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Alternative formats in detail

1. Organising Information on Computer Disk

- Some disabled people use speech software. This software reproduces text as speech. Computer Disk is the preferred format for some people with a visual impairment.
- If a request for information on computer disk is received then it can be formatted using any PC. The print information needs to be in electronic format. Ideally, the author of the document should email the text to the person organising the disk copy, or the person will need to scan in the print information.
- The person organising the disk copy will need to know if the person needs an electronic format on computer disk (or email). The person will also need to know which programme the information should be saved in (Plain text, Office (Word) 2003 or 2007 etc).
- Speech software can only read text, so any images will need to be described in the text. Also some speech software cannot read the information provided in tables. This information may need to be reproduced as text. It is advisable to speak to the user and ask how they would prefer to receive the information, as tabulated information provided as text could lose context. The information in

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the accessible venues section of this booklet is reproduced as a good practice example of how information, usually provided in a table, can be provided in text.

2. Producing information on audiocassette

- People who are blind or have a visual impairment commonly use information on audiocassette. This format is becoming popular with people who have learning difficulties and people who don't use English as their first language.
- This format can be very expensive when produced professionally. An alternative idea is to produce individual cassettes in-house. For example, if a person requiring audiocassette attends a meeting on a regular basis, minutes and reports could be produced in-house.
- The Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) can provide a service in producing information on audiocassette.

Royal National Institute for the Blind

RNIB Transcription Centre South West

2 Whiteoaks Court

David's Lane

Ivybridge

Devon

PL21 0DW

Telephone: (01752) 690092

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3. Producing information in Braille

- When considering transcription, note that Braille cannot reproduce italics, underline, use capitals or any other form of emphasis
- Some rules on the layout of a Braille page are standard, for example:
 - Page number in top right hand
 - All sections and subsections numbered
 - Document must be fully indexed
 - Title printed on page 1 for reference by sighted reader
 - Avoid graphics and tables
- If you require a document to be produced in Braille, it is easiest to supply the document on a computer disk in a Word document to the individual/ organisation making the translation.

Royal National Institute for the Blind

RNIB Transcription Centre South West

2 Whiteoaks Court

David's Lane

Ivybridge

Devon

PL21 0DW

Telephone: 01752 690092

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A2i Transcription Services Ltd

139a Whiteladies Road

Clifton

Bristol

BS8 2NR

Telephone: 0117 707090

E-mail: info@a2i.co.uk

3. Producing information for people with Learning Disabilities and/or Learning Difficulties

- People with learning difficulties or literacy skills gaps need to receive carefully designed and targeted information. Thought must be given to the style of presentation and the media used. General rules for supplying information include:
 - Keep it short
 - Be clear in your own mind what you want to say and why
 - List the important things
 - Use short, clearly separated chunks of information
 - Supplement information using:
 - § Pictures/ diagrams
 - § Symbols
 - § Photographs
 - § Natural /formal signs and gestures
 - § Real objects

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- Write it down in large clear letters
- Give time for people to listen, understand and take in the information
- Be aware of individuals communication needs, and sensory impairments such as vision and hearing
- Be aware of people's preferred method of communication and any communication aids that they may use, for example symbol books, electronic aids
- Remember that carers and advocates can be very useful to advise
- Always check that the information produced really works, as it may not be immediately obvious that a person does not understand it.

Bristol and South Gloucestershire People First

19 Easton Business Centre

Felix Road

Easton

Bristol

BS5 0HE

Telephone: 0117 941 5842

E-mail: admin@bsgpf.org.uk

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4. Producing information on video

- Video is a useful means of communication because visual images make written or spoken words more accessible for Deaf people, for people whose first language is not English and people who have learning difficulties. Videos should include British Sign Language and subtitles.
- It is worth considering the topic and 'shelf life' of the information, as producing a video made by professional companies can be expensive. But if the topic is of general interest and could be relevant for a long period of time it may be appropriate to commission a professional company to produce the video.
- The British deaf Association provides a service in producing information in video format.

British Deaf Association – Sign Community

E-mail: helpline@signcommunity.org.uk

Website: www.signcommunity.org.uk

5. Translating information into different written languages

- To help reduce the time and cost of reproducing written information into alternative languages please consider the following guidelines:
- Supply the document on a computer disk in a Word document avoiding jargon, graphics, tables, italics, underline and capitals unless

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they are necessary. Keep the information to a minimum and keep it simple and basic. Contact one of the services listed below.

- The widest range of online translated information is available on the Multikulti website which aims to support citizenship through the delivery of culturally appropriate and accurately translated information in the following areas of welfare law: debt, employment, health, housing, immigration and welfare benefits. For more information visit www.multikulti.org.uk.
- Further guidance and translation services can be accessed through the following organisations:

Tapestry Translation Service

Corporate Personnel Services

Gloucester City Council

Herbert Warehouse

The Docks

Gloucester

GL1 2EQ

Telephone: 01452 396909

E-mail: tapestry@gloucester.gov.uk

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Multilingua

Devon Community Interpreting Agency

St Sidwell's Centre

Sidwell Street

Exeter

EX4 6NN

Telephone: 07951948038

E-mail: devonci@uk2.net

6. Accessing sign language interpreters (including BSL)

- British Sign Language is the most commonly used language of the Deaf community in Britain; it is recognised as a language in its own right, with its own structure and grammatical rules.
- BSL interpreters are trained to interpret spoken English into BSL.
- If you require a BSL interpreter for over two hours you will need to book two as the maximum permitted time for a BSL translator to work constantly is two hours.
- Sign language interpreting services can also provide advice and support on Lip Speaker interpreters and Deaf blind interpreters.

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Sign Solutions Nation Wide

Telephone: 01527 592110

E-mail: office@signsolutions.uk.com

(Sign Solutions are a national organisation which uses local interpreters).

REMARK!

13 – 14 Greenwich Quay

Clarence Road

Greenwich

London

SE8 3EY

Telephone: 020 86910210

E-mail: info@remark.uk.com

RNID

The RNID have produced a guide for employers and service providers in working with BSL interpreters 'A quick Reference Guide' can be found at:

http://www.rnid.org.uk/virtualcontent/86074/1242_dda_quic_kref_a5.pdf