



Choosing a telephone, textphone and accessories

DLF Factsheet

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this factsheet is to provide information and advice about telecommunications products and services that may benefit older people and people with disabilities. Such equipment includes landline telephones, mobile phones, textphones, and accessories, containing particularly useful features.

It also refers to the rapid technological advances within the telecommunications industry and how computers and the internet may offer alternative solutions to using more conventional telephone and textphone equipment.

For up-to-date product and supplier information, contact our equipment helpline, open daily from 10am to 4pm, tel no 0845 130 9177 (local rate); or, if you use a textphone, 020 7432 8009 (standard rate).

Alternatively, you can write to our letter enquiry service or contact us via e-mail at advice@dlf.org.uk. To help us give you a concise and informative reply, please provide us with as much detail as possible including information on the difficulties you are having and any solutions you have considered, including equipment ideas.

SUPPLY, PROVISION AND ASSISTANCE WITH FUNDING

Some older and disabled people, especially those who are living alone or who have severe impairments, may be able to get

help with the cost of installing a telephone line and the equipment needed from their local social services/social work department. Assistance is not usually given for the cost of line rental or call charges.

If you have difficulty in using a normal telephone, it is advisable to contact a community occupational therapist (OT), based at the local social services/social work department, who will come and assess your needs. He/she will advise on possible solutions and may be able to organise some items of equipment on loan

If you meet certain criteria, for example, if you are deaf or hard of hearing, you may be able to get help with the cost and installation of a textphone (sometimes known as a 'Minicom') for use at home. Some local authorities have a dedicated social worker for deaf people, or an adult disability services team, who can advise on what equipment, can be provided in your area.

Specialist telecommunication equipment that is needed by a disabled person at work can usually be obtained through the 'Access to Work' scheme, operated by the Department of Work and Pensions. Normally, most or all of the cost of equipment provided, is paid for under the scheme. An 'Access To Work' referral can be made by either the employee or his/her employer, directly to the nearest Access To Work Business Centre or via the disability employment adviser (DEA) at the local Job Centre Plus office.

If you do decide to buy items privately, it is always advisable to try them out first. Arrange to visit one of the Disabled Living Centres, which will have a range of equipment on display, and from where you will be able to get advice and information on what may be most suitable for you. For details of the nearest centre contact Assist UK (see 'Useful Organisations' below). It is also worthwhile looking at the wide range of telephones available in high street shops, because a number of useful features are now incorporated as standard on some models.

For individuals who are unable to get help with equipment through their local social services / social work department, or 'Access to Work', funding may be available from other sources. For contact details of the organizations mentioned below see 'Useful Organisations'.

Social Fund

People who receive income support or income based job seekers allowance for a minimum of six months, can apply to the Social Fund for a budgeting loan to cover telephone costs, including line rental and calls. Applications should be made to the local benefit office. The Social Fund can also sometimes supply a Community Care Grant to enable a claimant to live independently in the community.

Telephones for the Blind Fund

This fund helps blind people (not partially sighted people) with the cost of telephone line installation. Under very special circumstances, it may also help with line rental costs. A referral is required from a Social Worker.

Renate Campbell Trust

Can assist with funding for a textphone and the cost of installation if you cannot afford one, and social services /social work department do not supply a textphone.

Free Socket Conversion

All properties should now be fitted with a telephone socket to allow for telephone equipment to be plugged in. However, if your installation is still an old-style wired-in telephone connection, BT will come and convert your home to a plug-in type of connection, free of charge, if someone in the household has a disability, or needs a community/auto-dialler alarm.

Free extended ringer

BT landline customers who find it difficult to hear their telephone, because they are hard of hearing, can get an extension ringer which can be plugged into any telephone socket. Non-BT customers can buy this accessory for about £20.

Free Directory Enquiries

If you are unable to use the phone book because of a visual impairment, dyslexia, impaired grip or other disability, you may be entitled to free calls to directory enquiries. Check if your landline or mobile service provider offers such a service. Your application will require evidence of your impairment from either a doctor or social worker. Successful applicants receive details of a special number to call and a Personal Identification Number (PIN), which needs to be quoted every time the service is used.

Operator Assisted Calls

Many telephone service providers will offer an operator assisted call service if you have difficulty in using keys to dial. Some telephone companies will not charge, or will charge you at a low call rate if you are an older or disabled person. You may need to register for another service, such as free directory enquiries, or meet certain rules, to use this service.

Service for vulnerable customers

If you are a vulnerable customer because you are an older person or have a disability it is advisable to let your telephone service provider know about it. If an engineer has to visit you, be sure to ask for his/her identity card before letting him/her into your home. When you book for an engineer to visit, it should also be possible to arrange with the phone company for him/her to use a pre-arranged password to be spoken before you

let him/her in. This is particularly useful for people who would find it difficult to read an ID card. Some companies have engineers specially trained to deal with older people; they will ensure that telephones are installed in accessible positions, demonstrate their features and, if requested, help to program quick dial memories into the phone.

You may be able to join a priority fault repair scheme if you have certain impairments. The criteria for joining depends on the rules laid down by your service provider. If the fault turns out to be in telephone equipment not supplied by your telephone company, a charge may be made for this service.

If you are worried that your telephone may be cut off - because you are going into a hospital, for example - some telephone companies operate a third party scheme which allows a nominated person to take full control of your account, or be contacted if you fail to pay a bill. You may have to register for this service. Contact your telephone service provider for more details.

Literature and bills in accessible Formats

The Disability Discrimination Act now places an obligation on suppliers of goods and services to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled people get the same level of service as other customers. In compliance with the Act, a considerable amount of written material is available in alternative formats, such as Braille, large-

print, and multi-media formats. Many providers now provide Internet access to product and billing information for their customers. If, for any reason, you are unable to read the bill yourself, it is sometimes possible that information can be read to you by an operator over the phone.

FEATURES OF TELEPHONES

There have been considerable changes within the telecommunications industry over the past few years, both in the way telephone services are delivered, and the technological advances in the design of equipment used. For a customer guide to using different phone companies for your line rental and calls, contact the communications industry regulator, OFCOM.

Listed below are some features that you might find useful when selecting a telephone.

Caller display

Telephones with this feature display the telephone number of the person who is calling your telephone, before you pick up the receiver.

Digital display

Telephones with this feature have a small display screen that can show a number of the phone's internal features, including a number as it is being dialled out, a personal

phone book and memories. Some telephones, especially mobile phones, may also display SMS Texts, email text; photographs and internet pages.

Hands-free

Telephones with this feature have a built-in microphone and loudspeaker to enable you to speak and listen to the caller without lifting the handset.

Inductive couplers

Inductive couplers are devices which are either built into the telephone, or a unit that can be attached to the handset which produces a signal that can be picked up by hearing aids that have a 'T' switch.

Last number redial

Last number redial enables you to call back the telephone number last dialled at the press of one button.

Memory

A telephone with this feature enables you to store telephone numbers and recall them by pressing one or two buttons.

On-hook dialling

Enables you to dial a telephone number without lifting the handset.

Pulsator

A pulsator produces a vibrating sound when placed on the bone in front or behind the ear, which may assist some people to hear conversation.

Raised dot on '5'

Telephones with a raised dot on '5' enable someone to find his/her way around the keypad using the '5' as the centre of the keypad.

Ringer volume control

This feature enables the volume of the ringer to be adjusted.

Volume control

Telephones with this feature have a built-in speech amplifier to make the caller's voice louder or quieter.

Wall mountable

A fixing system (normally consisting of holes on the back of the telephone) to attach a telephone to the wall. Most fixed telephones and some cordless telephones have this feature.

ADDITIONAL TELEPHONE SERVICES

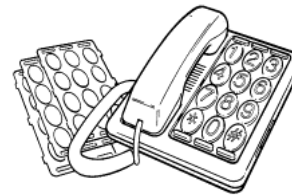
The features of individual telephones can sometimes be further improved when combined with selected services offered by

some telephone service providers. Below is a list of some of the services, which are offered:

TELEPHONES AND SERVICES FOR SOMEONE WITH A VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

Features that people may find useful on a telephone if they have a visual impairment are:

Large Numerals And Keypad Colour Contrasting



Large numerals and high colour contrast between the numbers on the keypad and the background may assist people to locate buttons.

Larger spacing and larger Buttons

Larger spacing and larger buttons may reduce the likelihood of someone mis-dialling a telephone number.

Number memory

Enables frequently used numbers to be stored so that a complete telephone number need not be dialled each time.

Raised dot on '5'

Enables someone to locate the centre of the keypad, and helps orientation. If this option is not featured on a telephone of your choice, it may be possible to create a dot using products available from the RNIB.

Wall mounted

Enables the telephone to be positioned at eye level. A keypad situated on the handset also enables the keypad to be brought closer to eye level.

Audible Prompts

Voicemail Services and some answer phones are designed to give audio indication when a message is stored. Many also supply spoken prompts to assist with retrieving incoming messages and recording outgoing messages.

TELEPHONES FOR SOMEONE WITH IMPAIRED DEXTERITY

Features that people may find useful on a telephone if they have impaired dexterity are:

Enlarged keys with a concave Shape

Help the user to press the correct key.

Hands-free

Hands-free telephones have a built-in microphone and loudspeaker that allows the user to hold a conversation without lifting the handset. However, this means that other people can hear the conversation.

Telephone headsets

These allow for private hands-free conversations.

Larger spacing and larger Buttons

Larger spacing and larger buttons may reduce the likelihood of someone misdialling a telephone number.

Number memory

Enables frequently used numbers to be stored so that a complete telephone number need not be dialled each time.

On hook dialling

Enables the user to dial a number without lifting the handset. However, the handset needs to be picked up when the call is answered.

Pre-dial

This feature enables you to take a longer time to dial a number, once dialled; you simply press the DIAL button, then use the telephone handset or handsfree.

Last Number Redial

This button enables you to re-dial previously dialled numbers

Automatic answering phone

For someone who has so little physical movement that he/she cannot pick up and operate a telephone at all, the Easy answer Phone will automatically answer an incoming call after a preset number of rings. The person calling in handles the entire management of the call. The disabled user is only required to speak and listen. The unit has a small clip-on microphone for the user to wear, and replies are heard through a built-in loudspeaker mounted in the unit. To prevent nuisance and unwanted calls, the person making the incoming call has to use a three -digit PIN before activating the automatic phone.

Telephone conversation recorders

Telephone conversation recorders allow conversations to be recorded, which may be useful for people who are unable to make notes during a call.

Telephone holders and stands

These support the telephone handset so that the user does not have to pick up, replace or hold the receiver for any length of time. The supports could be a shoulder rest to hold the telephone between the shoulder and ear, or a telephone stand to hold the

handset with a lever to operate the receiver button.

TELEPHONES FOR SOMEONE WITH A SPEECH IMPAIRMENT

The following features may be useful for people with impaired speech or language disorders.

Hands Free

This feature allows signals to be picked up some distance away from the phone. This is ideal if a Communication Aid with a keyboard and synthesised speech is being used.

Out-going Speech Amplification

This feature enables the volume of someone with a quiet or weak voice to be heard louder over the phone.

Fax

This facility enables someone to communicate in writing as an alternative to speaking.

Caller Display

This feature enables someone with communication difficulties to identify callers without speaking to them, and screen non-essential calls.

Pre-recorded Answerphone and Voice-mail Messages

These provide an out-going message for callers and an invitation to leave a message,

Textphone Communication

For people whose speech is difficult to understand, a Textphone enables a conversation to be typed instead of being spoken.

SMS or Texting

Telephones with this feature enable short messages to be sent to other phones with the same feature.

Videophones

These are particularly useful for people who communicate using a sign language, such as Makaton, and need to see the person they are telephoning.

TELEPHONES FOR SOMEONE WITH A HEARING IMPAIRMENT

HEARING AID COMPATIBILITY

A telephone described as hearing aid compatible has an earpiece that produces an audio magnetic field. If you use a hearing aid with a T setting, you should get clearer sound if you switch to that position when you use the telephone.

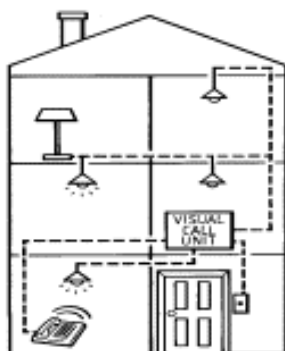
PEOPLE WHO FIND IT DIFFICULT TO HEAR THE TELEPHONE RINGING

Telephones and units with ringing volume control

Add-on and built-in ringing volume control may be useful for someone who finds it difficult to hear the telephone ringing. Some telephones have a ringing volume control which allows the volume of the ringer to be raised as necessary. Add-on telephone bell units can be used with a standard telephone and enable the volume of the ringing tone to be increased. These are battery or mains powered and plug into a telephone socket- a double telephone socket will therefore be required.

Telephones and units with Flashing ringing indicator

Add-on and built-in visual bells (flashing lights) may be useful for someone who finds it difficult to hear the telephone ringing.



Telephones are available with a flashing light that flashes in time with ringing of an incoming call. However, the size of the light is often small and the user may need to be near the telephone to notice the light flashing.

Add-on flashing lights are also available. These are usually mains powered and plug into a telephone socket - a double telephone socket will therefore be required.



Systems are available that make one or more of the lights flash in the house when the telephone rings. An electrician should always install these.

Ringers

Before buying a telephone try out the ringers available as some people can hear one kind of ringer but not others. Some telephones have extra loud ringers, and a ringer volume control.

TELEPHONES AND EQUIPMENT FOR PEOPLE WHO FIND IT DIFFICULT TO HEAR A TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

Inductive couplers

Inductive couplers are used when the hearing aid is switched to the 'T' position. They improve the clarity of the sound by cutting out background noise, but do not amplify sound. Telephones are available with an integral inductive coupler in the earpiece of the handset. Add-on couplers - small battery operated devices that can be positioned inside, or strapped onto, the telephone handset - are available. Inductive couplers are now fitted into all public telephones and motorway emergency telephones.

Pulsators

Telephone earpieces and portable pulsators which operate by vibrating sound when

placed on the bone in front or behind the ear, can assist some people to hear a conversation.

Portable Amplifiers



Portable amplifiers are small battery operated devices that attach to the telephone earpiece. They are used to amplify the volume of incoming speech but do not improve the clarity of sound unless they also incorporate an inductive coupler. They are suitable for people who do not use a hearing aid or for those who take their hearing aid off when they use the phone.

Telephones with two handsets

Telephones with two handsets are useful if you have a lip speaker to relay a conversation to you, or if you like to listen with both ears. You might want to consider alternatives to an extra earpiece. Other options include buying a cheap second phone which can be plugged into the same socket with a socket doubler.

TEXTPHONES



Textphones (sometimes known in the UK as Minicom) may be used by people with a hearing and- /or, speech impairment to communicate with someone who uses a telephone. Unlike other messaging systems, a textphone enables 'real time' communication.

A textphone can be used to communicate directly to other textphone users with compatible equipment using a standard telephone line. Once connected, the caller can type in the message that is transmitted to the receiver's display screen; messages can then be relayed back in the same manner.

A textphone may also be used to connect with a voice phone using a BT service called TextDirect and a message relay service, operated by the RNID, called Typetalk. Full details about how these services work and are accessed are given later in this section.

USEFUL FEATURES OF A TEXTPHONE

A textphone is a unit that connects with a standard telephone line and provides

message communication via a keyboard and display. Some textphones have two flexible acoustic couplers (rubber cups), other models do not and may be used as a telephone and textphone in one, which can be used by all members of the household. A textphone can either be placed directly into a telephone socket or may be used in conjunction with a telephone headset that is placed into the cups.

Some useful features of textphones are:

Answering Facilities

Some textphones have a built-in answer machine that can record text messages when you are not there to take a call.

Display

All textphones have a scrolling display which shows incoming and outgoing messages. The size and quality of the display varies. Fluorescent displays are large and bright. LCD screens are smaller but show more words on the display at one time.

Keyboards

Keyboards vary from one textphone to another. Some textphones have full sized typewriter style keyboards, others have small pressure keys.

Voice Announcer

A voice announcer is a pre-recorded message that can be played down the telephone line to tell a hearing caller that he/she needs to call through Typetalk or use a textphone.

Voice Carryover

Some textphones have special functions to make it easy to switch between text and voice during a call. This simplifies matters if you are deaf and prefer to use your voice to talk to hearing callers, but need to have their replies to you typed.

Text memory

Some machines are fitted with a large text memory that enables conversations to be stored for future reference.

Built-in phone book

Some textphones have the ability to store names and telephone numbers

Caller display register

When used in conjunction with BT's Caller Display service, some machines can register incoming and outgoing calls

Emergency alert

Some textphones are fitted with an emergency service call button.

Connection to printer and computer equipment

Using additional equipment, some textphones may be connected to a printer and other computer equipment.

BT TEXTDIRECT AND TYPETALK

BT TextDirect

BT TextDirect is a service provided free of charge by BT which enables easy access between textphones and telephones. Anyone can access the service by simply dialling a five-digit access code before the full national number required. No registration is needed to use this service.

The codes used are:

18001 # if calling from a textphone;
18002 # if calling from an ordinary phone to a textphone. This will also enable voice-to-voice communication if required;

18003 # if making a call to the emergency services from a textphone (same as '999').

When using this service, information on the progress of the call, such as 'busy' and 'ringing' tones, is provided in text format. Where necessary, BT TextDirect automatically brings in the 'Typetalk' relay operator service to communicate between voice and text users.

BT Direct also operates a service called Relay Assist for people who would like operator assistance in setting up a call. To use this service call 0870 240 9598 from a textphone, or 0870 240 5152 from a standard (voice) phone.

The RNID Typetalk service

The Typetalk service is funded by BT and is operated by the RNID - 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Typetalk users call the relay centre free and are then connected to the person to whom they wish to speak. Their conversation continues in one of the following ways:

- if the Typetalk user can speak but not hear he/she will talk directly to the contact, whose reply will be typed by the operator, appearing as text in the user's telephone;
- if a Typetalk user cannot hear and has difficulties with speech, he/she types the conversation on the textphone and this is relayed in spoken form to the hearing person by the operator who then types the response.
- If the Typetalk user can hear but has difficulties with speech, then he/she will type the conversation via the textphone for relay by the operator, but will listen directly to the other person's response.

Typetalk Helpdesk

More information about using BT TextDirect service and the RNID Typetalk, and other advice and information about textphone communications, is available from the RNID Typetalk Helpdesk. The service is available from 8am - 8pm Monday to Friday and between 9am - 5pm on Saturday and Sunday. The helpline can be contacted on: Voice: 0800 7311 888 Text: 0151 709 8119 Email: helpline@rnid-typetalk.org.uk

Rebate scheme for BT textphone customers

There is no additional charge for using BT TextDirect and normal call charges apply. However, because it takes longer to use a textphone, BT customers will receive a rebate on their bill for the text part of the call. If you use another telephone service provider, check if they operate a similar scheme.

CORDLESS TELEPHONES

Cordless telephones are available in high street shops. These phones may be useful for people who have problems moving around the home as the handset can operate independently from the base unit. Below are some factors you may wish to consider when choosing one:

- cordless telephones use radio waves - either analogue or digital to link the base unit and handset;

- digital cordless phones offer a clearer sound than the older style analogue phones, and are less prone to interference; digital cordless phones may cause audible interference with analogue, which could make them fiddly to operate; hearing aid compatibility # If the caller uses a hearing aid with a 'T' position, audible interference may occur if an analogue hearing aid is used near a digital cordless phone;
- sound quality from a cordless telephone is not as good as from fixed telephones, although this may be affected when operating it next to other electrical equipment;
- cordless telephones do not work in a power cut.
- some models have more than one handset, which can operate from one base unit; cordless analogue telephones can be used with a hearing aid without interference, whereas, cordless digital telephones can cause severe interference;
- some cordless digital models have a SMS (Short Message Service) feature, like mobile phones, enabling the user to text messages to similar cordless and mobile phones.

MOBILE PHONES

Mobile phones were first developed in the early 1980's and are now in widespread use

throughout the world. In the UK, there are currently four major networks: O2, Orange, T-Mobile and Vodafone. Additionally, there are also a number of other suppliers that provide Services on this network, providing a very competitive market. This also includes a huge number of products to choose. Mobile phone designs are frequently being improved upon and new models being launched into the shops.

As a result there is range of tariffs and phone packages to suit individual needs. It is important to shop around before making any commitment to a provider. There are a number of High Street retailers that can assist you before making a purchase. Always ask to make a test call to check that you are able to use the phone easily. This may also mean being able to connect up accessories, such as the battery charger or a headset. For many older and disabled people, Mobile phones, because of their small size, may not be a viable option. More information and guidance on telephone services for Disabled and Older People is available in a report called "Stay In Touch" from Ricability at www.ricability.org.uk.

Features of mobile phones

- Calls can be made and received almost anywhere in the UK and overseas.
- Mobile phones are small, lightweight and easy to carry around.

- Mobile phones have a number of internal features, such as phonebook, choice of ring-tones, answering machine.
- Most mobile phones offer a range of detachable outer cases, in a variety of colours, which can be used to improve colour contrasting for visually impaired people.
- Some models have a hands-free option.
- Many of the latest models have voice activated functions, such as voice-activated dialling and voice tagging internal phone book.
- SMS (Short Message System) text messaging enables text messages to be sent.
- Internet Access using WAP (Web Access Protocol) technology makes it possible to send emails.

Limitations of mobile phones

- Setting up and using a mobile phone is more complicated than fixed landline phones.
- Voice activated phones work on voice recognition - the user therefore has to read certain passages when setting up the option, which people with some disabilities may find difficult.

- Mobile phones can be fiddly to use and, because they are so small, can easily be dropped.
- Digital mobile phones can cause severe interference to analogue hearing aids.
- Mobile phones are powered by a re-chargeable battery, which needs to be connected to a mains charger unit from time to time.

MOBILE PHONES FOR PEOPLE WITH A HEARING IMPAIRMENT

Hearing your mobile phone ring

If you have difficulty hearing your mobile phone, choose a model which can vibrate, instead of ringing. Most mobiles now have this feature. It is also worth maximising the volume of your ring tone and selecting the one you find easiest to hear. If you have an older phone, you may be able to get a vibrating battery for it. This device makes the telephone vibrate when it receives an incoming call. If you cannot get a vibrating battery for your phone try a vibrating belt clip. This is the size of small pager and works by picking up the radio signal from the telephone as it acknowledges the call. Vibrating batteries and belts can be bought from most mobile phone high street shops.

Hearing a conversation

To make it possible to use a digital mobile with a hearing aid, in most cases you will

require an add-on device, such as a headset or neck loop.

Neck-loops plug into a digital mobile phone and are designed to work with almost any hearing aid that has a T position. The device has a loop of plastic-covered wire to go around your neck and a control unit about half the size of a small matchbox, which can be worn round the neck or under clothes.

Using SMS messaging

Most mobile phones have the facility to send texts. This system, however, is one-way communication as each short message is an individual call.

MOBILE TEXTPHONES

Unlike SMS, a textphone allows for two-way communication. One mobile phone service provider, T-Mobile, has developed a mobile textphone package with the RNID.

MOBILE PHONES FOR IMPAIRED DEXTERITY

The small physical size and complexity of most mobile phones make them inaccessible for many older and disabled people. The miniture keypad and the spacing between individual buttons can make dialling or receive particularly difficult if you have limited dexterity, or are visually impaired. The "SILVERPHONE EASY 5" by Communic8, is a mobile phone that is designed for use by older people and is

easy to use. Unlike a conventional model, the keypad has been replaced with 5 pre-programmed larger size memory keys, allowing five stored numbers only to be dialled. It also has an additional button for contacting the emergency services. The limitation of this phone is that the five programmed phone numbers have to be pre-programmed in advance by the manufacturer.

Some other mobiles have some voice activated functions, which could prove useful, and may work in a hands-free mode. However, it should be remembered that these functions will need some setting up, and you should always check that you are physically able to perform this task, before you buy the phone. A plug-in 'Qwerty' keyboard might make it easier to send SMS text messages.

MOBILE PHONES FOR VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

There is now a mobile phone on the market which is specifically designed for blind and partially sighted people, It is called the OWASYS 22 from the Royal National Institute for the Blind Customer services. There are also Screen Magnifier and Speech Synthesiser software programs that can be installed to adapt certain models available in the High Street. For more information on Accessible Mobile Phones, contact the RNIB Technology Department.

Some of the latest generation of mobile phones, are now fitted with slightly larger displays, to facilitate SMS/texting, photo images, and Internet display. However, a larger screen does not necessarily ensure a larger displayed font, although in some phones the font size can be adjusted as a menu function.

Some mobiles which are designed to open up like a clam to reveal two working surfaces often have slightly larger buttons. If you are blind and partially sighted, and your phone has a 'shortcut key' facility, it may be very useful to set up frequently used numbers or menu functions. Some providers also provide specific facilities on their network. Check for details with your local High Street supplier.

FIXED CELLULAR TERMINAL

This is an adapter which enables normal landline telephones to be connected to the mobile phone network at home or other fixed location, So that larger, easy-to-use telephones to be used instead of smaller mobile phones. The supplier, Access Audio, also offers a special 10p per minute, no contract tariff, to purchasers of this item. service, which offers chat plus video images for deaf people who have Web-Cams. Screen reading software enables blind and partially sighted people to access computers. Alternative hardware, such as a roller-ball mouse, may help people with limited dexterity. Environmental control systems offer severely disabled people

computer access and telephone access. For more information on computer access technology solutions contact Abilitynet which gives advice on computing for disabled people.

COMPUTER ACCESS TO THE TELEPHONE NETWORK

If you are a computer user, it is possible to access telephone services using your PC. This can be achieved by plugging your phone line into an internal voice/fax/data modem; or by using a broadband connection, access telephone services over the internet. Contact an organisation called AbilityNet if you require information on computer solutions and advice on assistive technology available. A voice/fax/data modem allows the user to send and receive faxes and, by connecting a headset with a built-in microphone to the sound card, make voice calls. Communications software, which comes free with most purchases, makes voice mail possible.

The internet provides a number of messaging services including emails and instant 'chat' services. For users who are hearing impaired, the RNID has a V-Cam For more information about Internet telephone, known as 'Voice Over IP' services, contact your local internet Service Provider, Telephone Service provider, or search on-line.

USEFUL ORGANISATIONS

Access Audio Ltd
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Dalhousie Road
Eskbank
Dalkeith, Lothian
EH22 3NX
Tel: 0800 781 9489
Fax: 0131 660 9777
Email: info@accessaudio.co.uk
Website: www.accessaudio.co.uk

AbilityNet
PO Box 94
Warwick, Warwickshire
CV34 5WS
Helpline: 0800 269545
Fax: 01926 407425
Email: enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk
Web: www.abilitynet.org.uk

Age Concern England
Astral House
1268 London Road
London, SW16 4ER
Tel: 020 8765 7200
Fax: 020 8765 7211
Textphone: 020 8679 2832
Helpline: 0800 009966
Email: ace@ace.org.uk
Web: www.ace.org.uk

Age Concern Northern Ireland
3 Lower Crescent
Belfast
BT17 1NR
Tel: 028 9024 5729
Fax: 028 9023 5497

Email: info@ageconcernni.org.uk
Website: www.ageconcernni.org.uk

Age Concern Scotland
Causewayside House
160 Causewayside
Edinburgh
EH9 1PR

Tel: 0845 833 0200

Fax: 0845 833 0745

Email: enquiries@acscot.org.uk

Website: www.ageconcernscotland.org.uk

Age Concern Wales
13-14 Neptune Court
Vanquard Way
Cardiff
CF24 5PT Tel: 029 2043 1555
Email: enquiries@accymru.org.uk
Web: www.accymru.org.uk

BT - Age and Disability Action
PP38/15 Lea Valley TE
Britannia Road
Waltham Cross
Hertfordshire
EN8 7NR
Tel: 0800 800 150
Fax: 011332 822 839
Email: disability@bt.com
Web: www.btplc.com/age_disability

Communic8 Ltd
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OFCOM
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Email: contact@ofcom.org.uk
Web: www.ofcom.org.uk

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Tel: 020 8862 2925

Ricability
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Tel: 020 7427 2460
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Textphone: 020 7427 2469
Email: mail@ricability.org.uk
Homepage: www.ricability.org.uk
Royal National Institute for the Blind
105 Judd Street
London
WC1H 9NE
Tel: 020 7388 1266
Fax: 020 7388 2034
Helpline: 0845 7669999
Customer Services: 0845 7023153
Technology Information: (0870) 013 9555
Textphone: 0845 758 691

Email: helpline@rnib.org.uk
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technology@rnib.org.uk ;
Web: www.rnib.org.uk

Royal National Institute for Deaf People
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EC1Y 8SL
Tel: 020 7296 8000
Fax: 020 7296 8199
Textphone: 0808 808 9000
Helpline: 0808 808 0123
Email: informationline@rnib.org.uk
Web: www.rnib.org.uk

T-Mobile, Disability Services Team
6 Camberwell Way
Doxford International Technology Park
Sunderland
SR3 3XN
Tel: Disability Services (0808) 121 1122
General Enquires (0845) 412 5000
Fax: (0845) 412 4412
Textphone: (0808) 121 0785
Website: www.t-mobile.co.uk

Telephones for the Blind Fund
7 Huntersfield Close
Reigate
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RH2 0DX
Tel: 01737 248032
Fax: 01737 247032
Web: www.tftb.org.uk

Typetalk
John Wood House
Glacier Building
Harrington Road
Brunwick Business Park
Liverpool, Merseyside
L3 4DF
Tel: (0151) 709 9494
Fax: (0151) 709 8119
Helpline: (0800) 731 1888
Textphone: (0800) 500 888.

Vodafone Connect Limited
PO Box 549
Croydon, Surrey
CR9 3WB
Customer Services 08701 654321
Disability Services: 01295 818171
Email: disability.access@vodafone.co.uk

Donation Form

We hope this factsheet has proven useful to you. If you would like to help the DLF continue to provide valuable information such as this, you may wish to consider making a small donation towards our work. As a charity, we rely on the generosity of the public to help us continue to help older and disabled people lead independent lives.

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Or charge my: Visa CAF Mastercard Amex Maestro

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**Please print out and return your completed form and cheque (if applicable) to:
Fundraising Department, Disabled Living Foundation,
380-384 Harrow Road, London W9 2HU**

Please tick here if you would prefer not to receive further communications from the DLF.

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