

Help for Deaf, deafened and hard of hearing people

December 2021

What help can I get?

- NHS hearing assessments, and the provision and maintenance of hearing aids
- information and advice on services
- help with understanding letters and forms
- information about clubs and groups for Deaf, deafened and hard of hearing people
- access to benefits advice and pension advice
- help with care needs
- equipment to let you know that someone is at the door or the telephone is ringing, or to help you listen to the radio and TV
- services to help communication between you and other people, for example, British Sign Language interpreting and lipreading
- help to care for someone else
- help with travel – Diamond cards.

Where can I go for help?

Help is available from the following:

- Gloucester Deaf Association
- South Gloucestershire Council
- Audiology Services (NHS)
- Lipreading classes
- Social clubs supporting people with hearing loss.

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: Gloucestershire Deaf Association.

Centre For Deaf People

Colin Road

Barnwood

Gloucester

GL4 3JL

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

Help for People with Dual Sensory Impairment

Dual sensory impairment is when people have sight loss and hearing loss. The two main organisations who provide tailored support, advice, information and services to dual sensory impaired people, their families, carers and the professionals who work with them are Sense and Deafblind UK.

Sense is a national charity that supports and campaigns for children and adults who are deaf and blind.

Tel: 0300 330 9250

Textphone: 0300 330 9252

Email: info@sense.org.uk

Web: www.sense.org.uk

Deafblind UK is a national charity providing support services and campaigning on behalf of deaf and blind adults and their carers.

Tel: 01733 358 100 (Voice/Text)

Fax: 01733 358 356

Information and Advice Line: 0800 132 320 (Tel and Textphone)
Monday – Thursday - 9:00 am – 5:00 pm
Friday - 9:00 am – 4:00 pm
Email: info@deafblind.org.uk
www.deafblind.org.uk

South Gloucestershire Council Children, Adults & Health Department

You can contact the Children, Adults & Health Department directly if:

- you would like an assessment for equipment to help with your hearing loss, such as amplified phones, pager systems or hearing loops. Equipment aims to reduce risks for you at home, and to maximise your independence.
- you would like to be registered as Disabled because of your hearing impairment
- you have equipment from the council which is broken or needs repair
- you have other needs, for example you are having difficulty in getting around at home or caring for yourself or a family member
- you would like one of our Factsheets in another format such as British Sign Language.

When you give your information to the Children, Adults & Health Department, they will contact you to tell you what will happen. They will tell you how long it will be before someone will contact you about the help you may need – this is called an assessment. The time you have to wait will depend on how urgent your needs are.

After the assessment, the Children, Adults & Health Department will let you know if they can help, and what help you will receive. If we are not able to help we will explain the reasons why and advise you of where else you can get help.

Contact the Children, Adults & Health Department through the Customer Services Desk on:

Phone: 01454 868007
Textphone: 01454 868010
Fax: 01454 866250
E-mail: CSODesk@southglos.gov.uk
Text: 07950 080111 (160 characters maximum)
Website: www.southglos.gov.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 RTCT-JXLE-EETT

South Gloucestershire Council
Children, Adults and Health - Complaints and FOI Team
Civic Centre, High Street
Kingswood
BRISTOL
BS15 9TR
Phone: 01454 865 924
Fax: 01454 865940
E-mail: CAHfeedback@southglos.gov.uk

Registering Disabled with South Gloucestershire Council

Being registered disabled as a result of your hearing difficulties can help you get concessions and benefits.

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 to get a third off most standard and first class fares throughout Britain.

You will qualify if you are registered because of hearing impairment.

For more information:

Tel: 0345 605 0525 (7.00 am - 10.00 pm Monday to Sunday)
Minicom: 0345 601 0132
Email: disability@atoc.org
Website: www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk

Diamond Travel Card

Diamond Travel Cards can be issued to individuals who are not of pensionable age and are profoundly or severely deaf. People are generally regarded as having a severe hearing loss if it reaches 70-95 dB HL and a profound loss if it reaches 95+ dB HL.

If an individual is not registered with South Gloucestershire Council they would need to provide evidence confirming that they could register, for example, an audiological report, or a report from an aural specialist. A South Gloucestershire concessionary Diamond Travelcard will allow free travel from 9am Monday to Friday throughout South Gloucestershire, Bath, Bristol and North Somerset authority areas. When the card is used outside of these areas the National scheme rules apply.

For further details contact the Concessionary Travel team:

Phone: 01454 868004
Email: contravel@southglos.gov.uk

VAT relief on products and services for disabled people

Disabled people can claim back VAT for certain items of equipment and home adaptations. Please visit GOV.UK for more information.

Audiology Services

Referrals to audiology are made by GPs. If you are aged over 60 you should be referred directly for a hearing assessment, provision of hearing aids, review and counselling. You also may be given the choice of being seen at an NHS hospital or by another qualified provider.

The hearing aids are all NHS equipment, and there is no charge whichever provider you choose. If you are under 60 you may also be referred to Audiology for an assessment prior to an onward ENT referral as necessary. Your GP could refer you directly to an ENT (Ear, Nose and Throat) specialist themselves.

A full audiology service is provided by University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust from Southmead Hospital with outreach clinics at:

Cossham Hospital
Thornbury Hospital
Yate Health Centre

Repairs/retubing are carried out by appointment only at all sites. Batteries are obtainable from all sites and currently all Health Centres.

A postal service is available for repairs.

Address for North Bristol Site:

Audiology Department
Brunel Building, Gate 36
Southmead Hospital
Westbury-on-Trym
Bristol
BS10 5NB

Audiology also provide a range of other services:

- hearing therapists who support and counsel patients who experience difficulty in communication in their home, work and social life
- tinnitus counselling

To contact the Audiology Service:

Phone: 0117 3425854

Email: audio.dept@uhbristol.nhs.uk

Lipreading classes

Lipreading classes offer a regular, friendly and informal place where hard of hearing and deafened people can learn skills and techniques to manage their hearing loss. Classes are generally fun and stimulating, with an emphasis on learning a range of techniques to improve communication with friends, family and work colleagues.

Classes take place in a range of venues across South Gloucestershire and Bristol. Please contact Mary Hall, Lip Reading Teacher, on 077902 83939 or email lipreadingmary@yahoo.com for details of classes.

Information can also be found on local lip-reading classes by using the following link: <https://www.hearinglink.org/living/lipreading-communicating/lipreading-classes>

Information for groups

Action on Hearing Loss provide free information and talks about managing hearing loss and how to improve communication with people who are gradually losing their hearing as they get older. There is a range of information on techniques for managing hearing loss, and equipment that can make a huge difference to someone's quality of life. This could be for you if:

- You run a social group or club for older people who are interested in managing their hearing loss
- You live in sheltered housing or extra care housing and you and other residents have identified hearing loss as an issue.

For further information please contact:

Karen Squire
Regional Information Officer South West
Action on Hearing Loss
Unit 27
HQ Business Centre
237 Union Street
Plymouth
Devon
PL1 3HQ
Phone: 01752 228657
Mobile: 07918 755809 (text and voice)
Karen.squire@hearingloss.org.uk

www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk

Other useful contacts

RNID or Action on Hearing Loss

Barron Lounge
Poolemead Centre
Watery Lane
Twerton
Bath
BA2 1RN
Tel: 01225 332818
Email: information@rnid.org.uk

Action on Hearing Loss Tinnitus Information Line

E-mail: tinnitushelpline@hearingloss.org.uk
Tel: 0808 808 6666
Textphone: 0808 808 9000
SMS: 0780 000 0360

British Deaf Association (BDA)

E-mail: bda@bda.org.uk
Tel: 020 7697 4140
SMS / Facetime: 07795 410724
ooVoo / Skype: bda.britdafassoc
Web: www.bda.org.uk

Carers Support Centre

The Vassall Centre
Gill Avenue
Fishponds
Bristol
BS16 2QQ
Tel: 0117 965 2200 (Carer's Line) or 0117 939 2562 (Admin Line)
Web: www.carerssupportcentre.org.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau

South Gloucestershire CAB
Kennedy Way
Yate
BS37 4DQ
Citizens Advice consumer helpline: 03454 04 05 06
Textphone: 18001 03454 04 05 06
Web: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

Deafblind UK

Tel: 01733 358 100 (Voice/Text)

Fax: 01733 358 356

Information and Advice Line: 0800 132 320 (Tel and Textphone)

Monday – Thursday - 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Friday - 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Email: info@deafblind.org.uk

www.deafblind.org.uk

Driving and Mobility Centre (West of England) CIC

Provide driving, passenger, scooter and equipment hoisting assessments by appointment only. Does not offer drop-in facilities. Please note that there may be a charge for a driving assessment.

The Vassall Centre

Gill Avenue

Fishponds

Bristol

BS16 2QQ

Tel: 0117 965 9353

E-mail: mobserv@drivingandmobility.org

Web: <http://www.drivingandmobility.org/>

Hearing Concern

Web: <http://www.hearingconcernlink.org/>

SENSE

Tel: 0300 330 9250

Textphone: 0300 330 9252

Email: info@sense.org.uk

Web: www.sense.org.uk

WE Care and Repair

5 Hide Market

Waterloo Street

St Philips

Bristol

BS2 0BH

E-mail: info@wecr.org.uk

Tel: 0300 323 0700

Web: www.wecr.org.uk

For information and advice on all housing issues. WE Care and Repair also have a display of equipment for hearing impaired people at The Waterloo Home Design Centre, Waterloo Road, St Philips. WE Care and Repair can order and install equipment, and can supply smoke alarms for people with hearing impairment.

Wellaware

The Care Forum
The Vassall Centre
Gill Avenue
Fishponds
Bristol
BS16 2QQ.

E-mail: info@wellaware.org.uk

Freephone: 0808 808 5252

Web: www.wellaware.org.uk

www.gov.uk

This government website offers information on a vast range of subjects of interest to people with a disability – for example travel, holidays, health and support, financial support and information for disabled parents.