brilliant for distinguishing between products. Use an elastic band on the conditioner, but not on the shampoo bottle. You can also use elastic bands on tins of food and for keeping matching socks together in the washing machine.



- **Colour detectors**
  Check the colour of clothes or the ripeness of fruit when shopping. You can buy this talking colour detector from Cobolt, RNIB or even Amazon.



- **Buttons/safety pins**
  Organise your clothes in your wardrobe by colour, or attach buttons or safety pins on specific colour clothes. Alternatively, add elastic bands to hangers to indicate clothing colours.



- **RNIB PenFriend audio labeller**
  Use the PenFriend to record short or long messages on each label for items such as food, films or clothes. To identify an item, place the PenFriend on to the label and it will playback the recording.



- **Bumpons**
  These are a very low price, but simple product to identify buttons on equipment, such as an oven or microwave. These raised dots can be affixed to most surfaces and are available in a variety of colours and shapes. You can purchase these from RNIB, Amazon and IC Vision.



- **Talking tins**
  Label your food shopping with these talking tins, which come with a Velcro strap for non-metal containers and bottles. Simply press the button to record a short 20-second recoding of what is in your tins and place on the item in your cupboard. You can purchase these from IC Vision and RNIB.



- **Large print labels**
  Write in large print (using a marker pen) on sticky labels and affix to your item.



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VisionAid

Freephone 0800 002 5555

BlindShell Classic 2 - Accessible Mobile Phone

- **Simple to use** with **clear, tactile, well spaced buttons**
- **Loud speaker** and **high contrast display**
- **Reads everything out loud**: callers, messages etc.
- **Easy voice control / dictation** - no internet required
- Up to **5 day battery life**
- Includes **all smartphone features**: WhatsApp, YouTube Facebook, email etc.



Eye-D v2 - Handheld Magnifier

- Replace all your magnifying glasses
- **Vibrant 4.3 inch screen**
- **Magnify** from **1.5x to 32x**
- Large **tactile controls** & **fold-out handle**
- Replaceable, **rechargeable battery**
- Ideal for reading post, medication, cooking instructions, use-by-dates



OrCam Read - Instant text to speech

- **Push a button to have any printed text; post,** magazines, cooking instructions etc. read to you within a second with natural sounding voices
- **Pocket-sized and lightweight at just 50g**
- Rechargeable battery (3 hours)
- **Easy to use** with **just 4 tactile controls**
- Includes free **Bluetooth earphones**



VisionAid

Restoring Independence Since 1996

0800 002 5555

visionaid.co.uk

Call VisionAid on:
Freephone 0800 002 5555

VoxiVision - Portable reading machine & Magnifier



- All in one **text-to-speech** and **6 inch video magnifier**
- **World's first reading machine that accurately reads handwriting** as well as **printed text**; books, post, greetings cards, newspapers, magazines, recipes etc.
- **Automatic reading**, place your document and it reads
- **Shop with confidence** with its **instant barcode reader** to easily identify your shopping • **Magnify up to 25x**
- **Translates** text between different languages
- **Easy to use** via **tactile buttons** and **voice control**

Clover Book Plus - Transportable Electronic Magnifier



- **12.5" matt touch screen- magnify 1x - 60x**
- The **portability** of a large handheld magnifier, with the **stability and reading comfort** of a desktop solution
- **Distance and self-viewing camera** allows TV viewing, see the garden, do hair & makeup etc.
- **Read post, medication, newspapers, write letters, enjoy hobbies** e.g. cards, sewing, models, crosswords etc.

Eye 5 - Latest Wearable Magnifier



- The lightest and **most 'glasses-like' wearable magnifier** available
- Brand new technology allows users to **see TV in detail, see loved ones' faces**, cook, play cards and musical instruments etc.
- **Hands-free** magnification up to 10x
- **Stay mobile** with retained peripheral vision
- Also functions as a **handheld magnifier**

Please call us for a **free** copy of our **latest catalogue** or a **friendly chat to assess your needs**

Try from **100s of solutions** with **free, expert, no-obligation, in-home** & **remote demonstrations**

Keeping active with support



Steven has two days' support from KAB from our Guide Communicator one-to-one support service.

"Helen visits me on Fridays and we often go out and about. We take long walks around Leeds Castle or go to the golfing range. I am part of KAB's Active Social Group so I get involved with all sorts of activities from pottery to archery! When the weather is bad, we go bowling or do other indoor activities."

Steven started to lose his sight when he fell down two flights of stairs as a child. His sight deteriorated more in his 50s. "I can't go out on my own as my eyesight is so bad. That's why it's so great to have KAB to get me out of the house. Helen understands me and my sense of humour, so we get on really well. I wouldn't be able to get out as much, without KAB's support."

This one-to-one support service enables people like Steven to get out and about. We can support people who have sight loss or who also have hearing loss.

If you need support, which does not include personal or domestic care, then email us at deafblind@kab.org.uk

Family fun!





In January we held a Jo Jingles music session with a group of pre-school children, their siblings and parents. Friendships were built and phone numbers exchanged! We also run a regular family swim session at Larkfield Leisure Centre on Saturdays 7.30pm until 8.30pm. The children have sole use of the pool and have fun in the wave pool, rapids and slides. These events are supported by a Kent County Council Short Breaks grant. To attend any of our activities email nicola.tallon@kab.org.uk







Nominations open for Heart of KAB Awards 2024

Let's celebrate the achievements of our volunteers, people with sight loss, fundraisers and partners. To nominate, please email karen.mitchell@kab.org.uk if you need help with your nomination or visit our website at: **kab.org.uk/who-we-are/heart-of-kab-awards**

One-to-one IT support



Getting to grips with new technologies can be difficult. Our team of Assistive Technology Workers provide a much-needed service to our clients, who need help using computers or phones.

"I would like to say how much I appreciate your input. Without your advice and support, I would not have been able to achieve purchasing and setting up a computer, using NVDA screen reader, Teams, Outlook and many other items on my computer; plus learning how to use an iPhone and setting up apps etc." Kim

As technology changes rapidly, it's hard to keep up with the latest equipment or software. That's how we can help. If you need assistance, please get in contact with your local team.

Accessibility on phones

Fortunately, both Android and Apple phones have built-in accessibility functions, which include magnification, speech and text size options.



Our Assistive Technology Worker, Steve, has put together some things to consider when choosing your phone.

Price and processor

Androids, such as Samsungs and Motorolas, can be cheaper to buy than Apple phones. However, if buying a lower cost Android, ensure it has an adequate processor to cope with running the built-in accessibility options (otherwise it can be quite slow). The Motorola G54 5G is a good example of a low cost phone that works well. The Apple iPhone SE 3rd Gen is the lowest cost iPhone, but a good, reliable one.

Size

I would recommend a larger screen size at least 6.1", especially if you intend to make the text larger on screen.

Accessibility menus

Whatever phone you buy from Apple, the menu is exactly the same. With Android phones, the menu will vary depending on the brand. So something to think about if you're sticking with Android, but want to change brands.

We can't recommend one phone over the other, as it's really a personal choice and there are even more options out there. So, if you want any advice, please speak with one of the team.



Upcoming Roadshows aboard Iris

We are visiting venues across Kent and Medway this year and are partnering with our suppliers to bring you our 'ask the expert' roadshows. If you'd like to attend an event, please pop by - no booking needed.

Ask the Expert Roadshows, 10am-3pm:

- 11th March at Estuary View Medical Centre, Whitstable with VisionAid
- 5th April, Biggin Hill Memorial Pool and Library, with Optelec
- 9th May at Practice Plus Surgical Centre, Gillingham with VisionAid
- 12th July, Longacres Bybrook Barn Garden Centre, Ashford with Optelec
- 1st August, at Practice Plus Surgical Centre, Gillingham with Optelec

For a list of all events, visit kab.org.uk/get-support/help-advice/iris-mobile-sight-centre or email iris@kab.org.uk

Kent Association for the Blind
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