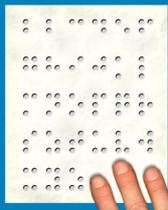
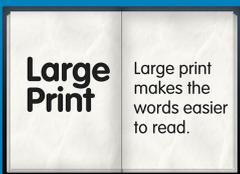


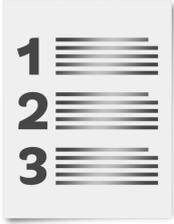


Accessible Communications Policy. How we communicate with people in a way they can understand. 2020 - 2022



Please contact us if you would like this policy in another format
(for example on CD or MP3)
communications@sefton.gov.uk.

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When we say **we** in this document, we mean Sefton Council.

Difficult words are in **blue bold** and there is an explanation next to them.



Why do we have this policy?

We want to make sure people who use our services can

- Find the information they need.
- Get information in a way they can understand.
- Get in touch with us easily.



People in Sefton are all different.

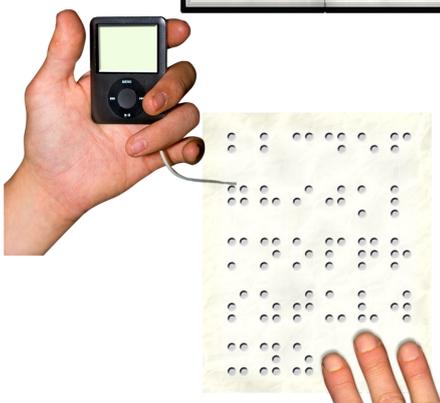
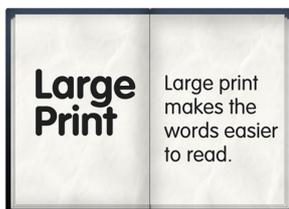
Some people need to get information in a way that they can understand.



This means we need information in different formats.

This could be in

- Easy Read
- Large Print
- Audio - so people can listen to information (like on a CD or MP3)
- Braille - which is used by some people who are visually impaired.





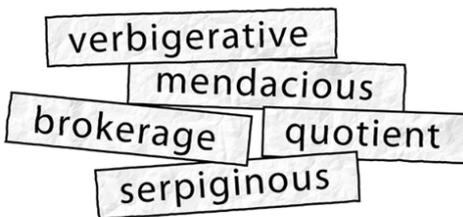
Why do we have this policy ?

Sefton Council wants to make **all** its information easy for everyone to understand.



We do this by

- Writing in plain English and with clear and simple language.
- Getting rid of jargon and big words.
- Getting people involved in making the information for the public so it is done right.



If a person does not understand then they cannot make choices.



This policy says how we are doing and will continue to do this.



The Law

The **Equalities Act 2010** says we have to make **reasonable adjustments** for people with disabilities

A **reasonable adjustment** is a change that has been made to a service so that anyone with a disability can use them like anyone else.



The **Care Act 2014** says

- Local councils must have good information to help people to understand their options and to choose the right care and support.
- The guidance says: councils must give information and advice to everyone who wants it, not just people who have their care and support paid for by the council.





**Accessible Information:
Specification**

The Law

NHS England - Accessible Information Standard 2016

This law tells us to make sure that people have access to information that they can understand and any communication support that they might need.

The Standard tells health and social care services how to make information accessible to the following people

- Patients
- Users of Social Care services
- Their parents and carers

This includes making sure that people get information in different formats if they need it.

The Accessible Information Standard also tells organisations how to support people's communication needs. This could be by offering support from a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter, deafblind manual interpreter or an advocate.



What we are doing



- We use clear language in all our publications and on our website.
- We will follow the rules to make sure our website can be used by those who choose to use it.
- We tell people on social media and in our buildings how you can get information in other formats.
- When we **consult** which means ask for peoples ideas about ideas for changes to how we do things. We make sure there are other formats so all people can get involved.
- We regularly attend meeting of groups with different communication needs.
- When we send out important reports we also make them in other formats.
- When we use images of people in our publications and on the website we make sure it represents the diversity of everyone in our communities.

What we are doing



Training

- We will make sure our website is as accessible as possible. We will test how it works with service users and technology and make any changes we can.
- We will use the accessibility tool Recite Me on our website to give people choice in how they see the information.
- We will think about the reasonable adjustments that we can make before you need to ask for them. We will also work with you to find the best way for us to communicate with each other.
- We will tell people about our accessible communications policy, including our staff and services outside the Council.
- We have Accessible Information Advocates to support this way of working throughout the Council.
- We will talk, help and train our staff to produce information in accessible formats.

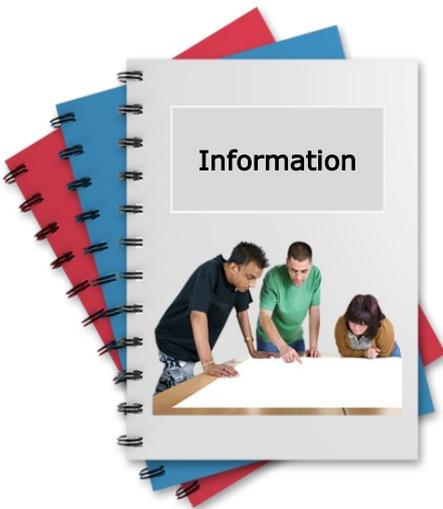
Things we are doing



- We have a group of volunteers who use different ways to communicate. The group makes sure the information we make for the public meets the needs of all people. These are our quality checkers and they are involved in the training to staff.

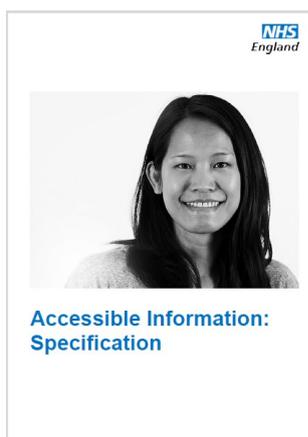


- We tell people how they can get alternative formats on our website.



- We will work with organisations supporting people who need different ways to receive their information.

- We will convert our most used publications into most used alternative formats. Less used information can be changed on request.



- We will follow the recommendations of the Accessible Information Standard for people who use Adult Social Care service.



How we make decisions about producing accessible versions of information.

Sefton Council Information

Sefton Council has lots of different jobs to do. Things like

- Bin collections
- Benefit advice
- Libraries
- Sports and leisure
- Parking, roads and travel
- Planning and building control
- Schools and learning
- Environmental protection
- Public Health
- Children's and Adult social care
- **Councillors** - A councillor is someone you and people in your area vote for. They work for your local council. They make big decisions about your area.

Sefton Council 



People's lives involve some if not all of these things.

The information we give to people is important. We want to make sure that as many people are able to understand it. We are working to make **all** our information easier to understand.

The Accessible Information Standard covers Adult Social Care.

It says that we need to



1. **Ask** people if they have any information or communication needs, and find out how to meet their needs.



2. **Record** those needs in a set way.



3. **Highlight** a person's social care file, so it is clear that they have information or communication needs, and clearly explain how those needs should be met.



4. **Share** information about a person's communication needs with NHS and adult social care providers, when they have given consent or permission.



5. **Meet the need** - make sure that people get information in an accessible way and communication support if they need it.



The Council's Adult Social Care team will do as the Accessible Information Standard asks.

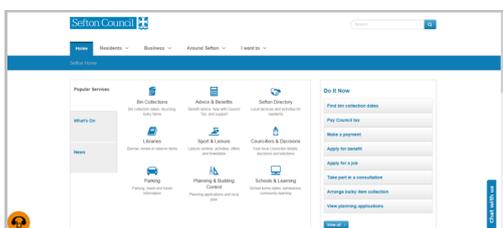
But we - the Council will also go further.

We will work to make all Sefton Council public information easier to understand.

It will take longer for all the older information to be changed.

All new information will be made in a way that more people can understand.

We will make sure that we put as much information onto the Council's website in an easy to understand way.



Recite Me works on the Council's website to give information in many different ways. It can -



I am Recite Me
....I read out
any words
from the
website...and
so much more!

- Read webpages out loud including in different languages
- Change the font, colour, size and contrast of the website
- Add a ruler to keep your place on the page
- Display just the information and no images

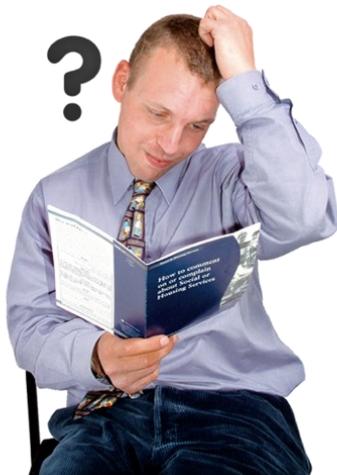
Helping people to tell us what they think



A group of experts by experience are helping to guide us on how we can make information accessible in the best way. They are called the Improving Information Group.



The group are people from Sefton who have different information or communication support needs. These needs are related to or caused by a disability, impairment or sensory loss.



They are working to make easy to understand versions of information that can meet the needs of lots of people. This information can use technology to assist people understand.

They tell us how to make the website easier to use and understand by all people with communication difficulties.



They are part of the training we are developing for all our staff to give practical skills to make information accessible.

Improving information Group's Plan on 2 pages

Improving Information Group Plan 2020 - 2022



What we want to achieve

For the Council to make it easier for people to find and receive good quality information in a way they need it.

What we will do



Make sure all public information is provided in a way that people understand.



Make sure that people who do consultation do it in a way that includes everyone.



Support people who work for Sefton Council services to make information better.



Help to raise awareness of how members of the public can access information and services.

Improving Information Group Plan 2020 - 2022



How will we do it

Have **Accessible Information Advocates** who are Council staff who will be a point of contact and support about how to make information accessible.



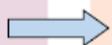
We have Accessible Information Advocate in all parts of the Council.
More people get information in ways they need.

Council staff have access to the **resources** needed to produce a range of types of information.



Staff can use resources to produce different types of information.

Train Accessible Information Advocates and develop **training** for all Council staff.



Training for Accessible Information Advocates has happened.
Accessible Information Training co-produced and available to all council staff.

Group **Membership** to have wider involvement from people with different communication needs.



Members of the group have a full range of experience and share this with others

Support people who are carrying out **consultations and feedback** to include everyone including people who have information or communication needs relating to a disability, impairment or sensory loss.



Consultation and feedback plans to include actions to provide information in the way needed and look at how to involve all people.