



LONDON  
VISION

## London Scene

June 2020

London Scene is a regular newsletter to inform people with sight loss about accessible activities and events happening around London, including local society events.

If you would like to unsubscribe from this newsletter at any time, then please call 020 37613651 or email [info@londonvision.org](mailto:info@londonvision.org)

Please note that a copy of this newsletter may have been despatched before receiving your request to unsubscribe. If you would like to submit local society events for promotion in this newsletter, please email or call using the same details as above.

Welcome to the June edition of the London Scene newsletter.

London Vision will continue to be in contact with our clients/members regularly via the London Scene newsletter. We hope everyone is well, staying safe and adapting to life under lockdown. London Vision staff are still working and contactable. If you are feeling particularly isolated during this difficult time, then please do get in contact using the normal channels.

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

Twitter / Facebook / Instagram @LondonVisionUK  
Charity number: 1183741

## Sports

Keen on staying active while at home? Check out Metro Blind Sports' [gentle exercise workout](#) and [pilates and yoga stretch session](#).

### Baked Bean workouts

Metro member Odette and her husband are live streaming dance classes, and Odette will be leading the Friday Baked Bean workouts.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1I5D-2EonnI>

## Theatre and Music

Stage shows, musicals and opera you can watch online for free:

[https://www.whatsonstage.com/london-theatre/news/stage-shows-musicals-opera-free-stream-online\\_51198.html](https://www.whatsonstage.com/london-theatre/news/stage-shows-musicals-opera-free-stream-online_51198.html)

Royal Albert Home brings exclusive sessions from artists' homes to yours whilst the Hall is shut. These shows are all available for free

<https://www.royalalberthall.com/tickets/series/royal-albert-home>

## Tours

The best virtual tours to help you beat boredom.

Art galleries might not be so interesting unless you have some useful sight, others work well.

8 Stunning virtual garden tours around the world

<https://www.housebeautiful.com/uk/garden/g31913008/best-virtual-tours-garden/>

Free virtual globe-trotting, tours & experiences

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/deals/deals-hunter/2020/03/free-virtual-globe-trotting/>

## Riddles:

Riddle: I'm tall when I'm young, and I'm short when I'm old. What am I?

Riddle: I'm light as a feather, yet the strongest person can't hold me for five minutes. What am I?

Riddle: A word I know, six letters it contains, remove one letter and 12 remains. What is it?

Riddle: What begins with an "e" and only contains one letter?

Riddle: If you drop me I'm sure to crack, but give me a smile and I'll always smile back. What am I?

Answers will be in the July issue of London Scene.

## Join the Working Age Forum on Zoom

London Vision organises regular meetings of the Working Age Forum (WAF) for blind and partially sighted people who consider themselves of working age. Whether you are employed, self-employed or seeking work, join our forum to hear from invited speakers and take part in group discussions about all aspects of the world of work.

Due to the lockdown, our meetings are currently being held on the Zoom online platform.

If you wish to become a member of the WAF please email [waf.london@londonvision.org](mailto:waf.london@londonvision.org) and ask to be put on the database to receive news and invitations. We can also email you information on how to obtain Zoom. If you need tips on how to set up Zoom, [read Liam O'Carroll's blog on the website.](#)

Our next WAF meeting is scheduled for 11 June at 6 to 7.30pm.

## Beyond Sight Loss

Connect with the group via Zoom and WhatsApp.

We are regularly doing social interactions online where people are sharing their experiences during lockdown.

Zoom Calls: every Mondays and Thursdays at 5pm.

If you would like to join or know anyone who would be interested in joining our online calls or WhatsApp group, please email [info@londonvision.org](mailto:info@londonvision.org) and ask to be put in touch with Beyond Sight Loss.

## Baking

Let's start baking – either for yourself or to give others a treat!

### Rock Cakes

200g self-raising flour  
½ teaspoon mixed spice (optional)  
100g block margarine  
75g caster sugar  
100g currants  
1 Medium Eggs

1. Pre heat the oven to 200C, 180C Fan or Gas 6. Line baking tray with parchment.
2. Sieve flour (and spice) into mixing bowl. Cut the margarine into smaller pieces. Rub it into the flour using fingertips only until it looks/feels like breadcrumbs. Do not over rub.
3. Stir in the sugar and currants. Beat the egg in a small bowl and add to the mixture. Press firmly with a fork until a stiff rocky consistency is formed. Place the mixture on the baking tray in 12 rocky heaps.
4. Bake in the oven for 10-12 minutes, or until golden-brown and firm to touch. Set aside to cool for 10 minutes.

The good thing about rock cakes is that it doesn't matter what shapes you end up with – they all taste delicious.

## Vital Tech – Assistive Technology for Blind and Partially Sighted People

### Introduction

Vital Tech, [www.vitaltech.org.uk](http://www.vitaltech.org.uk), is a website supported by Thomas Pocklington Trust which aims to provide impartial assistive technology guidance for blind and partially sighted people in the UK

### Overview

Content is divided into the following themes:

- Being organised – banking and managing money, timekeeping, identifying, labelling and locating, writing and recording
- Jobs around the house – In the kitchen, household, gardening and DIY tasks, laundry and clothing
- Health and wellbeing – fitness and grooming, health and safety
- Staying in touch – landlines, mobile phones, using computers and tablets to stay in touch
- Computing – computers, other devices and accessories, using computers and software
- Heating, lighting and access – accessing and securing your home, heating and lighting
- Relaxing at home – accessing TV, listening to music and radio, playing games
- Reading and magnifying – magnifying, reading, using Braille

## Videos

Vital Tech hosts a collection of basic tutorial videos, demonstrating accessibility features available on Apple iPhones and Android smartphones.

## Future roadmap

There are plans to further expand Vital Tech to cover tech at work and at school.

## Getting in touch

The Vital Tech team would love to receive your comments and suggestions at any time and can be reached by emailing [contact@vitaltech.org.uk](mailto:contact@vitaltech.org.uk).

## UK Government Guidance

The [‘Get help with benefits and pensions if you have accessibility needs’](#) page is now live on GOV.UK.

### **Get help with benefits and pensions if you have accessibility needs**

Get help if you have difficulties claiming benefits and pensions because of a disability or health condition.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) can make adjustments for you if your disability or health condition makes it difficult to:

- use the phone
- use the internet
- read letters
- fill in forms
- attend face-to-face meetings
- understand complicated information to manage your own affairs

## **Difficulty using the phone**

If you have difficulty using the phone, you can use one of the following services instead.

### **Relay UK**

[Relay UK](#) is a national service provided by BT that helps people with hearing and speech difficulties communicate with people over the phone. This can be used to contact all of our benefit and pension services.

### **Textphone**

Textphone is available for all benefits and pensions services. The textphone number is given with the other contact details in benefits and pensions guides.

### **Video Relay Service**

Video Relay Service allows British Sign Language users to communicate through a BSL interpreter. The service is currently available for:

- [Access to Work](#)
- [Attendance Allowance](#)
- [Disability Living Allowance](#)
- [Employment and Support Allowance](#)
- [Personal Independence Payment](#)
- [Universal Credit](#)

It will be made available for other services by autumn 2020.

## **Other alternatives to the telephone**

If you cannot use these, you can ask for:

- communication by email – make sure you tell us this is because of your disability or health condition
- support from a family member, a friend or someone else such as a welfare rights adviser – make sure you give them your permission to help you
- a [home visit](#)

## **Difficulty using a computer**

If you have difficulty using our online services, contact the service by phone or letter. Tell them you cannot use the digital service because of your disability. You will be helped to access the service in a different way.

## **Difficulty reading letters or filling in forms**

If you have difficulty reading letters or filling in forms, let us know when you contact us. You can ask for information in other ways, for example:

- larger typesize
- braille – make clear if you need type 1 or type 2
- audio – you can get letters or leaflets on CD or as an MP3 file
- email – if you use assistive technology, you can get letters and forms emailed to you in a suitable format
- phone – ask for a phone call to explain things in more detail
- paper colour – if you find it difficult to read letters because of the colour you can ask for them in a different colour
- a [home visit](#)

## **Difficulty attending face-to-face meetings**

You should not visit jobcentres at the moment because of coronavirus (COVID-19). DWP will contact you to let you know what you need to do instead.

You may need to visit an office as part of your benefit or pension claim. If this may be difficult because of your disability or health condition, you can ask for 'reasonable adjustments', for example:

- an appointment at a quieter time
- a quiet area or separate room in a jobcentre to meet
- a room with a hearing loop
- a British Sign Language interpreter
- someone to meet you when you arrive at a building
- bringing someone you know to support you

Contact the office that asked you to attend an appointment.

If you cannot visit an office because of your disability or health condition, you can ask for a [home visit](#).

### **Difficulty managing your own affairs**

If you cannot manage your own affairs, or would like someone to act on your behalf you can ask for someone to become your [appointee](#).

### **How to complain**

If you feel that a service or information is not accessible, you can [make a complaint](#).

BBC Rory Cellan-Jones Technology Correspondent

18<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Coronavirus: Isle of Wight contact- tracing app trial – a mixed verdict so far

It is 10 days since all Isle of Wight residents were invited to test the NHS app at the heart of the government's test, track and trace strategy. So how's it going?

Mixed would probably be a fair verdict, though we may have a clearer idea following a Commons statement by the Health Secretary Matt Hancock this afternoon.

The big concern was how many people would download it. Epidemiologists suggest that for the UK as a whole, about 60% of the population needs to install and use the software for it to live up to its full potential.

So, when Downing Street says there have been roughly 60,000 downloads, that's not a bad result. The island's population is 140,000, and its inhabitants are slightly older and less likely to own a smartphone than the UK average.

But one cautionary note - that 60,000 may include some who downloaded it twice or are from the mainland.

Still that compares well with other experiments. About 20% of the population of Singapore downloaded its contact-tracing app, and last week an Australian government app had been installed by roughly a quarter of its population.

But here's the key question - does it work? Are users being alerted to take action after coming into contact with the virus?

Here, there is very little to go on. What we know is that there are just 173 confirmed cases of Covid-19 on the Isle of Wight. With most people still in lockdown, it is quite unlikely that any single individual using the app would have come into contact with an infected person.

Then there is the fact that what's been offered is an early, unsophisticated version of the app.

At this stage, it only asks someone who feels unwell about two symptoms - a high temperature and a continuous cough.

Depending on their answers, they may then be directed to a call centre to order a medical test.

People with whom they recently came into proximity may be sent alerts, warning them they need to be "super careful", as one of the app team put it to me, and be on the lookout for their own symptoms.

But here's the problem. As it stands, the app does not allow them to enter a test result, positive or negative.

That means their contacts are effectively left in limbo. Health chiefs had previously suggested that contacts would be given the all-clear or potentially

be told to self-isolate depending on whether the original user was determined to have the virus - but the app doesn't do that yet.

One GP on the island told the BBC: "My concern when the public realise this, is they will feel 'what's in it for me' and be disincentivised. The truth is very little is in it for them other than the greater good."

His other concern was that if it's marginally easier to obtain a test via the app, people might be tempted lie about their symptoms to get one, triggering pointless notifications as a consequence.

The NHS and its software developers are now working on an updated version of the app, which addresses some of those issues. It will probably have four questions rather than two, and feature a wider range of symptoms including the loss of sense of taste or smell.

The algorithm is being tweaked so the answers could either trigger a stronger warning to previous contacts or none at all, pending the results of tests.

And the whole testing process should be integrated into the app more effectively, meaning the process of sending people either a red alert or an all-clear becomes much smoother.

That, at least, is the theory. But will it work in practice?

The NHS has previously indicated it would go straight from the Isle of Wight trial to a national rollout. Health Secretary Matt Hancock had said the app would be deployed across England in mid-May.

This afternoon, Downing Street would only commit to saying it aims "to roll out the app across the country in the coming weeks".

It seems the islanders will first be asked to test version two before the rest of us join this great experiment.

### **Scams advice during coronavirus outbreak**

Bromley Trading Standards are writing to you with regard to the coronavirus and how you can access support and safeguard yourself against scams.

Facebook Community Groups, WhatsApp Groups and the Nextdoor social network that send neighbourhood alerts, can be great ways of staying in touch with those around you, however it can be difficult to know who to trust.

Please be aware that not everyone out there is trustworthy and some people will take advantage of this unusual situation our society is facing.

Here are just some of the scams we are aware of, but please note that criminals come in all shapes and sizes and can contact you at the door, by phone, in the post or online:

- Be aware of people impersonating healthcare workers claiming to be offering 'home-testing' or people offering miracle cures or vaccines for coronavirus – there is no specific treatment for coronavirus (COVID-19).
- Offers of home cleaning services which scammers use to try to gain access to your home – don't allow strangers into your home without checking who they are via a trusted source.
- People offering to spray disinfectant onto driveways of properties or around your home for cash
- Emails saying that you can get a refund on taxes, utilities or similar are usually bogus and they are just after your personal and bank details.
- There are lots of fake products available to buy online that say they can protect you or cure coronavirus. These will not help and are designed to take your money.
- There are new mobile phone applications that claim to give you updates on the virus but instead, they lock your phone and demand a ransom.
- Be aware that your bank or the police will never ask for your bank details or PIN over the phone.
- People offering to do shopping or collecting medication and asking for money upfront and then disappearing.

Tips to avoid being scammed:

- Be cautious and listen to your instincts. Don't be afraid to hang up, bin it, delete it or shut the door.
- Take your time; don't be rushed.
- If someone claims to represent a charity, be suspicious and don't give them money or your bank details. Don't let them into your home.
- If you are online, be aware of fake news and use trusted sources such as Gov.uk or NHS.uk websites. Make sure you type the addresses in carefully and don't click on links in emails or text messages
- Only purchase goods from legitimate retailers and take a moment to think before parting with money or personal information.
- Protect your financial information, especially from people you don't know. Never give your bank card or PIN to a stranger, even if they are going to get shopping for you.
- Know who you're dealing with - if you need help, talk to someone you know and trust or get in touch with your local Council on the numbers below.

Contact information:

If you think you've been scammed, report it to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)

Contact your bank if you think you have been scammed or given out your banking details.

If you need advice, call the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 0808 223 1133 or [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk) and select Consumer

If you are in immediate danger, contact the police on 999

To learn more about different types of scams and how to protect yourself and others, visit [www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk](http://www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk)

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Warm wishes from all at London Vision during this time.