



Sight Loss Bournemouth & Poole factsheet

INFORMATION FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND OR PARTIALLY SIGHTED

REGISTRATION OF BLIND OR PARTIALLY SIGHTED PEOPLE

Registration is voluntary and may entitle you to a range of concessions:

- VAT exemption to buy necessary equipment
- Discounts for some leisure activities
- Discounted travel on public transport

You do not have to register to be eligible to help from Social Services and registration does not automatically mean you will qualify for services

Registration for sight loss can only take place on the recommendation of a qualified ophthalmologist, a doctor who specialises in eyes and eye care. Referral to the ophthalmologist clinic can only be done through a GP who will refer you if they think it is necessary. Your High Street Optician will ask you to contact your GP if they detect any significant sight loss that requires attention from an Ophthalmologist.

If you are then registered blind or partially sighted the ophthalmologist will inform your GP and, if you wish, Adult Social Services, who keep a register of all the blind or partially sighted people in their area.

SIGHT & HEARING TEAMS – SOCIAL SERVICES

Your local Adult Social Services will have a Sight & Hearing Team and they can help you with support and information.

Contact the following numbers:

Bournemouth: - Care Direct 01202 454979

Poole Helpdesk: - Tel: 01202 633902

Fax: 01202 633634

Minicom: 01202 633630

Email: sshelpdesk@poole.gov.uk

www.boroughofpoole.com

Services available include:

- Practical advice about how to manage in your own home
- Information about specialist equipment to help you with day to day living
- Registration of sight impaired people where appropriate

- Access to support groups
- Details of local and national voluntary agencies who also offer advice and support

Bournemouth Sight and Hearing Services

The Bournemouth Sight and Hearing Team assist people who have serious difficulties with their sight, hearing or both. The team have specialist skills and knowledge and are able to offer practical advice on managing at home, communication skills, and employment. Training is also offered on mobility issues to help you get about safely and confidently, cooking and budgeting workshops, how to register as sight impaired, information on specialist equipment. The team will carry out an assessment of your sight needs and help you access a range of services and equipment such as large button phones, talking clocks and watches, amplifiers for televisions and doorbells, and more.

Residents of Bournemouth are able to try out equipment to suit their needs at:

Bournemouth Blind Society

5 Victoria Road
Moordown
Bournemouth
BH9 2RB
Tel: 01202 522184
Email: Sara.Olden@bournemouthblindsociety.uk
www.bournemouthblindsociety.uk

The Resource Centre is open Monday – Friday 10am – 1pm. Equipment is available for you to try and then purchase. A visit to Bournemouth Blind Society may help prevent or postpone a further deterioration in your condition, resulting in a referral to the Sight and Hearing Team.

Poole Sight and Hearing Services

The Sight and Hearing Team provide services for people with sight loss in Poole, both children and adults. The Sight and Hearing Team specialists provide advice and assistance to help you make adjustments so that you can cope more easily. The team work closely with the Royal Bournemouth Hospital Eye Clinic and the Audiology Clinic in Shelley Rd Boscombe. The team can help you by carrying out an assessment of your needs by looking at safety in the home, your mobility, communication needs, listening to your experiences and concerns, offering practical and emotional support. They can then offer you support and advice, equipment, mobility training, advice about benefits, information about support groups, advice about daily living skills, liaising with other professionals on your behalf or advising you who to contact. Support and advice about equipment is also available via:

Dorset Blind Association

17 Bournemouth Road
Lower Parkstone
Poole
BH14 OEF
Tel: 01202 712860

Appointments can be made for Poole residents between 2pm and 4.15pm. Contact office for further details.



HELP & CARE CONTACT DETAILS

Help us to help you

As a charitable organisation Help & Care relies heavily on the donations and goodwill of the local community. However large or small, every gift makes a difference!

Please contact us using the contact details below if you would like information about:

- *How to make a one off donation or*
- *How to set up a regular monthly donation or*
- *How to remember us in your Will*

Help & Care contact details

Help & Care offer a range of services and factsheets to older people, carers, and disabled people across Dorset. If you would like to know more about our information and support services, Advocacy, and our Handiworks Plus services, or you would like a copy of this factsheet in your own language, large print, Braille, or on audio tape or compact disc please contact us on the details below.

By telephone: 0300 111 3303

By fax: 01202 432299

Opening hours are: Monday - Thursday 9am -5pm and Friday 10am - 4.30pm. Answering machine available outside these hours.

Textphone for hard of hearing: 01202 416047

Email: contact@helpandcare.org.uk

Website: www.helpandcare.org.uk

Use the "Contact" form within the website to let us know how best we can help you.

Contact by post: Help & Care, The Pokesdown Centre, 896 Christchurch Road, Bournemouth, BH7 6DL

You can also make an appointment to call in and see us at The Pokesdown Centre, Bournemouth.

This information has been researched and produced by Help & Care and was believed to be correct at the time of production. Inclusion does not imply a recommendation by Help & Care.

Last IS Review in May 2009. Next total review due Sept 2011.

Latest amendment added: Sept 2014.



LOCAL & NATIONAL VOLUNTARY AGENCIES AND SUPPORT GROUPS

There are various agencies that can support, give advice and provide equipment to aid you.

Bournemouth Blind Society

5 Victoria Park Road

Moordown

Bournemouth,

BH9 2RB

Tel: 01202 546644

Members' Services email: jo.wood@bournemouthblindsociety.uk

Community support email: geraldine.bradley@bournemouthblindsociety.uk

Emotional support email: marie.evans@bournemouthblindsociety.uk

www.bournemouthblindsociety.uk

Bournemouth Blind Society is a voluntary centre for the visually or hearing impaired. They offer advice, support, contacts, information and equipment. Services offered to clients include the following:

- The Sight and Hearing Resource Centre is open Monday – Friday from 10am – 1pm. Fully trained experienced staff and volunteers offer advice, information and demonstrations on specialist equipment.
- Bournemouth Blind Society is a local agent for the distribution of radios from the British Wireless for the Blind Fund.
- Members can take advantage of the subsidised transport to and from the Centre.
- Home cooked meals are available and active participation in a daily programme packed with social events is encouraged.
- Pub Lunches, Bowls, Skittles, Bingo, Quizzes. Talks and Outings to places of interest
- Audio Library
- A Drop-In Café every Tuesday
- Professional Counselling Service is available to anyone who is experiencing emotional, psychological or relationship difficulties arising from sight loss.
- A Community Support Worker is available to assist people with significant sight loss remain independent within the community.
- Bournemouth Blind Society Community Service run a befriending scheme providing volunteer home visits to help with reading correspondence, form filling, occasional shopping trips, short walks, and other assistance with everyday living.

Dorset Blind Association

17 Bournemouth Road

Lower Parkstone

Poole
Dorset
BH14 0EF
Tel: 01202 712860
Email: info@dorsetblind.org.uk
www.dorsetblind.org.uk

Dorset Blind Association provides a resource centre for people who are visually or hearing impaired throughout Dorset. They offer advice, support, contacts, information and equipment, social opportunities across the county. Services include:

- Resource Centre – a wide range of low vision aids and equipment is available to help improve life for people with sight loss. For people with hearing loss a member of the local Social Services Sight and Hearing Team can be seen by appointment contact 01202 712869 to arrange this. The Resource Centre is open Monday – Friday 9am – 12 noon.

- Home Visiting Service – provides visits by trained and vetted volunteers to members in their own home. A flexible service adapted to the individual members needs, help is offered with going on short walks, assisting with forms and paperwork, sorting/reading mail, tidying kitchen cupboards, writing letters or cards, general friendship. Younger members can also access this service on request.

There are five Home Visiting Co-ordinators covering Dorset:

- Bournemouth area: Judy Bannon tel: 0774 8212 009

- Poole, Parkstone, Broadstone area: Carol Jenkins tel: 01202 712863

- Audio Library – an extensive catalogue of up to 2,000 talking book titles are available through our Audio Library. Titles are available through our mail order service which operates under the free Articles for the Blind postage service. For more information contact the Resource Centre on 01202 712869.

- Social, Handicraft, Activity Clubs – We run clubs in many areas of the county managed and supported by volunteers. The format of each club differs slightly offering a range of entertainers, speakers, quizzes, bingo and raffles. Handicraft clubs work on knitting, sewing, basket making, and cane work. Activity clubs range from ballroom dancing, talking book clubs, to Indoor Bowls. For info about clubs in Christchurch and Highcliffe contact 01202 712860.

- Sight Equipment Vehicles – travel the county promoting the charity and taking low vision equipment to members in their own homes enabling them to touch and try out equipment to suit their needs.

Low vision services

The RNIB is working with Social Services, Primary Care Trusts and other Voluntary Agencies to develop UK-wide, high-quality low vision services. Low vision services are available to people who despite having regular eye tests, wearing up-to-date glasses or contact lenses, are still experiencing problems with their sight but are not registered blind.

The RNIB produce an 'Adapting to Sight Loss' guide, other information products and aids that offer practical advice and assistance on how to make the best of your sight. The guides cover low vision aids such as magnifiers and give ideas for changes you can make at home to make things easier to see. The RNIB also offer help with:

- Information on your eye condition and available treatments

- Advice on financial benefits and discounts you may be entitled to

- Let you know of support available in your local area via RNIB and Action for Blind People

- Recommend products to make life easier

- Provide information about social groups, leisure time activities

- Audio Library Service

- Employment, Training, Education opportunities
- Housing options
- Emotional support and access to counselling services

For further information contact:

Royal National Institute of the Blind (RNIB)

105 Judd Street
 London
 WC1H 9NE
 Tel: 020 7388 1266 (Admin).
 Email: helpline@rnib.org.uk
www.rnib.org.uk

Helpline: 0303 123 9999 – Open: Monday – Friday 8.45am – 5.30pm. Answerphone available out of hours.

Local low vision centres

Royal Bournemouth Hospital (Eye Clinic)
 Outpatients Appointments: 01202 704355 open 8.30am – 5pm Monday – Friday

Able to provide written information, individual information and support, referral from GP or other health professional required for treatment.

Dorset Blind Association also staff a Help & Advice Desk at the Eye Unit, Royal Bournemouth Hospital as a way of providing people who are newly diagnosed with severe sight loss or see their condition worsening, with immediate information and support of a non-medical nature.

Out of hours emergencies please visit the Accident and Emergency Dept.

NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

British Blind Sport

Pure Offices, Plato Close
 Tachbrook Park
 Leamington Spa
 Warwickshire
 CV34 6WE
 Tel: 01926 424247
 Fax: 01926 427775
 Email: info@britishblindsport.org.uk
www.britishblindsport.org.uk

The work of the charity enables visually impaired people to have the same opportunities as sighted people to access and enjoy sport and recreational activities in the UK.

British Telecom (BT)

BT offers a range of services to older or disabled customers to help them communicate more effectively. For further

information contact: 0800 800 150 or visit the website: www.btplc.com/inclusion

BT Basic is a low cost line rental scheme for customers on the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance
- Guaranteed Pension Credit
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance

For further details contact BT on 0800 783 1675 or visit the website: www.bt.com

Healthcall Optical and Hearing Services

Unit 5, Titan Court
Laporte Way
Luton
Bedfordshire
LU4 8EF

Local office

Unit 3 & 4 Arena Business Centre
9 Nimrod Way
Ferndown
Dorset
BH21 7SH
Tel: 0845 601 7241
Email: info@healthcalloptical.co.uk
www.healthcalloptical.co.uk

A full and comprehensive eye examination within your own home using the most up-to-date equipment specifically designed for home visits. Our teams carry a large variety of spectacle frames, ranging from budget styles (provided free to those entitled to an NHS voucher) to the latest designer frames, plus all types of lenses at highly competitive prices. (Please note the lenses are not carried by our clinical staff).

When the spectacles are ready they are delivered to the patient's home and expertly fitted by one of our dispensing opticians or trained clinical assistants. For further details and to book an appointment call 0800 089 0166.

Healthcall are also able to carry out hearing tests in your own home if you require one, for details and appointments for the hearing test contact 0845 644 5000.

The Macular Disease Society

PO Box 1870
Andover
Hampshire
SP10 9AD
Helpline: 0300 3030 111
Email: info@maculardisease.org
www.maculardisease.org

The Macular Disease Society aims to build confidence and independence for those with central vision impairment by offering a range of support and information services to those newly diagnosed and those with an interest in Macular Disease.

Partially Sighted Society

7/9 Bennthorpe

Doncaster

DN2 6AA

Tel: 0844 477 4966

Fax: 0844 477 4969

Email: info@partsight.org.uk

www.partsight.org.uk

The Partially Sighted Society provides information, advice, equipment, and clear print material for people with a visual impairment to help them to make the best use of their remaining sight. The Society can call on the skills of ophthalmologists, optometrists, and lighting and rehabilitation specialists.



TALKING BOOKS AND NEWSPAPER SERVICES

Bournemouth and Wessex Talking Newspaper

Tel: 07587 174297

Website: www.bournemouthtn.org.uk

Serving the conurbation of Bournemouth, Poole, Christchurch, together with Wimborne, East Dorset and the Purbecks, Bournemouth and Wessex Talking Newspaper produce free tapes and CDs of local news for the Blind and Partially Sighted every two weeks. News is taken from local newspapers across Dorset. There are also magazine features, interviews and items of personal interest. Additional recordings of BH Life and Home News for Bournemouth Council on CDs are also available from Bournemouth Public Libraries.

The tapes and CDs are distributed free of charge on a fortnightly basis, all you need is a simple cassette or CD player. The charity is run entirely by volunteers and their work includes editing, reading, recording, duplicating, and administration. For further information or if you would like to refer some one or become a volunteer please contact the telephone number above.

Calibre Audio Library

Aylesbury

Bucks

HP22 5XQ

Tel: 01296 380 554

Website: www.calibre.org.uk

Calibre Audio Library brings the pleasure of reading to people who have sight problems, dyslexia, or other physical disabilities. The service is subscription free, nationwide, and the postal service includes:

- A choice of over 8,500 unabridged audio books
- Fiction and non-fiction titles, carefully selected to appeal to members
- Books recorded by professional actors and broadcasters
- MP3 CDs and USB memory sticks that can be played on many standard players and computers/laptops
- Free postage and no charge for lost books
- A friendly, personal and quick service

The service charges a one-off joining fee of £35 and is the only Talking Books service that offers on-demand books through USB memory stick.

Local Library – Talking Books

Your local library service run a Home Library Service where if you have a sight loss, or difficulty holding a book you may be entitled to a home delivery of Talking Books. The audio cassettes and CDs can be delivered and collected by a volunteer, or alternatively you can visit any local library and a member of staff will help you. Large print books, talking newspapers and

magazines are also available. There are also reading groups arranged for the visually impaired. For further details contact:

Home Library Service – Bournemouth: 01202 547879 www.bournemouth.gov.uk

Home Library Service – Poole: 01202 746023

RNIB Talking Book Service

RNIB National Library Service

PO Box 173

Peterborough

PE2 6WS

Tel: 0303 123 9999

Email: library@rnib.org.uk

RNIB's Talking Books service offers over 16,000 audio books, paid for by annual subscription and delivered directly to your door. Titles are recorded in DAISY format, making them easy to navigate and enabling a whole audio book to be put onto a single CD. A full annual subscription includes the loan of a lightweight DAISY player with accessible controls.

There are a variety of ways to choose books and you will have the support of professional librarians. A Talking Book catalogue is available to help you choose titles currently available for loan.

Subscription to Talking Books includes all the titles you read throughout the year. There are two subscription options:

- £82 - Full loan annual subscription – this includes the loan of a Plectalk PTX1 DAISY player.
- £50 – books only subscription



OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL – BOURNEMOUTH & POOLE

For full details of Concessionary travel arrangements for blind or partially sighted people please request our Help & Care factsheet No 8 – Transport by calling us on 0300 111 3303 or visiting our website www.helpandcare.org.uk . Alternatively you can contact your local authority on:

Concessionary Travel (Bournemouth)

Town Hall
St Stephen's Road
Bournemouth
BH2 6LL
Helpline: 01202 451584
Email: concessions@bournemouth.gov.uk
www.bournemouth.gov.uk/StreetsTransport/PublicTransport/ConcessionaryTravel.aspx

Concessionary Travel (Poole)

For full details of Concessionary travel arrangements for blind or partially sighted people please request our Help & Care factsheet No 8 – Transport by calling us on 0300 111 3303 or visiting our website www.helpandcare.org.uk . Alternatively you can contact your local authority on:

Transportation Services – Borough of Poole

St John's House
1 Serpentine Road
Poole
BH15 2DX
Helpline: 01202 262000
Email: transportation@poole.gov.uk

TV LICENSING AND TV SERVICE COMPANIES

Qualify for a 50% blind concession on your TV licence

You need a TV Licence if you wish to watch or record television programmes as they are being shown on TV. This includes the use of devices such as a TV, computer, mobile phone, games console, digital box, or DVD/VHS recorder
You are entitled to a 50% reduction on the TV Licence fee if you are blind/severely sight impaired. Your licence will also cover anyone who lives with you.

If you're registered blind or severely sight impaired:

- A blind concession TV Licence costs £72.75 for colour and £24.50 for a black and white TV Licence
- Please provide a copy of ONE of the following documents, to confirm that you're certified as either blind or severely sight impaired: a copy of the certificate or document issued by or on behalf of your local authority, or a copy of the certificate from your ophthalmologist. You won't need to provide this information again when you renew your TV Licence.

If you live with someone who is blind or severely sight impaired you can also benefit from the blind concession TV Licence. You just need to transfer the licence to the name of the blind person. For further information call 0300 790 6131.

How to apply for a blind concession

To apply for a blind concession you need to fill out an application form, contact:

TV Licensing
Blind Concession Group
Bristol
BS98 1TL
Tel: 0300 790 6131

Forms can also be downloaded from their website www.tvlicensing.co.uk, send in a printed off copy along with cheque payment and a photocopy of your local authority document or ophthalmologist's certificate. Please also include either your licence renewal notice or TV Licence number if you have a current TV Licence.

Free over 75 TV Licence – affecting aged 74 and over

When you reach the age of 75 you are entitled to a free over 75 TV Licence. You will be sent this licence every three years provided you have let TV Licensing know your National Insurance number. This can be found on your Pension Book, Bank Statement (if your pension is paid straight into your bank). If you don't have a National Insurance number please send a copy of one of the following documents as proof of age:

- Passport
- UK driving licence
- UK birth certificate
- National identity card

If you are currently aged 74 and your licence is due for renewal, you should buy a short-term licence. This will cover you up to your 75th birthday. For a free over 75 TV Licence or a short term licence contact 0300 790 6131 or apply online at www.tvlicensing.co.uk

If you are already aged over 75, apply for your free over 75 TV Licence and you will be refunded for each full month after your 75th birthday. You will receive your refund when your over 75 TV Licence is issued.

TV ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

Freeview

If you have a sight impairment

Audio Description – is a service provided by some channels for visually impaired viewers. AD provides extra commentary in gaps between dialogue that describes the action, body language, facial expressions and anything else that helps understand the scenes being shown. To get AD on Freeview you require a special type of digital box made by Netgem or TVonics, or a digital TV from Sony or Panasonic which supports AD. For more information call RNIB on 0303 123 9999 or visit www.rnib.org.uk

SKY

If you have a sight impairment

Audio Description - 20% Audio Description is available on SKY channels with the exception of SKY News and SKY Sports who are not required to provide audio description due to the amount of spoken words used in news reading.

Accessible Remote Control – the SKY remote is designed for easy grip and has raised buttons with larger text.

Alternative Format Correspondence – a choice of alternative correspondence formats including Braille, Large Print, and Audio CD is available to visually impaired customers of SKY.

Virgin Media

If you have a sight impairment

If you subscribe to Virgin Media for your TV package, Audio Description is available on every channel that provides a pre-mixed audio description. These services are accessible by pressing the 'HOME' button on the remote and then going to 'SETTINGS' and following the instructions from there. If you need further assistance contact Virgin Media by dialling 150 on your Virgin phone line. An Audio Description service is available for channels BBC1, BBC2, ITV1, Channel 4 and 5.

