

AIO comes to the regions

Event in Bath forms first local group for Association spreading its wings

Following on from its first foray into Scotland at Eyecare 2016, the Association for Independent Optometrists (AIO) is now embarking on a series of regional events designed to establish local groups of the Association across the country. This is the precursor to the launch of the new Independents Code of Practice (the IC) which will help those practices that subscribe to IC to differentiate what they offer on the High Street.

A group of both AIO members and non members met in Bath to discuss the issues that were foremost on their minds and there was a strong consensus on a number of points. In particular, there was a unanimous view that free and discounted eye examinations or sight tests are not in the public interest as they result in a disproportionate incentive to prescribe glasses and contact lenses.

AIO Vice Chairman Keith Pearce who convened the meeting in Bath said 'I was delighted with this pioneering event for AIO not only because it attracted a group of very high profile Independent practitioners, but also that it demonstrated Independents share the same views on so many issues. I was also gratified to hear from those who were not members of the AIO that they will now join the Association. A strong Independent sector is good for the optical profession and even more importantly is good for the eye health of the nation.'

The next events are being planned for Cambridge, London and Manchester in the late spring and further details will be released shortly. Peter Warren, AIO Chairman said 'The Association is determined to build from the ground up as well as from the work being undertaken by the AIO Council and the success of the Bath event is testament that this is the right approach to take. I am looking forward to meeting both members and potential members in their local areas over coming months and listening to their issues and concerns as we continue to refine how best to ensure a vibrant future for the sector.'

Any Independent practice that would be interested to attend one of the regional meetings in Cambridge, London and Manchester are invited to contact admin@aiovision.org.