

Reading for blind and partially sighted people

Books Connect

Public libraries support a range of reading activities for blind and partially sighted readers, including lending tapes, CDs and large print books to reading/listening groups. Some authorities offer assistance with transport so visually impaired people can join a group at the library to discuss books. Other groups have help from volunteers to run and organise the groups, or offer lifts.

Many reading groups include people with sight loss of different types, and libraries always aim to supply a book on tape, CD or Large Print format if it is available. In some groups, members share extracts, stories, poems, or reviews by reading aloud to others.

In addition, the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) runs a national library service for readers with sight loss. They offer a comprehensive range of books and accessible information for children and adults in a range of formats including Braille, Moon, Large print and unabridged audio. Public libraries work closely with RNIB to make these services and formats available to all.

RNIB Talking Books library provides 14,000 fiction titles, including latest best sellers and old favourites as well as non fiction. Large print is available in 16 point type and they have a growing collection of titles in giant print 24 type. This is a postal service direct to the reader, for which there is a charge.

Public library staff can access information, books and help from RNIB for you, or direct you to their services. RNIB specialist librarians also offer advice to public library staff and individuals, on reading activities for visually impaired readers and how to set up listening groups.

Please ask at your library if you want to find out more.

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