

Changing Focus

Edition

12

Information for people with sight difficulties



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Introduction

If your vision is deteriorating, you may be experiencing practical and emotional difficulties which may also have an impact on your family, friends and carers.

We have compiled this book so that people, who need help and advice on sight loss, can find information about services and organisations.

Frequently used abbreviations

SI Sight Impaired (Partially sighted)

SSI Severely Sight Impaired (Blind)

CVI Certificate of Vision Impairment

RNIB Royal National Institute of Blind People

ROVI Rehabilitation Officer for the Visually Impaired

DVLA Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency

Sight loss and registration

Anyone experiencing difficulties with their sight is advised to go to their doctor who may refer them to an optician or an ophthalmologist at the local eye clinic. The ophthalmologist is a specialist who can identify eye conditions and may recommend treatments. They may decide that the degree of sight loss makes the person eligible for registration as SI or SSI.

Referral to a ROVI

There are four ways of referral to us.

- 1 **Opticians.** If an Optician finds that you are having significant difficulties with your eyesight, he may give you a Low Vision Leaflet (LVL). You can fill this in and send it to us.
- 2 **Eye clinics.** If an eye clinic identifies that you have significant difficulties with your sight they will, with your permission, complete a 'Referral of Vision Impaired Patients' (RVI).
- 3 **Consultant ophthalmologist.** If an ophthalmologist assesses that you are eligible for registration, he will complete a CVI .
- 4 **Self-referral.** If you are having significant difficulties with your sight, you or someone else can contact Sensory Duty on 01243 642555.

What is registration?

There are two categories of registration:

- 1 Sight Impaired (SI) (partially sighted).** This is when you are 'substantially and permanently handicapped by defective vision.'
- 2 Severely sight impaired (SSI) (blind).** This is when you are 'so blind as to be unable to perform any work for which sight is essential'.

Being registered does not necessarily mean that your sight will deteriorate further. Registration is not compulsory, but it may help you to access certain benefits and support. Even if you are not on the register, there are many available services.

The process of registration

The ophthalmologist will complete a CVI form and send it to us. Your name will then be added to the register and you will be issued with a registration card. We are required by law to keep a register of people in West Sussex who are sight impaired and severely sight impaired.

When we receive the CVI, our Duty Worker will contact you and advise you about the services that are available. If you meet our eligibility criteria, you will be offered an assessment of your needs to discuss your difficulties and possible solutions.

Charles Bonnet Syndrome

This term describes the visual hallucinations which may happen when vision is deteriorating. Visions can range from patterns, shapes, flowers, trees, animals and people to entire scenes. The hallucinations are quite common amongst people who are experiencing sight loss. There is no cure but visions often diminish and stop within a year or 18 months.

If you are having problems with the visions, it may be useful to contact your GP about other help which may be available.

You can also get information from the RNIB on 0303 123 9999.

West Sussex County Council

Telephone advice and information about visual impairment and hearing loss is available from us and you can also make a referral:

- Phone 01243 642555 and ask for Sensory Duty

Visual impairment services

We have specialist ROVIs, who have been trained to help visually impaired children and adults.

They will discuss your needs with regard to your sight loss and advise on new ways of coping with any aspect of daily living. For example, they can demonstrate ways of cooking safely and moving about independently both indoors and out. Their training helps them to understand that you may be feeling frustrated and apprehensive about living with low vision. They can also give you details about the services mentioned in this book.

Eye care for adults with learning difficulties

1 in 3 people with learning difficulties also have sight loss. However, many of these people do not have regular eye tests and are at a greater risk of experiencing sight problems as a result.

Look Up is a national information and advisory service about eye care and vision for people with learning difficulties.

- Phone 01372 755066

- Website: www.lookupinfo.org

Deaf and hard of hearing people

We have specialist workers who can help Deaf or hard of hearing people. They work with adults, children, and people who may have additional needs.

Specialist workers support adults through a process called self-directed support. If you meet our eligibility criteria you will be offered an assessment by a member of our Deaf Services Team to find out what assistance you need. Please see the leaflet from Adults' Services called 'Self Directed Support.' For more details phone 01243 642555 and ask to speak to our Duty Worker.

Members of the Deaf Services Team can also provide advice and information on a range of support services available including:

- Employment, housing, advocacy, audiology, welfare benefits, parenting, interpreters and communication services.
- Local support groups.
- Advice to young people approaching adulthood
- Assessment leading to provision or advice about equipment to help alert you to various sound sources for example, doorbell, smoke alarm, telephone, and equipment for listening to the TV and radio.

Action for deafness

This is a West Sussex organisation offering a full range of services to Deaf and hard of hearing people in the county. There are resource centres at Haywards Heath, Steyning and Worthing where you can see and try out equipment to help with hearing

- Phone 01444 415582
- Website: www.actionfordeafness.org.uk

Action on hearing loss (RNID)

This is a national organisation which can give advice and information about hearing loss and where you can buy equipment to help with hearing

- Phone 0808 808 0123
- Website: www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk

Dual sensory loss

Independent Living Services are able to provide specialist assessments for adults with a dual sensory loss and may provide the following:

- Advice and information
- Equipment
- Arrangements for specialist services, such as a volunteer or communicator guide.
- Support through the self-directed support process for Communicator Guide or other support services.

There are national organisations offering support to people with a Dual Sensory Loss:

- **Deafblind UK**

John and Lucille Van Geest Place

Cygnets Road, Hampton,

Peterborough PE7 8FD

Text and Voice 01733 358100

Helpline text and voice 0800 132320

Fax 01733 358356

Website: www.deafblind.org.uk

Email via the website

- **Sense**

101 Pentonville Road

London, N1 9LG

Phone 0845 127 0060

Text 0845 127 0066

Fax 0845 127 0061

Website: www.sense.org.uk

Email: info@sense.org.uk

Carers

If you are providing regular and substantial care, you are entitled to ask for a carer's assessment, which will make sure that your needs are taken into account.

Please see our leaflet 'Looking After Someone – assessments for carers' (SSP110), which is available by phoning 01243 642555

Carers' support organisations

These can offer you the following:

- Information about short breaks and respite.
- Face-to-face support
- Telephone support
- Carer training and activities
- Bereavement support
- Counselling
- Information
- Advocacy
- Complementary therapies
- Support groups
- Specialist Support workers for people with mental health or learning difficulties
- Creative and therapeutic workshops

- **Carers Support Service West Sussex**

The Orchard,

1–2 Gleneagles Court

Brighton Road

Crawley

West Sussex

RH10 6AD

Phone: 0300 028 8888

Email: info@carerssupport.org.uk

Website: www.carerssupport.org.uk

Finance

Benefits

The Department for Work and Pensions has a Benefit Enquiry Line to advise people with disabilities and carers about benefits.

- Phone: 0845 608 8551

The Pension Service

Because of your disability you may qualify for a home visit for a benefit check and help to complete forms to apply for disability and other state benefits.

- Phone: 0845 6060 265

Other organisations who may be able to help you with completing forms are 4SIGHT on 01243 828555, your local Citizens Advice Bureau or your local Age UK office.

Inland Revenue

People who are registered SSI and pay income tax can claim an extra allowance, which can be transferred to a spouse or civil partner. Contact your tax office to organise this.

- Phone: 0845 366 7887

Council Tax

If your property has been adapted to assist you with your disability, or if you have had to set aside a

room to house your specialist equipment, you may be eligible for the Disability Reduction Scheme.

Ask to speak to the Senior Revenues Officer or Team Leader at the Council Tax Office to see if you may qualify.

Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB)

The CAB can give advice on many topics including benefit entitlement, tax and employment issues, housing, debt and consumer issues. They may also help with form filling.

CAB offices can be found throughout the County.

Banks

Services offered may include statements in large print or Braille and guides for writing cheques. Contact your bank to find out what help they can provide for you.

If you are finding that using a chip and pin card is difficult because of your disability, you are entitled to request a chip and signature card from your bank or building society.

Consumer services

Gas, electricity, telephone and water companies offer a variety of services for people with sight problems. For example - bills in large print or Braille, or by phone. Contact your supplier to find out what help they provide.

Getting around

Mobility

Our Rehabilitation Officers can teach you how to get around safely and independently. They can supply different types of white canes to meet your needs. They can also show you and your family how you can be safely guided.

- For further information and advice on mobility phone the Duty Worker on 01243 642555

Guide dogs are suitable for some visually impaired people. To find out if you may benefit from becoming a guide dog owner:

- Phone: Guide Dogs on 0118 983 5555
- Website: www.guidedogs.org.uk

The disabled person's parking badge

If you are registered SSI you are automatically eligible. It allows you certain parking concessions when you are a passenger. There is a fee for the badge. Application forms are available on 01243 777653, or you can download one on www.westsussex.gov.uk

Rail travel

If you are registered as SI or SSI, you can apply for a Disabled Person's Railcard. The railcard gives you reductions on the cost of certain fares

for you and your escort. Please complete the form 'Rail Travel for Disabled Passengers', which is available on the internet as a download or from:

- 4SIGHT, phone 01243 828555,
- Sensory Duty Desk 01243 642555
- Most railway stations.

There are also certain discounts for you if you do not want to buy a railcard. Your local station can give you information.

For help with rail travel, please contact your local railway station or the National Rail Enquiry Line

- Phone: 0845 748 4950

Air travel

Do ask for assistance when booking your ticket if you have any concerns regarding getting about at the airport.

Bus travel

People who are aged over 60 or who have a qualifying disability (including being registered SI or SSI) are eligible for free off peak bus travel. There is also a 'companion pass' for those who need to be accompanied.

To apply for a bus pass contact the authority you pay your Council Tax to.

Daily living

Our ROVIs can help you develop safe ways of carrying out daily activities by giving you advice, information and training to use special equipment. Or they may be able to adapt your own equipment.

Lighting

We can give advice and information on the best type of lighting for people with low vision, both for safety and everyday activities.

Equipment

ROVIs may be able to loan equipment to help you overcome some of the difficulties caused by loss of vision. They can also advise about where to purchase equipment.

There are specialist equipment suppliers who can supply you with a catalogue. These include:

- **Cobolt Systems Ltd**
(specialise in talking equipment)
Phone: 01493 700172
Website: www.cobolt.co.uk
- **RNIB**
Customer Services 0303 123 9999
Website: www.rnib.org.uk

- **Partially Sighted Society**

Phone: 0844 4774966

Website www.partsight.org.uk

- **Optima**

(Specialise in lights and magnification)

Phone: 01803 864218

Website: www.optimalowvision.co.uk

Reading

Using your vision will not cause further deterioration, but it is important to wear any spectacles which have been prescribed for you. To make the best use of your vision, it is usually helpful to have plenty of light illuminating the reading material.

You are advised to visit an optician once a year for an eye health check, even if you have been told that spectacles will not help you.

Low vision aids (magnifiers)

These are designed to help you make the best use of your remaining vision.

The following can carry out an assessment:

- A hospital low vision clinic
- Some opticians (ask for a list at your eye clinic)
- A ROVI
- A contact officer from 4SIGHT

Most hospitals provide free low vision aids on long-term loan. Other providers may charge for the assessment and the prescribed low vision aid.

Large print

Public Libraries have a range of large print books as well as audio books. There are also specialist publishers of large print books.

'Big Print' is a weekly large print newspaper available on subscription. This comes with a TV and radio guide.

- **Phone RNIB 0303 123 9999**

Reading by touch

There are two methods of reading by touch, Braille and Moon. You can get further information about them by telephoning the Sensory Duty Desk on 01243 642555

Spoken word services

RNIB talking book service

For an annual subscription the service provides books on special CDs and a 'Daisy Player' to play them on.

- Phone: 0303 123 9999
- Website: www.rnib.org.uk

Calibre

Calibre provides a free loan service of audio books in various formats for adults and children. There is a one-off administration fee to join. (£35 in 2012).

- Phone: 01296 432339
- Website: www.calibre.org.uk

Talking Newspaper Association of the UK (TNAUK)

For a subscription TNAUK provides most weekly national newspapers and a wide range of magazines in a variety of formats.

- Phone: 01435 866102
- Website: www.tnauk.org.uk

Local talking news

Many areas have a local talking news organisation, which produces extracts from local newspapers on tape, CD or other formats.

- Phone: ICIS for your local service on 0800 859929
- Website: www.icis-info4life.org.uk

Libraries

Audio books for use by visually impaired people are available for free loan from local libraries. At some libraries audio books are available in a new easy to use format called 'Playaway' for which you only need headphones to listen to a book.

There is also a Housebound Reader Service for people who are unable to access the library because of a disability.

- Phone: 1903 704818

Leisure

Television

If you are aged over 75 you do not have to pay for a TV licence. However, if you are under 75 and registered as SSI, you are entitled to a half-price licence.

To get this the TV licence must be in your name. You will need the following:

- A letter, available from Sensory Duty, to confirm your registration
- Your renewal notice, (if you have one) and the licence fee

These should be sent to:

- TV Licensing
Blind Concession Group
Bristol, BS98 1TL

If you have any questions regarding TV licences

- Phone: 0844 800 6790
- Website: www.tvlicensing.co.uk

Radio

For people who are registered SI or SSI, the British Wireless for the Blind Fund may be able to loan easy to use audio equipment for listening to talking books or the radio.

For more information contact Sensory Duty:

- Phone 01243 642555

Cinema

Some cinemas are now offering audio description.

For more information:

- Phone: 0845 056 9824.
- Website: www.yourlocalcinema.com

For people who are registered SSI or who are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Attendance Allowance, the Cinema Exhibitors Association Card entitles the holder to one free ticket for a person accompanying them to the cinema. There is a small fee for the card which is valid for one year.

- Phone: 0845 123 1292
- Website: www.ceacard.co.uk

Theatres and museums

Audio description and 'touch tours' are becoming increasingly available. Ask about what is available to help you enjoy your visit before you attend or book

Holidays

specifically for people who are visually impaired.

You can get a full list from RNIB.

- Phone: 0303 123 9999

There are two hotels in West Sussex for people with a visual impairment.

- The Russell Hotel in Bognor Regis
Phone: 01243 871300

- **The Bradbury Hotel in East Preston**
Phone: 01903 770339

Vitalise

Vitalise run holidays for visually impaired people including touring, educational, activity and leisure holidays both in the UK and abroad.

- Phone: 0303 303 0147
- Website: www.vitalise.org.uk

Gardening

Thrive is an organisation which can advise on techniques to keep gardening. It runs courses and produces information in various formats for visually impaired people.

- Phone: 0118 988 5688
- Website: www.thrive.org.uk

Sports and physical activities

You can enjoy a wide range of sporting activities despite your sight loss. Ask at your local leisure centre about the help they can offer you. You can get information and advice from the following.

- RNIB on 0303 123 9999
- British Blind Sport on 01926 424247
- Website: www.britishblindsport.org.uk

Cricket

Sussex Sharks is a cricket club for adults and children with a visual impairment. For further information phone British Blind Sport on the number above.

Football

Visually impaired children up to the age of 16 can play in the Brighton and Hove Albion Seagulls Specials. For further information phone British Blind Sport on the number above

Bowls

There are lawn bowls clubs for visually impaired people in Bognor, Crawley and Worthing.

- Phone: ICIS 0800 859929

Riding

The Riding for the Disabled Association will be able to give details of your nearest centre

- **Phone: 0845 658 1082**
- **Website: www.riding-for-disabled.org.uk**

Adult and further education

The Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)

The RNIB website is full of useful information for students.

- Website: www.rnib.org.uk

SKILL (National Bureau for students with disabilities)

Promotes opportunities for young people and adults in post 16 education, training and employment.

- Phone: 0800 328 5050
- Website: www.skill.org.uk

Open University

The OU has a wide range of support services for students with disabilities. Contact the Disability Support Team.

- Phone: 01908 655978
- Website: www.open.ac.uk
- Email: disabled-student-resources@open.ac.uk

Adult and community learning

This is available at many locations in the County. Subjects range from hobbies to courses leading to an academic qualification.

The centre running the course you are interested in should be told before you enrol that you might need learning support because of your visual impairment. They may then arrange an interview to clarify the support you need.

For further information:

- **Phone: 0845 075 1009**
- **Website: www.westsussex.gov.uk/adulteducation**

Employment

There are several organisations that can advise you about the facilities available to help you find, continue or re-train for work.

Disability Employment Advisors (DEA)

They can give help and support in finding work or gaining new skills. Contact your local Job Centre and ask to speak to the DEA.

Access to Work

Can help if your health or disability affects the way you do your job. They can give you and your employer advice and support with extra costs which may arise because of your needs. The service is available for people starting a new job, self employed or employed people.

The service may include:

- Special aids, equipment and adaptations;
- A person to read for you
- Fares to work

For further information:

- Phone: 01273 364750
- Text Phone: 01273 364733

Workability

Workability aims to provide equal access to education, training and work opportunities for people with disabilities.

They offer help with applications, career histories and interview skills, finding courses or training opportunities and looking for paid or voluntary work.

- **Phone: 01903 730044**
- **Fax: 01903 735958**
- **Textphone: 01903 735957**
- **Website: www.impact-initiatives.org.uk**
- **Email: workability@impact-initiatives.org.uk**

Children

West Sussex Children's Services, Sensory Support Team

The ROVIs in this team can give specialist advice, information and support to you and your child with a visual impairment. They are able to provide training for mobility and life skills to maximise your child's development and independence both at school and at home. They can also provide environmental audits to schools and advise on any adjustments that are required. They liaise closely with Advisory Teachers for Visual Impairment, the school and other appropriate agencies.

All schools in West Sussex have a responsibility to assess children with disabilities and Special Needs. They provide support to children to help them access the curriculum and to play a full part in the life of the school.

Advisory Teachers for Visual Impairment from the Sensory Support Team can provide advice, assistance and specialist equipment to schools for children and young people with a sensory impairment to ensure they can access the curriculum. These teachers provide specialist Braille teaching; touch-typing training can also be provided when needed.

In some cases the local authority may decide to make a formal statement outlining your child's Special Educational Needs and how these will be met in the school.

For further information contact the Sensory Support Team or visit the West Sussex Grid for Learning website and enter Sensory Support Team in the search box.

- Email: sensory.support@westsussex.gov.uk
- Phone: 08450 751007

The Family Information Service is run by West Sussex County Council to offer free, impartial information on a wide range of activities and support including childcare

- Phone 01243 777807
- Website: www.familyinfoservice.westsussex.gov.uk

The RNIB has a service, which you can contact for advice and information regarding children and young people

- Phone: 0303 123 9999

Blatchington Court Trust and Look Sussex are charities working with families of children and young adults who have a visual impairment

- See text below for contact information.

National Blind Children's Society

The National Blind Children's Society can offer the following.

- Family support and information
- Education advocacy
- IT assessments, advice and support
- Customising of large print books
- Activities

For more information:

- Phone: 0800 781 1444
- Website: www.nbcs.org.uk

VICTA (Visually Impaired Children Taking Action)

Provides support and information to parents/carers/visually impaired young people/organisations. They also make grants to individuals, groups and research groups.

- www.victa.org.uk

Family Fund (London and South East area)

Provides grants to low income families with severely disabled children based on the families' views and needs.

- Phone: 08449 744 099
- Website: www.familyfund.org.uk

Clearvision

This is a UK postal lending library of mainstream children's books with added Braille, for visually impaired children and adults to share.

- Phone 020 8789 9575
- Website: www.clearvisionproject.org

Contact a Family

This is a UK charity which offers support, advice and information for families with disabled children. They have information about specific conditions and rare disorders.

- Phone: 0808 808 3555
- Website: www.cafamily.org.uk

General information

In Touch

BBC Radio 4 produces a programme on Tuesday evenings called 'In Touch' specifically for visually impaired listeners. Visit the In Touch page at www.bbc.co.uk/radio4

Eye conditions

There are a number of societies for specific eye conditions, some of which are listed below. If you need information on a condition which is not mentioned here, contact your GP, your eye clinic or RNIB on 0303 123 9999, website: www.rnib.org.uk

- **RP Fighting Blindness (British Retinitis Pigmentosa Society)**
Helpline: 0845 123 2354
Website: www.rpfightingblindness.org.uk
- **International Glaucoma Association**
Helpline: 01233 648170
Website: www.glaucoma-association.com
- **Macular Society**
Helpline: 0300 3030 111
Website: www.macularsociety.org

- **Nystagmus Network**

Phone: 0845 6342630

Website: www.nystagmusnet.org

- **Diabetes UK**

South East Region phone 01372 720148

Website: www.diabetes.org.uk

Postal concessions

An 'Articles for the Blind' label (available from RNIB) can be used when special equipment or information is being sent in an accessible format for someone who is sight impaired. This could be large print, Braille or recorded material.

Mailing preference service

This service will cut down on addressed 'junk mail'

- Phone: 0845 703 4599 to register

- Website: www.mpsonline.org.uk

Royal Mail – door-to-door opt-out

This service reduces unsolicited, unaddressed mail and leaflets delivered by the Royal Mail. To register to opt out send or email your name and address to:

- Freepost RSTR-YCYS-TGLJ

Royal Mail Door to Door Opt Outs

Kingsmead House, Oxpens Road, Oxford OZ1 1RX

- Email: opout@royalmail.com

Telephones

Telephone service providers may be able to offer you a number of services and equipment including free directory enquiries.

NTL/Virgin and BT customers should dial 0800 587 0195 to register for the free directory enquiry service.

BT priority fault repair service

If you are housebound because of a disabling condition you can get priority if there is a fault with your phone line.

- Phone 0800 800 150

Telephone Preference Service

This cuts down on unwanted phone calls from sales people.

- Registration line: 0845 070 0707
- Email: tps@dma.org.uk
- Website: www.tpsonline.org.uk

Organisations in West Sussex

There are several agencies in West Sussex for people with sight loss.

4SIGHT (West Sussex Association for the Blind)

Supports people of all ages with sight loss, across Sussex.

- For general Information and advice phone 4SIGHT on 01243 828555 or email enquiries@4sightsussex.co.uk
- Resource centres in Bognor Regis, Crawley, Burgess Hill and Shoreham have a range of equipment to view and purchase
- Hospital Sight Care Advisor Service offers advice, support and information for visually impaired people, their family and friends. The service is based at Worthing and Chichester eye clinics where advisors, who are trained nurses, can offer you advice, support and information if you attend either of these hospitals:
 - St Richards Hospital 01243 788122 ext. 3515
 - Worthing Hospital 01903 285281

Worthing Society for the Blind (WSB)

Assists visually impaired people in the Worthing area and membership is free. They have a well-stocked resource room and provide many social activities. A home visiting service is available and members receive a quarterly newsletter.

- Phone: 01903 235782
- www.worthingsocietyfortheblind.co.uk

Blatchington Court Trust

Works to promote the educational and employment needs of young vision impaired individuals under the age of 30 and living predominately in Sussex. In addition to providing grants for educational equipment the Trust also offers: family support, advocacy, counselling, advice, IT training, benefits advice and information on employment support.

- Phone: 01273 727222
- Website: www.blatchingtoncourt.org.uk

Look Sussex

This is a local charity supporting families in Sussex who have a child with a visual impairment.

- Phone: Gayle Rogers 01293 454454
- Website: www.looksussex.co.uk

ICIS : information for life

This is an information 'bank' helping people in West Sussex find information through difficult or challenging circumstances. ICIS also enables people to find care, support or advice services.

- **Phone: 0800 859929**
- **Email: enquiries@icis-info4life.org.uk**
- **Website: www.icis-info4life.org.uk**

National organisations

RNIB and Action for Blind People

These organisations have joined forces to share resources, skills and expertise. Their services include:

- Braille and talking book libraries
- Information about eye conditions
- Talk and support – telephone socialising and support
- Welfare benefits, employment and housing advice
- 'Actionairre' groups for children and families
- Advice about assistive technology
- Holiday and hotel information
- Equipment (order online or by phone)

For more information:

- Phone: 0303 123 9999
- Website: www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk
- Website: www.rnib.org.uk

Blind Veterans UK (St Dunstans)

Offers support and advice, training and rehabilitation, help with benefit claims, sport, socialising and more. You can apply if you served in the forces (from cadet to war service) and you are registered SSI. They will also help you if you have suffered severe sight loss whilst on duty with one of the emergency services. In most cases, your vision will be tested by an independent ophthalmologist to assess your eligibility.

- Phone: 020 7723 5021
- Website: www.blindveterans.org.uk

Torch Trust

This is a non denominational Christian organisation for visually impaired people. It provides Christian literature in accessible formats; holidays, retreats and residential courses. There may be a local group who worship near you.

- Phone: 01858 438260
- Website: www.torchtrust.org

Driving

Information for driving licence holders

You must be able to read (a post September 2001) car number plate at 20 metres (65 feet).

The law requires you to tell the DVLA immediately about any condition that may affect your ability to drive safely. Therefore if your sight is affecting your driving, or a specialist has advised that you are not safe, you must contact:

- Drivers Medical Group
DLVA, Swansea SA99 1DF
Phone: 0300 790 6807

Registration as SI or SSI is normally regarded as incompatible with holding a driving licence. You are breaking the law if you are driving without meeting the vision requirements and you are liable to a substantial fine. If you are involved in an accident and it is found that your health condition was a contributing factor you may be prosecuted and your insurance may not be valid.

Class 3 pavement vehicles

This category includes powered wheelchairs and other outdoor powered vehicles, including scooters for use on roads and highways with a maximum speed limit of 8mph, and facility to travel at 4mph on footways.

These vehicles need to be registered with DVLA and display a 'nil duty' tax disc. Your local DVLA office can be contacted by phoning 0870 850 007.

Although there is no legal sight requirement you should be able to read a car number plate from 12.3 metres (40 ft).

You are advised to take out insurance if you are driving one of these vehicles, and to advise your insurance company about your visual impairment.

Full information can be found in the booklet 'Code of Practice for Class 3 Vehicle Users' available from:

- **The Mobility and Inclusion Unit
Department of Transport
Great Minster House
76 Marsham Street
London, SW1P 4DR**
- **Phone: 0300 330 3000**
- **Website: www.dft.gov.uk**

Edition 12

www.westsussex.gov.uk

E-mail: socialcare@westsussex.gov.uk

We will review the information in this booklet in one year.

WS0226 August 2013