

FAREWELL GINNY!

GINNY RETIRES AFTER 42 INCREDIBLE YEARS
IN THE OPTICAL INDUSTRY

REFURB NEWS

YOUR BEXHILL STORE IS GETTING
AN EXCITING FRESH LOOK!

SOOTHE YOUR EYES

READ OUR GUIDE FOR HEALTHIER EYES
THIS SPRING

INSIDE:
OUR EYE
HEALTHY
SALAD!



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BARRACLOUGHS BULLETIN

Welcome to our spring newsletter! As the days lengthen (finally!) and the pollen counts rise, we're focusing on a common springtime complaint: dry eyes. Many of us experience that gritty, irritated feeling, especially with increased screen time and seasonal allergies. Inside, we'll explore the causes, symptoms and solutions to keep your eyes comfortable and healthy this season. You can also find out what the Barracloughs team have been up to and learn more about maintaining healthy vision!



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EXCELLENT

*Thank you to our
amazing customers!*



A fond farewell, best of luck Ginny!

It's with a mix of joy and a touch of sadness that the Barracloughs family bid a fond farewell to our Ginny, described as the heart and soul of our Uckfield store, as she embarks on a well-deserved retirement.

Over the years, Ginny has been more than just our store manager; she's been a loyal and valued ambassador for Barracloughs. Her dedication to providing exceptional eye care, coupled with her genuine care for each individual, has made her an integral part of the Uckfield community.

From the moment she joined us, Ginny's passion for optics shone brightly. Possessing an uncanny ability to remember every customer's name, their prescription history, and often, even details of their lives. Her friendly smile and reassuring presence calmed nervous first-time wearers, and her expertise helped countless individuals see the world more clearly.

Working with Ginny has been an absolute pleasure. She always went above and beyond for both her team and our customers. She'd be the first to admit that technology is not her forte but Ginny always gave it her best and surprised even herself sometimes with those IT skills that were buried deep! Her extensive and impressive optical knowledge was truly invaluable though, and her consistent cheery personality always kept us smiling. We'll definitely miss her and her skillset - plus Ginny would always take the most in-depth notes at every meeting!

It isn't just the team who will miss her. Ginny built strong relationships with generations of Uckfield families, some of whom will be reading this very article. Many customers have shared stories of how she helped them choose the perfect frames, patiently explained complex eye conditions, or simply offered a listening ear during a difficult time.

"Ginny, your wonderful manager and the optician who carried out my eye test. Both superb and extremely professional." - Mrs Jacqui B.

"I felt very looked after, everyone was polite and professional. Ginny helped me through the minefield of choosing the right product for me. All in all a very positive experience." - Mrs Penny W.

"Excellent service especially from Lucia and Ginny. I would definitely recommend this opticians to anyone who wants a first class service." - Mr Paul M.

"All members of staff go above and beyond, including Ginny who had popped in the shop whilst on holiday and helped me as other members were busy with other customers." - Mrs Jacqueline S.

As Ginny begins this new chapter, we wish her nothing but happiness and relaxation. We know she's looking forward to focusing on her home and spending valuable time with her family, plus a little extra time for golf and sewing! We sincerely hope she enjoys every single minute of her well-earned retirement.

While we'll miss Ginny dearly, we're grateful for her hard work over those years. Her dedication to excellence, her unwavering kindness and her genuine passion for helping others have shaped our Uckfield store into the welcoming and trusted establishment it is today.



"I've worked in optics for over 42 years, Barracloughs has been the best job I've ever had, and working with the loveliest people."

A Fresh Look

for our Bexhill store!

We have an exciting transformation coming our way...

We're thrilled to announce that our Bexhill store is undergoing a complete modernisation and renovation! From **Monday 14th April to Thursday 8th May 2025**, we'll be temporarily closed to bring you an even better, brighter and more comfortable experience.

This exciting project will see us revamp our entire space, incorporating the latest technology and creating a more welcoming environment. You can look forward to:

- A refreshed and modern interior, creating a relaxing and enjoyable atmosphere
- Improved accessibility, making our practice more comfortable for everyone
- Brand new state-of-the-art equipment, ensuring more precise and efficient eye care
- Additional dispensing areas to reduce waiting times for frame styling during busy periods
- A wider selection of frames, giving you even more choice

We understand that being without your local opticians for over three weeks may be inconvenient, and we sincerely appreciate your patience. However, we promise the wait will be worth it.

We're committed to providing you with the highest quality eye care, and this renovation will allow us to do that even more effectively. When we reopen on 9th May, you'll be greeted by a completely transformed practice, designed with your comfort and your eye health in mind.

In the meantime, our other six stores remain open, and for those who are registered at our Bexhill store, your nearest alternatives are [Battle](#) and [St. Leonards](#). You're more than welcome to book in there.

We can't wait to welcome you to our new and improved opticians! Stay tuned and keep an eye out over on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) for sneak peeks and updates as we progress.



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1 - 3 March 2025 EXCEL LONDON

At the start of March, a few of the Barracloughs team visited London to attend Europe's fastest growing optical event and the UK's largest optical event. Over 10,000 optical professionals from across the globe participate in this exhibition which sees many optical suppliers and brands showcase their latest collections alongside fashion shows and demonstrations of groundbreaking new equipment. Professionals also had the opportunity to attend CPD (Continuing Professional Development) events.

The team were thrilled to see the fabulous Into Optics exhibiting there too - some of you may remember [the recent workshops we delivered to local colleges, in partnership with Into Optics](#).

The optical world is really very small and it was great to see so many familiar faces at the event. We came away with some exciting new equipment which we'll tell you more about soon!



Optix
CONFERENCE


CELTIC MANOR
RESORT

Mid-March saw the Optix conference take place, where we were shown the latest developments in our customer management software along with a sneak peek at the fantastic new features which are on the horizon! The event was held at Celtic Manor Resort in Newport, hosted by Gyles Brandreth and included guest speakers including Tim Harford, James Corden and Iron Maiden's Bruce Dickinson.



Keep your eyes healthy this spring

Spring has sprung! The days are longer and the daffodils are in full bloom! While this season brings joy, it also presents some fairly unique challenges to our eye health. From increased pollen to brighter sunlight, it's crucial to take proactive steps to protect your precious vision and enjoy the beauty of springtime to its fullest...

Here's your guide to keeping your eyes healthy and happy throughout the spring months:

Combat Pollen!

For many, spring means allergy season. Pollen from trees, grass and weeds can trigger a range of uncomfortable eye symptoms.

Itching!

Swelling!

Watering!

Redness!

Burning!

How to fight back!

- Monitor pollen counts in the area and try to stay indoors when levels are high, especially during peak hours (usually mid-morning and early evening).
- Keep windows closed. Prevent pollen from entering your home and car by keeping windows and doors shut.
- Use air purifiers with HEPA filters to remove airborne allergens indoors.
- Wash your hands frequently to avoid transferring pollen from your hands to your eyes.
- Ask us about our lubricating eye drops which can help wash away pollen and soothe irritation.
- [Try out Zasp spray eye spray](#) which directly targets allergic reactions in the eyes and refreshes your eyes at the same time.

Also, remember that spring may bring longer days but it brings more intense sunlight. We love the sunshine but excessive exposure to ultraviolet radiation can harm your eyes, increasing the risk of conditions like cataracts, macular degeneration, and even eye cancer. Ask us about our range of sunglasses that block 100% of both UVA and UVB rays.



World Glaucoma Week

March 9 - 15, 2025

Glaucoma is an eye condition where the optic nerve, which connects your eye to your brain, gets damaged. This damage is often caused by a build-up of fluid in the eye, which increases the pressure inside. If not caught and treated early, it can lead to vision loss, and even blindness.

“The silent thief of sight”

The condition can be deceptive as it frequently progresses silently, particularly in its initial phases. This lack of early symptoms underscores the critical need for routine eye examinations. While often symptom-free at first, potential signs include:

- a gradual narrowing of peripheral vision (often the earliest and least obvious)
- blurred vision
- seeing halos around lights

In the less common but urgent acute angle-closure glaucoma, symptoms arise abruptly and can include severe eye pain, nausea, vomiting, red eye and headaches.

Glaucoma affects around 700,000 people in the UK alone. We have listed below some of those who may be at higher risk of the disease.

AGE: A sad fact of life is that the risk of glaucoma increases as you become older.

ETHNICITY: People of African, Caribbean, or Asian origin have a higher risk of developing glaucoma.

FAMILY HISTORY: If you have a close relative with glaucoma, you're more likely to develop it.

OTHER MEDICAL CONDITIONS: Conditions like diabetes, short-sightedness (myopia), and long-sightedness (hyperopia) can increase your risk.

EYE PRESSURE: Having high intraocular pressure (pressure inside the eye) increases the risk of developing glaucoma.

If you fall into any of the risk categories above, and you haven't had a sight exam for more than two years, [please ensure you book today](#).

If you're aged 40 or over and your mother, father, sibling or child has been diagnosed with glaucoma, you qualify for an NHS funded sight examination.

Types of Glaucoma

Chronic glaucoma is the most common form of glaucoma. The eye pressure rises very slowly and the field of vision gradually becomes impaired. Acute glaucoma is much less common and can happen suddenly. It can be quite painful and will cause permanent damage to your sight if not treated promptly.

We offer [Optical Coherence Tomography \(OCT\)](#) at all stores, which can be a valuable tool for detecting glaucoma early. This hospital-grade technology measures the thickness of the retinal nerve fiber layer (RNFL), which is often affected in the early stages of the disease. This allows for earlier diagnosis compared to traditional methods like visual field testing alone.

If you're struggling to hear, you might have **mixed hearing loss**. This means you have problems in both your middle/outer ear and your inner ear. It's caused by multiple factors affecting different parts of your ear. To understand more about mixed hearing loss, including its causes and treatments, read on...

World Hearing Day 2025 (3 March)

WHAT IS MIXED HEARING LOSS?

There are two main types of hearing loss: **sensorineural**, due to inner ear or nerve damage, and **conductive**, caused by blockage or issues in the outer or middle ear. Mixed hearing loss occurs when a person has both types simultaneously. This means they experience both a reduction in the sound reaching the inner ear and a diminished ability of the inner ear or auditory nerve to process sound. The extent of this combined hearing loss can vary significantly.

The signs of mixed hearing loss are varied, and may include: trouble understanding speech, especially in noisy environments; difficulty hearing soft or low sounds; needing to increase the volume on televisions and radios; tinnitus (ringing in the ears); ear pain; and vertigo (dizziness). If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, it is important to [book in for your free hearing assessment](#).

Treatment will depend on the type of hearing loss you have. Many types of hearing loss are temporary and can be treated to restore some, the majority, or all of your hearing (for example, treating an ear infection will help clear hearing loss associated with it).

However, there are some types of hearing loss, such as most sensorineural hearing loss, that are permanent and cannot be treated. If the hearing loss you have is permanent, you will be offered management options such as hearing aids.

Barracloughs THE OPTICIANS

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SUNSHINE SALAD WITH LEMON-HERB DRESSING

Here's a recipe for a vibrant and tasty salad, bursting with ingredients which those eyes of yours will adore!

Ingredients for the salad:

100g mixed baby leaves (including spinach and rocket - good sources of lutein and zeaxanthin)
1 large carrot, peeled and grated (full of beta-carotene, which your body converts to vitamin A)
1 small red pepper, deseeded and thinly sliced (another good source of vitamin C and beta-carotene)
50g blueberries (packed with antioxidants)
50g sweetcorn (fresh or tinned, drained) (contains lutein and zeaxanthin)
2 spring onions, trimmed and finely sliced
25g pumpkin seeds (good source of zinc and vitamin E)

Ingredients for the lemon-herb dressing:

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil (contains vitamin E and healthy fats)
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1 small clove garlic, minced (optional, but adds flavour)
1 tablespoon chopped fresh herbs (such as parsley, chives, or dill - they also contain beneficial nutrients)
Pinch of sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Wash the baby leaves thoroughly and spin dry if you have a salad spinner.
Grate the carrot, slice the red pepper and spring onions.

Assemble the salad in a medium to large bowl by gently combining the baby leaves, grated carrot, sliced red pepper, blueberries, sweetcorn and spring onions.

Make the dressing in a small bowl or jug - whisk together the olive oil, lemon juice, Dijon mustard, and minced garlic (if using). Stir in the chopped fresh herbs. Season with a pinch of sea salt and freshly ground black pepper to your liking. Have a little taste and adjust the seasoning if needed.

Just before serving, drizzle the lemon-herb dressing over the salad.
Toss gently to ensure all the ingredients are lightly coated.

Scatter the pumpkin seeds over the top of the salad for a bit of crunch and extra goodness.
Serve straight away and enjoy your eye-friendly feast!



Beta-carotene (in carrots and red peppers): Converted to vitamin A, which is essential for good vision, especially in low light.

Lutein and Zeaxanthin (in spinach, rocket and sweetcorn): Antioxidants that help protect the macula (the central part of the retina) from damage.

Vitamin C (in red peppers and blueberries): An antioxidant that supports healthy blood vessels in the eyes and may reduce the risk of cataracts.

Antioxidants (in blueberries and leafy greens): Help protect against age-related macular degeneration and other eye conditions.

Vitamin E (in olive oil and pumpkin seeds): Another powerful antioxidant that helps protect eye cells from damage.

Zinc (in pumpkin seeds): Plays a role in bringing vitamin A from the liver to the retina to produce melanin, a protective pigment in the eyes.

Healthy Fats (in olive oil): Help your body absorb fat-soluble vitamins like vitamin A and vitamin E.