

## Introduction to accessibility at Nationwide

At Nationwide, we believe in providing fairer, inclusive and more accessible banking. We recognise that not everyone will transact or communicate in the same way, which is why we endeavour to offer a range of services to suit all our customers' needs – including those who are deaf or disabled.

For deaf and hard of hearing customers, these include things like live chat in our app, Relay UK, face-to-face interpreters, video relay services (VRS) via SignVideo – and most recently, Signly, which offers the chance to turn on British Sign Language (BSL) translation on [our website](#).

In this case study, we'll go into a bit more detail about another of our new services, Experian Support Hub, and tell you about the ways you can personalise your service with Nationwide, to help making banking easier.

## Support Needs

Unlike the services listed above, which are available on-demand (live chat, SignVideo, Signly) or by request (face-to-face interpretation), we also offer customers the chance to record certain needs and preferences, to help make interactions with our colleagues even more accessible – these are generally called 'support needs'.

Support need options which might be useful for deaf or hard of hearing people include;

- I lip read, please face me when speaking.
- I need to use the hearing loop.
- I need to use text relay.
- I need to use the video relay service.
- Please arrange for an interpreter (BSL/manual deafblind).
- I will bring my own BSL interpreter with me.
- Please speak clearly and slowly.

Offering the chance to record support needs, aims to help avoid the need for customers to repeat their needs in every interaction with us.

Customers can add Support Needs flags when speaking to a Nationwide colleague on the phone or in branch.

We know that for some people, communicating support needs can be difficult and may mean having several conversations with each provider to get the right support. [Experian Support Hub](#) has been developed alongside vulnerability and disability experts, community members and customers to improve this process. The Support Hub is a simpler way for customers to digitally record their support needs with multiple firms.

A good way for firms to start to understand what they should consider offering is referring to the open-source resource [WhatWeNeed.Support](#), which was developed in parallel to the Support Hub by an independent body. Using industry-wide resources like this helps firms to be more consistent in their offering, and the language they use, which makes it easier for customers.

## Always improving

We know that high tech isn't for everyone, which is why in 2023 we launched a pilot for a low tech way to support in-branch communications for the estimated one in five people in the UK who struggle to communicate verbally. The [Speak Easy](#) tool is a set of printed cards, describing a range of key banking needs and services, to help support easier communication between customers and our branch colleagues.