

# Review



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The journal of  
Blind Veterans UK

**March 2026**

## The Great Outdoors

Don't miss our upcoming activity  
weeks at Rustington

### Inside:

A fond farewell to Barry  
Remembrance events 2026  
Is wearable tech worth it?



Rebuilding  
lives after  
sight loss



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**Feedback:** To give us feedback on any of our services, please email us at [supporter.services@blindveterans.org.uk](mailto:supporter.services@blindveterans.org.uk) or call **0300 111 22 33**.

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**On the cover**  
Enjoy fishing five beautiful Sussex lakes when you take a Rustington Centre break!



# With thanks

## A message from your outgoing Chair, **Barry Coupe**

As I prepare to step down as Chair of Blind Veterans UK, I want to speak directly to you, the Members, who are the heart and soul of this extraordinary charity.

It has been one of the greatest honours of my life to serve in this role, and I want to express my deepest thanks for the inspiration you have given me, the Board of Trustees,



**Barry Coupe**

and everyone involved in continuing the legacy of this life-changing work.

Throughout my time as Chair, I have had the privilege of meeting many of you, hearing your stories and witnessing firsthand the remarkable courage, humour and determination that define our community. Whether you served decades ago or more recently, each of you carries with you a powerful story of service and resilience. Your strength inspires me to do better every day.

I have been continually moved by the way you support one another; how friendships form when you get together; how you encourage newcomers; how you show that, with the right support, blindness can open up incredible possibilities for one's life. Your willingness to adapt, learn new skills and face challenges head on has been a constant reminder of why I got involved in the first place.

I also want to thank you for the trust you have placed in both myself and

“Throughout my time as Chair, I have had the privilege of meeting many of you”

the Board. And I can assure you that, at all times, we have worked hard to ensure that we honour that trust by safeguarding the charity's future, investing in the right services, and ensuring we reach every veteran who needs us.

As I step aside, I do so with complete confidence in the charity's leadership and direction. Blind Veterans UK is evolving with the aim to reach and help many more veterans earlier in their sight loss journey, to strengthen connections across the country, and to continue to innovate in the support we offer.

The Board will remain absolutely committed to ensuring that you receive the support, companionship and opportunities you deserve.

It won't surprise any of you who know me that as I come to the end of my tenure, my thoughts are with my father. As a blind veteran who lost his sight in WWII, the example he set and the start he gave me in life has made me all that I am today. So much of the man he became was shaped by being



a St Dunstaner, and he carried that pride with him always.

At the time of the official opening of our Rustington Centre, I was shown a series of 12 photographs lining the main corridor – each one honouring a blind veteran who had achieved Victory over Blindness. As we reached the final frame, there he was: my father.

It was an emotional moment for me and one filled with immense pride. He truly embodied Victory over Blindness and I know he would have been just as proud to see me become Chair of this remarkable charity.

**Thank you once again for allowing me the privilege of serving you all.** 🇬🇧

# Remembrance weekend 2026

London, Manchester and Edinburgh events

## London

**7-8 November**

Registration closes 31 July 2026

We are pleased to offer activities in London over Remembrance weekend to our Members and their chosen guests. This is a very special time to come together with friends and family and remember all those we have lost.

**Events include:**

**Sir Arthur Pearson Memorial Service**  
Hampstead Cemetery

**Festival of Remembrance**  
Royal Albert Hall

**Victory Services Club Evening**  
Trafalgar Room

**Remembrance Parade**  
Horse Guards Parade

■ Register your interest at [www.blindveterans.org.uk/events/remembrance-weekend-london-2026/](http://www.blindveterans.org.uk/events/remembrance-weekend-london-2026/)  
Alternatively, call 0300 111 2233.

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## Manchester

**7-8 November**

Registration closes 31 August 2026

We are delighted to invite our Members to Remembrance weekend in Manchester.

**Events include:**

**Remembrance Service**  
Manchester Picadilly Station

**Informal Dinner**  
Holiday Inn Manchester Picadilly

**Service of Remembrance Sunday**  
St Peter's Square



**Remembrance Parade in London, 2025**

Blind Veterans UK is offering a £100 contribution to our Members who book a room at Manchester Piccadilly Holiday Inn for the Saturday night.

■ Register your interest at [www.blindveterans.org.uk/events/remembrance-weekend-manchester-2026/](http://www.blindveterans.org.uk/events/remembrance-weekend-manchester-2026/)  
Alternatively, call 0300 111 2233.

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## Edinburgh

**7-8 November**

Registration closes 31 August 2026

This year, we are delighted to be organising Remembrance weekend activities in Edinburgh.

**Events include:**  
**Service of Remembrance**  
City Chambers

**Engagement Dinner**  
Double Tree Hilton Hotel

We are delighted to share that Blind Veterans UK is offering a £100 contribution to our Members who need to book hotel accommodation to attend this event. Members may use this contribution at any hotel of their choice.

■ Register your interest at [www.blindveterans.org.uk/events/remembrance-weekend-edinburgh-2026/](http://www.blindveterans.org.uk/events/remembrance-weekend-edinburgh-2026/)  
Alternatively, call 0300 111 2233. 🇬🇧

# News

## Military Sight loss Champions

We're pleased to share the launch of our new Military Sight Loss Champions scheme, an initiative designed to strengthen the connection between Blind Veterans UK and the wider Armed Forces community.

This new initiative invites serving personnel of the British Armed Forces, including reservists and cadet forces to act as champions for veterans living with sight loss. Through fundraising,

volunteering, education and advocacy, Military Sight Loss Champions will help raise awareness of sight loss and support the vital work that Blind Veterans UK carries out every day.

Being a Military Sight Loss Champion offers a flexible way to contribute to our work. Champions can get involved in many ways, reflecting the diverse skills and commitments of the military community. The level of commitment is entirely up to each champion, meaning individuals or units can tailor their involvement around service life and operational demands.

■ Find our more and get involved at [blindveterans.org.uk/champions](http://blindveterans.org.uk/champions)

## £500 raised at Towngate Social Club

On Saturday 24 January, Jess Wood, Volunteer Support Lead, and member John Dobson attended a cheque presentation on behalf of Blind Veterans UK at Towngate Social Club in Leyland.

Jess and John spoke to more than 100 attendees about the charity's work



Jess and John with the cheque

– John shared personal experiences of the support he has received – then Steve, the club's owner, kindly presented a cheque for £500.

Our sincere thanks go to Steve, the staff there, and all club members for their fantastic fundraising efforts through various activities. It was a wonderful evening and an excellent opportunity to raise awareness of the charity's impact.

## Andy's '200 miles a month' resolution

Member Andy Leitch has set himself a huge challenge – to run or walk 200 miles every month throughout 2026 to support our charity. That's 2,400 miles by the end of the year!

Since joining Blind Veterans UK, Andy, 51, has thrown himself into physical challenges including triathlons, 100km walks, cycling challenges between London and Brighton, ten London Marathons, ultra marathons and endurance adventures.

Andy came up with the idea for this challenge as his marathon training has intensified in the lead up to the London Marathon this April. He told us he's increasingly aware of how much the charity has done for him

and his family, and feels driven to give something back.

As he puts it: "That's why I'm so passionate about supporting the charity and helping them make a difference for others, just like they did for us."

■ You can hear more about Andy's story and help him reach his fundraising goal at [justgiving.com/page/andrewleitchrunswalk2400miles2026](https://justgiving.com/page/andrewleitchrunswalk2400miles2026) →



Andy Leitch

## Royal Welsh soldiers run the length of Wales

A group of serving Royal Welsh soldiers ran across the length of Wales in February to raise money for Blind Veterans UK and other charities.

The route was designed to pass through all 11 founding rugby clubs of the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU). At each club, the group attempted to score a try and conversion from the halfway line, before the club president presented a bespoke WRU rugby ball.

The 12 soldiers will cover 313 miles across the six days, starting at CSM Stadium in Colwyn Bay and

concluding at the Principality Stadium in Cardiff where the group ran onto the pitch at half time during Wales' Six Nations match against France.

In a show of unity and support, joining the group on the final leg into the Principality Stadium were two blind veterans, Andy and Darren, alongside their partners, as well as our Military Lead, Tim Eckersley.

Tim says: "The support we receive from the UK Armed Forces always makes a huge difference to the lives of veterans living with sight loss. The 3rd Battalion of Royal Welsh Regiment are great examples of this, and we thank them for taking on this challenge for our charity." 🇬🇧



**Soldiers from the 3rd Battalion of Royal Welsh Regiment**



**Member Conference 2025**

# Regional Member Conferences

Our schedule of Regional Member Conferences in May 2026 for you and a guest of your choice

Following the success of our Member Conferences last year, we're planning even more locations this May. Led by our CEO Adrian Bell and Senior Leadership Team, the conferences give you the chance to have your say and ask important questions about the future of the charity.

You can register to attend one

conference of your choice. Start time is 11am, with the option to stay overnight and enjoy an evening dinner with friends. This event is free.

### Venues and dates

**Leeds**, Tuesday 5 May  
Oulton Hall Hotel

**Grantham**, Wednesday 6 May



Belton Woods Hotel

**Cardiff**, Tuesday 12 May  
Holiday Inn Cardiff City

**Gloucester**, Wednesday 13 May  
Cheltenham Chase Hotel

**Basingstoke**, Thursday 14 May  
Hampshire Court Hotel

**Belfast**, Tuesday 19 May  
Crowne Plaza

**Edinburgh**, Wednesday 20 May  
Delta Hotels by Marriot

## Schedule

### Day 1

- Arrive at 11am
- Accommodation allocation
- Welcome
- Lunch
- Organisational updates
- Evening meal (circa 9pm finish)

### Day 2 (for those who wish to stay overnight)

- Breakfast and farewells
- Depart by 10am

## Important information

### Transport

If you'd like to register but feel transport costs and availability could be a barrier, we may be able to help. We can check if you meet our essential

criteria for support when we call to confirm your place.

### Evening meal

With all conference locations, a three-course evening meal will be provided for those who choose to stay overnight. Following this, Founder's Day Awards will be presented to Members, volunteers or carers who have been nominated in recognition of their remarkable achievements and contribution.

### Accommodation

We will provide free accommodation to attendees for the night of the conference. However, Blind Veterans UK will be unable to provide accommodation for the night before the conference.

### Dress code

We want everyone to feel relaxed, so smart casual clothing is perfect and formal attire is not required.

### Registration deadline

You can only attend one conference. Registration closes on Friday, 27 March 2026. We will let you know if you've been successful via email or a phone call by Friday, 10 April.

- **Please register your interest in attending a conference at [blindveterans.org.uk/conference](https://blindveterans.org.uk/conference)**



# 'Every Penny Counts' campaign raises over £1,000

Member **John Brice** from Weston-Super-Mare in Somerset has raised over £1,000 in 18 months by collecting pennies in an old milk bottle

John, 79, launched his "Every Penny Counts" campaign in July 2024 as a way to give back for the support he has received over the past 11 years.

Keen to find a simple and cost effective way in which he, and others, could donate to Blind Veterans UK without spending a lot of money.



John's labelled milk cartons

John asked people across the country to save an old plastic milk bottle or cordial bottle and fill it with loose change.

He says, "Back in 2024, I racked my brain to think what could people do to support blind veterans that wouldn't cost a lot? Everyone has a milk carton, so I thought let's use it."

John remembered a national news story that reported on people discarding their 1p and 2p coins. He says: "Discarding them into our containers is a much better idea and has now raised over £1,000 to support blind veterans like me."

John joined the RAF in 1962 at the age of 15 and a half as a boy entrant, serving for over 26 years as a →



**John holding up his 'Every Penny Counts' milk cartons**

cook and then a catering clerk in the UK, Middle East, Ascension Island and North Africa. He was discharged with the rank of Sergeant in 1988.

He lost his sight in 2006 due to age related macular degeneration. He says: "I can remember the consultant appointment so clearly. She said I'd lose my central vision and all I heard was, "You're going to lose your sight in both of your eyes." I stood outside the hospital stunned and thought to myself, how the devil will I survive this?"

"Sometime later, I started to volunteer for Vision North Somerset. I was based at the hospital chatting to people going to their eye appointments when I spotted a leaflet for Blind Veterans UK and applied.

"The year I began receiving support from the charity was life-changing. I was so lacking in confidence when I attended an introduction week at one of their centres and remember thinking that everyone else around me was so happy. With the support and encouragement of staff and my fellow blind veterans, I soon realised I could still do a million and one things I hadn't thought were possible.

"The charity provided me with a magnifying mirror, which is an absolute

godsend – I wouldn't be able to shave without it. I also have computer software that allows me to zoom in on the text. This allows me to do everything on my computer including online shopping and banking. I hate to be a pain to others so this means I can do things for myself and not starve! I can also use it to plan journeys – meaning I can pop off with confidence after doing the preparation."

'Every Penny Counts' has been John's way of giving back to Blind Veterans UK. He has managed to fill his milk carton three times raising just over £948.21. What's more, thanks to the UK Government's Gift Aid scheme, Blind Veterans UK has been able to claim a further £237.05.

For those who don't know, the Gift Aid Scheme enables charities to claim an extra 25p from the government for every £1 you donate, at no extra cost to the donor. All the donor has to do is complete a one-time gift aid declaration confirming they are a UK tax-payer. This declaration enables Gift Aid to be claimed on past and future donations.

John says: "This is such an easy and affordable way to donate to the charity and I hope others will be inspired by how much I've managed to raise by just collecting coins.

"The milk bottle has become a talking point for visitors when they visit my house and feed it with their pennies. Every penny counts these days and if we work together those pennies will make pounds."

■ **If you'd like to get involved in the 'Every Penny Counts' campaign and donate your loose change, you can find all the information you need – including a printable label for your milk carton – at [blindveterans.org.uk/everypennycounts](http://blindveterans.org.uk/everypennycounts)**

## Gift Aid

**If you've made a donation of your own money to Blind Veterans UK, you can make sure Gift Aid can be claimed on your past and future donations by simply completing our online Gift Aid Declaration form. (Please note that Gift Aid cannot be claimed on money raised by charitable activities you've organised such as raffles or coffee mornings.)**

■ **Find the online form at [www.blindveterans.org.uk/support-us/gift-aid-your-donation/](http://www.blindveterans.org.uk/support-us/gift-aid-your-donation/) or request a printed version of our form by calling us on 0300 333 22 11.**

# A fond farewell to Barry

A message of thanks to our departing Chair of Trustees from our President **Colin Williamson**

I have been extremely fortunate during my time with St Dunstan's and, later, Blind Veterans UK to have served under five different Chairmen, each bringing their own distinctive style of leadership and their own unique personalities.

Barry Coupe and Blind Veterans UK share a long and proud history that spans many decades. As many of you will know, Barry's father, Des, was a longstanding Member, having lost his sight during the Second World War.

Des served on Motor Torpedo Boats and was blinded by shrapnel in December 1943 after an attack on enemy ships off the Dalmatian Islands, off the coast of what was then mainland Yugoslavia. Despite this life-changing injury, he forged an impressive career as a physiotherapist with Preston North End football club

during the legendary Tom Finney years of the 1950s.

Barry describes himself, with typical humour, as a 'petrol head' – an affectionate term for someone with a deep love of motorcars. He is a regular at Track Days at his local circuit, where he puts his high-performance cars through their paces at speeds most of us would struggle to imagine. He is also a passionate enthusiast of fine wines.

Throughout his time as Chairman, Barry has been widely liked and respected. He has offered strength and unwavering support to his fellow board members, particularly during some of the more challenging periods in the charity's recent history. His commitment to Blind Veterans UK - combined with his professionalism, warmth and his outgoing nature –

have made him an invaluable asset. His contribution to the organisation is truly exceptional and will never be forgotten.

One of Barry's greatest strengths has been his ability to make every board member feel at ease and confident in sharing our views, always knowing our opinions matter and are listened to with genuine respect.

In every sense, he has been a hardworking, capable and consistently supportive Chairman who has always

**“Barry is a very well-liked and respected Chairman who gives strength and support to other board members”**

led by example. I know I speak for all my fellow Trustees, Members, staff, volunteers, friends and families, and supporters of Blind Veterans UK when I say that we wish him every happiness and success in the next chapter of his life. 🇬🇧



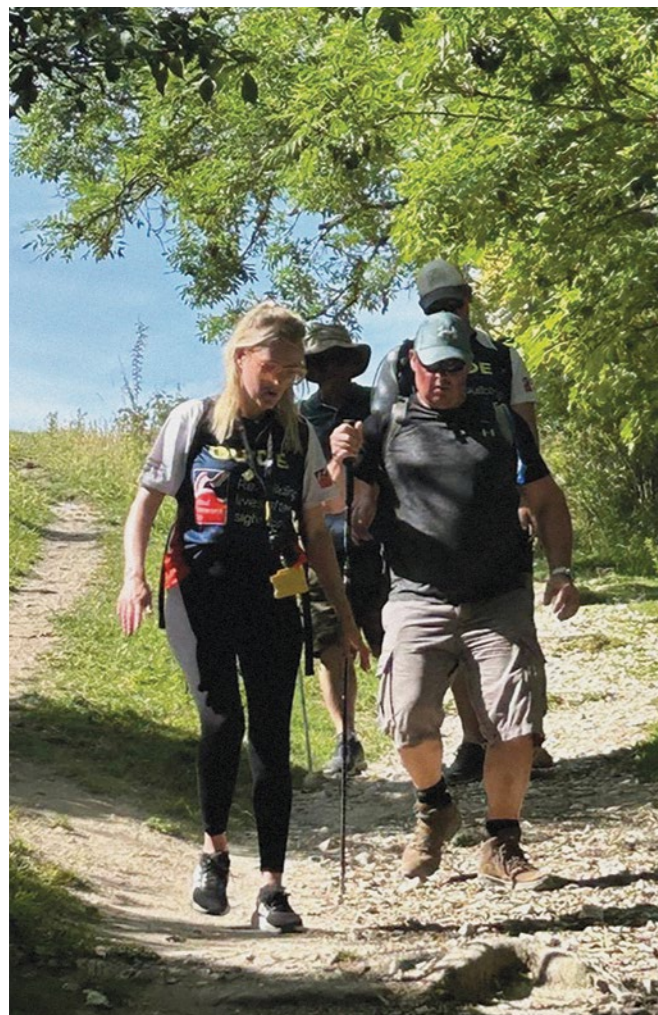
**Barry at the Cenotaph with Colin Williamson and Alan Holderness**



# Rustington Centre

As we move into spring, we'd like to remind everyone of the fantastic specialist activity weeks and dedicated breaks available at the Centre. We look forward to welcoming you!

**Activities Taster Week:** There's something for everyone in this taster week. You can try paddleboarding, hiking, golf, martial arts, rock climbing, axe throwing.... The list goes on!



Hiking in Rustington

**Adrenaline Week:** Get set for a buzzing week packed full of extreme activities that will get your heart pumping!

**Beginners Archery Week:** Enjoy learning the skills of archery guided by expert VI archery spotters, with years of experience.

**Bowls Week:** From beginners to frequent bowlers, everyone will be warmly welcomed on this week.

**Fishing Weeks:** Complete beginner? Years of experience? Come and enjoy fishing five beautiful Sussex lakes. All equipment and permits will be provided with experienced local volunteer anglers to support.

**Hiking Week:** Get your hiking boots, backpack and poles at the ready...

**Military Weeks:** Share stories from your days in the Armed Forces, compare modern military lifestyles and get hands on with equipment and

vehicles. We're offering a 13-night stay in November – our Military Week followed by a Wellbeing Week spanning Remembrance weekend.

**Strolling Week:** Come and enjoy the wonderful South Downs scenery and coastline with some gentle strolls and ambling walks.

**Carers Week:** Our Carers Week offers an opportunity for anyone who cares for a Blind Veterans UK Member to spend time with other carers, relaxing and sharing experiences.

**Wellbeing Breaks:** A chance to unwind and be pampered for a week.

### The cost of your stay

Our costs vary depending on whether you need care and if you lost your sight as a result of your service. Please note, Blind Veterans UK has a comprehensive grants policy so should you feel that cost is a barrier to you coming to stay, please do speak to your community team. Trips and activities are included in the cost of your break.

■ To register your interest, book or get more information, please call the Rustington Centre on 01903 945300 or go to [blindveterans.org.uk/centrebreaks-BVUK/](http://blindveterans.org.uk/centrebreaks-BVUK/)

Date	Week
30/03-05/04	Easter
04/05-10/05	Activity Week: Beginners Archery
04/05-10/05	Activity Week: Welcome Community 13
01/06-07/06	Archery Week
11/05-17/05	Activity Week: Activity Taster
24/05-31/05	Activity Week: Fishing
22/06-28/06	Military Week
29/06-05/07	Activity Week: Hiking
20/07-26/07	Activity Week: Fishing
03/08-09/08	Activity Week: Strolling
31/08-04/09	Activity Week: Bowls
31/08-06/09	Archery Week
07/09-13/09	Activity Week: Adrenaline
26/10-01/11	Carers Week
02/11-15/11	Military Week: 13nt stay
30/11-06/12	Turkey & Tinsel
07/12-13/12	Turkey & Tinsel

# Growing vegetables has helped my rehabilitation

After a high-flying career both in and outside the military, Member Andy Johnson shares his journey of adapting to sight loss and forging a new path in life

Member Andy was keen to find a new hobby that would benefit his family when he lost his sight and was forced to retire. The hobby he chose was to grow vegetables in his garden, which has not only given him an activity he can succeed at but also helped him maintain his mobility.

Andy, 66, served in the RAF for 24 years between 1976 and 2000 when he was discharged as a chief technician. He says: "When I was around 14, my parents took me to see the movie 'The Battle of Britain' and from that movie, I was hooked on the camaraderie, bravery and the whole spirit of what I saw as the Royal Air Force.

"I applied for an apprenticeship as an aircraft technician and was lucky enough to be one of 180 offered a

place out of 10,000 applicants. The apprenticeship was the making of me and made me who I am – the resilience and determination to never give in."

Andy's first posting was to RAF Kinloss, just outside Inverness, where he spent five years. During his time there he flew with Nimrods around the world, being on hand to maintain the aircraft. From there he was posted to RAF Odiham to work on Chinnock helicopters and then to RAF Akrotiri in Cyprus for a three-year posting. He says: "This was the cherry on the cake. I'd been there with my mum and dad from when I was three months old as my dad was in the Army, so I had vague memories from my time there.

"I finished out my career at RAF Lyneham and left the RAF in 2000

having served for 24 years as both a man and a boy."

Following his service, Andy worked for the airline Flybe, heading up the airline's maintenance department which covered most of Europe with around 19 bases and 300 engineers. He says: "My apprenticeship and military training have always stuck with me: resilience, respect and team working."

## First signs of sight loss

Andy first discovered he had glaucoma shortly after coming out of the RAF at

the age of 40. He says: "When I was 61, that's when my eyes started to give me real problems and I couldn't figure out what it was. I thought my reading glasses and sunglasses kept slipping down so I would be constantly pushing them up as it was like the top of the glasses was blocking my vision. Then I started to lose my peripheral vision. The eye drops I was taking for my glaucoma were no longer working."

These days, he has very little peripheral vision left. He says: "You could be standing next to me and I wouldn't have a clue you were there. As for →



Andy and his wife, Julie, enjoying a day out



**Andy and Julie**

my central vision, it's like I'm looking through a letterbox. Everything is very grey and it's much worse in the winter due to the light levels."

Due to his sight loss, Andy was forced to retire earlier than he'd planned. He says: "I had a very senior level job and I found it hard when I retired and just became a bloke – a chap with no power and no responsibilities. That was the first thing I had to get used to. But it wasn't until I stopped that I realised how much pressure I'd been

under – it was actually nice to lose that and just really slow down."

But shortly after retiring, he was diagnosed with bowel cancer and underwent surgery and five weeks of chemotherapy and radiotherapy.

Fortunately, Andy recovered and, in 2025, began to receive the support of Blind Veterans UK.

### Learning new skills

He says: "The welcome week served quite a few purposes. I had no idea what to expect but the whole setup was brilliant. I rely a great deal on my family, and my wife in particular, and there are points when you feel like she probably needs a break. My stay at Rustington gave her this while I was in a safe space. The staff were out of this world, as was the food!

"I had the opportunity to have cane training, which for me was a big thing. My local pub up the road is a five minute walk but I couldn't go on my own. My objective with my long cane training was to get to the pub!

"At first, I saw myself as this old geezer with a long cane tapping along the road. But after doing the training, I started to realise that this is who I am now and it's not so bad – I can get to the pub and to the shop. I

can stand tall. It's actually quite a skill to use a long cane and it's changed me. I've grown in confidence. "I've also been helped by the charity with technology, such as a magnifying glass, good lighting and tech for my phone."

### A healthy hobby

It's not just Andy's confidence that's growing – he's made the most of having free time and has taken up gardening and growing vegetables. This allows him to provide for the family and maintain his mobility.

"Gardening is an activity that you don't have to rush – I can do it in my own time and keeping my plants watered is quite physical and helps me to maintain my mobility. I also manage to mow my lawn by using markers placed at the borders that I can see and aim towards allowing me to cut the grass in straight lines."

### Last year, Andy's bumper crop included courgettes, aubergines and cucumbers. Here's his tips for any aspiring gardeners out there:

- I grow my crops in the greenhouse or in raised beds as this makes them easier to access. I grow the seeds into seedlings starting them off indoors and when they are stronger and healthier, I plant them into pots in my greenhouse.

**"It's actually quite a skill to use a long cane and it's changed me. I've grown in confidence"**

- I group the different crops together so that I know where each vegetable is and I use labels written as largely as I can to help identify them.
- In March, I start turning the soil in my raised flowerbed ready for planting my root veg.
- I try to grow plants which are quite large and have fairly large fruits and flowers to make it easier for myself. Last year I planted cherry tomatoes but I won't do that again as I kept standing on them!
- If you are going to grow cucumbers, don't go for the long ones – choose a shorter, stubbier variety as they grow much easier.
- With chillis, buy a plant rather than trying to grow them from seed.
- Pollinate your courgettes! The female flower has the start of a tiny courgette at its base; the dog flower doesn't. Get a makeup brush, twiddle it into the dog flower on the stamen, put that into the female flower's stamen. Then you'll get courgettes!
- Aubergines need the right size pot to let them grow and they need a lot of sun. 🍆

Listen here



**Bryan, centre, with corporate partners Josh and Salman**

**Bryan, smiling and holding his postcard illustration of Sandhurst**

**Top: Guests mingling at the event. Bottom: our venue, The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst**

# A celebration at Sandhurst

Last month, Members joined some of our current and potential charity corporate partners at a special event held at The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS)

The event was an inspiring celebration of resilience, achievement and community spirit. Designed to shine a spotlight on the remarkable stories of our Members, it also offered a valuable opportunity to connect with the corporate organisations whose support is vital to the charity's work.

Sponsored by two of our corporate partners, Amazon and Corps Security, this event held special significance as

it took place at the prestigious Royal Military Academy Sandhurst – a world-leading institution responsible for training future leaders of the British Army.

Guests were welcomed by Member Alan Lock, who opened the event by sharing his powerful personal story. This was followed by an engaging history of Sandhurst delivered by Brigadier Nick Wight-Boycott →

OBE. Blind Veterans UK itself has a long-standing relationship with Sandhurst. Over the year, blind veterans have taken part in numerous archery competitions at the academy, often competing against sighted teams from our serving Armed Forces.

### Past and present gifts

During one memorable visit to Sandhurst in 1982, blind and deaf WWII veteran Tommy Gaygan, who also lost his hand in the war, presented the commanding officer with an oak coffee table made by a fellow blind veteran. More than 40 years on, that very table was in the room at our event.

This time around, on behalf of the charity, Brigadier Wight-Boycott OBE was presented with another special gift – a painting produced specially by blind veteran Bryan Naylor. Bryan is a keen artist who has found ways to adapt his skill since losing his sight. He joined the Royal Navy in November 1959 after completing an apprenticeship in the Merchant Navy and spent 12 years in the Navy flying in helicopters. Upon retirement, he joined a joint service unit of the Royal Naval Reserve, which was comprised of people of all ranks from all three services, and finally retired in 1999.

Bryan's gift to Sandhurst depicts four

**“Over the past year, Stuart has demonstrated immense courage, resilience and determination”**

figures: a soldier from the Waterloo era, another from WWII, one from the modern day, and a veteran. Another of his pictures – an illustration of the Old College at Sandhurst – was made into postcards and given out to guests.

Bryan said: “I’m feeling extremely proud and a little humbled. My picture will be presented in the Waterloo Room which has the most beautiful picture of the Battle of Waterloo at one end.”

After the presentation, Members John Hardy BEM and Richard Jenkins gave the Grace and Toast respectively, and Wayne Perry led the guests into the Indian Army Memorial Room for dinner carrying the charity's standard.

### Life beyond sight loss

Two very special guests were presented with Founder's Awards – the charity's highest honour. One of those, blind veteran Stu Rodd, received our Life Beyond Sight Loss Award. Stu also shared his moving story in a live interview with our



Rebuilding lives after sight loss



### Member Stuart, who shared his moving story at the event

Military Engagement and Events Coordinator, Rob Coterill.

Prior to losing his sight, Stuart was working as a successful businessman – physically fit, independent and surrounded by animals he loved, including dogs and horses. But everything changed in 2021 when he began experiencing unexplained blackouts. Following one episode, he spent eight months in a coma.

His consultants didn't believe he would survive but eventually he woke to a devastating new reality – he'd lost his sight, his business, his home and his animals. He spent a further three years in residential rehabilitation

before he was referred to us in 2024 with little sense of where to start again.

Stu described himself at that time as a broken man, unsure how to begin rebuilding his life. However, over the past year, he has demonstrated immense courage, resilience and determination and, with the right support, is now thriving.

These days, Stu continues to rebuild his life and is pushing himself in bold new ways. He completed the South Coast Ultra last year and walked 50km across the South Downs, raising an incredible £7,500 for Blind Veterans UK. →

### A dedicated volunteer

The second recipient of the Founder's Award was volunteer Paddy Henshaw who was nominated by Member Sue Eyles. Paddy has been a huge support to Sue as she adjusts to life with a new guide dog – so much so that he now even joins her, the guide dog and the Guide Dogs trainer for their training sessions.



**Our Standard Bearer, Wayne**

**“I’m feeling extremely proud. And a little humbled. My picture will be presented in the Waterloo Room”**

Among his many other contributions, Paddy also regularly drives blind veterans to their fortnightly arts and craft clubs and has supported others taking part in walking challenges and a wide range of activities. His nomination summed it up perfectly: “He is just so dedicated to Blind Veterans UK that he will do whatever he can, whenever help and support is needed.”

The moment was made even more special when Paddy received his award from a current Sandhurst Officer Cadet – his own son, Matthew.

Following the event, Adrian Bell said: “This really was a special opportunity to gather our blind veterans together with our current, and possibly future, corporate partners. I would like to offer my congratulations to Stu and Paddy for their awards and my sincere thanks to Amazon, Corps Security, and The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst for making this event possible.” 🇬🇧



**Member Simon**

## Use our trusted Free Wills service

Having an up-to-date Will is so important. It ensures your wishes are understood, your loved ones are protected, and your affairs are handled exactly as you intend

Blind Veterans UK has partnered with two trusted providers to offer a free Will service to Members and their families, helping you plan for the future with confidence. The service is

simple, stress-free, and managed by qualified legal professionals. Those who have used the service have told us how reassuring it feels to have their Will completed. →

One of those is blind veteran, Simon. Many of you may know Simon, who lost his sight on his third tour of Iraq in 2006 as a Corporal in REME. He was called to rescue a stranded vehicle following an insurgent attack. During the extraction, as the vehicle pulled away, he was shot in the face by a sniper. Both his cheekbones were shattered, his jaw was broken and the roof of his mouth collapsed. His left eye was destroyed and he was left with only 20 per cent vision in his right.



PRESSMASTER / ADOBE STOCK

An older couple

## “Simon used the Free Wills Service and described the process as ‘painless’”

When Simon decided it was time to prepare his Will, he used our trusted free service and found the process straightforward and reassuring.

“Writing or updating your Will means that you’ve got important people in your life that you want to make sure are taken care of. It was made simple and stressfree. It helped me feel confident that my family will be looked after, and I could give something back to the charity that stood by me when everything changed.”

### Trusted Services

When writing or updating your Will, it’s important to choose a service that feels right for you. You can locate your own solicitor – a list is available at [solicitors.lawsociety.org.uk](http://solicitors.lawsociety.org.uk) – or you are welcome to choose one of the reputable free Wills services we have partnered with. Both are designed to make the process clear and straightforward.

### Free Wills Network

This service arranges a meeting with

JACOB LUND / ADOBE STOCK



### A couple writing their Will

a local solicitor who will write your Will in a face-to-face meeting with you. Once you request your free Will offer from us, you will receive a list of solicitors in your area. You choose the solicitor you prefer and then meet them to discuss your wishes. Many beneficiaries value this option because it allows them to speak directly with a legal professional and receive reassurance throughout.

Simon used the Free Wills Network and described the process as “painless,” adding, “The solicitor talked me through it, and I felt at ease. I wasn’t forced into making any decisions and everything was explained in full.”

■ To get started with this service, you can call Alice at Blind Veterans UK on 020 7616 7923.

### Make a Will online

This service allows you to write your Will from the comfort of your home. You begin by answering a short online questionnaire, review the information you have provided, and then have your Will drafted and checked by a legal expert. Your completed Will is posted to you for signing.

■ To begin, visit [blindveterans.org.uk/freewills](http://blindveterans.org.uk/freewills).

There is no obligation to leave a gift to Blind Veterans UK when writing a Will through these services, although many choose to leave a percentage to support future blind veterans once they’ve provided for their family and friends. These special gifts fund support for five in ten of our veterans and enable us to be there for veterans long into the future.

Whether you use the service now or in the future, our trusted partners are here to help you write or update your Will simply and with confidence. 🇬🇧

**To learn more about the services available, or about leaving a gift to Blind Veterans UK, call Alice on 020 7616 7923, email [giftsinwills@blindveterans.org.uk](mailto:giftsinwills@blindveterans.org.uk), or visit [blindveterans.org.uk/freewills](http://blindveterans.org.uk/freewills).**

# Is wearable tech worth it?

A beginner's guide to smartglasses, smartwatches and boneconduction headphones for people with sight loss

Wearable technology has grown from simple gadgets into essential tools that support many people with vision impairments. Modern devices help users navigate, communicate, manage health, and access information in ways that promote confidence and independence. Three of the most useful types of wearables are smart glasses, smartwatches, and boneconduction or openear headphones. Each offers important benefits, as well as practical considerations and possible barriers to independent use.

## Smart glasses: seeing the world through AI

Smart glasses are one of the biggest advancements in assistive technology. Today's devices use cameras, sensors and artificial intelligence to describe surroundings, read text aloud, recognise faces, and even guide users

indoors. By 2025, they had become even more advanced with realtime text-to-speech, object recognition, and boneconduction audio that keeps ears free for environmental awareness.

Popular models such as Envision Glasses and Meta Glasses can now provide scene descriptions, read text in different languages, and identify facial expressions. These improvements continue to change how tech supports people with sight loss in daily life.

### Pros

- Handsfree access to visual information, useful for reading signs, identifying products, and navigating.
- Boneconduction audio keeps the ears open, helping users stay aware of their environment.

### Cons

- High cost compared to mainstream devices.
- Some users may find gesture controls or AI features difficult at first.
- Battery life may limit long outdoor trips.
- Requires good lighting.

### Things to consider

- Smart glasses differ widely in weight, comfort and frame design, so trying them first is helpful.
- Some models offer prescription lenses or tinted sun lenses.

- Wearing glare-reducing glasses over smart glasses can affect performance.

### Barriers to independent use

- Indoor navigation and scene recognition depend on lighting or external building features.
- Too much audio feedback can feel overwhelming for some users.

### Smartwatches: navigation, health and independence on the wrist

Smartwatches have become extremely valuable for people with vision impairments because they →



ADOBE PHOTO STOCK / KASPARS GRINVALDS

Smart glasses are one of the advancements in assistive technology

combine haptic (vibration), voice and gesture controls. Devices such as the Apple Watch provide VoiceOver, sound recognition, wrist taps for directions, and handsfree control using Siri. Some sports and fitness watches, like those from Garmin, are also used, though accessibility varies.

### Pros

- Quick access to notifications, navigation prompts, and safety tools such as fall detection.
- Features like haptic timetelling, turn-by-turn vibrations, and voice commands support discreet and independent use.
- Some newer models work with offline voice recognition and custom



**Smartwatches are valuable for people with vision impairments**

wake words, reducing the need to touch the screen at all.

### Cons

- Small screens can be challenging, even with screen readers.
- Gesture controls may be tricky for some users and may not always respond accurately.
- Battery life can be reduced when using GPS or constant health monitoring.

### Things to consider

- Not all features are available on all operating systems. Apple usually provides stronger accessibility support.
- Strap comfort, button design, and preferred output (haptic or spoken) can affect ease of use.

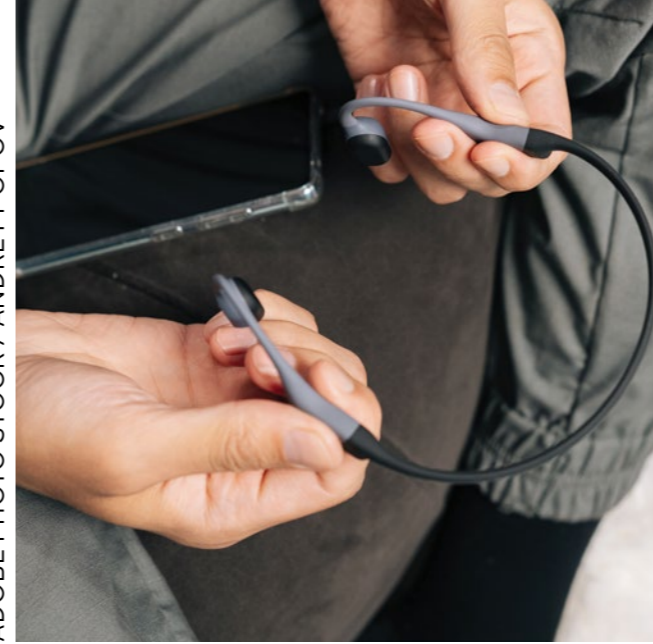
### Barriers to independent use

- Complicated menus or app layouts can make navigation difficult.
- Initial setup may require support to turn on and customise accessibility features.
- Many sports focused watches still offer limited accessibility.

### Headphones: OpenEar audio for safe and accessible listening

For people with vision impairments, headphones play an important role in safe mobility and information access.

ADOBE PHOTO STOCK / ANDREY POPOV



### Boneconduction headphones send sound through the cheekbones

Boneconduction headphones are especially popular because they send sound through the cheekbones instead of blocking the ears. This allows users to hear navigation instructions, AI descriptions, or screenreader speech while still listening to surrounding sounds like traffic and conversations.

### Pros

- Clear audio without blocking environmental sounds—ideal for travel and orientation.
- Comfortable for longterm wear and compatible with smartphones, apps, and smart glasses.
- Openear designs avoid the muffled or isolated feeling of traditional earbuds.

### Cons

- Some users feel mild vibrations at higher volumes.
- Wind noise outdoors can make audio harder to hear.

### Things to consider

- Designs vary (headband, earhook, or clip-on), so comfort and fit differ between users.
- Water resistance ratings are important for outdoor travel.
- Stable Bluetooth pairing is essential, especially when used with navigation devices or smart glasses.

### Barriers to independent use

- Too many audio sources at once—apps, traffic, notifications—can overwhelm users.
- Pairing or switching audio sources may require help depending on the user's Bluetooth skills.

### Conclusion

Smart glasses, smartwatches and boneconduction headphones each offer powerful ways to support independence for people with vision impairments. From AI-driven visual descriptions to tactile navigation cues and safe openear audio, these devices can significantly enhance everyday life. However, challenges such as high costs, complex setup, sensory overload and varied accessibility must be considered. As wearable technology continues to improve, it promises even more intuitive and inclusive solutions that place independence directly in the hands of users. 🧠

# Don't let your passions slip through the net

Your hobbies support your wellbeing, says Blind Veterans UK ROVI **Bryan Kilburn**, so how about giving our upcoming fishing weeks a try?

When you lose your sight as I have, it's completely normal to feel like your hobbies are no longer possible. But I'd encourage you to think about that. It may be true that you can't do the things you love to do in quite the same way but often, with a bit of thought and adjustment, you can still enjoy them. And that's what counts.

A good example of this is fishing – the most popular participation sport in the UK and one with proven benefits for our overall wellbeing. Of course, you may not be able to see the float bobbing around or the rod tip jerk as a fish takes the bait, but there are other ways to fish. For example, what if you simply hold the rod with the line

behind a finger? And how about using a modern bite alarm? There are always little tips we can share.

We have a full programme of wellbeing weeks this year for Members, giving you the chance to try out activities under the guidance of our staff and fellow Members. The activities are designed for all abilities, whether you're experienced or trying something for the first time. And the best thing is that hobbies often grow into supportive social networks, too.

Developing your pastimes can make life more enriching – and our wellbeing weeks are a great place to start. So, why not come along to beautiful Sussex



## Fishing has been found to improve our wellbeing

for some wonderful fishing, or find something else that inspires you?

### Bryan's fishing tips

Fishing has been found to improve our wellbeing to such an extent that the NHS can now prescribe angling for anxiety and depression. Our ROVI Bryan shares some of his tips for fishing with low vision

### Getting a licence

Every angler should have a Rod License, and you'll be happy to hear that a disabled persons license will save you a few pounds. You get the licence online. The GOV.UK website is the official, recommended way to buy one. Prices vary based on the type of fish (trout/

coarse or salmon/sea trout) and the number of rods used. Children under 13 don't need a licence, but those aged 13–16 must obtain a free junior licence. A rod licence is legally required for fishing in freshwater (rivers, canals, ponds, lakes) in England and Wales, but it's not needed for sea fishing.

### Preparing before you go

Setting up some of your equipment before you set off could save you a lot of time and frustration. For example, you could prepare by setting up your rod with a swivel clip tied to the end with the help of good lighting at home.

You might find it easier to keep your rods set up with a running swivel →

clip and a second one on the end. The rod is then simply folded and held together with elastic bands. Then when you arrive at the bank you can quickly put the rod together, then clip a weight on to the sliding swivel and a rig on the end. The rig can be baited beforehand.

### Ledgering the line

The simplest option for ledgering the line is to do it over your finger. With the help of ready-tied hooks and simple clip connectors, fishing can become a lot less fiddly. Ideally, for larger fish, you'll need an audible alarm for bite indication and ready-tied hooks or rigs. Fishing like this on a running ledger allows effective bite indication and is still nice and simple.

### Choosing your equipment

These days most fishing equipment comes in green and camouflage which doesn't lend itself to good contrast, so you might want to think about adding brightly coloured paint or tape so you can find your rod or net easily.

Camping gear often has more options for colourful chairs, bags and containers. If you have low vision you're best off going for bright colours.

### Staying safe by the water

In terms of safety – for both you and the fish – you may want to consider the following:

### Be organised

Avoid barbed hooks and keep your tools and tackle well organised.

### Stay connected

Have someone with you or use walkie talkies to stay in touch with others around the lake.

### Have a plan

Use an unhooking mat with edges so the fish doesn't slide around and have a plan in place for how you're going to return the fish to the water.

### Go in a group

The fishing weeks at Rustington are suitable for all abilities, from beginners who have never tried it, to those who'd just like a bit of help to dip a line.

### Join a local club

There are clubs set up to help people with disabilities – and even fishing venues that aren't but are happy to help where they can. It's often just a case of asking.

■ **Turn to page 18 for a list of our activities at Rustington. The fishing weeks will take place on 24 May and 20 July.**

■ **For more on fishing with sight loss, visit the British Disabled Angling Association at [bdaa.co.uk](http://bdaa.co.uk)**



# Member voice

Introducing our national events for 2026/27 and information on becoming a Member Ambassador

### Member Ambassadors

The Member Engagement team are pleased to announce the launch of the Ambassador Programme, enabling Members to share their sight loss journey, support our national events and educate others on the great work we do. Whether you wish to become a public speaker, standard bearer, bugler or fundraiser, your support will make a huge difference.

**The scheme will launch from 1 April**

**2026 and we are now recruiting for a limited number of roles in the following locations:**

- Edinburgh, SE of Scotland
- Northern Ireland, NE of Ireland
- Newcastle, NE of England
- Leeds, N of England
- Manchester, NW of England
- Liverpool, NW of England
- Birmingham, West Midlands
- Nottingham, East Midlands
- North Wales



**Members and supporters enjoying a day at RAF Coningsby, March 2026**

- South Wales
- London, SE of England
- Plymouth, SW of England

Between Thursday 9 May to Saturday 11 May, training for chosen National Ambassadors responsible for corporate and public speaking activities will be provided at the Holiday Inn, Manchester City Centre.

National Ambassadors chosen for Standard Bearer and Bugler roles will be given training opportunities within Q2-2026.

If you would like more information about these fantastic opportunities, or would like to register your interest, please email us at [met@blindveterans.org.uk](mailto:met@blindveterans.org.uk).

### **Military Sight Loss Champions**

We're looking for veterans and service personnel to join our Military Sight Loss Champions scheme and make a real difference to the lives of vision-impaired veterans.

### **What's a champion?**

That depends on you. A 'champion' could be an individual, division, squadron, regiment or an entire establishment. It all depends on how you want to get involved and support us.

### **Who can be one?**

Anyone who has served or continues to serve in the UK Armed Forces. You may have experience of sight loss through family or simply want to help vision-impaired veterans get more out of life. Whatever your story, we'd love to hear from you.

### **As part of the scheme, there are two roles available to Members:**

#### **Champion Liaisons**

We encourage veterans who are active Mess or Military Association members to volunteer as our Champion Liaisons. This important role acts as our voice and lets us know about any upcoming events that may be of interest.

You will also share information about upcoming events on behalf of your organisation to promote new opportunities to blind veterans who may not be able to access this information themselves.

#### **Education on sight loss and inspiring speakers**

We are also looking for Member to become trained public speakers, sharing useful information, along with your own extraordinary personal accounts of living with sight loss and time in service.

**Please register your interest in these opportunities at [blindveterans.org.uk/champion](https://blindveterans.org.uk/champion)**



Listen here

# National Creative Project

This month's VI-friendly creative activities you can take part in – all from the comfort of your own home

Spring is finally upon us and we're delighted to introduce the projects available from the NCP in March over the page. Please feel free to take part in as many of the projects as you like. To request a kit, simply leave a

message on the NCP voicemail on **01273 391 447** or email us at [ncwt@blindveterans.org.uk](mailto:ncwt@blindveterans.org.uk). You can also request a kit via the Member's area of the website at [blindveterans.org.uk/member](https://blindveterans.org.uk/member). →



MARIIA / ADOBE STOCK

**This year's Surprise Seeds project will include cornflower seeds**



**Deer head wooden model**

### Surprise seeds 2026

This is a yearly project where we share seeds for you to grow in your gardens in memory of the late Jim Long. Jim came up with this idea to unite his fellow Members. We'll be sending carrot, spring onion, basil and cornflower seeds – all separated into labelled bags. You will receive a fact sheet about each plant in the pack to help you get started. **(Small seeds but suitable for all gardening abilities.)**

### Deer head wooden model

This simple wooden model is made up of 20 large pieces and can be displayed

Our dear head kit is ideal for beginners as an introduction to model making as it's easier than our usual model kits

on the wall once finished. This is ideal for beginners as an introduction to model making as it's easier than our usual model kits, plus you can always ask for some help from family and friends! **(Suitable for beginners.)**

### Holiday landscapes (watercolour painting)

This kit has been created to help you enjoy the calming, expressive nature of watercolour painting, using soft washes of colour inspired by the feeling of summer – from quiet beaches and bright gardens to peaceful countryside paths. You'll receive a palette of 36 watercolour tablets, a variety of brushes, watercolour paper, and some high contrast masking tape to explore this versatile art technique. **(Suitable for beginners to experienced artists.)**

### Also available:

#### Sweet treats mandala

We still have some Valentine's Day themed mandala mosaics available. Your tiles will be sorted out for you into labelled bags for this step-by-step mindful pattern. These mosaics

make lovely gifts, place mats or wall decorations. **(Suitable for confident beginners.)**

We're also able to take pre-orders for the Jeep project which we will start to send out this month.

### Your feedback matters:

**Thank you for continuing to share your feedback forms with us** – these are invaluable in helping us continually improve the NCP service and the projects we offer. We can't respond individually, so here's some answers to recent frequently asked questions:

**Mosaic tiles** – thanks for all your lovely feedback about our bespoke mosaic



**Holiday landscapes kit**

designs. Some feedback has come through that the smaller tiles can be fiddly. There are a couple of imminent projects already designed and ready, but when we create future designs we'll make sure that the vast majority of tiles we use are larger – though we may still include some smaller ones occasionally for those who enjoy a challenge! You can always make up your own design if you're stuck and if you need spare large tiles please get in touch and we can send some out.

**Mosaic bases** – some of you have pointed out that designs starting from the centre of a base are more difficult and need to be marked. Thank you for this feedback – we will work with our supplier to see if we can change our engraving and make sure the majority of designs start from the edges and work in.

**Bulbs** – we're so pleased that so many of you enjoyed the hyacinth project that we actually ran out! A few of you commented on the novelty of growing bulbs in slate chips so we wanted to let you know that you can also grow 'paperwhite narcissus' bulbs in slate as these do not need soil. Other plants that are easy to care for without soil are air plants – these need a weekly soak to stay healthy and can be placed in terrariums and decorative planters. 🌱



# Quiz time

Our quizmaster **Ron Russell** tests your general knowledge

1. Which colour appears on more national flags than any other?
2. What is the only even prime number?
3. What does MBA stand for?
4. Who is considered the father of modern computer science?
5. What is the only type of bird that can fly backwards?
6. What is a group of flamingos called?
7. What is the name of the three-headed dog in Harry Potter?
8. From what grain is whiskey made?
9. Which country celebrates 'tomatina' with an annual tomato fight?
10. What was the first ever toy advertised on television?

*Answers (flipped) at the bottom of page 45*

ROBERT KNESCHKE / ADOBE STOCK



# Family news

## Birthdays

**John Bate** who celebrates his 102nd birthday on 30 April 2026.

**Edna Bowman-Sutton** who celebrates her 100th birthday on 8 April 2026.

**Alan Dickins** who celebrates his 101st birthday on 24 April 2026.

**Catherine Drummond** who celebrates her 104th birthday on 7 April 2026.

**James Fenton** who celebrates his 104th birthday on 21 April 2026.

**Joyce Gough** who celebrates her 100th birthday on 26 April 2026.

**Derrick Grubb** who celebrates his 102nd birthday on 12 April 2026.

**Sidney Jennings** who celebrates his 101st birthday on 18 April 2026.

**John Morris** who celebrates his 104th birthday on 22 April 2026.

**Alec Penstone** who celebrates his 101st birthday on 23 April 2026.

**Gerald Perryman** who celebrates his 100th birthday on 13 April 2026.

**Joyce Poolman** who celebrates her 106th birthday on 30 April 2026.

**Joseph Sanderson** who celebrates his 100th birthday on 19 April 2026.

**Dennis Smith** who celebrates his 100th birthday on 2 April 2026.

**Quiz answers:** 1. Red 2. Two 3. Master of Business Administration 4. Alan Turing 5. Hummingbird 6. A flamboyance 7. Fluffy 8. Barley 9. Spain 10. Mr Potato Head

**Leslie Sunter** who celebrates his 100th birthday on 23 April 2026.

**Phyllis Vernon** who celebrates her 102nd birthday on 4 April 2026.

**Robert Wheelhouse** who celebrates his 105th Birthday on 18 April 2026.

### Condolences

It is with deep regret that we record the deaths of the following, and we offer our heartfelt condolences.



**Jennifer Bennett** who died on 29 December 2026. She was the wife of Bill Bennett.

**Sheila Chamber** who died on 3 January 2026. She was the wife of William Chambers.

**Winifred Docherty** who died on 7 January 2026. She was the wife of Harry Docherty.

**Jeanette Finley** who died on 24 December 2026. She was the wife of Tony Finley.

**Kathrine Goddon** who died on 1 January 2026. She was the wife of Bill Goddon.

**Margaret O'brien** who died on 8 January 2026. She was the wife of Derek O'brien.

**Janet Paton** who died on 2 January 2026. She was the wife of John Paton.

**Elizabeth Schartau** who died on 1 February 2026. She was the wife of John Schartau.

*All birthday information was correct at the time of going to press*



# In memory

It is with deep regret that we record the deaths of the following Members and we offer our heartfelt condolences to their widows, widowers, families and friends

**Brian Alger** of Llanwrtyd Wells who died on 1 February 2026 aged 83. He served as a Private in The Kings Shropshire Light Infantry.

**James Baker** of Cheltenham who died on 1 February 2026 aged 93. He served as a Sergeant in The Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

**Ian Bacon** of Poole who died on 23 December 2025 aged 80. He served as a Senior Airman in The Royal Air Force.

**Ronald Barber** of Salford who died on 1 February 2026 aged 96. He served as a Corporal in The Royal Marines.

**Eric Bainbridge** of Stockport who died on 14 January 2026 aged 90. He served in The Royal Armoured Corps.

**Anthony Best** of Slough who died on 9 January 2026 aged 99. He served as a Trooper in The General Service Corps. →

**Michael Bishop** of Wotton-Under-Edge who died on 16 December 2025 aged 99. He served as a Lance Corporal in The Gloucestershire Regiment.

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**James Bridge** of Nottingham who died on 5 January 2026 aged 99. He served as a Private in The Royal Artillery.

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**John Cattanach** of Billericay who died on 31 December 2025 aged 91. He served as an S.A.C in The Royal Air Force.

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**Patrick Collins** of Felixstowe who died on 8 January 2026 aged 89. He served as a Sergeant in The Army Air Corps.

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**Frederick Corns** of Stockton-On-Tees who died on 19 December 2025 aged 96. He served as a Mechanic in The Royal Air Force.

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**Geoffrey Deaney** of Walsall who died on 7 January 2026 aged 78. He served as a Warrant Officer 2nd Class in The Parachute Regiment.

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**Kenneth Dix** of Poole who died on 1 January 2026 aged 95. He served as a Wing Commander in The Royal Air Force.

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**Susan Dunham** of Carnoustie who died on 1 January 2026 aged 71. She served as a Leading Wren in The Women's Royal Naval Reserve.

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**Ronald Duxbury** of Blackburn who died on 9 January 2026 aged 86. He served as a Gunner in The Royal Artillery.

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**Gerard Fleming** of Bishop Auckland who died on 23 January 2026 aged 94. He served as an A.C.1 in The Royal Air Force.

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**James Ford** of Horley who died on 6 December 2025 aged 97. He served as a Private in The General Service Corps.

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**David Garling** of Cambridge who died on 1 January 2026 aged 88. He served as a Sergeant in The Royal Artillery.

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**Michael Gatford** of Telford who died on 17 December 2025 aged 88. He served as a Warrant Officer in The Royal Army Ordnance Corps.

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**Colin Gilchrist** of South Shields who died on 1 December 2025 aged 90. He served as a Lance Corporal in The Durham Light Infantry.

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**Robert Gooch** of Welling who died on 9 January 2026 aged 90. He served as a Private in The Royal Army Pay Corps.

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**Francis Grant** of Stowmarket who died on 1 January 2026 aged 101. He served as a Royal Marine.

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**William Greatorex** of Shrewsbury who died on 31 January 2026 aged 92. He served as a Captain in The Royal Army Pay Corps.

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**Bryan Greenwood** of Sheffield who died on 29 January 2026 aged 91. He served in The Royal Air Force.

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**Gerrard Hodgkinson** of Carlisle who died on 3 February 2026 aged 92. He served as a Gunner in The Royal Artillery.

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**Glanville Hole** of Llantwit Major who died on 11 January 2026 aged 97. He served as a Flight Sergeant in The Royal Air Force.

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**Thomas Holland** of Bolden Colliery who died on 1 December 2025 aged 90. He served in The Royal Armoured Corps.

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**Leslie Hutt** of Reading who died on 20 January 2026 aged 104. He served as a Sergeant in The Royal Armoured Corps.

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**Joseph Jervis** of Salford who died on 1 January 2026 aged 102. He served as an A.C.1 in The Royal Air Force.

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**Peter Keevil** of Maidenhead who died on 20 December 2025 aged 93. He served in The Royal Navy.

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**Thomas Kimblin** of Oldham who died on 15 January 2026 aged 99. He served as a Lance Corporal in The Royal Air Force.

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**Brian McCormack** of Rochdale who died on 1 December 2025 aged 89. He served as a Gunner in The Royal Artillery.

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**Samuel Meers** of Peacehaven who died on 21 January 2026 aged 81. He served as a Private in The Kings Own Scottish Borderers.

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**John Meikle** of Winscombe who died on 29 January 2026 aged 90. He served as a Lance Corporal in The Royal Signals.

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**Peter Moore** of Lydney who died on 9 October 2025 aged 75. He served as a Lance Corporal in The Staffordshire Regiment.

---

**Ian Partridge** of Louth who died on 29 December 2025 aged 89. He served as a Flight Sergeant in The Royal Air Force.

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**Clifford Payne** of Cardiff who died on 1 February 2026 aged 99. He served in The Royal Welsh Fusiliers.

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**Robert Peach** of Romsey who died on 14 January 2026 aged 93. He served as an L.A.C in The Royal Air Force.

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**Andrew Penman** of Peterborough who died on 23 January 2026 aged 90. He served as a Corporal in The Royal Air Force.

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**Martin Phin** of Forfar who died on 26 December 2025 aged 80. He served as a Corporal in The Royal Military Police.

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**Brian Powell** of Eye who died on 19 January 2026 aged 90. He served as a Lance Corporal in The Royal Engineers.

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**Pamela Rivers** of Felixstowe who died on 15 December 2025 aged 84. She served in The Womens Royal Army Corps.

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**Anne Sexton** of Tadworth who died on 1 January 2026 aged 94. She served as an A.C.1 in The Royal Air Force.

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**Ronald Simpson** of Morpeth who died on 11 October 2025 aged 86. He served as an L.A.C in The Royal Air Force.

---

**William Simpson** of Worksop who died on 1 January 2026 aged 103. He served as a Sapper in The Reconnaissance Corps.

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**William Stacey** of Nottingham who died on 1 February 2026 aged 74. He served as a Lance Corporal in The Gordon Highlanders.

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**John Swayne** of Boldon Colliery who died on 21 January 2026 aged 94. He served as a Able Seaman in The Royal Navy.

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**David Sykes** of Chertsey who died on 31 December 2025 aged 88. He served as a Signaller in The Royal Signals.

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**Fredrick Walters** of Penarth who died on 13 December 2025 aged 94. He served as a Stoker Mechanic in The Royal Navy.

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**Laurence Watson** of Yarm who died on 26 January 2026 aged 94. He served in The Royal Air Force.

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**George Whatmore** of Middlesborough who died on 13 January 2026 aged 92. He served as a Sapper in The Royal Engineers.

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**Roger Willcox** of Newton Abbot who died on 8 January 2026 aged 90. He served as an S.A.C in The Royal Air Force.

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**Vivian Yates** of South Sheilds who died on 21 December 2025 aged 92. She served as an L.A.C.W in The Women's Royal Air Force.

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