

# Sight loss – Help with reading



Information sheet F2

January 2020

This document is also available on request in Braille, large print, tape, disc and can be translated into different languages.

This information sheet is about:

- How to get talking books
- How to get talking newspapers
- Services from local libraries
- Large print services
- Braille and Moon book services
- Other listening and reading
- How to get material put into audio, large print and Braille

There are many services that provide books, newspapers and other information in audio, large print and Braille formats.

## How to get talking books

There is a huge range of talking books available for people who are unable to read print. Here are some of the main services:

### Calibre Library

This service has over 5,000 books available on CD and in digital formats. There is an annual membership fee.

Calibre Audio Library

Aylesbury

Bucks

HP22 5XQ

Phone: 01296 432339

Fax: 01296 392 599

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

Email: [enquiries@calibre.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@calibre.org.uk) (email hyperlink)

## **RNIB Talking Book Service**

This library is the largest talking book service, run by the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB). There are over 60,000 items including books, in audio and digital formats, both fiction and non-fiction. There is a subscription charge for this service.

The service is for anyone who has problems with their sight and is unable to read print.

RNIB Talking Book Service  
PO Box 173  
Peterborough  
PE2 6WS

Phone: 0303 123 9999

Website: <http://rniblibrary.com/iguana/www.main.cls?url=a1> (hyperlink)

Email: [library@rnib.org.uk](mailto:library@rnib.org.uk) (email hyperlink)

The RNIB's Overdrive Service allows you to download books directly onto a computer, smartphone or tablet. There is a charge for this service. For more information contact RNIB:

Phone: 0303 123 9999

## **Services from local libraries**

Audio books in a range of formats are available from most libraries in Somerset. You can borrow them free of charge if you are registered blind/severely sight-impaired and partially-sighted/sight-impaired.

Phone: 0300 123 2224

Email: [enquiries@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@somerset.gov.uk) (email hyperlink)

Somerset Libraries also have an e-audio service, so that you can download books electronically. This service also has links to the RNIB's Talking Book Service, and Calibre.

You can find out more at: [www.librarieswest.org.uk](http://www.librarieswest.org.uk) (hyperlink)

## **Somerset Sight**

This local voluntary organisation has a large library of books to borrow in many audio formats.

Somerset Sight  
Northfield House  
51 Staplegrove Road  
Taunton  
TA1 1DG

Phone: 01823 333818

Email: [admin@somersetsight.org.uk](mailto:admin@somersetsight.org.uk) (email hyperlink)

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

## **How to get talking newspapers**

### **National Talking Newspapers and Magazines**

This organisation is now part of RNIB's National Library Service. It provides a wide range of national newspapers (including TV and radio listings), magazines and periodicals on CD, and in a range of digital formats. There is an annual subscription fee.

Phone: 0303 123 9999

Email: [Helpline@rnib.org.uk](mailto:Helpline@rnib.org.uk) (email hyperlink)

### **Local talking newspaper services**

Somerset Direct: 0300 123 2224

Email: [adults@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:adults@somerset.gov.uk) (email hyperlink)

### **Large print services**

Some of the main large print services are listed below:

#### **Local libraries**

Local libraries in Somerset have a wide range of books in large print for you to borrow. Visit your local library or:

Phone: 0300 123 2224

Email: [enquiries@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@somerset.gov.uk) (email hyperlink)

## **RNIB National Library Service**

This library is run by the RNIB and has a collection of large print books.

RNIB National Library Service

PO Box 173

Peterborough

PE2 6WS

Phone: RNIB Helpline 0303 123 9999

Fax: 01733 37 50 01

Minicom: 0845 758 5691

Email: [library@rnib.org.uk](mailto:library@rnib.org.uk) (email hyperlink)

## **Large print book publishers**

These publishers produce large print books.

ISIS

7 Centremead

Osney Mead

Oxford

OX2 0ES

Phone: 01865 250333  
0800 731 5637

Fax: 01865 790333

Ulverscroft

The Green, Bradgate Road

Anstey

Leicestershire

LE7 7FU

Phone: 0116 236 4325

Fax: 0116 234 0205

'Big Print' is a national newspaper in large print, published weekly. It is now part of the RNIB's range of reading services. It contains a summary of news items, articles and TV and radio listings. There is an annual subscription.

Phone: 0300 123 999

E mail: [helpline@rnib.org.uk](mailto:helpline@rnib.org.uk) (email hyperlink)

## **Other large print services**

### **Bills and bank statements**

Banks and Building Societies will provide large print services if you ask them.

All the main utility companies, for example gas, water and electricity, phone companies and others, will provide bills in large print if you ask them.

### **Large print diaries and calendars**

These are available from:

RNIB

PO Box 173

Peterborough

PE2 6WS

Phone: 0303 123 9999

Fax: 01733 37 50 01

Minicom: 0845 758 5691

Somerset Sight

Northfield House

51 Staplegrove Road

Taunton

TA1 1DG

Phone: 01823 333818

Email: [admin@somersetsight.org.uk](mailto:admin@somersetsight.org.uk) (email hyperlink)

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

### **Braille and Moon book services**

Braille is still very useful for people with very limited sight and provides a way of reading as an alternative to listening. There is a vast range of books and magazines in Braille. Braille can be used for labelling in the home, making notes and writing to people.

Moon is another form of raised writing that is easier to read than Braille.

### **Learning Braille and Moon**

The RNIB has teach-yourself courses in Braille and Moon.

## **Braille and Moon Books**

The RNIB's National Library Service provides books in Braille and Moon.

RNIB National Library Service

PO Box 173

Peterborough

PE2 6WS

Phone: RNIB Helpline: 0303 123 9999

Fax: 01733 37 50 01

Minicom: 0845 758 5691

Email: [library@rnib.org.uk](mailto:library@rnib.org.uk) (email hyperlink)

## **Other listening and reading**

### **Torch Trust**

The Torch Trust has religious books in audio format, in giant print and in Braille.

Torch Trust for the Blind

Torch House

Torch Way

Northampton Road

Market Harborough

Leicestershire

LE16 9HL

Phone: 01858 438260

Website: <http://www.torchtrust.org/>

Email: [info@torchtrust.org.uk](mailto:info@torchtrust.org.uk) (email hyperlink)

### **New Beacon**

'New Beacon' is a bi-monthly magazine published by the RNIB. It contains features of interest to blind and visually-impaired people and professionals. It is available on-line only.

Phone: 0303 123 9999

Email: [nbmagazine@rnib.org.uk](mailto:nbmagazine@rnib.org.uk) (email hyperlink)

## Getting material put into audio or Braille formats

### **RNIB Transcription Service**

The RNIB transcription service will put any printed material into other formats, such as, large print, cassette, CD, Braille, Moon and MP3.

RNIB Transcription Service South West

2 Whiteoaks Court

David's Lane

Ivybridge

Devon

PL2 0DW

Phone: 01752 690092

Fax: 01752 698329

Website: <https://www.rnib.org.uk/rnib-business/transcription-services>  
(hyperlink)

Email: [ivytcsw@rnib.org.uk](mailto:ivytcsw@rnib.org.uk) (email hyperlink)

### **Somerset Sight**

Somerset Sight will transcribe material into Braille or audio formats.

Somerset Sight

Northfield House

51 Staplegrove Road

Taunton

TA1 1DG

Phone: 01823 333818

Email: [administration@somersetsight.org.uk](mailto:administration@somersetsight.org.uk) (email hyperlink)

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

### **The Seeing Ear**

The Seeing Ear is a registered charity which provides an online library for visually impaired, and people who have difficulty reading print, in the UK. The service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and is free to members.

Teachers, parents and carers can join on behalf of somebody with a visual impairment or print disability.

To make them as accessible as possible, the electronic books are available in plain text or MS Word files. These can be downloaded and enjoyed using the member's preferred device and/or method, including large print, synthetic speech, and Braille. More books are being uploaded daily.

The Seeing Ear website provides all the information needed to help people join their service, and if there are any issues, they are always more than happy to help. You can also find them on Facebook and Twitter - just search for The Seeing Ear. They are also part of the Right to Read Alliance.

Website: [www.seeingear.org/](http://www.seeingear.org/)

### **Your opportunity to feedback**

We welcome your comments about the services you receive. If you would like to tell us what you think, please either:

- Contact us on our website, [www.somerset.gov.uk](http://www.somerset.gov.uk), or
- Phone Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224, or
- Contact the Adults and Customer Experience Officer:  
Floor B2 East  
County Hall  
Taunton  
TA1 4DY

Email: [customerexperience@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:customerexperience@somerset.gov.uk)

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