

Alerting Devices

Equipment for alerting you in the home such as doorbells, alarm clocks and smoke alarms have a range of features to provide alerts without completely relying on sound.

The main alternatives to standard sound alerts are:

- Vibration
- Flashing lights
- Extra loud sounds

Common devices in the home that can use alternative alerts are:

- Doorbells
- Smoke alarms
- Baby monitors
- Alarm clocks

For residents of York, the Yorsensory Team can potentially issue equipment following a Sensory Impairment Assessment to support with responding to important alerts.

Let's look at some common examples around the home that people may require alternatives in place of sound to respond to alerts...

Answering the door

Responding to visitors at the door can be difficult for many people, even when wearing hearing aids. Doorbells for people with a hearing impairment are available and are simple to install and use. The doorbells commonly use an amplified sound as well as flashing lights to provide an alert. The receiver with a light for the doorbell is not fixed so it can be moved around the home or placed somewhere that you are likely to see it flash, such as a table or mantelpiece. The portable doorbells usually have between a 100-150 metre range, which for many people will mean they can even take the doorbell into the garden. For

some, portable flashing doorbells may not be the most appropriate option. An alternative alert for the doorbell is a vibrating pager system. The vibrating pager systems have a receiver, usually either a pager that can be clipped to your person or a receiver worn on the wrist, which will vibrate when a visitor presses the doorbell.



Fire alarms

A potentially lifesaving item that can be missed, is your smoke detector. Smoke alarms for people with a hearing impairment most commonly rely on vibrating alerts rather than sound or lights. Many people with a hearing impairment can hear the smoke alarm when they wear their hearing aids. Wearing hearing aids can mean that the smoke alarm can be heard during the day however when they are taken out at night some people are unable to hear an alarm sound if there was a fire. Fortunately, there is a solution: a vibrating pad that is placed underneath the pillow.

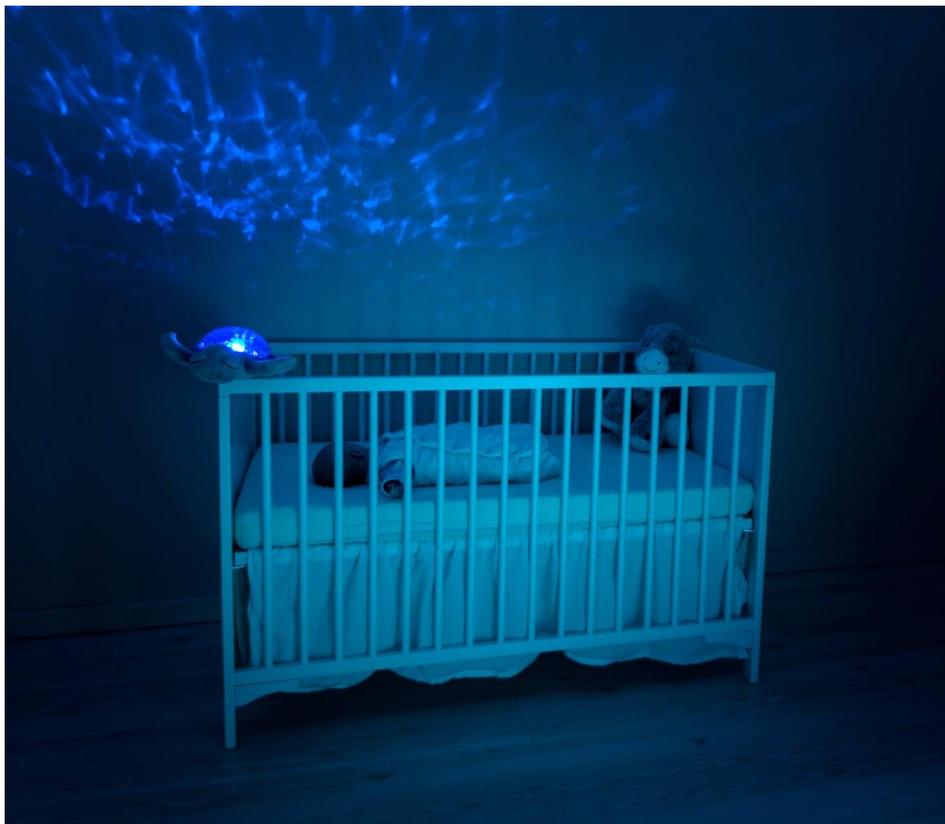
Other people may have a hearing impairment that means they are unable to hear the smoke alarm during the day or during the night. There are personal vibrating pager systems that will provide an alert both during the day and during the night for a reliable method of being alerted to a fire.

If you are unsure whether the smoke alarm in your home is adequate for your hearing impairment, you can contact your local fire service. If you live within York or North Yorkshire, North Yorkshire Fire Service can be contacted on 01609 780150.



Baby monitors

For parents and carers with a hearing impairment traditional baby monitors can be ineffective for providing an alert should a child wake during the night. There are baby monitors that use a vibrating pad under your pillow, instead of sound to provide the alert. Some of the baby monitors can be standalone products that come with a visual monitor whereas others can be part of wider alert systems that can incorporate several other alerts.



Alarm clocks

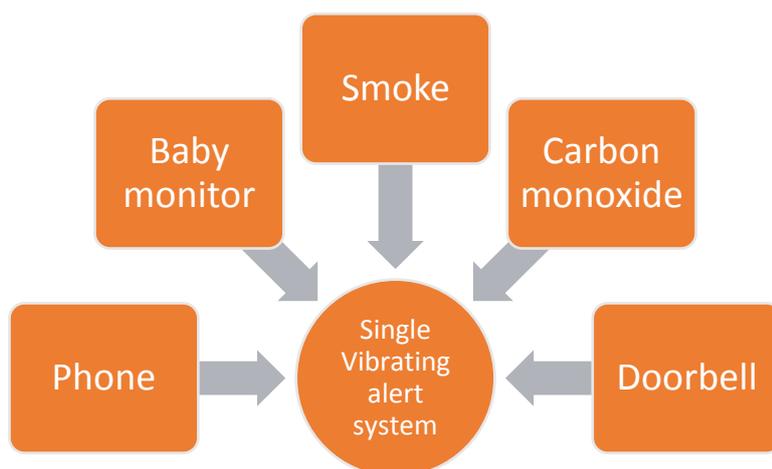
Being alerted to an alarm to wake in the morning can be tricky for many people. Alarm clocks for people with a hearing impairment rely on a combination of 3 alerts: vibration, extra volume and light. Some alarms can be a single unit that sits beneath the pillow to simply vibrate whereas others will be a more standard clock with either an analogue or digital clock face. The devices with a clockface will often flash however the main alert comes from the vibrating pad and extra loud alarm sound. These clocks are often highly adjustable – being able to change the vibration, lights and loudness of the alarm sound.

A lot of people use their mobile phones as an alarm clock. There are devices available that can work with mobile phones to provide additional vibration under the pillow to wake up.



Alert systems

There are devices available that can link together to provide alerts for everything listed above by using a vibrating pager or wrist receiver. The systems can be very useful for people with a significant hearing impairment however they are often expensive in comparison to many of the individual products. It is often the case that each alert can be added separately so can be purchased at different times.



If you would like further information, support and advice about any of the items mentioned here or for further information about requesting a Sensory Impairment Assessment please contact the Yorsensory Team on 01904 202292, Text 0758050346 or email enquiry@yorsensory.org.uk