

# Information for people registered as disabled with South Gloucestershire Council

There is a lot of support for you in South Gloucestershire if you are registered as disabled. Concessions and benefits include help with travel, parking and towards your TV licence. This factsheet covers the benefits of being registered and the range of services that you may be interested in. Some of these are national schemes but wherever possible local contacts in South Gloucestershire have been included.

The Government website [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) has information on a wide range of subjects if you are registered disabled, including travel, holidays, health and wellbeing, financial support and information for disabled parents.

The South Gloucestershire Council Website, [www.southglos.gov.uk](http://www.southglos.gov.uk) also has a section for disabled people. It is also worth looking at the Health and Social Care section of the website.

People may register with South Gloucestershire Council as a disabled person as a result of a sight, hearing or physical disability. For further information please contact the Customer Services Desk on 01454 868007.

The information in this factsheet is organised in three sections:

- specialist information for people with a sight impairment
- specialist information for people with a hearing impairment
- information that is relevant for all disabled people

# Information for people who are registered blind or partially sighted

People are registered as either sight impaired or severely sight impaired. In this factsheet we use the words partially sighted instead of sight impaired, and blind instead of severely sight impaired as this is the wording used by RNIB (formerly Action For Blind People)

## **Royal National Institute for Blind People (RNIB)**

RNIB offers a range of services which are open to everyone and many are free. Services include:

**Living independently** – RNIB can support you to live as independently as possible by providing information and guidance to:

- help you understand what it means to be registered and guide you through the process
- get help to support you in your everyday life
- deal with housing issues
- ask for self - directed support and personal budgets
- link you to other organisations that can help
- get benefits and help to complete forms

**Information technology** – RNIB provide technical advice and guidance on IT and computer issues. They run drop-in sessions and IT courses in their training suite.

**Employment advice** – RNIB can help you to prepare for work or retrain, find the right job or stay in employment. RNIB also provide specialist advice and support on starting your own business.

**Emotional Support** - RNIB recognises the importance of emotional support and counselling services. Trained Counsellors can offer a free service.

**Rehabilitation** - Early support enables people to achieve independence and improve their quality of life by regaining their independent living skills, mobility and communication.

**Resource Centre** - The Bedminster Centre offers services as above and equipment to buy.

## **RNIB**

10 Stillhouse Lane

Bedminster, Bristol

BS3 4EB

Tel: 0117 953 7750

Fax: 0117 953 7751

Email: [bristol@rnib.org.uk](mailto:bristol@rnib.org.uk)

Website: <https://rnib.org.uk/>

## **Vision Hotels**

Vision Hotels are fully accessible to visually impaired people and sighted guests, and well behaved pet dogs. They are in the Lake District, Devon, Somerset and West Sussex.

Website: [www.visionhotels.co.uk](http://www.visionhotels.co.uk)

## **The Yate Low Vision Group**

The group meets every fortnight on Tuesdays at 2.30pm at Yate Fire Station, Station Road, Yate. The group discusses issues around visual impairment, and shares information on services and support.

Chair: Mrs Gay Williams e-mail: [gab56@btinternet.com](mailto:gab56@btinternet.com) or you can ring 01454 321749.

## **Free postage on some items**

The Royal mail provides free postage on items marked "Articles for the Blind." There are also free collections for blind and partially sighted people. Contact the Royal Mail on:

Tel: 0345 6076140

Textphone: 0345 6000606

## **Free BT Directory enquiries calls**

This service is open to you even if you do not have BT as your phone provider. Call 0800 587 0195 to request an application form.

## **TV Licence Discounts for people who are blind**

If you or someone you live with is registered blind, you can get 50% off the cost of your TV licence. If the person who is registered blind is not the current licence holder for your address, you will need to transfer the licence to their name. You can do this by contacting TV licensing:

Tel: 0300 790 6165 or by applying [online](#)

Post a photocopy of the certificate stating you/they are blind with the licence renewal notice to:

TV Licensing  
Blind Concession Group  
Darlington  
DL98 1TL

If you have only just found out about the discount, refunds are available for previous years backdated to 1 April 2000. You will have to prove you had a TV licence and were registered blind during the relevant period.

**Tax Allowance for people who are registered blind**

Blind Person's Allowance for the tax year 2017 – 2018 is £2,320. There are no age or income restrictions. For further information contact Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs:

Tel: 0845 366 7887

Website: [www.gov.uk/blind-persons-allowance/what-youll-get](http://www.gov.uk/blind-persons-allowance/what-youll-get)

# Information for people registered with a hearing impairment

## **GDA (formerly Gloucester Deaf Association)**

GDA is an award-winning deaf charity which has recently extended its services into South Gloucestershire. GDA's support is for people with all levels of hearing impairment, from those who were born deaf and use sign language as their preferred method of communication, to those with an age-related acquired hearing loss.

## **Communications Support**

BSL interpreting is so much more than simply translating one language to another. Communication goes two ways and effective BSL interpreting will ensure it works for both sides, for the deaf person and the hearing professional.

## **Information, advocacy and employment**

GDA is able to offer support across the board for Deaf sign language users. This includes help with letter writing, making phone calls and even finding a job. Clients can contact us via Skype, or make an appointment to see us at one of our new monthly sessions in Yate.

## **Listening Aid Equipment**

If you are a hearing aid wearer, you may be eligible through social services for some listening aid and/or visual alert equipment to keep you safe at home. GDA also offers a wider range of equipment that is available to purchase. Our advice is impartial and expert.

Community Activities - Although our range of social activities in South Gloucestershire are limited at present, it is worth getting in touch with GDA as we anticipate opportunities for social interaction to grow in time.

Understand Deafness - Award-winning deaf awareness training which is available either as a face to face service or via our e-learning programme.

**Tel:** 01452 372999

**Fax:** 01452 372288

**Mobile/Text:** 07875 610860

**Minicom:** 01452 372600

### **Address:**

GDA, Centre For Deaf People  
Colin Road, Barnwood  
Gloucester  
GL4 3JL

**Website:** <http://www.gda.org.uk/>

# Transport and getting around – information for all disabled people

## **Diamond Card**

If you are under 60 and disabled you can apply for a bus pass providing free off-peak travel on local buses anywhere in England. You are eligible if you are:

- registered blind or partially sighted
- severely or profoundly deaf, i.e. you have a hearing loss of 70 decibels or more, and audiology are able to confirm this
- you are without speech
- you have a permanent impairment which means you have severe difficulty in walking
- you don't have arms, or you have long term loss of use of your arms

Diamond card holders can access shopmobility for free.

South Gloucestershire Council has introduced an additional scheme the Platinum Travelcard. The Platinum Travelcard is for residents of South Gloucestershire, who are severely sight impaired or sight impaired.

Platinum Travelcard holders will be able travel free of charge at all times, however any journeys commencing before 9am, must start within South Gloucestershire.

Companion passes are available where it is supported by medical evidence that the person needs to be permanently assisted to travel. This is a local concession and not part of the national scheme therefore not available for outside of the West of England.

## **Community Transport and Dial-a-ride**

Community Transport is a range of transport provided by community based voluntary organisations with support from the council, to cater for local transport needs which are not met by the commercial sector.

Community transport schemes have fully accessible minibuses which can be hired by community groups. They also run dial-a-ride services, which offer door to door transport for individuals.

For more information on both of the above contact:

Tell: 01454 868004 Email: [itu@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:itu@southglos.gov.uk)

## **Disabled Person's Railcard**

If you have a disability that makes travelling by train difficult, you may qualify for the Disabled Person's Railcard. The Railcard allows you and an adult companion with you to get a third off most standard and first class fares throughout Britain.

You will qualify if you are registered because of visual impairment or hearing impairment and may qualify if you have a physical impairment.

For more information contact:

Tel: 0345 605 0525 Textphone: 0345 601 0132

Email: [disability@atoc.org](mailto:disability@atoc.org)

Website: [www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk](http://www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk)

## **Blue Badge Scheme**

You are automatically eligible to apply for a blue badge if you:

- receive the higher rate of the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment
- are registered blind or
- receive a war pensioners mobility supplement.

You may also be eligible if you:

- have a permanent and substantial disability which means you cannot walk, or which makes walking very difficult
- have a severe disability in both arms and are unable to operate all or some types of parking meter, or would find it very difficult to operate them.

Applications can be made online, and forms are available from One Stop Shops in Yate, Kingswood, Thornbury and Patchway. For more information contact:

South Gloucestershire Council  
Chief Executive & Corporate Resources Department  
Concessionary Travel  
PO Box 1953  
Bristol  
BS37 0DB

Tel: 01454 868004

Email: [ConTravel@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:ConTravel@southglos.gov.uk)

Website: [www.southglos.gov.uk](http://www.southglos.gov.uk)

## **Shopmobility**

This is a scheme which lends manual wheelchairs, powered wheelchairs and powered scooters to anyone who needs help with mobility.

For more information contact:

Bristol Shopmobility Cabot Circus Car Park Newfoundland Circus Bristol BS2 9AB Tel: 0117 955 9083

Email: [admin@bristolshopmobility.co.uk](mailto:admin@bristolshopmobility.co.uk) Website: [www.shopmobility.co.uk](http://www.shopmobility.co.uk)

Yate Shopmobility Yate Library,

44 West Walk Yate Shopping Centre BS37 4AX Tel: 01454 868718

Email: [Shopmobilitvsouthalos@vahoo.com](mailto:Shopmobilitvsouthalos@vahoo.com)

## **Mobility centres**

These offer advice and assessment to people who wish to begin or return to driving following an illness, injury or accident. They also offer advice about:

- getting in and out of a vehicle
- loading or transporting a wheelchair or a scooter in a motor vehicle.

For more information contact:

Mobility Service of the Disabled Living Centre (DLC)

The Vassall Centre

Gill Avenue

Fishponds

Bristol

BS16 2QQ

Tel: 0117 965 9353

Fax: 0117 965 3652

Email: [www.info@dlcbristol.org.uk](mailto:www.info@dlcbristol.org.uk)

Website: [www.thisisliving.org.uk](http://www.thisisliving.org.uk)

## **Work**

Any person can “self-declare” at work if they consider themselves to be disabled. They do not have to be registered disabled to self - declare but they would need to have a disability, illness or condition that affects their ability to undertake a range of daily living tasks for 12 months or longer.

## **Disability employment advisers**

If you need extra employment support because of a disability, your local jobcentre can put you in touch with one of their Disability Employment Advisers (DEA). DEAs can give you help and support to find work or gain new skills, even if you have been out of work for a long time, or if you have little or no work experience. The DEA can link you in to a range of different schemes to help you. Contact your local jobcentre to arrange to see a DEA.

## **Access to work**

Access to Work can help if your health or disability affects the way you do your job. It gives you and your employer advice and support with extra costs which may arise because of your needs. Access to Work may pay towards equipment you need at work, adapting premises to meet your needs or a support worker. It can also pay towards the cost of getting to work if you can't use trains or buses, and for a communicator at job interviews if needed.

You may be able to get help from Access to Work if you are:

- in a paid job
- unemployed and about to start a job
- self employed and your disability or health stops you from being able to do parts of your job.

You can contact Access to Work through a Disability Employment Adviser.

## **Financial Support Welfare Advice Partnership**

South Gloucestershire Council has a co-ordinated approach to advice and information provision. It funds a number of voluntary sector organisations to provide these services and to work together to form the Welfare Advice Partnership. Membership of this group brings assurances of quality and value to those seeking information and advice.

The range of services provided by these agencies is broad and includes:

- Debt Advice
- Employment Advice
- Housing Advice
- Legal Advice
- Welfare benefit advice
- Representation at tribunals.

More information can be found: <http://www.southglos.gov.uk/advice-and-benefits/welfare-rights-and-financial-advice/advice-agencies-and-welfare-advice-partnership/>

## **Council tax reduction for disabled people**

The Disabled Band Reduction Scheme ensures disabled people do not pay more council tax when they live in a larger property due to their disability. However, having a disability does not automatically entitle you to a reduction.

For more information contact:

South Gloucestershire Council  
Chief Executive & Corporate Resources Department  
Housing Benefit  
PO Box 1953  
Bristol  
BS37 0DB

Tel: 01454 868002

Email: [Housingbenefit@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:Housingbenefit@southglos.gov.uk)

Website: [www.southglos.gov.uk](http://www.southglos.gov.uk) -search for housing benefit

## **VAT relief on products and services for disabled people**

Disabled people do not have to pay VAT when they buy equipment that has been designed solely for disabled people. Also VAT is not charged on certain services provided to disabled people, including some building work to adapt a disabled person's home and the hire of equipment like wheelchairs.

Check when you are buying an item that it qualifies for zero rating VAT and that the supplier is registered for VAT.

## **Everyday Life and Learning Support at college**

Colleges have to make a reasonable adjustment so that disabled people do not suffer a substantial disadvantage. Colleges might, for example, provide one to one support, a sign language interpreter or copies of documents in other formats.

Please contact the Learning Support Adviser or Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator at your local college.

## **Going to the cinema**

The Cinema Exhibitors Association Card is a national card for disabled people, which entitles the holder to one free ticket for a person accompanying them to the cinema. To be eligible, the holder must receive Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, Personal Independence Payments or be registered blind.

You can get an application from any participating cinema, or download one from the website. Even if a cinema is not participating in the scheme, it is worth asking whether they offer reduced or free admission to your carer or personal assistant.

For more information contact:

The Card Network Network House St Ives Way Sandycroft CH52QS

Tel: 0845 123 1292

Fax: 0845 123 1296

Minicom: 0845 123 1297

Email: [info@ceacard.co.uk](mailto:info@ceacard.co.uk)

Website: [www.ceacard.co.uk](http://www.ceacard.co.uk)

For people who are Deaf or hard of hearing, most cinemas have induction loops, and many cinemas run subtitled screenings on a regular basis.

## **Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI)**

This aims to make leisure centres available to everybody regardless of impairment or disability. There are IFI sites at Bradley Stoke, Yate and Longwell Green Centres. Kingswood and Thornbury Leisure Centres are less accessible; however they can still be used.

As an IFI member you get:

- no joining fee or induction fee
- one to one written gym programme
- the chance to attend IFI clinic sessions

In most centres you have access to facilities up to 4.30pm on weekdays and all day at weekends.

For further information:

Tel: 07921 492875

Email: [Jonathon.wheeler@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:Jonathon.wheeler@southglos.gov.uk)

## **Getting your voice heard - the Disability Equality Network**

South Gloucestershire's Disability Equality Network is a member run organisation which:

- involves all disabled people and groups
- promotes disability rights
- acts as a "critical friend" to the Council and other bodies giving informed and independent advice on how they can meet their obligations in the Disability Equality Duty

The Disability Equality Network supports people with disabilities to become part of our communities.

For further information contact:

Tel: 01454 868224

Email: [will.bee@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:will.bee@southglos.gov.uk)

## **Help from South Gloucestershire Council Children, Adults and Health**

### **Department**

Please contact the Children, Adult and Health Department if at any point you need help in your daily life, for example:

- help with care such as getting up and going to bed
- keeping up your personal hygiene
- getting round your home safely
- understanding letters and forms
- bringing up children
- caring for someone else
- continuing to go out and have social contact with people.

For more information contact:

Tel: 01454 868007

Email: [CSODesk@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:CSODesk@southglos.gov.uk)

### **Well Aware**

Well Aware is a new FREE user friendly information resource for everyone in South Gloucestershire. Services listed include personal health services, social groups, help in the home or garden, dentistry, advice and counselling support and recycling.

For further information contact:

Tel: 0808 808 5252 (freephone)

Email: [info@wellaware.org.uk](mailto:info@wellaware.org.uk) Website: [www.wellaware.org.uk](http://www.wellaware.org.uk)

## **What if I am not happy with the service I'm getting?**

In the first instance you should speak with the team or service involved. Most problems can be sorted out quickly this way. You can ask a friend or relative to do this on your behalf if you wish.

For Further information about making a complaint ask for Factsheet CCH82 - Your Experience counts. Or, you may wish to contact the Complaints and Freedom of Information Team:

Freepost RTXL-YHGY-GSYS  
South Gloucestershire Council  
CA&H Department - Customer feedback  
Council Offices  
Badminton Road  
Yate  
BRISTOL  
BS37 5AF

Phone: 01454 865924

E-mail: [CAHFeedback@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:CAHFeedback@southglos.gov.uk)