




Northumberland Sensory Services

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July- Sept 2025 Newsletter

Need to get in touch?

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Northumberland Sensory Services is funded by Northumberland County Council and delivered by BID Services.

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News, Updates and Events

Come and join us for a cuppa, a biscuit and receive personalised support from our team. This is your chance to ask questions about any aspect of life with hearing or sight loss. Our Tea and Tech sessions are at the library in the new Morpeth Leisure Centre. These run from 13:00-14:30 on the following dates:

Tuesday 15th July

Tuesday 19th August

Tuesday 16th Sept



We want to hear from you! Do you want us to run an event in your area? What would you like to see from our events? Please get in touch and tell us how we can support you.

We will also be at the following events where you can chat to us and other local organisations:

Elderberries 10:00-12:00 on the first Wednesday of each month to help with mobile phones, tablets or computers at Alnwick Gardens
(2nd July, 6th August, 3rd September)

We will be sharing more information about these on our social media or do get in touch if you would like to know more.

Our updates

- Anna, Jaimee, and Chelsea have recently had their job titles updated from Wellbeing Workers to Sensory Support Specialists - a title that more accurately reflects the valuable work they do.
- If you know someone that would benefit from our service please share our number or email address, they can contact us and refer themselves. They do not need to be registered to access our support.

About BID Services

BID Services (Birmingham Institute for the Deaf) is a national charity dedicated to supporting people with hearing and sight loss. Although we're not based in Birmingham and our work extends beyond support for deaf individuals, in Northumberland we operate under the name **Northumberland Sensory Services**.

We are the council-contracted provider for sensory support in Northumberland and are also responsible for maintaining the register of individuals who are Sight Impaired (SI) or Severely Sight Impaired (SSI). Our services are available to anyone experiencing hearing, sight or dual loss - there's no need to be registered, and you can self-refer at any time. If you're unsure why you've been referred, it may have come through the Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO) at the RVI or because you were recently certified as SI or SSI and we are enquiring to see if you would like to be registered.



How our service works

Once we receive your referral, our friendly admin team will call you to ask a few questions about your situation. You'll then be placed on our waiting list. This is currently around 4-6 weeks but may depend on how busy we are.

Next, a Sensory Support Specialist will contact you to arrange a home visit. These visits aim to support your daily life - offering tips for everyday tasks, help with using technology to see or hear better, benefit advice, referrals for extra support, mobility aid guidance, and information about local services and activities.

If needed, we can also refer you to a Vision Rehabilitation Specialist for specialist help with lighting, mobility, kitchen skills, and more.

A few weeks after your visit, we'll check in to see how you're doing. If you're satisfied, we'll close your case - but you're welcome to get back in touch or refer again anytime.

Did you know?

As we have eye health week in September, we thought we were share some Myths and Truths about eye health.

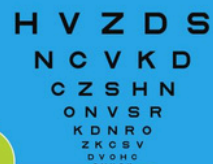


Myth:

All blind people wear sunglasses

Truth:

Not all people with a visual impairment wear sunglasses. It is important to keep your eyes covered when close to the sun. Sun rays can cause significant damage. This can increase your risk of cataracts and AMD.



Myth:

People with a visual impairment don't need eye tests

Truth:

It is still important to get your eyes checked at your local optometrist. Not only do they check your vision, but your eye health too.



Myth:

Staying fit can help your eye health

Truth:

Absolutely true! Being overweight or obese can put you at high risk for diabetes or other conditions that can lead to vision problems.



Myth:

Smoking doesn't affect eye sight

Truth:

Smoking can double the risk of developing age-related macular degeneration. This is the UK's leading cause of sight loss.



Vision Rehabilitation Corner

A Simple Piece of Advice

During my time in this role, I'm often told that the advice I give is "so simple" or "just common sense." More often than not, it involves everyday items people already have at home. One of my favourite examples is kitchen roll - yes, kitchen roll!

While it's usually used for cleaning and spills, it can also be repurposed in really helpful ways. One lady I visited at home, after coming into the office and learning about how contrast can help, proudly showed me how she'd used a single sheet of plain white kitchen roll on the arm of her black sofa. That small change meant she no longer lost her black TV remote - it stood out clearly against the white background.

Now, I often share her tip when I'm out on visits or giving talks about visual impairment awareness. Simple, but effective.

Mike - Vision Rehabilitation Specialist (VRS)

Hearing Loss Support

Hearing loss can make everyday life more difficult, but small adaptations can make a real difference. Flashing doorbells use bright lights to alert someone when there's a visitor, TV loop systems send sound directly to compatible hearing aids or headphones to make speech clearer, and vibrating smoke/carbon monoxide alarms provide a vital alert during the night when traditional alarms may go unheard. All of these items can be provided or sourced free of charge by us if needed, helping to make home life safer, easier, and more accessible.

Technology Support

Did you know? Most modern devices and technologies come with built-in accessibility features that you can customize to suit your needs. You can adjust settings such as increasing the font size, making text bold for better visibility, enhancing contrast to make content stand out more clearly, and reducing transparency to improve readability.

If you'd like help setting any of this up or just want to learn more, feel free to come along to one of our drop-in sessions - we're always happy to support you!

Meet the team

Vanessa

Hello! I work as the team administrator and have likely had the pleasure of speaking with many of you over the past year. I enjoy my role, especially being the first point of contact on your journey to receiving support. My background is in Learning Disability Nursing, which continues to inform my work and passion for helping others.

Outside of work, I enjoy walking, reading, socialising, and attending live music events.



Jaimee

Hi, I'm a Sensory Support Specialist for Northumberland. I love going on adventures, losing myself in a good book and catching up with friends. Eager to help and a great listener! Nice to virtually meet you :)



Our next newsletter will be out in October. Thanks for reading.