



**University
Hospitals Sussex**
NHS Foundation Trust

Hearing aid users information booklet

**University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust
Audiology Department**

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<https://www.bsuh.nhs.uk/services/audiology/>

Follow us on Twitter [@audiologyBSUH](https://twitter.com/audiologyBSUH)

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here/scan QR code: <http://ratenhs.uk/cWwc1B>



Consultant Audiological Scientist: Dr. Rob Low, BSc MSc DPhil

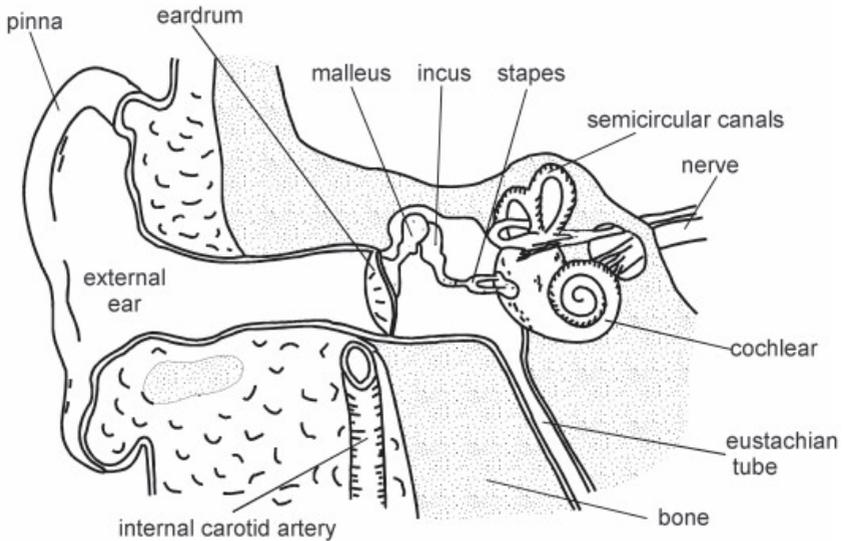
Patient information

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1. How does our hearing work?

Sound waves enter the ear and travel down to the ear drum. The sound waves make the ear drum vibrate, like a drum. This in turn makes three tiny connected bones (the ossicles-malleus, incus, stapes) in the space behind the ear drum vibrate. Beyond these three bones is the inner ear or cochlea, which consists of thousands of tiny hair cells like a rolled up piano keyboard. These cells sense the sound vibrations and convert them into nerve signals. The brain makes sense of these signals and this is how we hear.



CROSS SECTION OF THE EAR

2. How does aiding help with hearing loss?

Hearing loss is common – it affects 12 million people in the UK.

There are 3 types of hearing loss:

Conductive – Where sound is not passed properly from the ear drum to the inner ear (e.g. due to wax or middle ear congestion).

Sensorineural – Where the cause of the hearing loss is the inner ear e.g. the cochlea or hearing (auditory) nerve.

Mixed – a combination of both conductive and sensorineural.

Sensorineural hearing loss is the type of hearing loss many people experience with increasing age. It tends to occur **gradually** so people often don't realise that their hearing is getting worse. **High pitched sounds** are more likely to be affected than low pitches. This type of hearing loss often **reduces the quality** of the sound as well as its loudness.

If this is the reason for your hearing loss, the first signs you may notice are that people's **speech is muffled** or they seem to mumble. You may also have difficulty hearing conversation when you are in a **group**. These difficulties can lead to frustration and tension for both you and your family and friends.

A hearing aid can help. However, **a hearing aid will not cure your hearing loss**. It can only amplify the hearing you still have. It will not give you back the hearing you have lost.

A hearing aid is **not a 'quick-fix'** solution – it takes **time, practice** and **perseverance**. You will not get the full benefit of a hearing aid if you do not use it regularly. **The more you wear your hearing aid the more benefit you will get**. Wear it even in situations where you do

not think you need to - it is easier to start to practice in quiet environments. At first, your own voice **may sound a bit different** but you will soon get used to this.

Remember that your brain has become used to not hearing many sounds and will **take time to adjust to any new situations**. It is normal to hear sounds you have forgotten. These sounds have always been there and with time you will re-learn to filter them out again.

Sections 3, 4 and 5 of this booklet explain hearing aids, hearing aid maintenance, how to put your hearing in and how to find a fault with your hearing aid. This information can also be found in these videos:

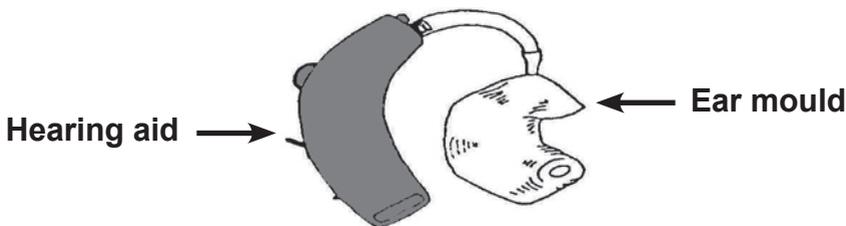


C2Hearonline.com

Helping new hearing aid
users to hear better

3. How do I maintain my hearing aids?

Your hearing aid consists of two parts:



The **ear mould** is the part that fits into your ear and can be made of different types of material, ranging from hard acrylic to soft silicon, or it can be a thin tube. The type of material that is chosen depends on various factors, including your **hearing loss**. Often, the greater the hearing loss, the fuller the ear mould.

The hearing aid itself attaches to the mould by the tubing. The hearing aid could have a volume control and program button. Most hearing aids turn off by disconnecting the battery drawer. See the manufacturer's manual for more information on your specific hearing aid.

Cleaning: You should clean your ear mould with a damp cloth or antibacterial wipe when you take it out at night. Check that the tubing is not blocked with wax or moisture. Please note, however, that getting the hearing aid very wet will permanently damage it.

Retubing: Your ear mould needs to be retubed every six months. We will show you how to do this or it could be done in a repair appointment. If you have the 'open fit' style of hearing aid, then the tube also needs to be changed about every six months. Should the dome come off the tubing, you should never attempt to replace it – instead, use a new tube and dome as provided by us.

Storing: After a day's use, there can be some build-up of moisture in the hearing aid and tube. When not in use and at night, open the battery drawer and **leave the hearing aid in a dry place** to air out. Avoid extreme heat or cold.

4. How do I put in my hearing aids?

Mould fit

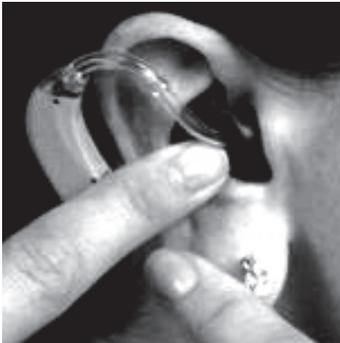
It is important to insert the mould into your ear correctly to prevent feedback (whistling), soreness of the ear or loss of the hearing aid. The correct insertion is demonstrated in the pictures below.



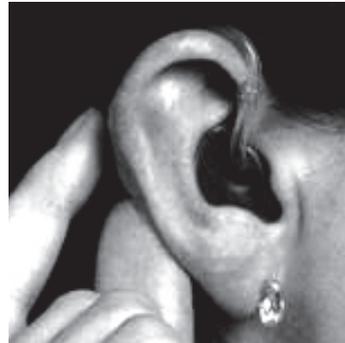
Hold the ear mould by the curved edge and place the tip of the mould into the ear canal.



Twisting slightly, make sure that the top part of the ear mould is pushed under the crease at the top of your ear. This is the most common area to make a mistake.



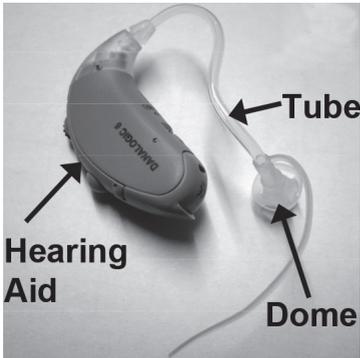
Use the other hand to pull down your earlobe. Push your ear mould firmly in.



With the ear mould correctly positioned in your ear, place the hearing aid behind your ear.

Open fit

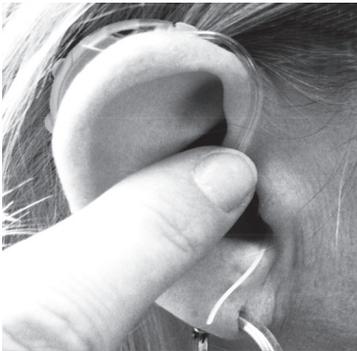
It is important to insert the tube correctly into the ear to stop the hearing aid from whistling or falling out. The correct insertion is demonstrated in the pictures below. Should the dome come off the tubing, you should never attempt to replace it – instead, use a new tube and dome as provided by us.



This picture shows the different parts of your hearing aid. The dome goes down into your ear and the hearing aid sits behind.



Place the Hearing aid behind the ear. Letting the tube and dome dangle in front of the ear.



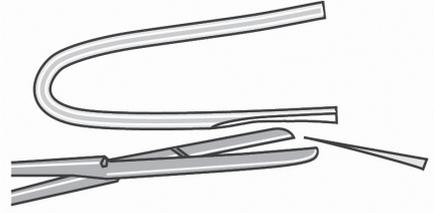
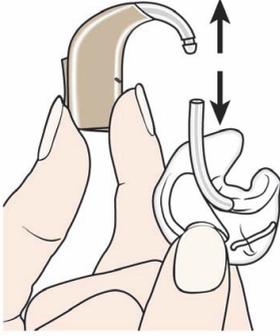
Push the dome in until the tube lies flat against your head. You may need to pull down on your ear lobe with the other hand to help.



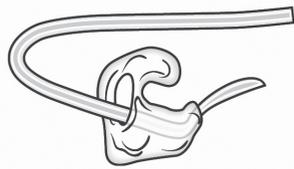
Tuck the retaining strip, if you have one, into the bowl of your ear to help keep the hearing aid in place.

5. How do I retube my ear mould?

1. Remove the old existing tubing with either your hand or pliers.



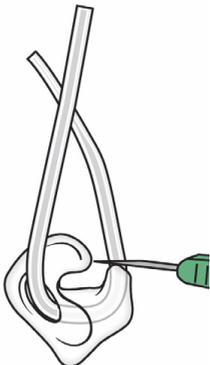
2. Using replacement tubing (which you can obtain from your Audiologist), taper the edge of one side using a pair of scissors. Do not cut too close to the bend.



3. Thread the tube into your earmould from the outside, through to the part that fits inside your ear.



4. Next, pull the tubing through the earmould so that the remaining tubing is facing upwards at approximately a 50 degree angle.



5. Using a sharp pair of scissors carefully cut the tapered tubing flush with the end.

6. How do I find a fault with my hearing aid?

Symptom	Cause	Action
Aid dead	Battery upside down	Rotate battery
	Ear mould blocked with wax or moisture	Clean ear mould
	Battery flat	Replace
	Faulty hearing aid	Return to Audiology for replacement
Rushing noise	Aid set on 'Telecoil/loop' not 'Microphone'	Reset to 'Microphone'
	Aid faulty	Return for repair
	New hearing aid user hearing environmental noise	Time needed to acclimatise
Feedback (whistling)	Ear mould incorrectly inserted	Re-insert ear mould
	Old, ill-fitting ear mould	New mould needed
	Wax blocking ear canal	Visit GP for removal
	Split or crack in tube	Retube the ear mould
Low volume	Blockage in the ear mould	Clean ear mould
	Volume control set incorrectly	Switch 'off' then 'on' again.
Crackling	Faulty connections	Return for repair
	Hair brushing microphone	Acclimatisation

7. How do I access repair services?

Postal repair service

If your hearing aid is faulty, you can post it to the Audiology Department. Include a letter with a description of the fault and your battery card. Your hearing aid will then be repaired and returned to you by post. We will return your aid as quickly as possible.

Re-tubing services (drop in)

If you need new or replacement tubing for an ear mould, please feel free to visit one of our drop-in re-tubing services (marked with * on the following pages). These are staffed by trained volunteers.

Hearing aid repairs (by appointment)

If you need a repair to your hearing aid or ear mould, please contact the Audiology Department to arrange an appointment. We will be able to offer a booked hearing aid repair appointment within two working days at Sussex House. You can also be seen at County Oak Medical Centre, Mile Oak Medical Centre, Orchard House at Lewes Victoria Hospital and Princess Royal Hospital, but you might have to wait longer for an appointment.

Repair appointments are not for adjustments of hearing aids that are working well. For this you will need to ask for a follow up appointment.

8. Where can I get batteries from?

You can get new batteries from a clinic in your area. We also supply batteries and by post - just send your battery card to us.

Brighton

Age Concern (near Seven Dials)

29-31 Prestonville Road, BN1 3TJ

Telephone: 01273 720603

County Oak Medical Centre

Carden Hill, BN1 8DD

Telephone: 01273 545922

Moulsecoombe Clinic

Hodshrove Lane, BN2 4SE

Telephone: 01273 260010

Sussex House

Abbey Road, Brighton,
BN2 1ES

***Re-tubing service every
Tuesday 10am – 12 noon**

Portslade

Mile Oak Medical Centre

Chalky Road, BN41 2WF

Telephone: 01273 426200

Hove

Charter Medical Centre

88 Davigdor Road, BN3 1RF

Telephone: 01273 738070

Knoll House

Ingram Crescent West

Portland Road, BN3 5NX

Telephone: 01273 267588

*Batteries only

Hove Poly Clinic

Nevill Avenue, BN3 7HY

Telephone: 01273 696011

Lewes

Orchard House

Lewes Victoria Hospital

Neville Road, BN7 1PE

Telephone: 01273 402508

Hearing & Maintenance support

group - House of Friendship,
208 High Street.

Lewes BN7 2NS

Wednesdays 10.30 – 12 noon

Telephone: 01273 476469

(run by east sussex hearing
resource centre - **01323 722505**)

Burgess Hill

Burgess Hill Clinic

The Brow, RH15 9BS

Telephone: 01444 248901

Hassocks

Hassocks Health Centre

Windmill Avenue, BN6 8LY

Telephone: 01273 845771

Haywards Heath

Outpatients Department

Princess Royal Hospital

Lewes Road, RH16 4EX

Haywards Heath Health Centre

Heath Road, RH16 3BB

Telephone: 01444 414100

Newhaven

Quayside Medical Practice

Chapel Street, BN9 9PW

Telephone: 01273 615000

Newhaven Polyclinic

Church Hill, BN9 9HH

Telephone: 01273 511800

Peacehaven

Children & Family Centre

Meridian Way, BN10 8BN

Telephone: 01273 612417

9. Who do I contact for assistive equipment in Sussex?

If you need help to hear the TV, phone, doorbell or smoke alarm, get in touch with your nearest centre.

Brighton and Hove

The Access Team,

3rd Floor, Barts House, Bartholomew's Square, Brighton, BN1 1JE

Social Care & Health Access Point

Telephone: 01273 295555

Text: 01273 296388;

E-mail: accesspoint@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Website: <https://new.brighton-hove.gov.uk/adult-social-care>

East Sussex

For an assessment contact:

The Sensory Team

St Mary's House, 52 St Leonards Road, Eastbourne, BN21 3UU

Telephone: 0345 60 80 191

Text: 07797 878111

E-mail: socialcaredirect@eastsussex.gov.uk

Website: www.eastsussex.gov.uk/socialcare/adults/disability/sensory/default.htm

Demonstration of equipment available from Social Services
or for purchase from suppliers:

East Sussex Hearing Resource Centre

8 St Leonards Road, Eastbourne, BN21 3UH

Tel/text/fax: 01323 722505

E-mail: mail@eshrc.org.uk

Website: www.eshrc.org.uk

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service

Church Lane, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 2DZ

Telephone: 0303 999 1000

Minicom: 01323 462 003 (available during opening hours)

E-mail: enquiries@esfrs.org

Website: <https://www.esfrs.org/your-safety/home-safety-visits/>

West Sussex

For an assessment contact:

Sensory Services Team,

County Hall North, Chartway, Horsham, RH12 1XA

Telephone: 01243 642555

Text: 07736 093462

Fax: 01403 217671

E-mail: as.sensory.services.duty@westsussex.gov.uk

Demonstration of equipment available from Social Services (assessments available) or for purchase from shop:

Action for Deafness - Worthing

2-6 Buckingham Road, BN11 1TH

Telephone: 01903 217341

Action for Deafness - Haywards Heath

22, Sussex Road, RH16 4EA.

Telephone: 01444 415582

Text: 07800 005423

E-mail: info@actionfordeafness.org.uk

West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service

County Hall, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1RQ

Telephone: 0345 8729 719

E-mail: safeandwell@westsussex.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire-emergencies-and-crime/west-sussex-fire-and-rescue-service/home-fire-safety/safe-and-well-visit/#request-a-visit>

For support at work, you may be eligible to apply to the government scheme Access to Work: www.gov.uk/access-to-work.

For details of funding routes available and to check eligibility, regardless of which hearing aids you use, visit the website

<http://www.hearinggrants.co.uk>.

10. How can I use the telephone with a hearing aid?

Using an ordinary phone with a hearing aid

- Place the telephone earpiece over or near the microphone area of the hearing aid.
- On the majority of hearing aids this is positioned at the front of the hearing aid itself.
- Do not put the phone over the ear as it has been 'blocked' with the ear mould.

- Adjust the volume control on the hearing aid if available but be beware that the hearing aid may ‘whistle’ or ‘feedback’ if the volume is too high.

Using an amplified phone with a hearing aid

- Press the ‘**amplify**’ button on the telephone (on some phones).
- Hold the phone **over the hearing aid itself** and move it until the best hearing position is found.
- **Adjust the volume control** on the telephone as required. This may be a sliding bar or it may be a + and – button.
- Some phones also have a tone control (Geemarc).

Using a speaker phone with a hearing aid

If you use the hands-free function of your phone you would have the benefit of hearing through both your hearing aids/ears.

Other useful tips

- **Practise** using a recorded message on the phone eg 1471 to make sure the phone is being held correctly.
- **Phone a friend** and practise with them!
- **Build up your confidence** before answering the phone.
- If you have difficulty understanding the caller, **tell them how they can help you** e.g.
 - Slow down
 - Check they are holding the mouthpiece correctly
 - Confirm the information in writing
- Consider subscribing to **Caller Display or Privacy at Home** (BT customers) which will show the number of the person who is calling you on a screen (you may need to have an extra piece of equipment).
- If you find nuisance or spam phone calls a problem, consider registering on the ‘**Telephone Preference Service**’ to prevent these callers contacting you. This is a free service and details can be found in the local telephone book. (NB This service may not be suitable for broadband users).

Extension bells

An extension bell could help you hear the telephone ring. BT will supply one extension bell free of charge for residential customers who are hard of hearing. Ideally this should be fitted in the hallway of the accommodation. If no telephone socket is available in the hallway BT will fit this without charge.

For phone adjustments, adapted phones or equipment

BT Age and Disability Action Team

Telephone: **0800 800150**

E-mail: **disability@bt.com**

Website: **www.bt.com/includingyou/index**

Connevans

Telephone: **01737 247571**

Website: **www.connevans.com**

Geemarc

Telephone: **01707 372372**

E-mail: **sales@geemarc.com**

Website: **www.geemarc.com**

Action on Hearing Loss Shop*

Telephone: **01733 361199**

Text: **01733 238020**

E-mail: **solutions@hearingloss.org.uk**

Website: **www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/shop**

**Action on Hearing Loss no longer sell equipment but will still offer impartial advice and make recommendations.*

11. How do I use the loop system?

When activated, the **loop** or **telecoil** setting on your hearing aid should make it easier to hear in public places, e.g. train station, bank, post office, church, theatre or cinema. Look out for the symbol with a **T** in the bottom right corner.



To use the loop system you will need to select the loop program in your hearing aids (if activated) – details of how to do this in your specific hearing aid can be found in the manufacturer's leaflet.

12. Where can I access equipment sessions?

These sessions provide an opportunity to try out a range of equipment. The sessions are held on a monthly basis. Please contact Audiology Reception to book your place.

Please contact Audiology Reception to book your place

Amplified telephones

- Advice on using telephones with hearing aids
- Demonstration of amplified phones.

Listening devices for:

- TV
- Meetings
- Social situations.

Alerting devices

- Alarm clock
- Doorbell
- Telephone Bell
- Smoke Alarm

Also further advice and information on other equipment.

13. Can I have hearing therapy?

You can be referred (by your Audiologist or GP) to see a Hearing Therapist in the department who could help with:

- Understanding your hearing loss
- Adjusting to using a hearing aid
- Advice and information on additional equipment e.g. for the TV, meetings, telephone, doorbell etc.
- Coping strategies for dealing with problems at home, work and social situations
- Lipreading and other communication tactics
- Advice for family/friends
- Tinnitus – explanation, discussion and tactics.

14. How do I access interpreting services for BSL users?

ActionDeafness

Telephone: 08445 938440
Fax: 08445 938441
Minicom: 08445 938445
Website: www.actiondeafness.org.uk

Action on Hearing Loss

Telephone: 0808 808 0123
Text: 0808 808 9000
E-mail: informationline@hearingloss.org.uk
Website: www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk

Sussex Deaf Association

Telephone: 01273 671899
Fax: 01273 625283
Website: info@sussexdeaf.com

15. Are there any tactics for good communication?

If you are deaf or hard of hearing

- Have you thought about learning to lip-read? Everyone lip-reads to some extent, especially in noisy places.
- Be open, tell the person you're speaking to that you lip-read, before you start a conversation.
- Ask people to get your attention before they start talking to you.
- Do not stand too far away from the person who is speaking to you.
- Try to keep calm and do not panic. If you become anxious or flustered, it might be harder for you to follow what is being said.
- If your hearing is not the same in both ears, try turning your better side towards the person speaking to you.
- If you do not catch what someone says first of all, do not be afraid to ask them to repeat it or say it in a different way.
- If necessary, ask people to slow down and speak more clearly.
- Do not be too hard on yourself. No one hears correctly all the time.
- Make sure you can see the speaker's face and lips. Their gestures and facial expressions will help you understand what they're saying.
- In a noisy place, move to a quieter area if possible. Position yourself how it suits you best to hear those you are talking to (this may be sitting in a corner or sitting with your back to most of the background noise, for instance).

If you are speaking to someone who has a hearing loss

- Even if someone is wearing a hearing aid, it does not mean that they can hear you. Ask if they need to lip-read you.
- Make sure you have the listener's attention before you start speaking.
- Speak clearly but not too slowly, and do not exaggerate your lip movements.
- Use natural facial expressions and gestures.
- If you are talking to a deaf person and a hearing person, do not just focus on the hearing person.

- Do not shout. It is uncomfortable for a hearing aid user and it looks aggressive.
- If someone does not understand what you have said, do not just keep repeating it. Try saying it in a different way.
- Find a suitable place to talk, with good lighting, away from noise and distractions.
- Remember not to turn your face away from a deaf person. Always turn back to your listener so they can see your face.
- Check that the person you are talking to can follow you. Be patient and take the time to communicate properly.
- Use plain language and do not waffle. Avoid jargon and unfamiliar abbreviations.

Lip Reading

To find classes in your area go to <http://www.atlalipreading.org.uk> and search 'find a lipreading class'. Alternatively, do some online learning at: <http://www.lipreadingpractice.co.uk>.

Lip reading classes within Sussex area (always check availability and book in advance):

Brighton & Hove

Action on Hearing Loss,

Community Base, 113 Queens Road, Brighton, BN1 3XG

Day: 3rd Wednesday each month (current waiting list)
Time: 1pm - 2.30pm
Level: Mixed
Telephone: **01273 840960**
Email: **brighton.lipreading@hearingloss.org.uk**

Haywards Heath

Action for Deafness,

22 Sussex Road, Haywards Heath, RH16 4EA

Days and times: Monday 2pm – 4pm
Tuesday 10am – 12 noon
Thursday 10am – 12 noon

Level: Mixed

Contact/Tutor: Helen Smith

Telephone: **01444 415582**

E-mail: **info@actionfordeafness.org.uk**

Lewes

House of Friendship, 208 High Street, Lewes, BN7 2NS

Day and time: Wednesday 10am - 11:30am

Level: Mixed

Telephone: **01273 476469**

E-mail: **hoflewes@aol.com**

16. Can I get assistance with travel?

Railcards

Everyone that wears an NHS hearing device is eligible to apply for a Disabled Persons Railcard from National Rail. This provides discounted rail travel for a small annual fee.

Details and application forms are available from the Audiology reception or online at: **www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk**.

Bus passes

Anyone that has a severe-profound hearing loss (70dB + loss) in the West Sussex, East Sussex and Brighton and Hove areas is entitled to a disabled person's bus pass. You can apply online or via post. We can provide you with a copy of your audiogram.

Brighton and Hove City council:

Telephone: 01273 291924

E-mail: buspasses@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Website: www.brighton-hove.gov.uk

East Sussex County Council:

Telephone: 0300 33 09 471

Website: www.eastsussex.gov.uk

In person: Pick up a form from your local East Sussex library

West Sussex County Council:

Telephone: 033 022 26222

E-mail: buspass@westsussex.gov.uk

Website: www.westsussex.gov.uk

17. Can I register as hearing impaired with my local council?

Registering with your local council as hearing impaired can be beneficial for their data collection and service planning. To register, please contact your council by using the contact information below. We can provide a copy of your audiogram if required.

Brighton & Hove

Brighton & Hove City Council

Business Support

Health and Adult Social Care

2nd Floor Bartholomew House

Bartholomew Square, Brighton, BN1 1JE

Telephone: 01273 296380

E-mail: BSHASC@brighton-hove.gov.uk

West Sussex

Adults' CarePoint

Parkside/County Hall North, Third Floor, Chartway,
Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 1XH

Telephone: 01243 642121

Textphone: 01403 275515

SMS: 07736 093462

Fax: 01403 217671

E-mail: county.deaf.services@westsussex.gov.uk

East Sussex

Health and Social Care Connect

St. Mary's House, 52 St Leonard's Road,
Eastbourne, BN21 3UU

Telephone: 0345 60 80 191

Text: 07797 878 111

Minicom via type talk: 18001 0345 60

Email: [Health and Social Care Connect](#)

18. Which organisations can be useful?

Action on Hearing Loss

Telephone: 0808 808 0123

Text: 0808 808 9000

E-mail: informationline@hearingloss.org.uk

Website: www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk

Hearing Link

Telephone: 0300 111 1113

Website: www.hearinglink.org.uk

Hearing Like Me

Website: www.hearinglikeme.com

Hear Together

E-mail: info@heartogether.org.uk

Website: <http://www.heartogether.org.uk>

Sense

Tel/text: 0300 330 9256 or 020 7520 0972

Website: www.sense.org.uk

Deafblind UK

Telephone: 0800 132320

Text: 07950 008870

Text relay: 18001 then 0800 132320

Facetime: helpline.dbuk@deafblind.org.uk (not BSL)

E-mail: info@deafblind.org.uk

Website: www.deafblind.org.uk

Meniere's Society

Telephone: 01483 740597

Text: 01483 771207

Website: www.menieres.co.uk

National Deaf Children's Society Helpline

Tel/text: 0808 800880

Website: www.ndcs.org.uk

Take on Tinnitus

Telephone: 0800 018 0527

Website: www.takeontinnitus.co.uk

British Tinnitus Association

Telephone: 0800 018 0527

E-mail: info@tinnitus.org.uk

Website: www.tinnitus.org.uk

Hearing Aids for Music

Website: <https://musicandhearingaids.org/>

19. Who do I contact for further appointments?

We recommend a reassessment of your hearing every three years. Please phone the Audiology department to book a reassessment appointment.

Further appointments can be booked at any site where our clinics are based:

**Sussex House
Royal Sussex County Hospital
County Oak Medical Centre
Mile Oak Medical Centre
Orchard House at Lewes Victoria Hospital
Princess Royal Hospital**

If you are unable to attend or no longer need your appointment, please let us know as soon as possible by using the below contact details. We can then agree another date/time that is convenient for you or cancel the appointment if you no longer wish to be seen.

These appointments are in great demand and if you no longer require one please let us know as soon as possible so your time can be offered to another patient.

Direct Telephone: 0300 303 9640
Text: 07551 360721
Email: uhsussex.audiologybrighton@nhs.net
Website: <https://www.bsuh.nhs.uk/services/audiology/>

This leaflet is intended for patients receiving care in Brighton & Hove or Haywards Heath

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Disclaimer

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is in no way intended to replace professional clinical advice by a qualified practitioner.

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