

Virtual Sighted Guide Training for Friends & Family - Brief for South West & Wales

What is Virtual Sighted Guide Training?

Our Virtual Sighted Guide training aims to give people the practical skills and principles needed to give appropriate assistance to a person with sight loss so they can negotiate their environment safely, whilst maintaining dignity and independence. We use a combination of personal calls, recorded videos and video conferencing tools such as Zoom to tailor the content to individual circumstances, specific challenges or ambitions.

Who is it for?

The impact of sight loss extends beyond those directly affected as those closest also experience challenges in supporting a person with sight loss. More than ever, it is friends & family who may be best placed to support someone's mobility and independence. It is for these reasons we are trying to reach friends and family of people with sight loss, particularly if home circumstances or vision has recently changed and consequently there is more reliance on them to facilitate mobility. We also welcome anyone with a visual impairment who wishes to participate alongside their supporters - if they so wish.

What does the virtual session involve?

After enquiry, a member of the Sighted Guide team will be in contact for an initial call to discuss current support and training needs to tailor a session appropriately. A member of the team will then email an invitation to join a video call, likely using Zoom, as well as links to sighted guide training videos and eye condition resources to prepare a participant for the session. The team will be able to discuss technology requirements and offer support in the initial call to make sure these resources and the technology is accessible. Zoom can be used with a smartphone so we anticipate that everyone will be able to access the virtual session. At the specified date and time, participants will join a small virtual session with two members of the team who will facilitate discussion around sighted

guiding, give tips and address any questions or concerns. After this session, members of the team will follow up with a participant after four weeks to see if there is any ongoing advice they can give.

Our offer to external partners

We would be supportive of running sessions for the friends and families of those living with sight loss in partnership with other sight loss organisations or community groups. Though anyone is welcome to join our advertised sessions, members of the regional team can organise and set up a bespoke session for an external partner at a time mutual convenient to the group. We would ask that an external partner help us in advertising these sessions to maximise attendance and benefit, but we would send out invitations, run the session and complete follow up calls ourselves. If this is something you would like to explore for your group or groups, please contact your local Community Team.

How do people register or enquire?

If someone is interested in joining our next Virtual Sighted Guide Training for Friends and Family, please contact the local Community Team; contact details are here, www.guidedogs.org.uk/contact-us/local-mobility-teams. Alternatively, participants can register their interest on our website through an enquiry and will then be contacted directly by the My Sighted Guide team; the link is www.guidedogs.org.uk/getting-support/help-for-adults/my-sighted-guide/friends-and-family-sighted-guiding-training. We are currently delivering sessions using staff members from across the South, South West and Wales however the local community team will be able to direct any enquiry.

Sighted Guide Training, My Guide and Guide Dogs

Sighted Guide Training is offered by Guide Dogs as part of the My Sighted Guide service. We aim to support people with sight loss improve their mobility, confidence and independence by training supporters and matching volunteers with people experiencing sight loss. To find out more about the service, please visit our website link here:

<https://www.guidedogs.org.uk/services-we-provide/my-guide>

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