

***Information for
visually impaired people***

Ref.93

***Seeing Sense Guide
3 – Assistive Equipment***



- **Where to buy equipment**
- **Mail-order services**
- **Local and national organisations**
- **Magnifiers**

www.devon.gov.uk/socialcare

May 2011

Equipment to Assist People with a Visual Impairment

- It is impossible to list a set package of aids and equipment likely to help a visually impaired person. Visually impaired people's needs will differ depending on what useful vision may still be retained or, in the minority of cases, if any.**
- Someone who has lost their central vision may be unable to read, but may still be able to walk around in places they're familiar with, as they still have some side vision.**
- Some eye conditions have the very opposite effect. Someone with damaged side vision may be able to read even standard sized print but will find getting around hazardous, even in familiar areas. They may need a particular cane and the training in how to use it properly and safely.**
- Magnification, useful lighting and good contrasts – or making things big, bright and bold – may well help within the house for those with no central sight.**

- **The needs of visually impaired people who have absolutely no sight will be different again; any aids or equipment likely to be of help may need to be tactile or audible.**

ROVIs can give advice on what may be helpful. Some equipment can also be seen and tried at:

Devon Sensory Bus

Find out more from:

Graham Morford 01392 386669

Our specially converted and equipped bus travels around the towns and villages of West Devon and Torridge district on a regular timetable, offering a free, confidential and impartial service for people with a hearing and /or visual impairment.

The unit has been adapted to include special listening devices, lighting and colour contrast. Families, carers, neighbours, friends and professionals are also welcome to use the unit.

The Sensory Bus offers:

- **Trained staff who understand the effects of hearing and sight loss and offer support and advice.**
- **A comprehensive range of equipment to address everyday difficulties. These can be for demonstration, trial and loan.**
- **Advice and training in using the equipment.**
- **A wide range of information and literature on hearing and visual impairment.**
- **Information and referral to other agencies.**
- **Simple maintenance of NHS hearing aids.**
- **Sensory Awareness training for employers businesses, residential/nursing homes, clubs, schools etc – a charge may be made.**
- **A tail-lift for people unable to use the steps.**

Devon In Sight

**Station House, Holman Way,
Topsham, Exeter EX3 0EN**

Tel. 01392 876666

Email: contact@devonblind.org.uk

www.devonblind.org.uk

A well-equipped resource centre and shop to try out and buy items.

- **Low Vision assessments. (An appointment is necessary if you wish to be assessed for a magnifier).**
- **Training for staff of local organisations.**
- **Quarterly newsletter in Braille, large print or on tape.**
- **Welfare and benefits information.**
- **Advice, help and support to the blind and visually impaired people of Devon.**

The centre/shop is open Tuesday to Friday from 10.00 am to 1.00pm.

Optima Low Vision Services

Dartside, Ford Road

Totnes TQ9 5LQ

Tel. 01803 864218

Email: sales@optimalowvision.co.uk

www.optimalowvision.co.uk

- **Comprehensive assessment and low vision therapy services to help people with poor vision make the most of the sight they have left for reading/writing, watching TV, hobbies and distance viewing.**
- **A wide range of low vision aids available – from simple magnifying glasses to closed circuit televisions (CCTVs – are not available through the NHS). Private consultations are available in Torquay and Totnes.**
- **For patients of Torbay Hospital, the NHS offers this service at Optima's Totnes premises.**
- **Optima sell an extensive range of lights/lamps, magnifiers and anti-glare UV shields. Certain products may be VAT exempt.**

Telephone Optima for further details.

Cobolt Systems Ltd

The Old Mill House

Mill Road

Reedham

Norwich

Norfolk NR13 3TL

Tel. 01493 700172

Email: sales@cobolt.co.uk

www.cobolt.co.uk

Cobolt sells a range of equipment, including:

- **A talking measuring jug**
- **A talking calendar alarm clock**
- **An audible spirit level**
- **A talking video remote control**
- **A talking microwave oven**
- **Anti-glare glasses**
- **Liquid level indicator**
- **Talking kitchen scales**

A catalogue will be sent on request.

IC, S W (Retail) Ltd

Unit 3

Martree Business Park

Kirkwood Close

Oxspring

Sheffield

S36 8ZP

Tel / fax: 01226 762513 or 762528

Email: sales@IC-Online.co.uk

www.ic-online.co.uk

IC, S W (Retail) Ltd sell a range of equipment, including:

- **Reading stands**
- **Magnifiers**
- **Large print computer keyboards**
- **Writing frames and signature guides**
- **Big Button telephones**
- **Record-A-Card greeting cards**
- **Talking calculators**

A catalogue will be sent on request.

Certain products may be VAT exempt.

Royal National Institute for the Blind

PO Box 173

Peterborough

PE2 6WS

Tel. 0303 123 9999

Email: helpline@rnib.org.uk

www.onlineshop.rnib.org.uk

Products may be viewed on the RNIB website, or by telephoning and requesting a catalogue. Some prices are subsidised for people who are blind or partially sighted. RNIB sell a range of equipment, including:

- **Dycem non-slip mats.**
- **Braille and Moon equipment.**
- **Symbol canes and white walking sticks.**
- **Coin holders and keyfobs.**
- **Reflective stickers and arm bands.**
- **Large print bingo board and cards.**
- **Hi-tech equipment.**
- **Tactile stick-on bumps (Bumpons) to mark items, such as microwave oven dials**

Partially Sighted Society

7/9 Bennethorpe

Doncaster

DN2 6AA

Tel. 0844 4774 966

Email: sales@partsight.org.uk

www.partsight.org.uk

The Partially Sighted Society sells a range of equipment, including:

- **Tactile dominoes and giant playing cards**
- **Large print diaries and calendars**
- **Talking bathroom scales**
- **Heavy lined stationery and felt tip pens**
- **Hobby/Magnifier lamps**
- **Sun visor/eye shades**

A catalogue will be sent on request. Certain products may be VAT exempt.

The Hearing & Sight Centre

Ernest English House

Buckwell Street

Plymouth PL1 2DA

Tel. 01752 201 766 for opening times.

Email: has@hascentre.org.uk

www.plymouthguild.org.uk/hearing-sight

A range of equipment for people with sight and/or hearing impairment.

Visualeyes

Unit 2B

New Line Road

Kirby in Ashfield

Nottingham

NG17 8JQ

Tel. 01623 754 646

Email: sales@visualeyesuk.com

A range of optical and electronic magnifiers, lights, lamps, and reading stands.

See Hear Centre

19a Alexandra Road

Barnstaple

EX32 8BA

Tel / SMS text / fax: 01271 373236

Email seehearnd@livingoptions.org

- **Support, information and advice.**
- **Demonstration of equipment for people with a visual or hearing impairment.**

Please telephone for more information or to make an appointment.

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**Further copies from the
Sensory Team via Care Direct
at the My Devon
Customer Service Centre:**



**Tel: 0845 1551 007
SMS text: 0777 3333 231
Text Phone: 0845 155 1020
Fax: 0845 155 1003
Email: sensory@devon.gov.uk**

**This information is available in other formats such
as audio, and in languages other than English.**

**Comments or updates to this pack: Please contact
the Sensory Team via Care Direct, as above.**

www.devon.gov.uk/socialcare

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