Services and information for people with a visual impairment

Hillingdon Council’s Sensory Team provides services and support for people with a visual impairment living in Hillingdon.

This leaflet outlines:

- the wide range of expertise, support and other services provided by the council for a person who is visually impaired
- the support and advice available from when you are registered with the borough, follow-up services and the services available once a person has been assessed
- how to get specialist equipment to aid independence, benefit advice and information on services provided by other organisations.

For more information or if you would like this publication in Braille or on audio tape, or you would like to find out more about this document or council services in your own language, please call the Sensory team:

📞 01895 556633

www.hillingdon.gov.uk/disabilities
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Did you know?
In the UK:
• one in every 60 people has a significant sight loss
• two-thirds of these people also have a significant hearing loss
• half of people over the age of 75 have a visual impairment
• 85% of people registered as blind have some useful sight
• as people tend to live longer, it is likely that the proportion of visually impaired people in the population will increase
• it is very unlikely that a person who acquires a visual impairment in later life will ever go totally blind.
The Sensory team
Hillingdon Council’s Sensory Team offers a wide range of support, to assist people who are encountering difficulties in daily life. The range of help available includes:

- shopping
- help with personal care
- meals-on-wheels
- advice on benefits and other entitlements
- aids and adaptations in the home.

One of the Sensory team’s care managers will assess your individual needs. From this assessment, a care plan is drawn-up and agreed between yourself and the care manager. This plan is then used to deliver the support you need.

Registration
Many people are contacted by the Sensory team, following an eye examination at the hospital, usually to discuss registering as blind or partially sighted in Hillingdon. The eye clinic prompts us to encourage you to register. Registration is optional; however, there are many advantages of doing so. You may be entitled, if you meet certain criteria, to:

- a blue parking badge
- a freedom pass
- railcards
- a taxicard
- capital call
- dial-a-ride
- free BT directory enquiries
- talking newspapers
- a reduced TV licence
- improved access to benefits
- tax relief on savings

Once registered, you can obtain a full list of the assistance available to you from the Sensory team. You can also request a copy of the council’s criteria for services at any time.
Rehabilitation

Hillingdon Council provides rehabilitation, especially for people who have a visual impairment.

A rehabilitation officer is trained to work with people who have difficulties in:

- mobility (how you get around)
- communications (how you read, write and use the telephone)
- daily living (how you manage tasks such as cooking, cleaning and shopping).

A rehabilitation officer will meet with you to assess how you cope with daily activities. Following the assessment, they will draw up and agree with you a rehabilitation plan, which looks at training and specialist equipment that will aid any difficulties you may encounter. A rehabilitation officer’s role is to enable people with a visual impairment to be as independent as possible.

Equipment

There are several types of equipment that can help people with a visual impairment – these can help with:

- preparing drinks
- reading and writing
- using the telephone
- getting around.
- using the cooker

Low Vision Aids (LVAs)

LVAs are pieces of equipment that can help you to read and carry out close work such as knitting, sewing or looking at photographs. Equipment includes:

- magnifying glasses
- task lights
- typo-scopes
- contrast schemes.
Magnifiers are available from the hospital’s LVA clinic. Other aids can be issued to you following the rehabilitation officer’s assessment. In some areas, you may get magnifiers from opticians.

**Books in large print or on audio**

Large print and audio books are available from all local libraries. If you find getting out and about difficult, the books may be delivered free of charge. Please call 01895 250600 for more information.

**Talking Newspaper**

Local news, as carried by the local press, comes on a weekly memory stick and comes with a small unit to play it on. A quarterly general information stick is also available. This is supported by the Middlesex Association for the Blind and organised by volunteers. Please note that there is no postal charge for these.

**Hillingdon People – the council’s magazine for residents**

The Hillingdon People magazine provides local residents with news and information on accessing council services. If you would like a copy in large print or on audio tape, please call 01895 250828.

**Other information**

If you need information about more council and government services in other formats, including large print or audio tape, please contact the relevant service directly.
Clubs and local groups in Hillingdon

Amigos
Activities: Speakers and outings
For: All
Where: Christchurch, Redford Way, Uxbridge
When: First Tuesday of every month, 10.30am-12.30pm
Transport: Not provided
Cost: £3.00 per year
Contact: Christina on 01895 677697

Bowling Group
Activities: Mat bowling
For: Visually impaired
Where: Battle of Britain Club, RAF Uxbridge
When: Second and last Friday of every month, 12.00pm – 2.00pm
Transport: Not provided
Contact: Val Brooks on 020 8573 4726

Hayes and Harlington Social Club for the Blind
Activities: Music, speakers, specially adapted bingo, quizzes and social afternoons
For: All
Where: Barnhill Community Centre, Ayles Road, Hayes UB4 9HG
When: Alternate Monday afternoons, 2.00pm-4.00pm
Transport: Can collect members from their homes (£1.50 per meeting)
Cost: £7.00 per year
Contact: Maureen Cox on 020 8848 4284
Clubs and local groups in Hillingdon

Pelican Club
Activities: Raffles, quizzes, bingo, music, speakers, entertainers and small outings.
For: All
Where: Southlands Art Centre, The Green, West Drayton UB7 7PW
When: Fourth Thursday of every month, 2.00pm-4.00pm, (except August and December)
Transport: Can collect and deliver members from/to their doors
Cost: £10 per year (includes transport)
Contact: David or Janet Ross on 01895 442388

Phoenix Blind Club
Activities: Social contact, talks and entertainment.
For: All
Where: Maria Dance Studio, 20 Elliotts Avenue, Ruislip HA4 9LZ
When: Third Wednesday of every month, 1.30pm-3.30pm
Transport: Door-to-door transport provided
Cost: Annual charge £2.00 + £2.00 per month
Contact: Ian Shellard on 01895 675449

Pottery class
Activities: Pottery
For: Visually impaired
Where: Harlington Adult Education Centre, Pinkwell Lane, Hayes UB3 1PB
When: Every Wednesday during term time, 11.15am-2.15pm
Transport: Provided
Cost: £60 a year
Contact: Colin Hoppe on 01895 446741
Clubs and local groups in Hillingdon

Reading Group
Activities: Audio books discussed
For: All ages
Where: Uxbridge library, level 3
When: Fourth Tuesday of every month, 10.30am-12.00pm
Transport: Not provided
Contact: Joanne Ray on 01895 250600

Uxbridge and District Social Club for the Blind
Activities: Music, speakers, specially adapted bingo, quizzes and social afternoons
For: All
Where: Bailey Hall, Redford Way, Uxbridge
When: First Thursday every month, 2.30pm-4.30pm
Transport: Can collect members from their homes (£1.00 per meeting)
Cost: £7.00 per year
Contact: Maureen Cox on 020 8848 4284

VIP Women’s Group
Activities: Theatre and museum visits, canal and boat trips, picnics, walks and annual cream teas. Speakers during the winter.
For: All ages
Where: Christchurch, Uxbridge (Committee Room 7)
When: Second Tuesday of every month, 2.00pm – 4.00pm
Transport: Not provided
Cost: £5.00 per year or £2.00 each month
Contact: Christina on 01895 677697
Voting in elections

If you find it difficult to get to your local polling station and you would like to vote via post or proxy, please contact the electoral registration officer on 01895 250251.

Statement on confidentiality

We will record your personal information correctly and only share it with others if you want us to or they have a legal right. We will ask you if you wish us to share information with the other agencies you deal with, so that you do not have to keep repeating the same information.

This helps us to look at your needs more closely and provide services more quickly.

Statement on personal information

You can see any information we hold about you in a format that suits you, such as your own language or on tape. Read our Right of Access to Personal Information leaflet for more information about this.

What if I want to complain or comment?

We work hard to offer you good service, but we don’t always get it right. If you think that we have not dealt with your case fairly and you want to comment or complain, please firstly speak to the member of staff you are in contact with or their manager. If you cannot resolve the problem with them, please call 01895 277800 and ask to speak to our complaints manager who will be able to help you. Please ask for a copy of our complaints leaflet for more information.
**Equal opportunities**

We have, and follow, an equalities policy to provide services regardless of gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, ability or age. If English is not your first language, we can provide this information in another language (either in a written form or by using an interpreter) or another format, including audiotape, CD-Rom and Braille.

We have reception staff who are trained to help everyone access our council’s services.
Useful contacts

Action for Blind People
14–16 Verney Road, London SE16 3DZ
☎️ 020 7732 8771

Age UK
Central Office, 2 Chapel Court, 126 Church Road, Hayes UB3 2LW
☎️ 020 8756 3040

Association of Blind Asians
65 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HL
☎️ 020 7388 2555

Benefits Agency/DSS
Kings House, Clarendon Road, Harrow HA1 1YJ
☎️ 020 8426 3000

Calibre Library
Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 5XQ
☎️ 01296 432339

DASH (Disablement Association of Hillingdon)
Wood End Centre, Judge Heath Lane, Hayes UB3 2PB
☎️ 020 8848 8319

Hillingdon Centre for Independent Living (HCIL)
Wood End Centre, Judge Heath Lane, Hayes UB3 2PB
☎️ 020 8848 260

Family Fund (Rowntree Trust)
PO Box 50, York Y01 9ZX
☎️ 01904 621115

Guide Dogs Association
Folly Court, Barkham Road, Wokingham RG11 4BT
☎️ 0118 979 1911

Jewish Care
221 Golders Green Road, London NW11 9DQ
☎️ 020 8458 3282

MAB (Middlesex Association for the Blind)
Suite 18 Freetrade House, Lowther Road, Stanmore HA7 1EP
☎️ 020 8423 5141

Macular Degeneration Society
PO Box 247, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH17 5FF
☎️ 0800 328 2849
Useful contacts

Organisation of Blind Afro-Caribbean’s
8 Camberwell New Road, London SE5 ORZ
☎️ 020 7735 3400

PSS (Partially-Sighted Society)
Queen’s Road, Doncaster DN1 2NX
☎️ 01302 323132
☎️ 020 7371 0289 (London office)

RNIB (Royal National Institute of the Blind)
Customer Services, PO Box 173, Peterborough PE2 6WS
☎️ 0303 123 9999
Head Office
105 Judd Street, London WC1H 9NE
☎️ 020 7388 1266

RNIB Talking Book Service
PO Box 173, Peterborough PE2 6WS
☎️ 0303 123 9999

Talking Newspaper Association of the United Kingdom (TNAUK)
90 High Street, Heathfield, East Sussex TN21 8JD
☎️ 01435 866102

If you need any further information, please contact:
Sensory team
☎️ 01895 556633