



# IMPROVE YOUR SERVICE TO CUSTOMERS WITH SIGHT LOSS

Andrew Carnegie Birthplace Museum

## **What is visual impairment?**

The term “visual impairment” is used to describe a wide range of sight problems from partial sight to total blindness. You may be surprised to learn that sight loss is one of the most common causes of disability in the UK, with almost two million people living with sight loss.

Visual impairment differs enormously from person to person and there are quite often simple factors that can help a blind or partially sighted person enjoy a day out or holiday.



**Many disabled people are keen to travel, just like everyone else, and people with sight loss make up an important part of the disabled market. Blind and partially sighted people often travel with friends and family and frequently return to places where they have received good service.**

**It makes good business sense to understand more about how you can cater for your visually impaired customers.**

## **What can you do to make your business more accessible?**

There are many easy things you can do to make blind and partially sighted customers welcome, for example:

### **Make sure blind and partially sighted people can access your premises**

There are some easy things you can do to help make your building accessible to all your customers. For example, marking glass doors, providing a handrail on stairways, using contrasting colours and tactile markings to highlight steps, edges and obstacles. Good lighting and clear signs are also helpful.

## **Make sure your staff know how to meet and greet a blind or partially sighted customer**

Just the same as with any other customer, the welcome and general attitude of your staff is important in making a customer with sight loss feel valued and welcome.

Don't be afraid to say things like "See you later" or "Nice to see you". Always offer help, asking how you can best assist, but don't be offended if it is not needed.

## **Make sure your information is accessible**

Accurate, accessible information will help people decide for themselves whether a holiday or activity is suitable for them.

People with serious sight problems need the same information as everyone else, but you may need to present it in a different way.

Braille is an important communication method used by some blind people, but two out of three people with sight loss can still read clear or large print. For those who don't read braille or large print, could you produce information in an audio format?

## **Market your service effectively**

If you provide printed materials promoting your service, think about whether someone with a sight problem will be able to access it.

If you have a website, is it accessible to blind and partially sighted people?

There are lots of ways in which a blind or partially sighted person will hear about you – it may be through RNIB or a local society for the blind, on the radio or through a Talking Newspaper. Word of mouth is still one of the most effective forms of promotion.



**Did you know the Scottish Braille Press can print your materials in Braille?**



The information in this guide comes from RNIB and Sight Scotland. They have more information and advice on how you can help people with sight loss in your business.

**Sight Scotland** – <https://sightscotland.org.uk/>

**Sight Scotland guide to giving great customer service to customers with vision impairment** – <https://sightscotland.org.uk/great-customer-service>

**Scottish Braille Press** – <https://sightscotland.org.uk/what-we-do/enterprise/transcription>

**RNIB** – <https://www.rnib.org.uk/professionals/business-professionals/>