



**Kent
Association
for the
Blind**



KentAssociationForTheBlind

KAB Connect

Spring 2026



A new sense of freedom

Richard lost the sight in his left eye due to a haemorrhage and later lost the sight in his right eye from chronic uveitis. He tells us: "Occasionally I can see a little bit of light, but otherwise I cannot see at all. For a long time, this made everyday tasks very difficult, and I struggled without help."

Richard contacted KAB as he needed help with something that was making his life difficult at the time – his phone.

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Something as simple as making a phone call depended on other people.

Richard recalls: "I was using a basic button phone and could only answer calls. If I wanted to ring my sons, I had to contact a carer through my lifeline so they could come in, look up the number, and dial it for me. The carers were always helpful, but I often felt like a burden, especially when they were busy. It was frustrating and disheartening to rely on others for something so small but so important."

That's when Richard decided to contact KAB to ask about a phone that allows him to be more independent. Through KAB's Assistive Technology Team, he was introduced to the Synapptic phone.



"Peter helped me to get a new phone and patiently taught me how to use it. At first, I was nervous. New technology felt daunting, especially when I couldn't see it. But with Peter's guidance, it quickly became easier. Now with my new phone, I can simply touch the screen and slide my finger down it to activate the voice control and ask the phone to call my sons. Being able to talk to the phone and have it talk back to me is the best part."

The Synapptic phone can also read out the phone's battery percentage, which is an important feature for Richard. With support from Peter, he now has a phone that works for his needs. It has given him confidence, freedom and his independence back.

He tells us: **"This phone has really saved my life."**

What's in a name?

Your views count



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We are finding that our current name may no longer reflect who we are today. We often hear that our name can be a barrier for people to request our help; thinking that you must be **blind** to receive support or must live in Kent only. We support people with various eye conditions, sometimes together with hearing loss. We also work in Bromley and Medway, which may not be seen as part of Kent.

We currently work with Kent County Council as the lead partner to deliver sight impairment **and** hearing impairment services. We continue to provide support to sight impaired clients (and those who also have hearing impairments, including through our Guide Communicator service) and signpost specific hearing support enquiries to our partners Hi Kent and 3D Care, and we are responsible for managing this contract with our partners. Our name does not reflect our responsibilities for this contract.

To reach as many people as we can, we need your views about the possibility of changing our name.

To help us with our survey, you can:

- Visit: www.surveymonkey.com/r/KXNJJCZQ
- Email karen.mitchell@kab.org.uk
- Call Karen Mitchell on 01622 358989 to answer questions on the phone. **Deadline: 31 March**



Step out for sight loss

Sensory Nature Walks



This Summer, bring your family and friends together and embark on a journey experiencing the sound, touch, smell and taste of nature at a KAB Sensory Nature Walk.

-  **Saturday 6th June 2026**  Mote Park, Maidstone
kab.org.uk/events/sensory-nature-walk-maidstone
-  **Saturday 18 July 2026**  High Elms Country Park
kab.org.uk/events/sensory-nature-walk-high-elms
-  **Saturday 22 August 2026**  Betteshanger Park, Deal
kab.org.uk/events/sensory-nature-walk-betteshanger

The walks are between 4km and 5km and start at 10.30am. When you register, you'll get a t-shirt and a welcome pack. Simply sign up by visiting our website or scanning the QR codes, and commit to raising a minimum of £25.00 per person to support our work.

Call the fundraising team on 01622 691357 (option 3) or email fundraising@kab.org.uk.



Maidstone



High Elms



Betteshanger



Nominate someone for a **Heart of KAB Award**



 **Thursday 18th June 2026**
 **Mercure Hotel, Maidstone**

We're excited to celebrate the successes of the people we support, volunteers and fundraisers, at our Heart of KAB Awards.

You may wish to nominate a visually impaired person for their perseverance in learning a new skill or a volunteer for their kindness as a befriender or a supporter who is making a difference. Read about our award categories on our website and nominate today!



How to nominate

Just tell us why you believe they deserve an award in recognition for their achievements. Tell us as much information as you can! The deadline for nominations is: Friday 20th March.



Ways you can nominate someone:

-  www.kab.org.uk/who-we-are/heart-of-kab-awards
-  Call Karen Mitchell on 01622 358989
-  Email karen.mitchell@kab.org.uk

Join us at our **Sight Matters Exhibition**



When: 24th September, 10am - 2.30pm

Where: Medway Park Sports Centre, Medway Park, Mill Road, Gillingham ME7 1HF

This is a free event designed for people with sight or hearing loss. It's an exciting exhibition showcasing services, new technologies and equipment from a range of exhibitors and local charities. KAB staff will also be on hand to provide support, advice and guidance.

For more information contact:

Susie Butcher-Mackie on 01622 358978
susan.butcher-mackie@kab.org.uk

Meet KAB staff aboard Iris



Chat to our team aboard our mobile vehicle about support you need or get advice about equipment or technology.

10am - 3pm unless otherwise stated. No need to book.

-  **Thurs 26 February** - Headcorn Village Hall.
-  **Thurs 5 March** - Sheerness East Working Men's Club.
-  **Tues 10 March** - Orpington Hospital.
-  **Wed 11 March** - Repton Connect Community Centre, Ashford - part of the Eat Well, Spend Less wellbeing event organised and run by Ashford Council. 10am-2pm.
-  **Mon 16 March** - The Spearpoint Pavilion, Kennington. 12.30pm-3pm.
-  **Wed 18 March** - Tonbridge Methodist Church.
-  **Wed 25 March** - Commercial Road Car Park, Strood.
-  **Fri 27 March** - Folkestone Eye Centre.
-  **Tues 12 May** - Orpington Hospital.

Join a **Social Group**

We have a big range of social groups across Kent, Bromley and Bexley and we're looking for new members! Whether you like a bit of entertainment, a coffee and chat or some fun activities, we have a social group for you!



Contact your local team to find out more (contact details on the back page).

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.



Clover 6 - Magnification at your fingertips

Are reading tasks difficult?

- A 5.5" handheld magnifier that instantly enlarges printed text on letters, labels, prices etc.
- Simple to use with tactile buttons & built-in light
- Adjustable magnification from 1.5x to 35x & rechargeable
- Perfect on-the-go companion or simply for home use



VoxiVision 2 - All-in-one solution

Do your eyes get tired?

- Reads any handwritten or printed text aloud
- Magnifies up to 25x
- Read all your post, books, magazines, medication, TV guides, etc.
- Tactile buttons & voice control
- Compact & pocket sized
- Shop with confidence to identify items, scan barcodes & detect banknotes



Call VisionAid for your free catalogue:

Freephone 0800 002 5555





ReadEasy Evolve MAX - Keep your independence

Would you prefer to listen?

- Place, press & listen - easy to use tactile controls with loud integrated speaker
- Reads aloud any printed text up to A3 size; letters, newspapers, books, etc.
- Human-like voices
- Effortlessly handles columns, pictures & tables



Maggie iVR - Be a part of those special moments

Have you given up a hobby?

- Wearable magnification that allows you to enjoy your hobbies again - sewing, DIY, board games, puzzles, playing cards, gardening & bird watching
- See your loved ones' faces
- Watch TV with clarity
- Read signage
- Ideal for social gatherings - theatre & live sports



- Every person's vision is unique and so is our approach
- Experience our solutions at home, free of charge
- Friendly, knowledgeable specialists across the UK

Looking after your health



There's lots of helpful equipment available that's designed to make everyday health tasks easier and keep you more independent. Products like talking blood pressure monitors, talking scales and talking thermometers read results out loud, while there are a variety of different eye drop dispensers to make it easy to administer.

With the right equipment, managing your health can feel simpler, clearer, and much more in your control. Here is some accessible equipment that may be of help.

Talking Blood Pressure Monitors

- RNIB
<https://shop.rnib.org.uk>
- Cobolt Systems
<https://cobolt.co.uk>
- Amazon
- Newer models also link with an app, which can be read aloud with the phone's accessibility settings enabled.



Model from RNIB

Talking Thermometers

- Cobolt Systems
<https://cobolt.co.uk>
- RNIB
<https://shop.rnib.org.uk>



Model from Cobolt

Talking Bathroom Scales

- RNIB
<https://shop.rnib.org.uk>
- Cobolt Systems
<https://cobolt.co.uk>
- Amazon



Model from RNIB

Eye Drop Dispensers

There are many different types of aids to help you use your eye drops. **Glaucoma UK** provides these free of charge. Call their helpline on 01233 648170 or email helpline@glaucoma.uk and they will help you choose the right one for you.



KAB LOTTERY

GambleAware

£25,000
Jackpot
Match 6
numbers

£1,000
Match 5
numbers

£25
Match 4
numbers

18+



www.kab.org.uk/get-involved/support-us/lottery

Staying safe from **Fraudsters**



People with visual impairments can be more vulnerable to scams because it's harder to verify emails, letters or phone calls visually. Scammers often exploit this by creating urgency or pressure.

Never share personal information such as bank details, PINs, passwords or one-time codes with anyone who contacts you unexpectedly. If you receive a suspicious call or message, hang up and contact your bank using the number on your card or call **159**.

Unlike long numbers, 159 cannot be impersonated or spoofed and you don't need to give any personal details. It works from both landlines and mobiles. 159 connects you safely and directly to your bank if you receive a call about a financial matter. It works for customers of over 99% of UK retail bank current accounts.

Follow the ABC of fraud awareness:

-  never **A**ssume a call is genuine
-  never **B**elieve what they tell you is correct
-  always **C**onfirm the identity of the caller.

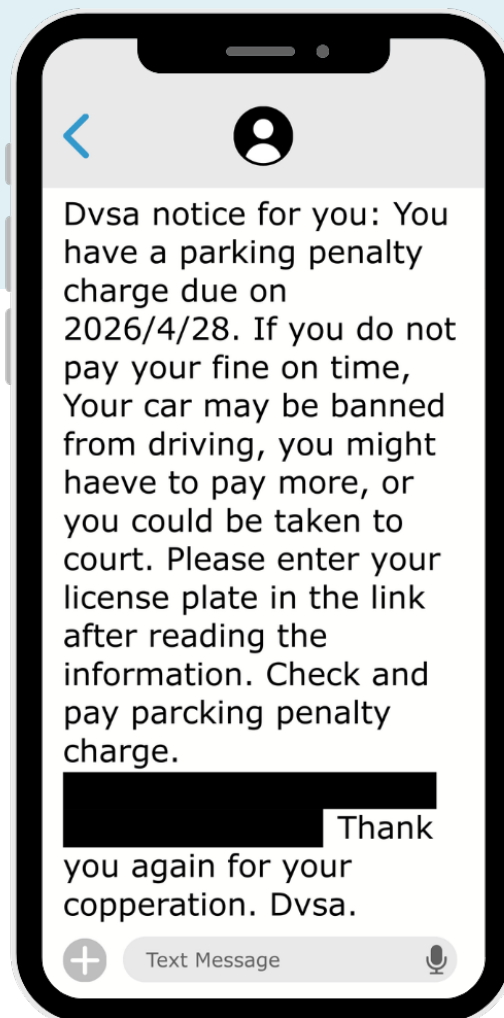
Be aware of pressure tactics or unusual payment requests, such as gift cards or cryptocurrencies. If you are unsure, ask a friend, family member, or carer to check the call or message with you. Suspicious activity can also be reported to Action Fraud at 0300 123 2040.

Scam Alert!

Fake parking fines

A number of residents have reported an increase in receiving fake parking fines, normally via text message.

This is an image of the scam text message that people have received. Sometimes there are many spelling mistakes! The messages always have a lack of detail, for example no vehicle registration, location and date and time of offence.



The criminals will ask you to click on a link to pay the fine. The link takes you to a realistic website under the control of the criminals, where they will steal your financial data. Please note that you **will never** receive a notification of a parking fine like this from DVSA.

You may also receive multiple follow-up scam reminders.

Report your scam text message or email

If you receive a suspicious text message you can report this by forwarding to 7726. Your phone provider can investigate the origin of the text and arrange to block or ban the sender, if it is found to be malicious.

You can also take a screenshot or screen recording of the text or email, and send it to report@phishing.gov.uk



A little help along the way with **Ray-Ban Meta sunglasses**

Our sincere thanks to Tim Newell (whose 3-year old daughter Elodie is being supported by KAB) who has worked closely with Meta to receive a donation of 25 pairs of Meta Ray-Bans to help people we support. We can't wait for them to be used and see the difference they'll make.

Meta tells us: "Our Ray-Ban Meta glasses, through their built-in AI capabilities and partnership with Be My Eyes, are helping people with disabilities navigate their daily lives with greater independence. The glasses enable hands-free calling and texting, real-time speech translation, and visual scene descriptions, while also connecting users with volunteers who can offer personalized assistance. This project embodies our commitment to using technology for good - empowering individuals by providing tools that foster confidence, autonomy, and connection in everyday life."

Spring into action with a **Cup of Tea for KAB**

It's time to get baking, dust off your finest tea set, and welcome the Spring season by hosting a Cup of Tea for KAB event.



Invite friends, family, neighbours or colleagues to enjoy tea and cake in exchange for a donation. Whether it's a Mother's Day celebration, garden gathering, a coffee morning at work or a cosy catch-up at home, every cup poured helps support Kent Association for the Blind's work.

For a fundraising pack, please call us on **01622 691357** (option 3) or email fundraising@kab.org.uk or scan the QR code to download your pack. There are recipe cards, sweepstake games, stickers, posters and more!



Kent Association for the Blind

Contact details

If you need support, please contact your local team:

Bromley Sight Centre

020 8464 8406

rehab.bromley@kab.org.uk



West Kent Sight Centre

01622 358995

rehab.maidstone@kab.org.uk



Medway team

01634 332929 (leave a message) or
call the West Kent team on 01622 358995

rehab.medway@kab.org.uk



East Kent Sight Centre

01227 763366

rehab.canterbury@kab.org.uk



**Kent
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Blind**

Charity number:
1062354



Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**



01622 691357



www.kab.org.uk



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[KentBlind](https://www.instagram.com/KentBlind)



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