



Information for people with a visual impairment

Who is eligible for help?

We have a duty to assess anyone who is eligible for community care services but we have to work within resources available to us each year. This means we are not able to offer services to everyone who contacts us. To make sure that services are provided fairly and used to support the people in the greatest need, we use guidelines which we call 'eligibility criteria'. We assess people's needs individually to find out if their level of need qualifies for a service and if so, at what level of priority.

Dorset County Council has decided that it will meet those needs which are critical or substantial. To see how 'critical' or 'substantial' are defined please see our factsheet 'Fair Access to Care Services'.

We understand that individuals have different needs and the impact of disability or range of disabilities will vary.

Carers may also be entitled to services in their own right, please see our factsheet 'Information for Carers'.

Following the referral a meeting will take place with you at a suitably agreed location.

Assessment and planning

Your specialist worker will be there to listen to your needs and offer support. They can talk to you about your sight condition, how it might affect your future, give advice on registration and tell you of other services from which you may benefit. Assessments conducted by us will always



take into account any needs which derive from your ethnic background. There will be ample opportunity to talk about all your circumstances and needs in the course of the assessment. Where needs are identified that we will be helping to meet, a support plan will be drawn up to show how this will take place. You will always be provided with a copy of this plan.

Practical help/specialist services

We can also offer a range of other help, which may include advice about monetary benefits, housing, leisure and educational opportunities, personal care, meal provision and suitable equipment. All services aim to help meet your needs.

Specialist workers can offer advice to enhance your use of existing skills, or enable you to learn new skills to maintain your independence.

Combined sight and hearing impairment/Deafblind

Many people experience a combined sight and hearing loss at varying levels and may be registered as deafblind. The Sight and Hearing Services Team will offer appropriate support and advice. There are many other organisations which are able to offer counselling, guidance, support and advice. (Contact details can be found at the end of this factsheet under the heading 'Voluntary services and other agencies').

How can we help?

Anyone can contact Adult and Community Services to request an assessment.

If you are a new customer or have no current involvement with us, please contact the Adult Access Team, Dorset



Direct, PO Box 7184, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 9ER.
Telephone: 01305 221016. Minicom: 01305 267933.
Email: adultaccess@dorsetcc.gov.uk

If you currently receive a service from us, please contact your social care local office. Contact details can be found at the end of this factsheet.

Sight and Sound Centres

Sight and Sound Centres are drop-in information centres for people with a visual or hearing impairment, staffed by the Sight and Hearing Team. The centres are located in Bridport, Christchurch, Dorchester and Wimborne.

For hearing aid repairs and batteries you should contact your local hospital Audiology Department. We can offer information and advice about hearing aid use.

Services available at the Sight and Sound Centres:

- **Advice** - We can offer you advice about the help and services available to anyone with a hearing or visual impairment.
- **Equipment** - We have a range of specialised equipment for you to try.
- **One-to-one** - You can talk to a Team worker about any problems you may have and how to overcome them.
- **Information** - We can give you information about our services and other support services, as well as equipment available to you, where to find it and how much it costs. **Please note we do not sell any products at the centres.**
- **Contacts** - We can put you in touch with other sources of professional help and voluntary organisations such as the Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID),



Hearing Concern, the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) and local support groups.

- **Facilities** – There is full wheelchair access into and outside the centres. We have toilets with full wheelchair access. Unfortunately, there is no parking available at most of the centres, however, Blue Badge holders can park at Dorchester and Wimborne. Parking for Blue Badge holders is available at Bridport if booked in advance with the Sight and Hearing Team.

Locations and Opening Times

- **Bridport Sight and Sound Centre** is located in Allington Court, St Swithins Road, Bridport DT6 3JL and is open on Wednesdays between 10am and 1pm.
- **Christchurch Sight and Sound Centre** is located inside Christchurch Day Centre, 250 Lymington Road, Highcliffe, Christchurch BH23 5ET and is open on Wednesdays between 9.30am and 12.00.
- **Dorchester Sight and Sound Centre** is located inside Dorchester Day Centre, Acland Road, Dorchester DT1 1SH and is open on Wednesdays between 10am and 4pm (closed for lunch from 1pm – 2pm).
- **Wimborne Sight and Sound Centre** is located in the Hanham Centre, Hanham Road, Wimborne BH21 1AS and is open on Wednesdays between 10am and 12.30pm.

Direct Payments

The Direct Payments scheme has been set up by Dorset County Council Adult and Community Services to give people control over the services they receive, and when and how these services are delivered. (For further information see our factsheet ‘Direct Payments – General Information’).



Disability Discrimination Act 1995

In October 2004 the final stages of the Disability Discrimination Act came into force. Businesses and public sector services now have to take reasonable action to ensure disabled people can access them. Anyone providing a service to the public has to consider barriers such as stairs, heavy doors, the way information is provided, lack of a hearing loop for example. Adaptations have to be made to buildings as far as this is reasonable, such as the installation of ramps for wheelchair users. Older buildings may present difficulties, which cannot be overcome without great expense, but information in large print or the installation of a hearing loop, are manageable changes, which will make it easier for people to use the service.

It is now also unlawful for any employer to discriminate against a disabled person when choosing someone for a job.

Personalisation

Adult and Community Services are introducing a host of changes in the way we support people. We aim to put the customer first and maximise the choice and control people have over the services they receive. We will be working closely with the people who use our care services, their carers and our partners to make sure we get things right and make a real difference to people's lives.

Compliments and complaints

Adult and Community Services staff in Dorset are committed to providing quality services to our service users, their carers and families. We welcome comments from our service users as this helps us to understand what aspects of our service people like.



If you are unhappy about the service you have received and want to make a complaint, our factsheet 'How to complain' describes the procedure. Our Complaints Officer can give you advice on the process and can be contacted on 01305 224322.

Diversity statement

Diversity is not about treating everyone in the same way, but about recognising and valuing difference, as well as recognising and addressing inequalities and disadvantage.

As an employer and service provider, Dorset County Council seeks to promote an environment that accepts and actively supports diversity in age, gender, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religious belief, disability, culture, work style and the many other ways in which people differ from each other.

All our factsheets are available in large print and on audio cassette/CD, Braille, Easy to Read or alternative languages. Please contact the Information Office on 01305 224320.

Further information on services provided by Dorset County Council Adult and Community Services can be accessed at www.dorsetforyou.com



Social care local offices:

Bridport

St Andrews Road, Bridport, Dorset DT6 3BJ

Tel: 01308 422234

Fax: 01308 426044

Email: bridportsocialcare@dorsetcc.gov.uk

Christchurch

Loring Road (off Jumpers Road), Christchurch, Dorset BH23 2GZ

Tel: 01202 474106

Fax: 01202 478081

Email: christchurchsocialcare@dorsetcc.gov.uk

Dorchester

Acland Road, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1SH

Tel: 01305 251414

Fax: 01305 251034

Email: dorchestersocialcare@dorsetcc.gov.uk

Ferndown

Penny's Walk, Ferndown, Dorset BH22 9JY

Tel: 01202 877445

Fax: 01202 876604

Email: ferndownsocialcare@dorsetcc.gov.uk

North Dorset

Bath Road, Sturminster Newton, Dorset DT10 1DR

Tel: 01258 472652

Fax: 01258 473161

Email: northdorsetsocialcare@dorsetcc.gov.uk



Purbeck

19 Bonnets Lane, Wareham, Dorset BH20 4HB

Tel: 01929 553456

Fax: 01929 556319

Email: purbecksocialcare@dorsetcc.gov.uk

Sherborne

Non-visiting office

Tel: 01935 814104

Fax: 01935 817207

Email: sherbornesocialcare@dorsetcc.gov.uk

Weymouth & Portland

Jubilee Retail Park, Jubilee Close, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 7BG

Tel: 01305 760139

Fax: 01305 774622

Email: weymouthsocialcare@dorsetcc.gov.uk



Voluntary organisations and other agencies:

Local voluntary organisations:

British Retinitis Pigmentosa Society, Dorset Branch

Contact: Mrs Jean Bradshaw (Chairman)

Tel: 01202 749925

Email: andrewbradshaw@parkstone36.freemove.co.uk

Diabetes UK South West Region

Victoria House, Victoria Street, Taunton TA1 3FA

Tel: 01823 324007

Fax: 01823 324550

Email: south.west@diabetes.org.uk

Dorset Blind Association (DBA)

17 Bournemouth Road, Lower Parkstone, Poole,
Dorset BH14 0EF

Tel: 01202 712860 – contact for details of local support
groups

Free Helpline: 08000 19 20 77

Email: members@dorsetblind.org.uk

Web: www.dorsetblind.org.uk

Glaucoma Support Group (Poole)

6B Trinidad Crescent, Branksome, Poole,
Dorset BH12 3NN

Tel: 01202 716259

Help and Care

Carerslink helpline

Tel: 0300 111 3303

Email: info@helpandcare.org.uk



**Macular Disease Society Local Support Groups:
Bournemouth and Poole**

Jeff Kitson – Tel: 01202 692162

Wimborne

Alan Barr – Tel: 01202 887792

Christchurch

Fred Alderman – Tel: 01425 275910

Gillingham and Shaftesbury

Nita Priest – Tel: 01747 826691

Shaftesbury Talking Newspaper

Hon Secretary, Mrs R Keating

The Manor House, Ansty, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP3 5QD

Tel: 01747 870952

South West Talking Newspaper

SWDTN, Portland Town Council Offices, Fortunswell,
Portland, Dorset DT5 1LW

Tel: 01305 861282

Web: www.swdtn.co.uk

National voluntary organisations:

Action for Blind People (services, information and some grants)

14-16 Verney Road, London SE16 3DZ

Tel: 020 7635 4800

Fax: 020 7635 4900

Tel: (National Helpline) 0800 915 4666

Web: www.afbp.org



Big Print National Weekly

RNIB Customer Services, PO Box 173,

Peterborough PE2 6WS

Tel: 03031 239999

Web: www.rnib.org.uk/bigprint

British Blind Sport – South West Region

Neil Jordain, c/o Exeter Golf Country Club,

Countess Wear, Exeter EX2 7AE

Tel: 01392 877444

Email: neil@britishblindsport.org.uk

Web: www.britishblindsport.org.uk

British Retinitis Pigmentosa Society

PO Box 350, Buckingham MK18 1GZ

Tel: 01280 821334

Fax: 01280 815900

RP Helpline: 0845 1232354

Web: www.brps.org.uk

British Telecom Inclusive Communications

Freephone: 0800 800 150

Web: www.btplc.com/inclusion

Calibre Free Talking Book Service

New Road, Weston Turville, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 5X

Tel: 01296 432339

Fax: 01296 392599

Web: www.calibre.org.uk



Deafblind UK

National Centre for Deafblindness
John and Lucille van Geest Place, Cygnet Road,
Hampton, Peterborough PE7 8FD
Tel: 01733 358 100
Helpline 0800 132320
Email: info@deafblind.org.uk
Web: www.deafblind.org.uk

Diabetes UK

Central Office, Macleod House, 10 Parkway,
London NW1 7AA
Tel 0207 424 1000
Web: www.diabetes.org.uk

Guide Dogs for the Blind

Armstrong House, 3 Bassett Avenue,
Southampton SO16 7NL
Tel: 02380 768800
Web: www.guidedogs.org.uk

Macular Disease Society

PO Box 1870, Andover SP10 9AD
Tel: 01264 350551
Fax: 01264 350558
Helpline: 0845 2412041
Web: www.maculardisease.org

Partially Sighted Society

7/9 Bennetthorpe, Doncaster DN2 6AA
Tel: 0844 4774966
Fax: 0844 4774969
Web: www.partsight-org.uk



Royal National Institute for the Blind

105 Judd Street, London WC2H 9NE

Tel: 020 7388 1266

Fax: 020 7388 2034

Helpline: 0303 123999

Web: www.rnib.org.uk

RNIB Talking Book Service

PO Box 173, Peterborough PE2 6WS

Tel: 0303 123999

Email: library@rnib.org.uk

Web: www.rnib.org.uk/talkingbooks

SENSE (Association for deaf-blind and rubella)

South west regional office, 9A Birkdale Avenue,

Off Heeley Road, Sellyoak, Birmingham B29 6UG

Tel: 0121 4152720

Text: 0121 4152720

Fax: 0121 4728932

Email: westenquiries@sense.org.uk

Web: www.sense.org.uk

St Dunstan's Organisation (for people with a visual loss from war service)

St Dunstan's, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD

Tel: 020 7723 5021

Fax: 020 7262 6199

Email: enquiries@st-dunstans.org.uk

Web: www.st-dunstans.org.uk

Thrive (Horticultural therapy)

The Geoffrey Udall Centre, Beech Hill, Reading,

Berkshire RG72 A7

Tel: 0118 9885688

Web: www.thrive.org.uk



Statutory organisations:

Department for Work and Pensions:

Bournemouth

20–28 Cotlands Road, Bournemouth BH1 3RS

Tel: 01202 446000

Poole

Park Road, Parkstone, Poole, Dorset BH15 2RP

Tel: 01202 712600

Weymouth

Westwey House, Westwey Road,

Weymouth DT4 8TG

Tel: 01305 328000

Disability and Carers: Enquiry Line

Tel: 0800 882200

Text: 0800 243355

Veterans Directorate

Service Personnel and Veterans Agency

Norcross, Thornton Cleveleys,

Lancashire FY5 3WP

Tel: 0800 1692 277

Web: www.veterans-uk.info

