



# LONDON VISION

## London Scene

### Lockdown London Scene

This is a special edition of the regular London Scene newsletter below you'll find information on sources of support and social activities. We'll be working hard to ensure our website is packed with useful content so why not take a look. [www.londonvision.org](http://www.londonvision.org) If you don't find what you are looking for or want to tell us about something you think should be shared please don't hesitate to drop us a line [info@londonvision.org](mailto:info@londonvision.org) or call **020 3761 3651** we are always pleased to hear from you . It's the same contact details if you wish to unsubscribe form 'London Scene'.

#### **It's good to talk**

2020 has been a long and difficult year for us all. We know talking can sometimes make things a little better so please don't hesitate to give us a ring for a chat especially if you've not spoken to anyone for a little while. We work office hours and we are all at home so sometimes the phone doesn't work that well but please do leave a message and we'll get back to you as soon as we can.

#### **Blind and partially sighted Londoners gave us their top tips for beating lockdown blues**

1. Limit the amount of news you listen to and avoid news channels before bedtime

2. Try and get some fresh air even if it's only by putting your head out of the window
3. Take a moment and think about what you've got to be grateful for. If you can try and write five different sources of gratitude each day and reflect on these before you go to sleep
4. Loose yourself in a good audio book
5. Try and do something physical like dancing around your kitchen to your favourite music
6. Phone a friend
7. Try and learn something new

## **Sources of support**

### **Samaritans**

is available round the clock, every day of the year. Talk to them off the record about whatever is getting to you. Call 116 123, email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org) or to find your nearest branch visit [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

### **RNIB helpline** -0303 1239999 [helpline@rnib.org.uk](mailto:helpline@rnib.org.uk)

The helpline team will listen to you, provide information and connect you to local services, support you with technologies, give information on eye conditions, benefits and legal issues. The team also have access to colleagues who can provide you with emotional support.

### **Blind Veterans UK**

Provides free services and support to all vision-impaired Armed Forces and National Service veterans, no matter when they served or how they lost their sight. For more information, call 0800 389 7979 or visit [www.noonealone.org.uk](http://www.noonealone.org.uk)

### **British Blind Sport**

British Blind Sport enables blind and partially sighted people to have the same opportunities as sighted people to access and enjoy sport and recreational activities in the UK. For more information, call 01926 42 42 47 visit [www.britishblindsport.org.uk](http://www.britishblindsport.org.uk)

### **Deafblind UK**

Deafblind UK provides specialist services to deafblind people and those who have progressive sight and hearing loss acquired throughout their

lives. For more information, call 0800 132 320 or visit [www.deafblind.org.uk](http://www.deafblind.org.uk)

### **Esme's Umbrella (Charles Bonnet Syndrome)**

Esme's Umbrella is the Campaign Group for everyone working towards a greater awareness of the Charles Bonnet Syndrome (CBS). The condition causes sufferers to see images which are not real. These 'visual hallucinations' are caused by loss of sight – but not everyone with low vision develops the condition. Esme's Umbrella provides support to people with the condition or those that think they have it.

For more information, call 020 7391 3299 or visit [www.charlesbonnetsyndrome.uk](http://www.charlesbonnetsyndrome.uk)

### **Guide Dogs**

The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association not only provides guide dogs but also offers a range of other mobility services, giving advice and supporting those with sight loss and their families, especially in maintaining or improving a person's ability to get out and about. For more information, call 0800 953 0113 or visit the website

[www.guidedogs.org.uk](http://www.guidedogs.org.uk)

### **The Macular Society**

The Macular Society provide information and support to people affected by macular conditions, their family and friends. For more information, help and advice, call 0300 3030 111 or visit [www.macularsociety.org](http://www.macularsociety.org)

### **See Ability**

supports people with sight loss and multiple disabilities. They provide specialist support and accommodation services as well as raising awareness to help prevent avoidable sight loss for people with learning disabilities. For more information, call 01372 755 000 or visit

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

### **Sense**

Sense supports adults and children who are deafblind or have sensory impairments with additional needs. For more information, call 033 330 9256 or visit [www.sense.org](http://www.sense.org)

## **Age UK**

Age UK helps older people by providing information, advice and support. For more information, call 0800 169 6565 or visit [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)

## **Carers UK**

Carers UK supports people who look after older, ill or disabled family and friends. For more information, call 0808 808 7777 or visit [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)

## **Diabetes UK**

Diabetes UK supports people affected by, or at risk of, diabetes. For more information, call 0345 123 2399 or visit [www.diabetes.org.uk](http://www.diabetes.org.uk)

## **MIND**

MIND provides information and support to people living with a mental health problem. For more information, call 0300 123 3393 or visit [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

## **NHS Direct**

Call 111

## **Your Sensory team**

Each borough in London has a sensory team accessed through adult social care for advice and information

## **Zoom and telephone-based groups and activity taking place during November and December 2020**

If you are not sure how zoom works or how to access any of the activities highlighted below please get in touch and we'll do our best to explain how everything works. If we can't help we'll try and find someone who can [info@londonvision.org](mailto:info@londonvision.org) or call **020 37613651**

## **Esme's Virtual Friends**

Do you or someone you know have Charles Bonnet Syndrome (CBS)? This condition affects people with sight loss. A condition first identified

300 years ago by the grandson of Charles Bonnet. Over the last 3 centuries people with sight loss have experienced similar hallucinations to those described by Charles Bonnet. Some are mildly aggravating whilst others are terrifying. If you'd like to join this informal session contact [info@londonvision.org](mailto:info@londonvision.org) or give us a call on 020 3761 3651

## **Managing Sight Loss sessions**

Since July London Vision has hosted more than 20 sessions exploring the challenges of living with sight loss and the solutions that help overcome the challenges. Ours sessions are friendly and relaxed, and we ensure that everyone has time to talk. Attendees tell us it makes a huge difference being able to talk to others in similar circumstances.

Each session is themed, and we cover a variety of topics from registration, rights and benefits to sport and leisure. We welcome friends and family and if you've never used Zoom we will do our very best to explain how it all works. If you would like to learn more, get in touch via e-mail [info@londonvision.org](mailto:info@londonvision.org) or call 020 3761 3651. Why not take a look below and pick a session; We look forward to meeting you:

### **Sport, leisure and hobbies**

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2.30 pm – 3.30 pm

We will explore sport leisure and hobbies and we'll be joined by Jessica Beal and Metro Blind Sport.

### **Reading**

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> November 6 pm – 7 pm

We'll explore the joys of reading whether using a magnifier, Braille or one of the spoken word library services. Paul Porter RNIB's digital production manager will be joining us to outline how to make the very best of RNIB's reading services.

### **Introduction to Assistive Technology**

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2.30 pm – 3.30 pm

The session will be led by Graham Page from Thomas Pocklington's technology team. We will explore how every day technologies can be made usable by people with sight loss. We'll talk about phones, tablet computers, smart speakers and computers.

## **Advanced technology**

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 6pm – 7.30pm

The session will be led by Graham Page from Thomas Pocklington's technology team he'll be joined by Davinder from RNIB's technology for life team. This session is for people who regularly use technology but want to trouble shoot a problem or ask how to complete a certain activity. If you'd like to come along, we'd like to have your questions in advance. [info@londonvision.org](mailto:info@londonvision.org)

## **Feeling good**

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2.30pm – 3.30pm

We'll be exploring the frustrations of living with sight loss and how to remain relaxed, positive and healthy in body and mind.

## **Registration your rights, your benefits**

Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2.30-3.30

We'll explore the Certification and registration process as blind and partially sighted and the benefits and rights it brings

## **Getting about safely**

9<sup>th</sup> December 6-7pm

We'll introduce you to some of the techniques used to move indoors and out safely and confidently with sight loss

## **Sport and leisure**

14<sup>th</sup> December 6-7pm

With the help of Metro blind sport and VocalEyes we'll explore sporting, cultural and leisure activities in London and beyond

## **Quiz & bizarre facts about vision loss - Christmas fun**

22<sup>nd</sup> December 6 pm – 7 pm

A slightly lighter look at living with sight loss

## **Still time to join the Working Age Forum on Zoom**

London Vision organises regular meetings of the Working Age Forum or 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.

If you wish to become a member of the WAF please email

[waf.london@londonvision.org](mailto:waf.london@londonvision.org) Our next WAF meeting is scheduled for 11<sup>th</sup> November at 6 to 7.30pm

### **Eye Matter - Beyond Sight Loss**

A new exciting fun and informative group for anyone who is blind or partially sighted, discussions, cookery, quizzes, mindfulness, exercise and an upcoming talent competition are just some of the highlights.

For all information contact Suzie on 07523266421 or Ashrafia on 07956510008 or email [eyemattervi@gmail.com](mailto:eyemattervi@gmail.com) with your full name and telephone number.

### **Barnet Borough Sight Impaired Group**

Are having a Zoom Quiz Night on Saturday 28th November 2020  
6.30pm for a prompt 7.00pm start

Free to attend Please book by 15<sup>th</sup> November 2020. Please contact:  
Sunethra on 020 8343 3450 | email [sasg@btinternet.com](mailto:sasg@btinternet.com) Or Lis on 020 8349 4705 | email [lis.vandyk@sky.com](mailto:lis.vandyk@sky.com) Please book by 15th November

### **RETINA UK London local group online / virtual meeting**

Saturday 21 November 2020, 11.00am - 1.00pm

Kate Arkell, Research Manager at Retina UK, will give a short presentation on the latest research into inherited sight loss conditions which will be followed by time for a general discussion. If you would like to join us, please: Email: [services@RetinaUK.org.uk](mailto:services@RetinaUK.org.uk)

Call: Jacqui Wallace on 07841 486008

### **The Staying Inn**

The staying Inn is a dynamic community of people with disabilities providing truly inclusive quizzes, craft sessions, support and information. The Staying Inn has a full programme of activities and events taking place over November and December check out their website to book places or catch up with previous activities <https://www.thestayinginn.org.uk/>

## **The Braillists Foundation**

Braille has the power to change the lives of blind and partially sighted people and the Braillist Foundation are on mission to prove this by: providing taught session, equipment and information to people wishing to learn braille. Over the two month of 2020 they've a packed programme of events . So why not take a look at their website or Facebook page [www.braillists.org](http://www.braillists.org) all Braillist events are socially interactive and fully inclusive so why not give it a go?

## **Weekly cooking sessions with Look UK**

Every Wednesday Look UK are hosting cooking workshops which are informative and fun; why not take a look?

[www.look-uk.org/clever-cooking-workshops](http://www.look-uk.org/clever-cooking-workshops)

## [Countdown to success: Marathon runner Charlotte Ellis in conversation](#)

Tuesday 1 December, 6pm to 6.30pm

Hear the inspiring story of visually impaired marathon runner Charlotte Ellis as she discusses her remarkable sporting journey with Ely Fiorentini of BBC Radio York. Charlotte will explain how she entered sport despite low expectations around sporting achievement for someone with sight loss and how the University of York was influential in her sporting career. Visually impaired all her life, as a child Charlotte was discouraged from taking part in sport at school. However, she didn't allow this to stop her and found alternative routes into sporting activity, including circus performing and self-defence. As a student at the University of York, she discovered trampolining, before being encouraged to take up running for the first time. Another exciting challenge arose with a move to Triathlon, which led to world and European titles in 2010. But despite further success in Triathlon, Charlotte's attention returned to running. Through hard work and dedication she qualified for the British Athletics team and a place in the World Para Athletics Marathon championships in 2020. Unfortunately, the event was cancelled due to Covid-19.

## **TV**

If you've got some useful vision how you make the best use of it is very personal to you. Generally moving closer to screen works. Sometimes sitting slightly to one side or the other will allow you to make best use of

a remaining visual field. Other people report that increasing the vibrancy of colour and contrast assists. For some people watching the TV in the dark or low lighting works well.

Some smart TVs now have the ability to read menus aloud to you. You may wish to use streaming apps such as Netflix on phone, tablet or computer. Whatever screen reader you use will allow you access to Menus.

Audio description is available on all platforms. Audio description is a subtle commentary giving you additional descriptive information about the action taking place on the screen. Often this can be activated by a button on your remote control. Other times it's activated from inside the TV settings. There is a wide range of accessible remote controls available. For advice on accessible TV call RNIB's Helpline and ask for the technology for life team 0303 123999

### **Something sporty**

For more than 40 years Metro Blind sport have been creating and supporting leisure activities for blind and partially sighted people so why not have a look at their website [www.metroblindsport.org](http://www.metroblindsport.org)

### **Baking**

We thought we'd spice things up and get a little competitive below you'll find all the recipes we've published over the last few months. Now we want evidence of your baking why not take a moment and send us a picture of the cakes you've baked or if photography isn't your thing then an ode to your creation or piece of prose outlining your time in the kitchen. Like the BBC we can't give prizes but we will put suitably described pictures and writings into our next newsletter. Good luck and get baking

Why not treat someone? It is great to bake for others. This cake makes a nice gift as well as being very yummy.

### **Sticky Apple and Almond Cake**

250g Self Raising Flour  
175g Caster Sugar

175g Butter - melted  
3tbsp Honey  
2 Medium Eggs  
1tsp Almond Extract  
250g Cooking Apples – peeled and cored  
40g Flaked Almonds  
Icing Sugar

1. Pre heat the oven to 160°C, 140°C Fan or Gas 3. Grease a 20 cm cake tin.
2. Put the flour, sugar, butter, honey, eggs and almond extract in a mixing bowl.
3. Beat together with a wooden spoon until smooth.
4. Put half the cake mix in the prepared tin and spread evenly over the base.
5. Slice the apples and arrange over the cake mix.
6. Cover with the remaining cake mix and sprinkle with flaked almonds.
7. Bake for 40 minutes, until golden and springs back to the touch.
8. Serve warm, dusted with icing sugar.

Happy baking!

## 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 200°C, 180°C 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.

Good thing about rock cakes it does not matter what shapes you end up with they all taste delicious.

#### Fairy Cakes

110g Self Raising Flour

110g Caster Sugar

110g Butter or margarine, softened at room temperature

2 Medium Eggs

1tsp Vanilla Extract

1-2 tbsp milk

Icing

2-3 tbsp water

2-3 drops of food colouring

300g Icing sugar

Hundreds and thousands, or other cake decorations

1. Pre heat the oven to 180°C, 150°C Fan or Gas 4. Line two 12-hole fairy cake tins with paper cases

2. Cream the butter and sugar together in a bowl. Beat in the eggs a little at a time, and stir in the vanilla extract.

3. Fold in the flour using a metal spoon. Add a little milk until the mixture is a soft dropping consistency, spoon the mixture into the paper cases until they are about half full.

4. Bake in the oven for 8-10 minutes, or until golden-brown on top. Set aside to cool for 10 minutes, then remove from the tin.

5. Icing sift the icing sugar into a large mixing bowl and stir in enough water to create a smooth mixture. Stir in the food colouring.

6. To ice the fairy cakes, drizzle the icing over the cakes, sprinkle with decorations and set aside until the icing hardens.

The best part is licking the spoons.

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Best wishes from all at London Vision during this time.