



Visual Impairment Ayrshire

Scottish Charity No. SC033263

**A guide to services in Ayrshire
for visually impaired people**

All Information correct at time of printing.

Visual Impairment Ayrshire

What is VIA? We are a charitable organisation of blind and visually impaired people, dedicated to improving life for anyone living with serious sight loss in Ayrshire.

What does VIA do? We are an umbrella group of all the blind and visually impaired clubs and organisations throughout Ayrshire. We are a network providing a means of sharing valuable information on all aspects of living with serious sight loss.

VIA has links with and consults with NHS Ayrshire & Arran, the local authority Sensory Impairment Teams in East, North and South Ayrshire and representatives on all these Councils' Access Panels, whose remit is to work toward making Council services available to everyone.

VIA has also produced an audio recording providing some useful information to those newly diagnosed with serious sight loss. Copies are available through eye clinics, libraries, doctor's surgeries etc. This booklet has been produced to supplement the audio recording, but contains a much wider range of information.

VIA aims to raise the awareness of how visual impairment affects everyday life and in doing so improve services and facilities for those affected by sight loss.

Contact details on back cover

Index

- Page 4 East Ayrshire Council Services**
- Page 5 North Ayrshire Council Services**
- Page 6 South Ayrshire Council Services**
- Page 7 NHS Ayrshire & Arran Adult Low Vision Service**
- Page 8 List of Accredited Opticians**
- Page 11 Tape Service for the Blind**
- Page 12 Local and National Charities**
- Page 27 Information**
- Page 29 Useful Telephone Numbers and Links**

Visual Impairment Ayrshire would like to thank all three Local Authorities for their contributions of funding that have made this publication possible.

We would also like to pass on our gratitude to Anne Gary of Visibility for her contribution to the editing and setting out this booklet.

East Ayrshire Council Services **for People with a Visual Impairment**

The Sensory Impairment Team provide information support and advice on sight loss.

Home visits, assessment and training in, and provision of, a range of equipment to assist in everyday living.

Training can also be offered to enable people to remain independently mobile at home and in the community.

Contact:

**Claire Mills, Team Manager,
East Ayrshire Council, ESS,
Civic Centre, John Dickie Street,
Kilmarnock KA1 1BY
TEL: 01563 576930**

North Ayrshire Council **Sensory Impairment Services**

The Sensory Impairment Service offers a wide range of services for people with a visual impairment.

These Services Include:

Certification/ registration, home assessment, Counselling /support, benefits, mobility/daily living training, aids/adaptations, support to local groups and many other factors relating to visual impairment.

Duty Times: Monday to Friday 09.00 -12.30

We are based at
Pavilion 9, Ayrshire Central Hospital,
Irvine, KA12 8SS

But in the first instance please contact us on:

Tel: 01294 276650

Fax: 01294 323542

Email: dsweeney@north-ayrshire.gov.uk

South Ayrshire Sensory Impairment Team

The Sensory Impairment Team are based on the ground floor of Burns House, Burns Statue Square next door to the Odeon Cinema and adjacent to Ayr Railway Station.

A number of local buses stop nearby. The team offer a wide range of services to anyone affected by visual impairment, hearing impairment or dual sensory loss. Services include registration of visual impairment, Community Care Assessment, assessment and provision of aids for daily living, advice on disability benefits, communication support, mobility training, information and advice and support to local groups.

The team offer a duty system:
Monday and Wednesday mornings 10 -12 and
Tuesday and Thursday afternoons 2 - 4pm.

Contact details are:

<u>Telephone</u>	<u>01292 616 261</u>
Fax	01292 616 622
Textphone	01292 616 301
Text mobile service	07977 540 721

NHS Ayrshire & Arran

Adult Low Vision Service

NHS Ayrshire and Arran has introduced a new low vision service to integrate some of the support services for visually impaired people.

Optometry practices listed, on the following pages, across Ayrshire have been accredited to provide patients with

- low vision assessments free of charge
- optical low vision aids on a free of charge, long term loan

Patients can be referred from various sources:

Hospital Eye Service, Sensory Impairment teams, Community Mental Health, GP, Optometrists and self referral.

Optometrists can in turn direct patients to other support services and charities.

A follow up assessment will be advised on an annual basis, to ensure the patient's needs are being met.

If you require any further information please contact:

**Catherine Taysum. Optometric Development
Adviser, Eglinton House, Ailsa Hospital,
Dalmellington Road, Ayr KA6 6AB
Tel 01292 513675**

NHS Ayrshire & Arran Adult
Low Vision Service

List of Accredited Optometrists

Helen Scott Opticians, 59 Newmarket Street, **Ayr**
Tel: 01292 262 530

Optical Outlet, 15 Arran Mall, **Ayr**
Tel: 01292 290 092

Specsavers Opticians, 41-45 High Street, **Ayr**
Tel: 01292 619 007

Kilgour Optometrists, 42 Dalblair Road, **Ayr**
Tel: 01292 267 293

Kilgour Optometrists, **Troon**,
Tel: 01292 311 553

First Sight Opticians, 38 Eglinton Street, **Beith**
Tel: 01505 502 727

First Sight Opticians, **Auchinleck**
Tel: 01290 420 029

First Sight Opticians, **Cumnock**,
Tel: 01290 518 082

First Sight Opticians, **Dalry**,
Tel: 01294 832 762

James R Shaw & Sons, 41 Townhead Street,
Cumnock
Tel: 01290 421 421

James R Shaw & Sons, **Mauchline**

Tel: 01290 551 466

Ronald B MacGregor, 47 Chaplewell Street,

Saltcoats

Tel: 01294 465152

Ronald B MacGregor, **Beith,**

Tel: 01560 485 300

Ronald B MacGregor, **West Kilbride,**

Tel: 01294 823 623

David Bonellie Opticians, 183 High Street, **Irvine**

Tel: 01294 275 272

David Bonellie Opticians, **Largs,**

Tel: 01475 674 553

David Bonellie Opticians, **Stewarton,**

Tel: 01560 482 413

Stephen Rowe Opticians, 150 High Street, **Irvine**

Tel: 01294 271 435

Stephen Rowe Opticians, **Ayr,**

Tel: 01292 260 826

Stephen Rowe Opticians, **Saltcoats,**

Tel: 01294 462 333

Stephen Rowe Opticians, **Troon,**

Tel: 01292 314 202

R Urquhart, 14 Portland Road, **Kilmarnock**
Tel: 01563 525 059

R Urquhart, **Prestwick**,
Tel: 01292 475 603

R Urquhart, **Troon**,
Tel: 01292 311 866

John Lindsay, 59 The Foregate, **Kilmarnock**
Tel: 01563 523 309

John Lindsay, **Kilmarnock**,
Tel: 01563 522 821

Michael J Birtwhistle, 73 High Street, **Maybole**
Tel: 01655 883 928

Michael J Birtwhistle, **Girvan**,
Tel: 01465 713 429

Michael J Birtwhistle, **Dalmellington**,
Tel: 01292 511 662

Kenneth McPhee, 30 Main Street, **Prestwick**
Tel: 01292 477 547

Occuleye Opticians, 29 Dalrymple Street, **Girvan**
Tel: 01465 712 257

McAlister Opticians, Unit 1 Douglas Centre,
Brodick, Isle of Arran
Tel: 01770 302 878

The Tape Service for the Blind

We are a charity producing a weekly tape service for Visually Impaired people throughout the Kilmarnock and Loudoun area.

The service is free and we produce

- The Kilmarnock Standard
- Cumnock Chronicle
- Largs & Millport Weekly News and a Church Service

We also supply information tapes from organisations such as the Benefits Agency, Strathclyde Police and many others.

Anyone wishing to receive our service can contact us on:

01563 530 880 during office hours

01563 532 287 in the evening.

Cumnock & District Blind Club

A warm welcome awaits you at our friendly club and our activities include:- Speakers, Entertainment, Quizzes, Dominoes, Bingo, Local Trips, Tea, Coffee & Biscuits.

The group meets in The Barrhill Centre, Bank Avenue, Cumnock at 1.45 - 4.15pm on the 2nd & 4th Thursday of the month (September - May)

For further information contact:

Chrissie 01292 591 432

Jean Smith 01290 421 836

Garnock Valley **Visually Impaired Persons Club**

This group is always looking for new members and volunteers to help share in fun, fitness and friendship.

Please come along and have a cup of tea or coffee.

The group meet at:

Radio City, Kilbirnie

every 4 weeks – 1.30 pm to 3.00 pm

Contact: Ellen McLaughlin on 01294 835 443

Kilmarnock & Loudoun District Blind Club

Kilmarnock Blind Club meets on Mondays
from 1 - 3pm

Winter time (October to April)
in the Gateway Centre, Kilmarnock.

Summer time (May - September)
in the West Netherton Bowling Club, Kilmarnock

Our activities include speakers, outings and an
annual holiday. We also have parties. Tea and
coffee is available at each meeting.

For further information contact:

Office hours: 01563 530 880

Evening: 01563 532 287

Kilmarnock Macular Group

There may not be a cure for Macular Degeneration
but our group can provide help, information and
friendship.

We meet on the third Monday of each month in
"The Cabin", Witch Road, 2pm – 4pm

Evelyn 01563 530 401

Jean 01563 531 554

North Ayrshire Macular Group

We would like to invite you to join our group where a warm welcome awaits you. We have a full and varied programme throughout the year including exchange of information, relevant speakers, equipment demonstrations and outings.

Friendship and mutual support are one of the main aims of the group.

Meetings take place in the Annick Centre, East Road, Irvine (behind the old police station) on the first Thursday of the month at 1.30pm - 3.30pm.

May Orr **01294 822 460**

Hazel Allen **01294 469 582**

Social Eyes

Hi my name is Norma (42), I am Registered Blind and I live in Saltcoats. My friend Gillian (29) lives in Beith and has friends and family who are visually impaired.

We think that there may be a need for people who have experienced sight loss to meet up to talk about their experiences, organise social activities and generally have some fun! If you are interested in helping us form a social group **please contact Norma or Gillian on 07771 582 219**

North Ayrshire **Blind Bowling Club**

Our main function is bowling although we do have some other social activities. All new members will be made most welcome.

**Contact Billy Edgar, 35 St Mary's Palace,
Saltcoats 01294 463 545**

The Largs Club **for the Visually Impaired**

Features of our club include regular meetings, speakers, information, annual holidays and outings to the theatre.

The club meets at the Brisbane Centre, Bath St, Largs.

(September to April) Fortnightly on
Wednesday afternoons, 2pm – 4pm

Mrs Helen McDowall 01475 674 962

Mrs Mary Mushet 01475 674 753

Mr Matthew Johnston 0141 649 2169

Cunninghame Club for the Visually Impaired

(for residents of Ardrossan, Saltcoats & Stevenston)

The Club meets every second Monday from September - April in St Mary's Hall, Saltcoats with an average attendance of 30 members. Our Syllabus includes Talks, Music and Visits, Christmas Lunch, Burns Supper and annual 5 day holiday.

Transport is provided for members who would not otherwise manage to the Club.

Supported by "Visibility" & North Ayrshire Council.

Bill McKay 01294 467 140

Three Towns Visually Impaired Club

Would you like to become more active, feel better and fitter, make new friends and socialise? Of course you would! Our club actively promotes lawn bowls as a sport for visually impaired people

Our members enjoy outings, trips and theatre breaks. We welcome new members and provide bowls equipment for coaching and training.

If you would like to "Have a go" simply give us a call

David Thomas 01294 601 973

Ayr & District Macular Group

Exchange of information on services and equipment, Relevant Speakers, Outings, Social Events, Informal Discussions, Friendship and Mutual Support.

You will find a warm welcome at our meetings which are held in Holy Trinity Church Hall, Fullarton Street, Ayr on the last Tuesday of each month (except December) at 2pm – 3.30pm.

Bob Shields **01292 270 285**

Ann Deans **01292 267 479**

Ayr Blind Club

The club meets in the Holy Trinity Church Hall, Fullarton St, Ayr, every Thursday at 1.30pm to 3pm (late September to April)

We have a good variety of speakers, quizzes, musical afternoons and games. We arrange a Christmas lunch and a summer outing for members and their guides. Why not come along. For more details contact the Chairman:

Robert Logan: **01292 289 186**

South Ayrshire **Macular Degeneration Group**

A support group for people and run by people with macular degeneration. The group are kept up to date with issues concerning visual impairment and information is shared and discussed in a friendly and welcoming environment.

The group meet on the 1st Monday of every month from 10.30am to 12.00 pm at Burns House, Burns Statue Square, Ayr.

Pauline Clarke **01292 441 894**

Girvan & District **Visually Impaired Group** **Social Club**

The club meets every Thursday in Carrick Buildings, Henrietta St, Girvan, from 1.30pm to 3.30pm

Members enjoy a varied programme of speakers, games, discussions and demonstrations, finishing with a cup of tea/coffee.

Mrs C Lopez, Secretary **01465 831 405**

SAVIC

South Ayrshire Visually Impaired Children

We are a registered Charity operated by parents of visually impaired children. We promote regular contact with parents and organise professional speakers on all aspects of visually impaired children.

Through SAVIC'S activities the children can be themselves and do not have to "pretend" to see what they can't see to be like their peers. We provide a safe environment for them to socialise and have fun. If you are interested in the group, for further information contact:

Merle Smith

01292 285 759

Troon Blind Club

Troon Blind Club meets from September - May every second Tuesday in Ivy Cottage, Troon (next to The Walker Hall) from 2pm -4pm.

We have a varied syllabus to suit all tastes - musical entertainment, speakers on health issues and Burns' poetry. We also like to visit places of interest for afternoon tea.

Margaret Dunbar

01292 317 434

Eye Contact

Hi my name is Debbie McKenzie, I am registered blind and live in Ayr. I have recently formed a new social group for visually impaired people between the ages of 30 – 60 in Ayrshire.

The activities will be chosen by the members in a relaxed atmosphere. If you feel you would like to be part of this exciting forward looking group and be part of its future.

Please call me on 07764 212 897

RNIB Vision Support Service Ayrshire

At Crosshouse and Ayr Hospitals, RNIB's Vision Support Service Ayrshire ensures that those in need can access services quickly after sight loss diagnosis or registration.

The service lets you discuss concerns or needs to do with your eyesight; offers a brief needs assessment which can lead on to local support services; provides information on eye conditions, equipment, services and help; displays and demonstrates daily living equipment, to assist independence and safety in the home.

**Contact: Gail Ivory, Vision Support Officer,
Tel: 07554 110 883**

Bridge to Vision: Ayrshire and Arran

People with a learning disability are more likely to have sight problems and less likely to access eye care.

This partnership between NHS Ayrshire and Arran and RNIB Scotland works closely with high street optometrists and eye care professionals across Ayrshire and Arran to support adults with a learning disability and other complex needs to access local eye care services.

**RNIB Project Assessment Worker
Tel: 01292 614909**

The Ayrshire Echo Association

The Ayrshire Echo is produced by volunteers recording a free weekly tape service for visually impaired people carrying news from the local papers within the South Ayrshire area. We also record and deliver a monthly tape entitled "Hear and Now".

South Ayrshire Disabled Resource Centre
01292 616 636

Peter MacDonald, Ayrshire Echo Association
Chairman 01292 264 059

Vision Basics Ltd
Seeing the Bigger Picture



Vision Basics Ltd is a North Ayrshire based business with a qualified staff who have a wide range of experience in the field of disability.

We provide a range of high quality services tailored to each individual's needs:

- Orientation and mobility training
- Independent living skills
- Computing and low vision equipment training
- Independent travel training

Norma 01294 461 539 or 07903 936 753

Ayrshire Independent Living Network **Self Directed Support & Payroll Services**

AILN provide a support service to individuals who obtain Direct Payments or Independent Living Fund from their Local Authority. We have a dedicated Direct Payment Support Worker, who can give information on Direct Payments, advise on safe recruitment, interviewing and other employment issues.

Payroll

AILN provide a payroll service to Self Directed Support users who employ their own Personal Assistants, as well as to users of the ILF and are branching out to do payroll for small businesses and Voluntary Organisations.

Training

AILN can access training on how to be a good employer of personal assistants and give one to one support where required.

Information

AILN have information on Direct Payments for people living throughout North, South & East Ayrshire as well as the Islands of Arran & Cumbrae.

Ayrshire Independent Living Network
Pavilion 9, Ayrshire Central Hospital, Irvine
01294 272 260 Scottish Charity No.SC030092

The Macular Disease Society

The Society welcomes anyone who has macular degeneration themselves, is a relative or a healthcare professional. Providing information, help, support and practical advice to people with macular degeneration, sponsoring and monitoring research into the causes of, and treatments for, macular disease, promoting improved low vision and rehabilitation services nationwide. Subscription £15 per year.

help line **0845 241 2041**
email **info@maculardisease.org**
www.maculardisease.org

Action For Blind People

We are one of the largest charities in the UK working with blind and partially sighted people to enable them to transform their lives.

Our Helpline provides free, impartial advice and support, while our website enables people to get the help they need, no matter where they live. We also have a Mobile Sight Loss Information Service, which travels around the UK with the latest equipment and information.

National Freephone Helpline 0800 915 4666



Visibility has been listening and responding to people with sight loss in the west of Scotland for over 150 years. Our services include:

- Information, advice and emotional support
- Visually Impaired Mentors
- Community based events
- Low vision training
- Social and recreational activities
- Visual impairment awareness training
- Volunteering opportunities

2 Queens Crescent, Glasgow G4 9BW

0141 332 4632

Scottish Charity No. SC009738

Royal National Institute of Blind People Scotland

RNIB Scotland is a charity helping blind and partially sighted people to live as fully and independently as possible.

We also campaign to help improve the life chances of people with sight loss. Among the many services we offer to visually impaired children, adults, families and carers are:

- Support and training
- Talking Books and transcription services
- Products such as aids and equipment
- Magazines in accessible formats
- A welfare Benefits telephone hotline
- Training for work at our Employment Learning Centre
- Services for blind and partially sighted people with learning disability
- Children's services and Youth Forum

**Insight Radio is the radio station of the RNIB.
101FM in Glasgow and on SKY channel 0188
Online @ www.insightradio.co.uk**

**RNIB helpline - 0845 766 9999
Benefits Helpline number - 0845 602 4033
Talk and Support - 0845 330 3723
www.rnib.org.uk/scotland**

Calibre Audio Books

If you love books but can't see to read.....listen to ours!

Our FREE audio book library offers:
Over 7000 audio books for all tastes
A choice of format – cassette, MP3 disk, USB stick, Free postage, a friendly, personal, quick service

Catalogues in large print, CD and online 1200 books for under 16s.

www.calibre.org.uk **01296 432 339**

SITE Scotland

Supported Integration, Training and Employment (SITE) is a charity for blind and visually impaired people covering Glasgow and the West of Scotland. We give expert care, advice and training to anyone affected by sight loss, right where it's needed most.

If you would like to get in touch with us then please do so via our email address:

info@sitescotland.org

0141 276 5252

Registered Charity no SC0366056

Visual Impairment Benefits You May Qualify For:

- **Free Telephone Directory Service**, including waiving of 1471 Call Back charge.
- **Freepost Articles for the Blind**, including large print documents.
- **Scottish Blind Persons Travel Card**. Free travel from participating bus, ferry and train operators - excluding excursions. Companion Card permits escorts to travel at concessionary fares, including peak hour travel.
- **Disabled person's parking permit**. Registered blind people would automatically qualify.
- **Half price TV licence**. Registered blind people
- **Blind person's income tax allowance**. Allowance can be transferred in full or in part, between husband and wife. Registered Blind only.

- **Disability Living Allowance or Attendance Allowance.**
- **Free audio library services.**
- **Possible Reduction in Council Tax** band for people who use a room in their home exclusively in relation to their disability.
- **Carer's Allowance** Those looking after visually impaired people may qualify for Carer's Allowance, or Underlying Entitlement to Carer's Allowance depending on the amount of State Benefit income.

These benefits may also entitle you to an increase in Council Tax Benefit.

Please remember when dealing with any government body or utility company, that you can insist on your preferred format of communication, large print or audio tape/ cd.
ALWAYS ASK !!

Cinema Concession Card: Companion goes free!! For details call **0845 123 1292** or www.ceacard.co.uk

Useful Contact Numbers

Ayr Hospital	01292 610 555
Ayrshire Central Hospital.....	01294 274 191
Crosshouse Hospital	01563 521 133
East Ayrshire Council	01563 576 000
North Ayrshire Council.....	0845 603 0590
South Ayrshire Council	01292 612 000

Police

Ayr	01292 664 000
Irvine	01294 404 400
Kilmarnock	01563 505 000
Cumnock	01290 306 600
Guide Dogs for the Blind	01307 463 531
Age Scotland	0845 125 9732
Samaritans	01563 531 313

Useful Website Links

www.deafblind.org.uk

www.viscotland.org.uk

www.look-uk.org

www.guidedogs.org.uk

www.visibility.org.uk

www.cafamily.org.uk

www.nbcs.org.uk

www.sitescotland.org

www.rnib.org.uk

www.calibre.org.uk

www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk

www.blind.org.uk

www.tnf.org.uk

www.listening-books.org.uk



Contact: Janet Prydie

Tel: 01563 851933

Visit our website

www.visualimpairmentayrshire.org.uk