

Leaflet VI 2

Are you, or is someone you know having problems with sight?

Your first points of contact

For eye health:

Contact a local optician for information and advice on sight tests, glasses and contact lenses.

Contact your own G.P. if you are concerned about your sight. They may advise you on medical treatment or contact the hospital for you to be seen by a consultant.

For information and advice on other services available when you are having problems with your sight contact:

Adult Social Care

Contact: Adult Social Care, Central House, Gladstone Street, Darlington, DL3 6JX

Tel: 01325 406111

Adult Social Care provides information and advice and can support you with an assessment of your care needs.

Vane House Resource Centre

Contact: Vane House Resource Centre, Vane Terrace,
Darlington, DL3 7AX

Tel: 01325 405406

Access is by appointment only. Contact Adult Social Care. Carries out the registration process for people with a visual impairment. Provides rehabilitation services to help you learn new skills, improve old skills, to undertake kitchen, household and other daily tasks, to read, write and communicate using specialist equipment. Provides advice and information on the range of services and organisations available to assist people who have a severe sight loss. Provides small pieces of equipment on loan following an assessment.

Adult Social Care Compliments and Complaints

Contact: Complaints Manager, Town Hall, Darlington,
DL1 5QT

Tel: 01325 406777

Responds to customer feedback in a positive, sensitive way, whether they are compliments, comments or complaints.

Benefits

Disability Benefits Helplines

Personal Independence Payment

Tel: 0345 850 3322

Attendance Allowance

Tel: 0800 731 0122

Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

Tel: 0800 121 4600

Get advice or information about a claim for any of the above benefits.

Carers Allowance Unit

Tel: 0800 731 0297

Get information on Carers Allowance and how to make a claim.

Citizens Advice Bureau

Contact: Bennett House, 14 Horsemarket, Darlington,
DL1 5PT

Tel: 01325 256999

Offers independent advice regarding benefits and employment issues and can assist you to complete forms.

Blind Person's Allowance

Tel: 0300 200 3301

Blind Person's Allowance is an extra amount of tax-free allowance. It means you can earn more before you start paying Income Tax.

The Pensions Service

Tel: 0800 731 0469

Provides information, advice and handles claims on allowances, grants, benefits and pensions for people over the age of 60.

Communication and Information

RNIB

Contact: Dawn Rafferty - Eye Clinic Information Officer,
Darlington Memorial Hospital, Hollyhurst Road,
Darlington, DL3 6HX

Tel: 01325 743575

Provides information and advice on all aspects of visual impairment. For further information please telephone Dawn on Wednesdays, 9:00am - 4:30pm. For more information about RNIB, please contact the helpline on 0303 123 9999.

Darlington Talking Newspaper

Contact: Northern Echo Buildings, Priestgate, Darlington,
DL1 1NF

Tel: 01325 465101

Produces a free weekly local newspaper available on
download, USB, CD or MP3.

Directory Enquiries

Tel: 0800 587 0195

If you are unable to read or hold a telephone directory because of your sight loss or other disability, you can make use of a free directory enquiries service. Once you have successfully signed up to the service, all you do is dial 195 and you can speak to an operator who will find the number you require.

TV Licence

Tel: 0300 790 6131

If you are registered blind (severely sight impaired) then you are entitled to a “blind concession TV Licence” which gives you 50 per cent off the cost of your TV Licence. You can get a free licence if you are aged over 75.

Education, Employment and Training

Darlington College

Contact: Additional Learning Support Team,
Darlington College, Haughton Road, Darlington,
DL1 1DR

Tel: 01325 503190

Provides a programme of support for any learners with additional support needs.

JobCentre Plus

Contact: Disability Employment Advisors, Bondgate House,
90 Bondgate, Darlington, DL3 7JY

Tel: 0800 169 0190

To enable disabled people to find and retain work and provide and support to assist you into employment.

RNIB Employment Services

Tel: 0303 123 999

RNIB provide specialist support and advice to help you find employment, start your own business, or stay in work if you are losing your sight. Services are delivered via our helpline and our UK-wide network of regional and local centres.

Equipment

Contact: RNIB Resource Centre, 105 Judd Street,
London, WC1H 9NE

Tel: 020 7391 2356

The resource centre/shop offers an excellent opportunity for blind and partially sighted people to get advice, find information about local services and try out or buy equipment.

There are other companies that supply specialist equipment. Contact Adult Social Care for further details (see page 1). Adult Social Care may also provide a range of small pieces of equipment on loan to those people who have been assessed as needing equipment to assist them.

Health

Darlington NHS Urgent Care Centre

Contact: Darlington Memorial Hospital, Hollyhurst Road,
Darlington, DL3 6HX

Tel: 01325 364271

Provides healthcare advice, information and treatment. No appointment is necessary. The Walk-In Centre is open Monday-Sunday, 8am-6pm.

Leisure

Darlington Hippodrome

Contact: Darlington Civic Theatre, Parkgate, Darlington,
DL1 1RR

Tel: 01325 486555

Guide, hearing and other assistance dogs are welcome - Front of House staff will look after your dog during the performance and can provide a bowl of water. Please let the box office know if you are bringing a dog when you book. The "What's On" is available in large print, braille and audio and an audio brochure is available for download. Please contact the Box Office if you would like a copy of this. Audio described performances are also available.

Healthy Darlington Everyone Card

Tel: 01325 406000

The Healthy Darlington Everyone Card offers up to 25% off core activities at The Dolphin Centre and Eastbourne Sports Complex.

Mobility Training

Contact: Adult Social Care (details on page 1)

Offer an assessment of your needs for mobility training and subsequent instruction to assist people to move around safely and independently.

Reading and Writing

Adult Social Care

Tel: 01325 406111

At Vane House Resource Centre there is a computer suite providing specialist software to enable visually impaired people to access computer systems and learn new skills. Rehabilitation staff also teach Braille writing skills using manual Perkins Braille writers and instruct on reading Braille. Access to this service is by appointment only. Contact Adult Social Care (see page 1).

Calibre Audio Library

Contact: New Road, Weston Turville, Aylesbury, HP22 5XQ

Tel: 01296 432339

Provide a wide choice of unabridged books through a free postal service, on download, USB, MP3 or CD.

Darlington Library Service

Contact: Crown Street, Darlington, DL1 1ND

Tel: 01325 462034

Has a range of books on CD and in large print available for loan. There is also a visually impaired reading group held on the first Monday afternoon of each month.

The library's home reader and care homes services deliver books to people in the Borough who can't get to the library. Residents who use the home reader service can choose the genre of book or spoken word item they want delivered and items are exchanged each month. The service also delivers a selection of books to care homes that have residents who enjoy reading. If you know someone who would benefit from this service please contact them.

RNIB Talking Books Service

Tel: 0303 123 9999

A free Talking Books service giving you access to over 25,000 titles, available on download, USB or CD.

Travel

Blue Badges (Parking Badges for Disabled People)

Tel: 01325 405222 (option 3)

You can apply for a car badge if you are registered blind, or if you receive certain disability benefits. If you are not registered blind or do not receive certain benefits, but do have limited sight or have an illness or disability that limits your mobility, you may still be entitled to a car badge.

Concessionary Bus Pass

Contact: Town Hall, Darlington, DL1 5QT
Tel: 01325 405222

If you are registered blind/severely sight impaired or partially sighted /sight impaired and/or are of pensionable age, you may be entitled to a concessionary bus pass.

Disabled Persons Railcard

Tel: 0345 605 0525

If you are registered as visually impaired, you can apply for the railcard which gives you a 33% discount on all fares. If another adult travels with you, they can also receive the same discount.

Rail Travel Assistance

Contact: The train company you will be travelling with

Arrangements can be made for disabled passengers including arranging for staff to meet you at your departure station, accompanying you to the train and seeing you safely on board. Similar arrangements can be made at your destination station and other stations if you need to change trains.

Voluntary Groups

Darlington Association on Disability

Contact: Unit 1P Enterprise House, Valley Street North,
Darlington, DL1 1GY

Tel: 01325 489999

Promotes independence and choice, and supports disabled people and carers through the provision of services, support and information.

Darlington Social Club for the Blind

Contact: 73 Corporation Road, Darlington, DL3 6AD

Provides a place for people with a visual impairment to meet and enjoy leisure and sporting activities organised by the club. They hold a coffee morning on Tuesdays, 10am-12pm.

Guide Dogs Association

Contact: Burghfield Common, Reading, RG7 3YG

Tel: 0118 983 5555 or 0345 143 0220 (Mobility Team)

Provides mobility and freedom to blind and partially sighted people. They also campaign for the rights of people with visual impairment, educate the public about eye care and fund eye disease research.

Macular Degeneration Society

Contact: Bradbury House, Beaumont Street West,
Darlington, DL1 5SX

Tel: 01325 362832

Offer advice, support and companionship for people with this condition. The group enjoys lunch at the meeting, often sharing relevant news which they record themselves.

Torch Trust for the Blind

Tel: 01325 286491

Provides Christian fellowship & literature. Meet on the second Tuesday of each month for prayer meetings.

This document will be made available on request in Braille, large print, audio, easy read, electronically and in other languages. Telephone 01325 406222 (option 7).

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