



Disability Rights UK (DRUK) – News Roundup – May 2023

We work with our members to influence national policy on independent living, benefits,

education, employment, transport, human rights and other issues – shaping policy through direct experience and expertise.

We also work with our local individual and organisation members to empower and to influence local policy and services.

To contact Disability Rights UK (DR UK) see

www.disabilityrightsuk.org/contact-us

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Huge Rise In Extra Costs For Disabled Households

Scope research has found that Disabled households face an average extra cost of £975 per month. These extra costs are the additional amount of money a Disabled household would need to have the same standard of living as a non-disabled household. Read more [on the Scope report](#) story on our website.

Thousands Of Disabled People Disenfranchised By Voter ID

It's been reported that only 85,000 people have applied for a free voter ID certificate in time for the May Local Elections, despite the Electoral Commission's estimate that over 2 million voters in the UK don't have access to photo ID. Read [the full voter ID story](#) on our website.

CAA To Review The Accessibility Of The Top 20 Airlines

A review by the Civil Aviation Authority has shown the depth of contempt within the airline industry for Disabled passengers. Read [the full CAA story](#) on our website.

Disabled People Take Over Vogue

The May edition of Vogue has put Disabled people front and centre, with five distinct covers featuring Selma Blair, Aaron Rose Philip, Ellie Goldstein, Justina Miles, and Sinead Burke who all identify as Disabled. Read [the full Vogue story](#) on our website.

Disability Rights UK Attends Climate Change Event In London

Last week DR UK attended the Extinction Rebellion event in London called the Big one. The four-day event that took place in London was attended by over 100,000 people who descended on Parliament square to talk, march, & to demand change when it comes to policy and action on climate change. Read more on [the Climate event story](#) on our website.

Lack Of Trust In The Benefit Health Assessment System

The health assessments system to access benefits for those who cannot work or face extra costs due to disability or ill health continues to let down those who rely on it, a new Work and Pensions Committee report finds. Learn more about [the Committee's inquiry](#) on the DR UK website.

£19 billion of benefits support goes unclaimed each year

A new research report by Policy and Practice estimates that the total amount of unclaimed income-related benefits and social tariffs is now around £19 billion a year. Read more about [this research report](#) on the DR UK website.

Child Disability Payment resource launched

The Scottish government is now encouraging Disabled people to find out if they are eligible for the disability benefits run by the Scottish government. These include child disability payment and adult disability payment. Read the full [resource on child disability payment](#) on our website.

Children's Residential Care Provider To Close 28 Homes

This week the fourth largest provider of looked-after children's care homes in the UK, Outcomes First, will be closing 28 residencies – currently housing around 60 Disabled children. Read the full [children's care homes story](#) on our website.

Yorkshire Adult Neurodiversity Diagnoses Removed

North Yorkshire and York Health and Care Partnership is removing access to autism and ADHD assessment and diagnoses for adults. Read the [full Care Partnership story](#) on our website.

DR UK Oppose Illegal Migration Bill

Disability Rights UK has joined 175 civil society organisations calling on the Government to withdraw the Illegal Migration Bill. [A petition](#) to withdraw the Illegal Migration Bill can be found on Liberty's website. For the full [joint statement on the illegal migration bill](#), read the story on our website.

New Dis Life Column: 'Voter ID Is A Major Barrier For Some Disabled People'

Read the words of our Communications Manager, Anna Morell, in the Daily Mirror highlighting the inaccessibility of voter ID at the polling stations. [The article can be found on the Daily Mirror's website here.](#)

Disabled-Led Commission In Lewisham Demands Local Power

After a three-year inquiry into the barriers Disabled people face, Lewisham Disabled People's Commission (LDPC) has called for changes so that Disabled people are at the centre of local decision-making. Read more about [LDPC's inquiry demands](#) on our website.

Renters Reform Bill Finally Published

After years of campaigning by organisations like Acorn and London Renters Union, the Government is set to introduce landmark reforms to "deliver [a] fairer Private Rented Sector for tenants and landlords". Read [more about the Bill and our response on our website here.](#)

1 In 14 People Are Now On Long-Term Sick – A Record High

Over two and a half million people are unemployed due to being long-term sick or Disabled, according to the latest data from the Office for National Statistics. Take a [look into our response to these numbers on our website](#) here.

Government Policies On Rail Travel Set To Seriously Disadvantage Disabled People

Disability Rights UK wrote to Mark Harper, Secretary of State for Transport, raising our deep concerns about the major impact of government cuts on Disabled rail passengers. [For more information and to see Mark Harper's response](#), read the story on our website.

The EHRC Outlines Nine Principles for Social Care Equality

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has published a new report on equality and human rights in social care, setting out nine principles for social care equality. For a [breakdown of the report's highlights, visit our website](#) page here.

Support For Disabled Councillors And Candidates

The Local Government Association (LGA) is offering support to Disabled councillors and candidates, in an effort to increase representation of Disabled people in local politics. Disability Rights UK is proud to have partnered with the LGA in this effort, offering a bespoke leadership programme for Disabled councillors. Learn [more about the LGA's support of Disabled councillors](#) here.

Calls Grow For Changes To The Energy Bill On Prepayment Meters

Campaigners are fighting to ban the forced transfer of homes onto prepayment meters. The Government's current bill makes no provision for such a ban. Read [more about the Bill and the campaigning effort against prepayment meters](#) here.

Get Involved

'Memories' Supports Disability Rights UK

Support For Rights On Flights Continues

Local Housing Allowance Legal Challenge

Share Your Local Election Experience

Entry Is Now Open For The Annual Metro Athletics Open

Preventable Harm Project

Take Part In The Airline Accessibility Consultation

Government Invites Views On Tackling Major Conditions

My Info My Way Campaign by RNIB

Scrap VAT on Audiobooks

'Memories' Storms The Indie Charts And Supports Disability Rights UK

Disability Rights UK is honoured to have been chosen by talented young singer/songwriter Alice Randall as the charity to receive royalties from her newly released song, Memories. You can [listen to Memories on Bandcamp](#) and also buy a high-quality download with all the proceeds going to Disability Rights UK.

Support For Rights On Flights Continues

Ruby Taylor, with support from Kerry Pollard, released a statement backing the Rights on Flights campaign. Read their full statement, and Kamran Mallick's reponse, on the [Milestone Trust website](#).

Local Housing Allowance Legal Challenge

[Mental health charity Mind](#) is considering a potential legal challenge in relation to Local Housing Allowance (LHA). They are looking for a claimant who has been affected by the LHA within the last three months, where their Housing Benefit or Universal Credit housing element is not enough to cover their housing costs, and they face difficulties moving to somewhere cheaper due to their circumstances.

This will particularly be the case where a child has a mental health condition or is neurodiverse. If you are supporting someone in these circumstances who you think may want to bring a legal challenge against the DWP, please email the Mind legal team at legalunit@mind.org.uk

Share Your Local Election Experience

The Electoral Commission is collecting evidence on the impact that voter ID had on voters. If you are an individual with personal feedback, please fill out the [voter survey](#). If you are a service

provider, and want to give feedback on behalf of those you support – please complete the [charity survey](#). The deadline for both surveys is the 16th June. If you need downloadable copies of the survey or have other questions, please email access@electoralcommission.org.uk

My Vote My Voice is also undertaking a survey to understand more about the voting experience of those with learning disabilities, autistic people and people who have an acquired brain injury. Complete the [My Vote My Voice survey](#) on their website.

Entry Is Now Open For The Annual Metro Athletics Open

The athletics event is the perfect opportunity for blind and part-sighted people to experience what it's like to take part in a professionally organised athletics event.

Run in accordance with UK Athletics and International Blind Sports Association's rules by a team of qualified officials, the event is a great day out for families and many new friendships are forged. [Learn more about the event on the website page here.](#)

Preventable Harm Project

Mo Stewart Fellow, Centre for Welfare Reform Research Lead explains:

“The [Preventable Harm Project](#) was created on behalf of the chronically ill and disabled community to alert them to various social policies being adopted by successive administrations which were destined to cause preventable harm to those in greatest need.

The planned removal of the WCA will prevent more people accessing the social security needed for financial survival as more restrictions are adopted.”

You can find more information on the [Preventable Harm Project website](#).

Take Part In The Airline Accessibility Consultation

The UK Civil Aviation Authority has launched a consultation asking for views how to improve passenger accessibility on airlines.

It will be ranking the performance of airlines based on their service for disabled and less mobile passengers, from booking flight

tickets and assistance at the airport, through to their onboard experience and complaints handling.

The consultation is running until 21 July 2023. [It can be found on our right our rights on flights page.](#)

Government Invites Views On Tackling Major Conditions

The Government are seeking your views and ideas on how to prevent, diagnose, treat and manage the 6 major groups of health conditions that most affect the population in England. These are: cancers, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory diseases, dementia, mental ill health and musculoskeletal disorders,

The views and ideas gathered will inform the priorities and actions in the major conditions strategy. [Visit this website page to take part in the open consultation.](#)

My Info My Way Campaign by RNIB

Did you know? If you are blind or partially sighted, you have a legal right to health and social care information in a format that you can read and understand. But 77 per cent of people with accessible information needs have reported rarely – or never – receiving this information in alternative formats.

RNIB has launched the #MyInfoMyWay campaign, calling for NHS and social care services to make accessible information a reality, and we want to empower blind and partially sighted people to speak up for this vital right.

We've created a new guide for blind and partially sighted people, explaining how to request accessible information from NHS and social care services, and what to do if you don't receive it.

[Find out in this link about the campaign, and how to request your information in your required format.](#)

Scrap VAT on Audiobooks

Former Minister for Disabled People and MP for Hemel Hempstead, Sir Mike Penning, has secured a backbench debate in Parliament on VAT on audiobooks.

Whilst the Government recognises the importance of reading and education with zero-rate VAT on printed books and e-books, it does not extend this measure to audiobooks. For many people with sight loss, visual impairment, dyslexia or disabilities that make holding a book physically impossible, audiobooks offer a lifeline to

the world of education, training and literature. Sir Mike is calling for the zero-rate VAT status to be extended to audiobooks.

The more MPs who attend and speak in this debate, the better. The debate will take place at 3pm on Thursday 15 June in Westminster Hall. Please contact your MP and ask them to support this debate. [You can find out how to contact your MP on the Find Your MP website here.](#)