

HELPING YOU STAY INDEPENDENT GUIDE

PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION GUIDE

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About this guide

A Prevention and Early Intervention Guide was first published in March 2011 by Bracknell Forest Council and was produced as an informative read for people living in Bracknell Forest. Being independent means having freedom, choice, dignity and control at home, work and in the community. It does not necessarily mean living on your own without support. It means everyone has the right to support that allows them to join in the community and live as active a life as they can, if they so choose.

This guide is for everyone: anyone who wants to get the most out of life; anyone preparing for the future and anyone who wants some support to deal with the challenges of life before they become problems will find this guide is for them. It is about ensuring people of all ages are able to maintain their independence and are able to access appropriate support when they need it.

In refreshing the guide, the council have placed a strong emphasis on giving information and advice to encourage people to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing. We want people to remain healthier for longer and when they do need help, wherever they enter the health and care system, the process will be seamless and as stress free as possible. It is important to understand that the way health care is delivered will change with a lot more home based support and fewer days spent in hospital. Therefore, in refreshing this guide it has been renamed "Helping you stay independent" to reflect some of the changes made and happening in today's health and care world.

The articles in this guide are not only a snapshot of what is available to you but should also be inspiration for you to think of your own approach to staying independent and happy.

Best wishes

Dale Birch

Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Housing and Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board

TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

NHS Health Checks

We never go too long without taking the car for an MOT – but many of us go for years without a proper health check up. Staying fit and healthy is important in helping to prevent illness and falls in later life. In Bracknell Forest there are many schemes and programmes which people can use to keep healthy or to improve their health.

Anyone can be at risk of developing heart disease, stroke, diabetes and kidney disease. The good news is that these conditions can often be prevented, even if there is a family history of them. The trick is to learn about the risks early and make some changes.

NHS Health Checks can help by giving information on the risk of developing such health problems and giving expert, personalised advice on how to reduce it. This could mean anything from giving up smoking to doing more exercise. The NHS Health Check is available to adults in England between the ages of 40 and 74. Many General Practices are offering health checks, so check with your local practice. Alternatively, get in touch with the local Public Health team who can offer more information on how the NHS Health Check Programme is being expanded in Bracknell Forest at: public.health@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Services aimed at health improvement can be found on the following website:
www.bracknellandascotccg.nhs.uk/services/healthy-lifestyles/

Over 75 Health Checks

The “Over 75” health check scheme is a service which involves local GP surgeries and Bracknell Forest Council working together to help you stay independent and help reduce the risk of your health getting worse. As part of the scheme an occupational therapy assistant visits you in your own home, they discuss your general health, vision, hearing, mobility and how you manage with daily tasks. Health checks are also offered during the assessment with these results, along with any concerns, being reported back to your GP.

The “Over 75” health check scheme is not just a health assessment, it is about making sure you are aware of the services and help available, as well as letting you know there is support out there if you need it in the future.

If you would like more information contact the Business Support Team on 01344 351858.

GP annual health checks for people with a learning disability

The majority of GPs in Bracknell have had support to help them understand how to work with people with a learning disability so they can offer an enhanced annual health check service.

If you have a learning disability, or know someone who does, make sure you take up your annual health check and stay healthy. If you would like more information on what is available Tel: 01344 354466.

Self Care

There is a lot someone can do to maintain their own health and treat simple health conditions, often without the need to involve a doctor or nurse. Self Care is a process of identifying for yourself whether you need to seek help as well as having the confidence to look after yourself when you can, if you can.

A key part of Self Care is gathering enough information and knowledge as well as having access to sources of health and care advice. The telephone number 111 is the NHS helpline anyone can call. The health staff you speak to by phoning 111 can help to identify whether you need professional help or support, or whether you would be better to look after yourself and wait for symptoms to improve at home. They would also tell you whether your local chemist may be an appropriate place to visit or seek advice; you may not realise that local pharmacists have spent almost as long training as a doctor so are fully qualified to advise you.

The internet is also a good place to find information for those who have access:

- Guidance from the NHS about common conditions, where to find local services and a health A-Z can be found on NHS Choices at www.nhs.uk/Pages/HomePage.aspx
- Information from local GPs on how to care for yourself when you have a common medical complaint can be found at Bracknell and Ascot Clinical Commissioning Group website www.bracknellandascotccg.nhs.uk/
- Local services which can provide support services to people in their own home can be found at Bracknell Forest Council's iHub ihub.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/kb5/bracknell/asch/home.page

An excellent example of Self Care advice is what to do when you have a heavy cold or flu, there is very little your doctor can do to help you unless you are unfortunate enough to develop complications. If you are an older person or have certain medical conditions, then you may be able to have a flu jab at the start of winter. If you are one of the thousands of people who develop flu, advice would be to remain at home, keep warm, drink plenty of water and take paracetamol as instructed on the packet. If you are concerned that your symptoms are developing into something more serious than flu, then phone 111 to seek further advice.

Diet and Exercise

Improving diet and physical activity levels helps to manage weight. However, the benefits go way beyond that. A healthy diet and active lifestyle help to avoid illness such as diabetes, as well as having a positive effect on mental well-being. What is more, making positive changes doesn't have to be a chore; in fact, you could meet new people and having fun doing it.

Weight Management

Being overweight has consequences. For example, it can lead to a range of health problems including diabetes, heart disease and even some types of cancer. When it comes to healthy eating and losing weight, all the evidence suggests that by sticking to certain, common sense rules it succeeds in managing your weight. These include things like eating lots of fruit and vegetables, cutting down on saturated fats and sugars, just as importantly, not skipping breakfast. Try the [NHS 12-Week Weight Loss Programme](#) and see how you get on. Maybe join a [weight loss club or programme](#) where you will get expert advice and meet others with the same goals.

Smoking

If you smoke then quitting is the single most important thing you can do for your health. It's often not easy to quit, but with the right advice and support, any smoker can do it.

Why Quit Smoking?

There are so many benefits to stopping smoking. These include:

- less risk of serious illness such as cancer and stroke
- feeling fitter and more energetic
- younger looking skin and whiter teeth
- better mental well-being
- more money to spend on other things.

You are far more likely to succeed in quitting if you get some expert help. The staff at local Stop Smoking Services (called 'Smoke Free Life') will offer you a warm welcome and help you through the quitting process. They offer free, weekly one to one or group sessions, as well as a free weekly supply of Nicotine Replacement Therapy. Take the first step today by getting in touch with them. Their details are: 'Smoke Free Life' Stop Smoking Service. Tel: 0800 622 6360 or text QUIT to 66777 or go to their website at www.smokefreelifeberkshire.com

Being Active

Increasing physical activity is of course an important part of losing weight. However, there is far more to gain from an active lifestyle. Regular exercise reduces the risk of serious illnesses like heart disease and stroke, as well as providing a boost to mental well-being. In later life it is particularly important in reducing the risk of being able to get around, accidental falls and even memory problems.

To really reap the rewards of physical activity, it's important to exercise for the right amount of time and at the right level of intensity. So, for example, adults between the ages of 19 to 64 years should exercise for around two and a half hours a week in total at a level which leaves them out of breath. It doesn't matter what it is – walking, cycling or ballroom dancing – it's the intensity and duration that counts.

Probably the best way to really make a positive change in relation to physical activity is to not do it alone. There are a number of [clubs or programmes](#) to suit a whole range of ages, abilities and interests. There's absolutely no reason why getting physically active shouldn't also involve a lot of fun and a lot of new friends.

Leisure Centres

Bracknell Leisure Centre, Bagshot Road, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 9SE.

Tel (General): 01344 454203 Tel (Office): 01344 861717.

Edgbarrow Sports Centre, Grant Road, Crowthorne, Berkshire, RG45 7JL. Tel: 01344 776211.

Email: edgbarrow.sports-centre@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Sandhurst Sports Centre, Owlsmoor Road, Sandhurst, Berkshire, GU47 0SD.

Tel: 01344 778836 Tel: 01628 627 690.

A list of services for all abilities is available via <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/dietandexercise>

Mental Wellbeing

Mental well-being is a vital part of everyday life just as much as physical health. It is a crucial resource to help handle everyday life and is not merely the absence of mental health problems. In fact, a person with a diagnosed mental health problem can have positive mental well-being with the right support.

Mental well-being does not stay the same as lives and circumstances change. There are many influences on an individual's wellbeing, for example work pressures, bereavement, physical illness, drug and alcohol and many more.

There are many ways to improve mental well-being:

Connect

Build connections with those around you - family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. Whether they be at home, work, school or in your local community. Think of these as the cornerstones of life and time invested in developing them helps to support you in many aspects of your lives.

Be active

Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discovering a physical activity that suits your level of mobility and fitness can be very rewarding. It could help with sleep problems and enhance your mood.

Keep learning

Try something new:

- Rediscover an old interest
- Sign up for a taster course [Adult and Community Education and Learning](#)
- Sign up for that course
- Take on a different responsibility at work
- Fix a bike
- Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food
- Set a challenge and enjoy achieving.

Learning new things can make you more confident as well as being fun.

Give

Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone, smile, volunteer your time. Join a community group, linking and working with the wider community can be incredibly satisfying and creates connections with interesting people who can inspire.

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteering in Bracknell Forest

Volunteers should be celebrated because they give their time and expertise for free. Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action (BFVA) runs the Volunteer Centre for the borough. This acts as a free recruitment agency, assisting the many voluntary and community organisations in the area to find volunteers. The popular volunteering opportunities which people recognise are roles such as:

- driving for Good Neighbours (local car transport schemes providing vital transport for people to get to a doctor or hospital appointment)
- helping at a day centre (making and serving teas and lunches)
- activities with people who may be lonely or isolated.

There are many other things that people can do as a volunteer. If you would like more information on volunteering, contact BFVA on 01344 304404 or email vro@bfva.org. You can also see the range of roles and apply online via www.do-it.org.uk

Helping each other to live fulfilling lives

Years ago, families often lived in the same area so were at hand to help out relatives. In this modern world, often that close support is not there. LETS stands for Local Exchange Trading System. LETS is a barter system which helps people to exchange goods and services with minimal use of money by encouraging the sharing of skills and resources. There's a wealth of often unused skills and expertise so LETS is a great way of helping others whilst receiving help in return when needed. If this sounds like you and you are willing to trade what you have - a skill, some time or an item for you need, then Bracknell LETS is for you. Members advertise their goods, skills and services in a regularly produced directory.

LETS welcomes new members - many people find it a useful way of getting to know other people. Bracknell LETS meets at Newbold School, Popeswood Road, Binfield, on the first Wednesday of each month from 7.30pm. Find out more at bracknell-lets.co.uk or at Bracknell-LETS on Facebook.

Befriending Scheme

Paid for by Bracknell Forest Council, the Befriending Scheme is a service aiming to introduce trained volunteers to adults who may be vulnerable, isolated or lonely. These vulnerable adults include:

- those with health problems
- people living alone having lost loved ones and with families living some distance away
- people who find it very hard to get out and about or have other circumstances which make opportunities for developing friendship difficult.

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The main purpose of the scheme is for the volunteer befriender to meet regularly for a planned period of time with adults they are matched with to do activities which are helpful to that person. These activities may include:

- meeting for a talk
- going out
- visits to shops, garden centres, cafes etc
- going to other activities in the community.

The scheme also runs regular group activities including a twice monthly coffee mornings and weekly board games with local primary children, with additional events during the year.

If you would like more information about the Befriending Service, contact Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action Tel no 01344 304404, e-mail: www.bfva.org

The Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector

There are a lot of different groups and organisations that are often referred to as the voluntary, community and faith sector. They include:

- charities
- religious groups
- community groups
- co-operatives
- clubs.

They provide a lot of vital services, many can help prevent a situation getting worse. Others provide information, advice and advocacy services supporting people, carers and families to understand their condition and the services they can access. Also there are many groups providing social activities for all including social clubs, dancing, sport, keep fit, community cafes and arts and crafts.

Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action supports this voluntary, community and faith sector activity in the borough, and as a result has a wider knowledge of both local and national groups along with organisations offering support, services and activities. Therefore if you would like any information about these organisations and how they can help please telephone 01344 304404, email info@bfva.org or call into the office in Amber House, Market Street, Bracknell.

HEALTH RELATED ASPECTS

New Hope

Bracknell Forest's Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) are committed to making sure anyone who lives in Bracknell Forest with either a drink or drug problem can access help and support.

New Hope is the first point of contact for those aged 18 or older who drink too much or use drugs; its location is in Units 16/17, Market Street, Bracknell. There are a number of services provided here:

- needle exchange products service in order to prevent the spread of diseases by the use of dirty needles. When people come in for this service they are also given immediate advice to raise their awareness of the risks when taking drugs, how to reduce those risks and to ensure they are using everything in a safe way

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- clinic every two weeks where people can be tested for a blood borne viruses like Hepatitis and HIV and are able to receive vaccinations against Hepatitis B.

You can make an appointment to see someone by calling the telephone number at the bottom of this article or by attending one of the following drop-in sessions:

- Tuesday - 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm
- Saturday - 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm.

There is no need to make an appointment for a drop-in session. You will be seen by a worker who can provide advice, information, further appointments and referrals to specialist services.

Supporting Young People

There is also a Substance Misuse Worker based at the Youth Offending Service along with a Parenting Early Intervention Project Worker. They work closely together in delivering presentations to schools, youth clubs and also work with Connexions, to educate young people about the effects and risks of drugs. The aim of this early intervention work is to prevent young people from using drugs in the future. If you would like more information please contact New Hope on 01344 312360.

Stroke Coordinators

Who are Stroke Coordinators?

Stroke Coordinators are staff with specialist skills in stroke care. They include specialist nurses working in hospitals as well as other workers based in the community who help to coordinate people's return home following a stroke. In Bracknell Forest, support for those who have experienced stroke is provided by a Community Stroke Coordinator from the Stroke Association based within Adult Social Care and Health.

Wherever possible, the Community Stroke Coordinator would make initial contact with you to give as much information and advice as possible before you leave hospital. Arrangements can then be made to visit you at home within six weeks of leaving hospital. Further visits would be offered over a period of time to help you and your family to adjust to the changes associated with the stroke.

The coordinator can also arrange for you to undergo a supported self-assessment in order to identify any further health and social needs you may have to help you and your family/carer achieve greater independence. The Bracknell Forest Stroke Coordinator can be contacted on 01344 482986.

What is a stroke?

A stroke is caused by a disturbance of the blood supply to the brain.

What is a TIA?

Transient Ischaemic Attack (TIA) is also called 'mini-stroke'. It is similar to a stroke with the same signs, but gets better within 24 hours. However, it could be a warning sign of a more serious stroke and it is vital it gets the same **F.A.S.T.** action by calling 999.

Why you must act **F.A.S.T.**

The sooner somebody who is having a stroke or TIA gets urgent medical attention, the better their chances of a good recovery. So recognising the signs and calling 999 for an ambulance is crucial. F.A.S.T is a simple test to help recognise the signs and understand the importance of fast emergency treatment:

F = Facial weakness

Can the person smile?

Has their mouth or eye dropped?

A = Arm weakness

Can the person raise both arms?

S = Speech problems

Can the person speak clearly and understand what you say?

T = Time to call 999.

Reducing your risk

Some are more at risk of having a stroke if they also have certain other medical conditions. These include:

- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Atrial fibrillation (an irregular heartbeat)
- Diabetes.

It is important these conditions are carefully monitored and treated. The risk of having a stroke is higher amongst certain ethnic groups, including South Asian, African and Caribbean. This is partly because high blood pressure and diabetes are more common in these groups.

Leading a healthy, active lifestyle is vital to help reduce your risk of having a stroke. There are also lifestyle factors that may increase the risk of having a stroke. They include:

- Smoking
- Being overweight
- Lack of exercise
- Poor diet
- Drinking more alcohol every day than is recommended.

The NHS recommends women should not regularly drink more than 2-3 units a day and men should not regularly drink more than 3-4 units a day.

Integrated Care

If someone has more complicated health and social care needs then they might benefit from a more intensive and joined up service, this is called integrated care. The aim is to work out how a team can work together more effectively to provide someone with the joint care and support that the person requires. The team is made up of a GP, a District Nurse, Community Matron, Social Care Practitioner and a Care Co-ordinator and they aims to provide health and social care support which is flexible, personalised, and seamless. The person is involved and gets a copy of their integrated care plan.

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Locally, there are three groups, or clusters, of GP surgeries working to gradually develop integrated case management caseloads in their areas. The groups are Bracknell North, Bracknell South and Ascot

The Dementia Advisory Service

If you are worried about your memory problems, but do not have a diagnosis of dementia you will need to contact your GP in the first instance.

The dementia advisory service can provide advice and support for those people diagnosed with dementia, their carers, family and friends. This information includes:

- local support services
- getting a break
- legal planning
- support for carers
- living well with dementia
- national support services
- money matters.

If you would like more information please contact the Dementia Advisor on: 01344 823220.

ASSISTANCE TO STAY INDEPENDENT

Making yourself heard

If you need some support to speak up about decisions you need to take or about the things that are important in your life, it may help you to have support from an advocate.

Advocacy is:

- speaking up for, or acting on behalf of, yourself or another person
- doing something to help people say what they want, secure their rights or represent their interests
- making sure people feel part of the community.

People who work as advocates have experience in supporting individuals who find it hard to get their voice heard. They use different ways to help people so they can be fully involved in the decisions about their lives. Advocates also support people and groups to speak up for themselves – this is called self-advocacy. One group, called Be Heard, is for adults with a learning disability living in Bracknell Forest.

Just Advocacy is an independent charity providing advocacy support to people and groups. If you would like to find out more about getting support from an advocate or one of the self-advocacy groups you can contact Just Advocacy: Tel: 01276 28515 or text: 07852 634 113 email: staff@justadvocacy.org.uk, or visit www.justadvocacy.org.uk

SEAP (Support, Empower, Advocate, Promote), provide advocacy support to enable people to talk about their experience of health services and to make a complaint if they want. If you would like more information contact SEAP Bracknell Forest Tel: 0300 3435702 Email: BracknellForest@seap.org.uk Minicom: 01424 457601.

If someone needs help to make an important decision about their lives, because they don't have the ability to do it for themselves, they can speak to a specialist advocate. In Bracknell Forest, this is provided by POhWER. If you would like more information Tel: 0300 4562370.

Technology to help you live at home

Technology has made a lot of advances in recent years with things such as televisions, computers and mobile phones to name but a few. There are also a lot of different types of technology to help people with a wide-range of conditions live at home, while remaining independent and safe. It can provide peace of mind as well as freeing up the time of friends and family carers. This technology can range from equipment such as walking frames, bathing aids and grab rails to technology making use of automatic monitoring of things like: possible falls, unexpected opening of doors, alarms to alert when someone needs help and various types of sensors. There are a range of sensors, for instance, a bed sensor can be used to detect when a person gets out of bed at night and if they do not return within a certain period, an alarm would be raised, as the person may have fallen. The bed sensor can be combined with a light sensor so that when the person gets out of bed the light turns on so they can see where they are going.

These products can be bought or hired from many suppliers. If you would like more information contact adult social care on 01344 351500.

Forestcare

"Forestcare" is Bracknell Forest Council's emergency response service which monitors Lifeline alarms in the community and provides out-of-hours calls for the Bracknell Forest areas. If you would like more information log on to www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk or call 01344 352000.

Bracknell Forest Handyman Service

People who are eligible for support from the council can access the Bracknell Forest Handyman Service. This service is paid for by the council and can be used to make small changes to your home such as fixing handrails. If you would like more information, please contact Bracknell Forest Council on 01344 352000.

Food at Home

The council does not provide a "meals on wheels" service nor does it provide any financial help with buying a meal. However, it does provide a wide-ranging list of organisations from across Bracknell Forest who can either deliver food or offer meals at their locations. The organisations on the list have asked to be on the list and have been checked by the council's Environmental Health Team. The aim is to provide choice and flexibility which should help someone to choose meals that can meet personal preferences and requirements. Amongst other things the list provides details about:

- the types of meals available,
- the ability to cater for specialist requirements, for example dietary or cultural needs
- whether the organisation can deliver
- whether the premises are adapted and can cater for people with severe disabilities.

You can request a copy of this list – called Community Meals – by calling Tel: 01344 352000, or by visiting the council's I-Hub at www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/ihub

Disabled Facilities Grant

If you experience difficulties getting around your home, for example having trouble getting up the stairs, you may be eligible for a Disabled Facilities Grant. This grant helps towards the cost of making changes which are reasonable and practical to meet your needs and enable you to continue to live in your home. To access the grant you would need to ask for an assessment of your needs and your finances.

You can claim this grant if you, or someone living in your property, are disabled and:

- you, or the person on whose behalf you are applying, either own or rent (including licensees) the property
- you can certify that you, or the person on whose behalf you are applying, intend to occupy the property as your/their only or main residence throughout the grant period - currently five years.

If you would like more information, please contact Bracknell Forest Council on 01344 351500.

Recovering from illness at home

No-one likes being ill and would all rather be at home rather than have with a lengthy stay in hospital. To prevent someone going into hospital, to allow them to leave early from hospital or to reduce the need for long term care, people living in Bracknell Forest may be referred to the intermediate care service provided by Bracknell Forest Council in partnership with the NHS. This allows people the chance of recovering at home from episodes of ill health or accidents by helping with recovery, support and rehabilitation. If someone cannot be supported to recover at home, they may be able to go into Bracknell Forest's Intermediate Care residential unit.

Following an assessment and depending on your needs, the Community Response and Reablement Team (CRRT) can provide this service free of charge for up to a six-week period.

There is also an Enhanced Intermediate Care Service helps to prevent someone going into hospital unnecessarily, making sure the person receives planned care at a suitable time to prevent a crisis occurring. Calls are dealt with in order of need with the team aiming to respond to a call in less than 2 hours, with the service continuing outside of normal office hours where required. This means you would get the same response times whatever the time, day or night.

Referrals for these services can be made by anyone. If you would like more information Tel: 01344 351500.

Falls Clinic

Anyone may have a fall, but older adults are more likely to fall than others. This is mainly due to them being more likely to have long-term health conditions that can increase the chances of a fall. A falls clinic is held every Tuesday at the Bridgewell Centre, to which you can either refer yourself via the number below or you may be referred by your doctor. The clinic is staffed by practitioners from health and social care and this allows a full assessment to be carried out, with any suggestions able to be dealt with by the appropriate member of staff. Your GP would be sent a letter telling them about the assessment.

If needed, you may be invited onto a "Positive Steps Programme" where you would complete a balance and strength exercise programme and receive advice on healthy eating, home hazards, how to get up after safely after a fall etc. The "Positive Steps Programme" is held at the Bridgewell Centre on a Wednesday afternoon over a six week period.

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For those people unable to get to clinic, transport can be arranged. Referrals can be made by calling 01344 351500.

Occupational Therapy

Occupational therapy helps people to live as independently as possible and assists those with disabilities to carry out activities essential for daily living, with the aim of maintaining or improving independence. Occupation means any way people spend their time, from washing, dressing, toileting to paid or unpaid work, housework, education to sports, hobbies, and social activities.

Examples of activities essential for daily living include:

- Managing personal care, such as getting to the bathroom and getting on/off toilet
- Moving safely around the home, getting in/out of bed
- Managing steps and stairs
- Accessing property
- Ability to prepare meals
- Enabling an individual to take up or stay in paid or unpaid work.

Following an assessment, you may be eligible to receive support from an occupational therapist. If you would like more information contact adult social care on 01344 351500.

Sensory Needs Clinic

The aims of the sensory needs service are to promote independence and safety as well as providing short term programmes of rehabilitation to allow someone to manage activities essential for daily living. The service is for people who have some form of eye-sight or hearing loss.

An assessment is made to look at how your particular eye-sight or hearing problem affects your day to day life. If you are eligible, items of equipment may be provided and/or help may be given to adapt your home or you may be provided with a direct payment you can use for support either in the home or getting about.

In addition to these services, weekly clinics are held at the Bridgewell Centre so you could speak to an occupational therapist and try out equipment that might help you. Other support is available to help with issues like dealing with letters, bills and e-mails, sorting out benefits and/or communicating with others.

If you would like more information about attending the sensory needs service or clinic please contact adult social care on 01344 351500.

Minicom: 01344352045 Fax: 01344 351596 Email: adult.services@bracknell-forest.gov.uk.

Daytime Support

There are a number of locations around Bracknell Forest where there is the opportunity for daytime support for older people. These locations look to assist independence and stimulation through a range of activities and hobbies with the opportunity to meet others socially, share experiences and have refreshments and/or a meal. They also look at ways to build or re-build confidence in how to cope with daily life.

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Some locations provide a daily service, while others may be open less often, although they all offer the opportunity to get together with other people. These centres are a mixture of local authority or voluntary organisations, and some have eligibility criteria to make sure their services are provided to those who most need them. Most centres provide transport, and sometimes provide other health care such as health checks or chiropody. More information on these locations can be found on the [lhub](#) by searching for Day Centres.

DisabledGo The Bracknell Forest Access Guide

DisabledGo provides access guides to a number of venues in Bracknell Forest. The guides allow people of all abilities to know what facilities are available at these locations. These guides are normally available via the computer but printed copies can be made available. If you would like more information Tel: 0845 270 4627 or 01438 842710 email: questions@disabledgo.com or visit www.disabledgo.com/en/org/bracknell-forest

INFORMATION FOR CARERS

Working and caring

Did you know more than three million people in the UK work and also care for someone? Juggling work and care can be a challenge, but as a carer you have rights at work that can make this easier with support available to help you continue both working and caring. You have rights to request flexible working and to challenge decisions if you are not happy with the outcome. You may also have rights to various forms of time off. Your employer may offer other forms of support such as unpaid leave or telephone access to the person you are caring for during your working hours.

More information on these rights can be found at: www.gov.uk/browse/disabilities/carers or you can call the Carers UK's Carers Line on 0808 808 7777 or visit <http://www.carersuk.org/>

If you provide regular and substantial care you are entitled to an assessment of your needs; this is called a carer's assessment. There is no legal definition of 'substantial' and 'regular' care but the impact your caring role is having on your life is considered along with the support you require to help you maintain your caring role. Local Authorities, such as Bracknell Forest Council, take into account your wish to work or undertake training when carrying out an assessment. If you would like more information contact adult social care 01344 351500 or visit www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/carers

Carers' Grant

If you are aged over 18 and provide regular and substantial care for someone who is not eligible for support from Bracknell Forest Council, then you can apply for a Carers' Grant. This grant is run by Berkshire Carers Services and paid for by Bracknell Forest Council. You could use this money to get a break from your caring role. The funds can be used for things such as:

- a complete break, i.e. a holiday
- for funds towards care hours from a paid care worker
- to pay for costs towards a college course or for membership of a club or a sports activity.

The use of the money is very flexible; the most important thing of the grant is to support you in a way that best meets **your** needs. To ask for an application form, or to get information or advice, please call the Berkshire Carers Services on 0800 988 5462 or E-mail helpline@berkshiracarers.org

Carers' Emergency Respite

Do you worry about what might happen to the person you care for if you were taken ill or involved in an emergency? Then the Carers' Emergency Respite Scheme may be able to help you. The scheme is paid for by Bracknell Forest Council and run by Berkshire Carers Services. It is free of charge and open to any unpaid carer providing regular and substantial care to a resident of Bracknell Forest.

The scheme involves developing a plan to help make sure the person you care for continues to receive the support they need in a crisis or emergency. For example, a carer was recently rushed to hospital in the morning and the plan that had been developed meant a trained care worker supported the individual in their own home until the carer returned later in the afternoon.

There is no charge for support up to a maximum of 48 hours (72 hours over a Bank Holiday weekend). If the emergency continues for longer, then an assessment may be needed for the person being cared for. You must be registered with the scheme and have completed an emergency plan to receive support. If you would like more information about the scheme call 01628 777217 or email helpline@berkshirecarers.org

Heathlands Carers' Drop-in Service

When caring for someone, taking regular breaks is important to ensure you stay well and healthy. If you care for someone aged over 60 who has difficulties with their memory, you could benefit from this new service. Heathlands Carers' Drop-In Service is able to care for your loved one for two to four hours either on a one off, or more regular basis if you need a break to see some friends, get some chores done or simply have some time to yourself. Carers living in the local area are welcome to use this service. The person you care for would need to visit Heathlands for a free assessment of their needs and to have a support plan agreed which would then be available for staff to ensure the person gets the right support when they "drop-in".

This service is paid for by Bracknell Forest Council, however, people would be asked to make a small contribution to the cost of the scheme plus a charge for lunch if this is required. If you are receiving social care support you could use your personal budget pay for this service. Hairdressing and chiropody services are also available at additional cost. If you would like more information please call the centre manager on 01344 360775 or 01344 425650.

Carers' Lunch

Carers UK Bracknell is a voluntary organisation, working on behalf of unpaid carers; usually family or friends. It is run by volunteers, all of whom have been, or are, carers. They provide support as well as working on behalf of carers to keep their needs in the spotlight.

Four carers' lunches are held each year at Easthampstead Baptist Church, where representatives of the authorities are invited to provide updates on carer related issues as well as listening to carers' ideas and feedback.

If you would like more information about the Carers' Lunch and support group for ex-carers, please call the Berkshire Carers Services helpline on 0800 988 5462 or email helpline@berkshirecarers.org

Carers' Information and Advice

There are various organisations that can provide information and advice on a whole range of issues related to a carer's needs and the needs of the person for whom they care; they can help with information about benefits, health and social care services and can advise on what other organisations can give more help. Sometimes the carer just needs the opportunity to talk to someone in confidence, who understands their demanding caring role and the impact it can have on their lives. If you would like more information and to access support please contact either: Berkshire carers services Tel no 0800 988 5462, e-mail: www.berkshirecarers.org or Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action Tel no 01344 304404, e-mail: www.bfva.org

KEEPING SAFE

Keeping safe from harm

We all have the right to live safely, to be free from violence, fear and any abuse, no matter who we are, someone's age, disability, race or health, whether someone lives on their own, at home with their families or in supported accommodation.

Abuse can be defined as 'a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons'. The council have a safeguarding team who can investigate allegations of abuse.

If you suspect an adult is being abused:

- Contact the Bracknell Forest Community Response and Reablement Team Telephone 01344 351500
- In an emergency outside normal office hours you may contact the EMERGENCY DUTY TEAM on 01344 786543
- If you have concerns about abuse in relation to a care or nursing home or domiciliary care provider contact the Care Quality Commission on 03000 616161
- If you think someone may be in danger, call the emergency services on 999.

What if you are the person being abused?

Call one of the numbers above or ask someone you trust to contact them for you.

Making someone feel safer in town

The safety of the borough's residents is a top priority for Bracknell Forest Council, as such the council, in partnership with Thames Valley Police and local traders, run the Safe Place scheme. The scheme involves shops and other places within Bracknell Forest displaying a nationally recognised Safe Place symbol. This indicates that the shop or premises can provide a safe haven if a member of the public is feeling vulnerable or scared.

Individuals can carry a 'safe place' card which gives their name and contact details of someone to call if they need some help. When someone feels at risk, they can hand the card to one of the shop staff who can call the name and contact details on the card. There is no charge made for these cards plus carrying this card lets the person to choose who they would like to be contacted as well as having the local police number. The card also helps those who have difficulties with talking to others as the card can simply be handed to a member of staff who can then act on the card's instructions. If you would like more information or to receive a card contact adult social care on 01344 351500.

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If you require help at any time, call the police on 0845 850 5505 or Bracknell Forest Council on 01344 352000.

Help find people should they get lost

Neighbourhood Return is a free service, using local volunteers to help find people with memory problems, including dementia, who have gone missing. Once a person is registered on the scheme, a search can start within 3-5 minutes after being told that they have gone missing.

To start a search, someone would contact Neighbourhood Return who would then contact registered volunteers to request help with a search. If volunteers are available, a description of the missing person, and if possible a photograph will be sent via text, a home phone message or an email. Neighbourhood Return then request volunteers search a local area close to them. If the volunteer finds the missing person they contact the call centre while staying with the person until other help arrives. All volunteers would be notified immediately when the person is found.

Being a volunteer is not a regular commitment as someone may be called rarely to help but if they are, they could help to save the life of a vulnerable person. If someone is not available to help when called, they just need to let the centre know. Someone can also stop or re-join the search at any time. If you would like to register a person with memory problems onto the scheme, or if you would like to register as a volunteer please contact the call centre on 0116 229 3118 or contact Karen White, CMHTOA, Church Hill House, 51-52 Turing Drive, Bracknell. Berks. RG12 7FR, Email: karen.white@berkshire.nhs.uk Tel: 01344 823220.

How to stay safe from fire

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) aims to reduce deaths and injuries from fires and other emergencies. RBFRS works with residents and communities to raise awareness of fire, minimise the risk of fire and ensure everyone knows what to do if a fire should start:

Smoke alarms

- Fit smoke alarms to every level of your home
- Push the button once a week to check the batteries are working.

Escape plans

- Make an emergency escape plan in advance
- Keep exits clear.

Cooking

- Never leave cooking unattended
- Check the oven/hob is switched off when you've finished cooking.

Electrical safety

- Don't overload sockets - only use one plug per socket
- Always switch off plugs when they are not in use unless they are designed to be left on (e.g. freezers).

Smoking

- Make sure cigarettes are properly extinguished 'put it out, right out'
- Never smoke in bed - you might fall asleep and never wake up .

Home Fire Safety Check

Visit the Home Fire Safety Check website at www.rbfrs.co.uk where you can complete an online Home Fire Safety Check self-assessment and find other fire safety advice. In addition, you can visit the Electrical Safety Council's website at www.esc.org.uk for further advice and details of electrical product recall notice. TO REQUEST A FREE HOME FIRE SAFETY CHECK. Tel: Freephone: 0800 587 6679 or Email: communitysafety@rbfrs.co.uk

Support With Confidence Scheme

Whether you get a direct payment from the council to pay for your support, or you buy services privately, the Support With Confidence scheme aims to help you find Personal Assistants you can trust – from people and organisations that have been vetted and approved on grounds of quality, safety, and training.

The 'Support with Confidence' scheme in Bracknell Forest is paid for by Bracknell Forest Council and run by the Family Resource Centre UK. They approve and check workers and then add them onto a register. Members of the public with support needs are then welcome to access the register to arrange their support knowing that CRB/DBS checks, references and necessary training has been completed. If you would like more information please contact the Family Resource Centre on 01344 206113 or 0800 3289148.

Buy With Confidence Scheme

The Buy With Confidence scheme helps you avoid rogue traders by providing a list of approved local businesses. These traders have been checked by Bracknell Forest Trading Standards staff to ensure their trustworthiness and compliance with the law. Complaints against members are also monitored on a regular basis.

A list of all traders registered on the scheme can be found on the Buy With Confidence website. A list of Bracknell Forest's current approved traders can also be downloaded from www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/environment/env-trading-standards/env-buy-with-confidence If you would like more information call Customer Services on 01344 352000 or email: customer.services@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Comments, Compliments and Complaints

At some stage in life there may be a point reached where someone may need help with normal, everyday tasks. Although this might make people feel frail and vulnerable, they should always expect to feel safe and respected by those who give this support. Most people don't like to complain, but sometimes things go wrong, or people feel they could have been done better. On the other hand someone may feel that the service provided was excellent.

The council want to listen, respond and learn from your comments, compliments and complaints which will allow the council to improve services and prevent problems in the future. If you feel uncomfortable in raising an issue yourself, then ask a friend or family member to raise the matter on your behalf.

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If you have adult social care support arranged through the council and want to find out more contact adult social care on 01344 351500

For any other comments, compliments and complaints about the council please contact via the website: www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk, by email, customer.services@bracknell-forest.gov.uk or by telephone 01344 352000

If you pay for any support yourself then you, or somebody on your behalf, should contact the organisation or company direct.

MONEY AND BENEFITS

Blue Badge Scheme

The Blue Badge scheme provides parking concessions for people with disabilities who travel either as drivers or passengers. The scheme applies to:

- People with severe walking difficulties
- People with very severe upper limb disabilities who regularly drive a vehicle but cannot turn a steering wheel by hand
- People who are registered blind
- People who receive a mobility allowance or higher rate of the mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance.

The badge costs £10 and allows badge holders to park close to their destinations as well as in designated disabled parking bays. The council provides a number of disabled badge holder parking bays within the Town Centre. If you would like more information on who is eligible and how to apply call Bracknell Forest Council on 01344 351464 or email BlueBadge.Applications@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Money, Money, Money

Bracknell Forest Council can advise about entitled to benefits and how to go about claiming them. The team can help you to complete benefit claim forms and would support you through the application process.

They can also offer advice with regards to the new benefit changes coming into effect this year:

- PIP - Personal Independence Payment - replacing Disability Living Allowance for people under 60
- Universal credit - A new single payment for people who are looking for work or on a low income.

For other benefits, the team offers advice and contact details for making claims. For further information Tel: 01344 352010

There are a number of agencies which help with benefits advice and claim forms. These include:

Bracknell Forest Homes benefit advisors (for tenants)	0800 692 3000
The Pension Service	08456 060 265
Disability Living Allowance & Attendance Allowance helpline	08457 123 456

Direct payments

If you are entitled to support from Adult Social Care, you have a right to ask for a direct payment. Direct payments are payments made to your bank account instead of the council arranging your support. A direct payment can be made so you can arrange the services, or employ someone, to provide specific support that meets your needs. Direct payments give more flexibility and choice. There are some circumstances when direct payments cannot be made and Bracknell Forest Council can let you know about these. If you would like more information about receiving direct payments, contact the self-directed support co-ordinator on 01344 351420.

Looking after your home

Flexible Home Improvement Loan

"Are you an owner occupier?" Would you like to improve the warmth, safety and security of your home? Are you aged over 60?

If the answer is 'yes' to all these questions you might like to find out more about a Flexible Home Improvement Loan by calling Bracknell Forest Council on 01344 352000 for more information and to receive an information leaflet.

Keeping your home warm

Energy used in homes is responsible for over a quarter of all UK emissions of carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas causing climate change. Making your home as energy efficient as possible will improve your comfort, save you money and is better for the environment. For advice on improving the energy efficiency of your home, please contact the council's Sustainable Energy Officer on 01344 352536.

Information Hub

The iHub (Information Hub) has been created by the council as an online directory of services, support, sources of advice sources and activities for residents of the borough. Whilst primarily developed to provide information for people who may need some support to remain independent, it provides valuable information for all Bracknell residents. The iHub has information about:

- local groups
- activities in the community
- education and volunteering opportunities
- agencies providing support at home
- businesses which can deliver meals
- registered care homes for people who no longer feel able to live in their own home with support.

If you have any queries or comments about the ihub, or would like to add a service then, please email Information.Hub@bracknell-forest.gov.uk or call 01344 352000 or visit the website at www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/ihub

Do you want to help by providing services

People who are eligible now have more control over how to get support to help meet their needs and want to look to have support in different, personal, local and tailored ways.

Local small businesses could benefit local people, whether the people receive funding from the local authority or funding themselves, by providing more personal and tailored support with local people to meet local needs.

This provides opportunities for you to create a small business on your own or as a group, which can offer a range of diverse, personalised and flexible support in innovative and creative ways as well as earning from it. These include activities such as helping people to gain a new skill or make new friends, lead a healthy life or enjoy a leisure activity.

For a short discussion to find out more about the benefits of being a community micro provider and explore your needs, contact Bracknell Forest on 01344 351504 or e-mail ASC&H.CommissioningTeam@Bracknell-Forest.gov.uk and join the mailing list. For links to support and advice providers, please visit the 'one stop shop' advice page at <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/businesssupportandadvice>

Looking ahead to 2014 and beyond

Bracknell Forest Council believes that it, and the people it works with, needs to provide good advice and information. This guide has aimed to provide a sample of the opportunities available for people to remain healthier for longer and what good support services look like.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

For the majority, social life takes place in shops, clubs, libraries, leisure centres, restaurants and at home, these are the familiar everyday experiences. They are not traditional social care services but can make a huge difference to someone's continuing independence given a little extra thought by all concerned. The council seeks to encourage all agencies to tailor their support and services to meet individual needs.

Good quality information and advice can allow anyone to be as prepared as possible for dealing with the challenges of life. This will help people make informed decisions about how best to meet their social care needs and keep people independent and healthy.

It is very important to involve you in planning support and services for the future. If you would like to comment on this guide or share your ideas about what preventative services and opportunities should look like, the council would like to hear your views. Details of how you can feedback to the council are:

By email: ASC&H.CommissioningTeam@Bracknell-Forest.gov.uk

By telephone: 01344 351504 or 01344 351446

By post to: The Joint Commissioning Team Adult Social Care Health & Housing
1st Floor North, Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell RG12 1JD

i hub: Information.hub@bracknell-forest.gov.uk. or telephone 01344 352000.