

Registration

Legislation Social Care Services have an obligation under Section 29 of the National Assistance Act 1948 to hold a register of people in the County who are “permanently and substantially handicapped”.

NB This is not the same as registration as a disabled person under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act 1948.

Records Social Care Services at present hold a written and/or computer record of all people who are registered as Physically Disabled within the County. This means that if a person wishes to contact us again, some of the information that has previously been provided will be available for re-use.

Data Protection Act The Act enables individuals to request personal information held about themselves such as clients wishing to access their case files. For more information contact your local County Council office/ establishment.

Statistics Having a record of registered disabled people in the County offers Social Care Services useful statistical information when planning future services and requesting and allocating funds.

Benefits of Registration

There are certain monetary benefits to an individual being registered as a disabled person. There may be times when an individual’s right to receive certain allowances/benefits and/or services will still require an assessment of their eligibility.

Attendance Allowance (aged 65 years and over) People who have been registered as Physically Disabled are advised to apply for Attendance Allowance (AA). AA is a tax-free benefit for people over 65 years of age who are physically or mentally disabled and who may need help with personal care or supervision to remain safe.

A person does not actually have to be getting any help – it is the help that a person may need that is relevant, not what a person may get. A person can get AA even if they live alone; they do not need to have a carer. AA is not usually affected by any savings or income and there is no national insurance contribution test.

If a person starts to get Attendance Allowance, it might increase the amount of other benefits or credits they are entitled to. They may get an extra amount for severe disability with Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit or Pension Credit. They will also be eligible to take a friend to the cinema for free.

The Blue Badge Scheme provides a national on street parking concessions. A person who has been registered as Blind or Partially Sighted is 'automatically' entitled to receive a Blue Badge. A person who has been registered under a different category i.e. as Physically Disabled or Deaf or Partially Hearing is not automatically eligible to receive a badge but they may still apply and have their application assessed under 'Assessed Eligibility' criteria.

For a Blue Badge Application Form telephone 0845 678 9000 or visit www.shropshire.gov.uk

BT Total Care Scheme If you are registered Blind or Partially Sighted you can ask BT for a form to apply for this scheme. BT will offer you 24 hour (rather than 48 hour) response to reported faults.

Carers Allowance (CA) is a benefit for people who regularly spend at least 35 hours a week caring for a severely disabled person. A person can get CA even if they have never worked and if they are in receipt of AA or DLA.

Disabled Person's Rail Card generally allows the holder to travel at a third off normal prices on a range of ticket types. The card is available to people who are registered Deaf (but not Partially Hearing), Blind or Partially Sighted. It is also available to wheelchair users and others who are registered Physically Disabled. Contact your local Rail Station or further information.

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) is a means tested grant available from District and Borough Councils (see contact details on page 6) to private home owners and tenants who are registerable as disabled with Shropshire County Council (including Physically Disabled, Deaf, Partially Hearing, Blind, Partially Sighted and Dual Sensory Impaired people) to enable a person to fund alteration work in your home to meet your needs as a disabled person. This work has to be assessed and appropriate by Occupational Therapists. For more information please contact your local Occupational Therapy Team (see below). Support with DFG applications can be provided by Shropshire Care and Repair.

Email Shropshire.carerepair@anchor.org.uk or visit www.stayingput.org.uk.

Building Regulations and Planning Fees are exempt if the facilities are for a disabled person; please contact your local District or Borough Council to confirm (see page 6 for contact details).

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) (for a person up to 64 years of age)
People who have been registered as Physically Disabled are advised to apply for DLA.

DLA is a benefit for adults and children with disabilities; is for the person, not for a carer or parent; is tax free, not means tested and a person does not need to have paid any national insurance contributions and is paid on top of any earnings or other income that the person may have.

DLA is divided into 2 parts:

- Care Component – for help with personal care needs and is paid at 3 different levels (Higher, Middle and Lower). For children this can be claimed once a child has reached 3 months and generally needs extra help with looking after.
- Mobility Component – for help with getting around is paid at 2 levels (Higher and Lower). A child can be awarded the Higher Rate from 3 years of age. If a child does not qualify for the Higher Rate then they can not be awarded the Lower Rate until they are 5 years of age.

A person can be paid either the care component or the mobility component on its own, or both components at the same time. If a person gets DLA, they can spend it on anything they like and it is not usually affected by savings or income a person may have.

Although DLA can be paid for life or indefinitely, there is an upper age limit for making the first claim. A person can only get DLA if they claim before their 65th birthday (otherwise a person should claim Attendance Allowance (AA) but AA has no mobility component). DLA Higher Rate Mobility also acts as a gateway to other types of help such as:

- Exemption from Vehicle Road Tax
- A vehicle through the Motability Scheme
- Driving Licence at age 16
- Automatically eligible to receive a Blue Badge
- Eligible to take a carer to the cinema for free

For more information/advice/support on these and many other allowances and benefits please contact:

Benefits Enquiry Line (BEL) – 0800 88 22 00 or visit www.dwp.gov.uk

Age Concern – 08456 060 265 or visit www.shropshire.gov.uk/ageconcern.nsf

Phone your local Citizens Advice Bureau or visit www.adviceguide.org.uk

PCAS – 01743 450905 or visit www.pcas.shropshiredisability.org

DIAL – 01743 240404 or visit www.shropshire.gov.uk/community.nsf

Welfare & Income Team, Shropshire County Council - 01743 253771 or enter 'Financial Assessment Enquiry' in the search facility at www.shropshire.gov.uk

Exemption from Directory Enquiry Charges If you are registered Blind or Partially Sighted you can apply for exemption from directory enquiry charges. For further details telephone 195 (BT) and ask for the Registration Department or telephone 0800 4240 194 (Mercury) for details.

Free NHS Sight Test If you are registered Blind or Partially Sighted tell the Optician about your registration before the sight test.

Free Permanent Loan of Radios, Cassette Payers & TV Sound Receivers Through the British Wireless for the Blind fund. For further details telephone the Sensory Team on 01743 255702.

Free Postage on Items Marked 'Articles for the Blind' Only applies to Braille items or recordings like Talking Books, but not to personal tapes. For further details telephone the Sensory Team on 01743 255702.

Help with Telephone Installation and Rental Charges Help may be available. For further details contact your local Social Care Team or telephone 'Telephones for the Blind Fund' on 01737 248032.

Independent Living Centre (ILC) Obtaining the right equipment can make all the difference to you, allowing you to get on with your life and stay in your own home. There is a range of products on the market to help you:

- Get out and about
- In the kitchen – including eating
- Carry out housework
- In the bathroom
- With leisure activities
- With seating and sleeping

Staff at the ILC carry out assessments and provide advice and information free of charge at The Lantern in Meadow Farm Drive, Shrewsbury or one its satellite centres. They can advise on equipment that is available from Social Care Services and the Health Trust even if you are considering purchasing your own items.

For further advice or to arrange an appointment telephone 01743 210820

Library Services People who are registerable Deaf or Partially Hearing are able to borrow subtitled videos from Shropshire Libraries free of charge. (Some tapes have 'hidden' subtitles that can only be viewed using a Video Caption Reader. Libraries may be able to let you try a video caption reader).

Libraries also provide access to a wide range of large print books and spoken word tapes for people with visual impairment. Contact your local Library or the Senior Librarian – Equal Access telephone 01743 210806.

Other Reading Sources For further reading options contact Big Print (a large print weekly newspaper) Voice: 0800 12 40 07

Calibre Cassette Library (full length books) Voice: 01296 43 23 39

Cinema Tickets: (If registered Blind, or getting AA/DLA, or have a Disabled Person's Rail Card): The Card Network 0845 123 1295 or visit www.ceacard.co.uk

Listening Books Voice: 0171 407 9417

Talking Newspaper Association (National newspapers & magazines on tape) Voice: 01435 86 61 02

RNIB Talking Book Service (full length books) Voice: 0181 903 6666

National Library for the Blind Voice: 0161 355 2000

For local publications contact West Shropshire Talking Newspaper (publishes a monthly copy of the Consumers' Association Magazine "Which", eight weekly issues of the Shropshire Magazine and the Talking Newspaper).
Voice 01743 364726

Low Vision Aids (Such as magnifiers) through the Hospital Services.
Telephone 01743 261000 or via your GP.

National Association for Colitis and Crohn's Disease (NACC) The NACC brings together people of all ages who have Ulcerative Colitis or Crohn's Disease, their families and the health professionals involved in their care. These 2 illnesses are both forms of Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD).

NACC members receive a membership card with a "Can't Wait" message which is renewed annually. The card carries the message '**Please help: due to illness, which is not infectious, our member needs toilet facilities urgently**'. A number of High Street shops have agreed that NACC members may ask to use staff facilities, if public ones are not available.

For more information/advice/support contact NACC on 0845 130 2233 or visit www.nacc.org.uk

Personal Income Tax Concessions Available to Blind people. Can be transferred to a person's partner on request. For further details telephone your local Tax Office or visit www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk

Reduction on Television Licence Television licences are free for everyone aged 75 years and over, however, a 50% reduction on the cost of the licence fee can be claimed by people under that age when registered Blind (not Partially Sighted).

Shropshire Wheelchair Service The Wheelchair Service provides equipment to meet the basic mobility needs of people with restricted abilities in Shropshire. The wheelchair service accepts requests from Health Service professionals, such as Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Nursing Services or GPs who are registered as accredited referrers.

For further information or advice telephone 01743 444051 or your GP Practice.

Travel Concessions In some parts of the County, registration entitles a person to extra travel tokens, or travel tokens before a person's 65th birthday. See page 6 for details of Local District/Borough Councils.

Disabled Toilets (RADAR Key) A RADAR key enables access to disabled toilets around the country for people with disabilities and can be purchased by anybody with a disability.

For information on locations of disabled toilets within your local area and/or information on obtaining a key please contact your District or Borough Council:

- Bridgnorth District Council telephone 01746 713100 or visit www.bridgnorth-dc.gov.uk
- North Shropshire District Council telephone 01939 232771 or visit www.northshropshiredc.gov.uk
- Oswestry Borough Council telephone 01691 671111 or visit www.oswestry-bc.gov.uk
- Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council telephone 01743 281000 or visit www.shrewsbury.gov.uk
- South Shropshire District Council telephone 01584 813000 or visit www.southshropshire.gov.uk

For Shropshire Bus Card & Travel Token information phone 01743 254378

VAT Exemption A person does not have to be registered as a disabled person with Shropshire County Council in order to benefit from zero rate VAT on some goods and services. Customs and Excise have stated that it is up to the retailer to evidence that "a person is chronically sick or disabled". For further details telephone the National Advice Service 0845 010 9000 or visit www.hmce.gov.uk

Wills Subject to financial status, Legal Funding is available for the preparation of wills for people who are aged 70 or over, Registered as Blind, Partially Sighted, Deaf or Hard of Hearing or without speech or who suffer from a mental disorder of any description or who are substantially or permanently disabled by illness or congenital disability. Contact the Community Legal Service Direct (0845 345 4345 – local rate call) or visit www.clsdirect.org.uk who should be able to provide a list of solicitors who work under the scheme in your area.