

Spelthorne Committee Access Now



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1992 – 2023



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Baby With Swollen Legs And Feet Now Walking

<https://www.kentonline.co.uk/dover/news/they-said-my-baby-would-never-walk-but-look-at-him-now-290175/>

One-year-old Brodie Arbon-Davis, from Dover, was born with the PIK3CA mutation – leaving him with birth defects, including a blood vessel malformation on the bottom half of his body, as well as cysts on his kidneys and thickened bone marrow. This has caused his legs to permanently swell. Scans show he technically only has two toes on each foot.

Doctors warned his mum, Holly-Louise Mackie, 26, that the tot would never walk unaided or wear shoes. But despite the odds, Brodie has been able to pull himself up and toddle along while holding on to a walker and furniture.

Full-time mum Holly-Louise says her son is “smiley and thriving”, and loves to make people laugh, adding: “Brodie was born this way and it’s a blessing in disguise. “He can’t do the stuff other kids are doing but he’s thriving anyway. He’s a strong little fighter.

Brodie was born nine weeks prematurely, weighing 5lbs 4oz, on November 26, 2021. Nothing concerning had been flagged during scans while she was pregnant. She and her partner, Liam Arbon-Davis, 27, a builder, believed Brodie's premature birth would just make him “short”. But as soon as Brodie was delivered, his parents could see his legs were ridiculously swollen and purple when he was born. At first, I thought it was a port wine stain birthmark. “He had bloods, and they did ultrasounds on his kidneys and a skin biopsy. That was when they found the mutation.

“The PIK3CA mutation is basically a malformation in the blood vessels affecting the lower half of his body. “It wasn’t hereditary – neither myself or my partner carried it. It’s what they call a mosaic anomaly – just a freak accident, basically. “It was heart-wrenching – but I loved him to pieces as soon as I first saw him. “His bone quality is very low. He’ll never be able to walk unaided.”

Brodie was allowed home from the NICU on December 23, 2021. But he has regular blood tests in case more of his organs are affected by the mutation - and he has constant access to a ward in case he’s ever ill or in pain. He experiences the most pain during the night when, particularly after a long day, his legs can feel “achey”.

His birth defects mean he’ll never be able to wear shoes and he currently needs to wear adult-sized socks at just one-year-old.

Despite his conditions, Brodie is a “happy little boy”. Holly-Louise says he loves playing with his younger brother, 10-month-old Cade, and he has a knack for making his family members laugh. “He’s just an all-round happy little boy,” she added.

“Brodie has a really cute little bond with Cade. He strokes his

brother's head, sometimes even pretends to feed him." Cade was born less than a year after Brodie, on September 20, 2022, weighing 4lbs 11oz. He was six weeks premature and born with just one kidney.

Even though both her sons were born with severe medical issues just 10 months apart, Holly-Louise and Liam have managed to stay positive. She said: "I just crack on with it. I've had two traumatic births, but I don't focus much on that. "I get through it with laughter. "We just try and turn the negatives into positives."



Grandmother With Stoma' Humiliated By Airport Staff

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/gran-who-beat-cancer-humiliated-30506345>

Colette McAreevey, was travelling home to Belfast after visiting her daughter and two grandchildren in Manchester when she says she was subjected to "intimidating" treatment. When she expressed her upset, Colette claims staff told her "it is what it is" - while Manchester Airport insisted correct procedures were followed but said they would 'welcome feedback' from Colette, reports the Manchester Evening News (M.E.N).

Colette said: "I went through the x-ray machine and then was told to go over to a woman who would pat me down, which was fine. I told her I have a stoma and you can probably feel it. She then told me to follow her."

The 75-year-old said she asked where she was being taken multiple times but says she was simply told staff needed to search her due to her stoma. Colette, who has had the stoma since December 2021 after multiple operations for bladder cancer, said "Although I have had the stoma for a couple of years, I know that I haven't accepted it 100 per cent," she added.

She told the M.E.N she was led to a private room where two other security staff told her they 'had' to search her and 'it is what it is' - despite the fact Colette had never had a problem at any other airport.

Colette was then forced to drop her trousers so the security officers could see her stoma and rub her hand across it while a machine scanned her hands. She said there was 'no empathy' in the way she was treated, which she described as 'awful'.

Manchester Airport said the full-body scanner only highlighted abnormalities, so it is necessary for them to then search the area more thoroughly. They added previous feedback from travellers showed they preferred to touch their stoma themselves, rather than have someone else touch it.

But Colette said the experience has 'put her off flying' and said she wants Manchester Airport to make sure nobody goes through

the same as her in the future.

A spokesperson for Manchester Airport said: “The safety of our passengers and staff is of paramount importance and our security processes must be applied consistently. We’ve looked into the incident in question and are satisfied the process was carried out in line with statutory security regulations, in a private area, with a chaperone. “Our security colleagues receive training on how to conduct any necessary searches privately, discreetly, and compassionately. We are, however, sorry to hear this passenger found her experience distressing and would welcome any feedback from her on how she feels the process could be improved.”



Green Man Crossing Times Could Be Extended

[Why the green man at UK crossings is set to be lit for 'extra seconds' longer \(yahoo.com\)](#)

The green man at road crossings in the UK is set to be lit up for "extra seconds" longer as the population becomes “slower” and “less fit.” The light which allows people to cross the roads safely will be extended by 20% of its original crossing time to “encourage walking and make journeys safer.”

“Under Department for Transport (DfT) guidelines, pedestrians have 6.1 seconds to cross over both lanes of a normal road at a walking pace of 1.2 metres per second, but a new recommendation will allow 7.3 seconds to cross at a speed of 1m per second,” reports The Sunday Times.

It comes as a change to the official guidelines has been announced by Active Travel England (ATE), an executive agency of the Department for Transport (DfT) that has drawn up the plans. Brian Deegan, director of inspections at ATE, said: “A lot of infrastructure is aimed at the average person but the number of people excluded by that is growing, so we have to tackle it.

“If we don’t give people enough time, they are going to feel they can’t cross the road and that will leave some people feeling that they can’t leave their own house if they don’t have a car. “We are going to have to meet people where they are. That means local authorities might need to think about extending crossing time

According to Deegan, the present guidelines were devised in the early 1950s, at a time when Britain was “adapting to the rapid rise in motor traffic, often at the expense of pedestrians and cyclists.” The changes to how long the green man will stay lit up will be put out to consultation in September this year but are already being used on a pilot basis.



Thousands of Over-50s Could Have Undiagnosed ADHD

<https://inews.co.uk/news/health/adhd-undiagnosed-over-50s-thousands-living-2506910>

Tens of thousands of Britons over the age of 50 could be living with undiagnosed ADHD making their lives much harder than it needs to be. Scientists are investigating a gulf in diagnosis rates between older and younger adults that can only be partially explained by symptoms waning with age.

Just 0.024 per cent of men and women over the age of 50 in the UK have a diagnosis for attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, according to a new study, published in the journal *BJPsych Open*. That's one in 4,000 people in that age group, with men and women diagnosed at almost the same rate. By contrast, about one in 70 men and one in 370 women aged 18 to 29 have a diagnosis. Childhood diagnosis is even more common, according to the research, by University College London (UCL).

Much of the disparity is due to ADHD declining with age, the researchers say. They point to separate research suggesting that, in nearly two thirds of cases, people "grow out" of ADHD between the ages of 18 and 54. But a large proportion still remains unexplained. "The question we're asking is 'why are ADHD diagnoses much less common in over-50s?'," Doug McKechnie, one of the UCL researchers, said. "ADHD symptoms do improve with age but studies suggest the proportion of adults who 'grow out' of ADHD with age is not big enough to explain this drop."

It's quite possible that there are thousands, and potentially even tens of thousands, of people over 50 in the UK with undiagnosed ADHD. But precise figures are very difficult to conclude because it requires using data from other studies, involving different groups of people, from his research.

Chdel Cooke a 57 year-old counsellor living in Carmarthenshire in south west Wales, was not diagnosed with ADHD until she was 55. "I really, really wish I had been diagnosed earlier. But it wasn't something that was on people's radars when I was at school," she says. "I was considered to be awkward and difficult or demanding and noisy. So I was labelled as being loud, full of myself and attention seeking – whereas what I was actually doing was just being exuberant and full of excitement about the ideas that were going through my head and wanting to share them with people, but not really knowing how to do it because I was a kid that didn't yet have the skills to be able to mask enough to fit in with society.

"I had to learn a lot of masking skills to be able to fit in. But the cost to your energy levels and your sense of self of masking, of constantly having to be not you but a version that's acceptable to somebody else, that's really hard, it's a very eroding thing. That sense that who you are is not good enough, is not right, doesn't fit.

That's a very lonely place to grow up.

Symptoms of ADHD include impulsiveness, disorganisation, poor time management skills, difficulty focusing and restlessness.

Dr Tony Lloyd, the 61-year old chief executive of the ADHD Foundation said: "The UCL study's great – we need more like this. "ADHD Diagnoses have jumped up in past five or ten years, because of better education and because there is more balanced information out there – and so less of a stigma attached to it than there used to be."

"The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence has clear guidelines on ADHD diagnosis and treatment, and we are also increasing investment into mental health services by at least £2.3bn a year by 2024.



Dame Judi Dench Admits 'I Can't See On A Film Set Anymore' <https://www.express.co.uk/celebrity-news/1796714/Judi-Dench-health-update-eyesight-cant-see-films>

Dame Judi Dench was diagnosed with age-related macular degeneration back in 2012, and the Skyfall star's sight has now deteriorated so much that she has revealed the struggles she now faces while making movies,

The 88-year-old star, who is known the world over for her role as M in James Bond, has admitted that being so dependent on those around her has been a "terrible shock to the system". "I can't see to read... but, you know, you just deal with it... It's difficult for me if I have any length of a part. I haven't yet found a way." She continued: "I have so many friends who will teach me the script, but I have a photographic memory."

Research published in New Scientist has suggested that the average person finds it easier to remember what they see than what they hear.

Judi's ability to use that technique, instead of verbal recall, has been severely impacted by her deteriorating sight and the condition, which she's had for over a decade, has also forced her to give up driving. She joked previously: "I [now] have to learn through repetition, and I just hope that people won't notice too much if all the lines are completely hopeless!"

According to the NHS, age-related macular degeneration doesn't usually cause total blindness, but it can make simple tasks, such as recognising faces, extremely difficult. Judi found this out the hard way in an embarrassing encounter when she yelled a playful insult, mistakenly believing a random passerby was her pal Alistair McGowan. "I was driving along and saw who I thought was Alistair and I shouted 'w***er'... and it was a total stranger!"

In one dark restaurant last year, she had to ask her partner, David Mills, to cut her food up for her and hand it to her on a fork. She has begun to take memory supplements to give her a boost with learning lines.

Despite the issues, she's made it clear she has no plans to retire just yet, and courageously carried on with a planned Royal Shakespeare Performance attendance this month in front of King Charles. She was among the special guests invited by the Royal Family, which also included Vanessa Redgrave and Helena Bonham Carter.



Kew Gardens Walking Tours for People Living with Dementia, Sight or Hearing Loss (incl. BSL)

Kew have started their walks around the beautiful setting of Kew Gardens that are designed to be accessible for people living with dementia, sight or hearing loss and for Community Well Being.

All walks start from Victoria Gate and last around 60 minutes. The walks are led by their volunteer walk leaders. Support workers, friends or family are very welcome and will also receive free entry to the Gardens. Please Check with Kew for any changes to the schedules

Forthcoming BSL Tour Dates

<https://www.kew.org/kew-gardens/whats-on/monthly-british-sign-language-tours>

Sunday 10 September 2023 11am to 12pm

Forthcoming Dementia Friendly Tour Dates

<https://www.kew.org/kew-gardens/whats-on/health-walks-for-people-living-with-dementia>

Wednesday 13 September 2023 11am to 12pm

Forthcoming Sensory Tour Dates

<https://www.kew.org/kew-gardens/whats-on/sensory-guided-walking-tours-for-visitors-with-sight-loss-and-their-carers>

Sunday 10 September 2023 2-3pm

Walking tours have a limit to the number people who can participate for any of their Events and Walking Tours so it is essential that you register in advance for ALL walks and events at Kew. Email discovery@kew.org or Telephone 07341 114533.



Boy Born Without Arm Can Now Fish With His Dad

<https://metro.co.uk/2023/07/30/boy-7-born-without-arm-can-now-fish-with-his-dad-using-bionic-limb-19216324/>

Alex Sparkes spent birthdays 'wishing his arm would grow', only to be left heartbroken when he was told it wasn't possible. But the youngster has been gifted a 'life-changing' prosthetic arm by 'Britain's kindest plumber'

James Anderson, 55, who was touched by Alex's moving tale.

Since receiving his Black Panther-themed arm, Alex has been able to put toothpaste on his toothbrush for the first time and will learn how to tie his shoelaces. And Alex is ecstatic to have finally fulfilled a lifelong dream of holding a rod for the first time during a fishing trip with his dad Robin Sparkes, 31.

Teaching assistant Robin said: 'With his new hero arm, he's a lot more independent, I don't have to be there by his side all the time with the fishing rod or by the bankside. 'I had to constantly be there whenever he handled the rod, especially if he had a decent-sized fish on, just in case the weight pulled on his right arm. 'But now I can take a bit of a step back and watch over his shoulder as he's fishing rather than having to constantly having to manage him with it. 'We're realising what he couldn't do before, rather than what he can do now.

Alex said his arm is 'amazing', adding: 'I can now pick up stuff. I like that I can hold the rod. I feel happy when I'm fishing, I've got two hands and I can reel the rod.'

Mum Dionne, 33, said she'd had a normal pregnancy and her scans came back clear. But she was shocked when Alex was born without a full set of limbs after a 20-hour labour. Doctors later looked into the reason for Alex's missing appendage and decided that it was due to a 'sporadic event', which had occurred by chance.

Crushingly, Dionne said young kids were 'scared' of him when he first went to school after spotting his single arm. And she revealed his birthday wish one year was for the missing arm to re-appear. He'd been on a list of patients due to have an NHS prosthetic arm before the pandemic, but three years later, he was still waiting.

Robin and Dionne, from Oswaldtwistle, Lancashire, visited an Open Bionics fair, which makes a robotic arm so advanced it allows wearers to pick up a pin with its fingers. They launched a bid to raise the £12,700 needed to purchase the arm, which they said would be life-changing for Alex. When plumber James Anderson,, who has helped thousands with his charity Delpher, saw the appeal he 'fell in love' with Alex and offered to pay for the arm.

Dionne said: 'I was at work and I got the message and I thought: 'surely that's not going to be true.' 'I couldn't do my job then – I was just so excited. 'Then James told him and he didn't know what was going on but now he's got the arm, every half an hour he's asking me if I can believe he's got his arm. Alex 'had the biggest smile on his face' when we picked up his new bionic arm, she added: 'His eyes lit up, I don't think he knew what to do or what to say. 'He's just enjoying feeling like he has two arms. 'It's also

given him the independence of pouring a drink himself and not needing any help and he can fully get dressed by himself. 'To me, that's him feeling like he's complete.'



Spelthorne Community Centres Opening Extra Day Each Week

Spelthorne Community Centres provide a wide range of activities including yoga, pilates, quizzes, art, bridge, computer classes, singing, bingo, dancing, book club and language classes. Some also offer hairdressing, chiropody and beautician services.

They are great places to have a bite to eat, meet new people or try some activities.

For information about opening hours, costs and your nearest centre, visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/communitycentres , email independentliving@spelthorne.gov.uk or call 01784 446389.

Fordbridge and Greeno Centres have extended their regular opening days to include alternate Saturdays until the end of September 2023.

Members of the Community Centres and non-members over 50 are welcome. Please call the Centre to book a place for lunch by the Wednesday before each date.

Which Community Centre Is Open On Saturdays

Saturday 2 nd September 2023	Greeno Centre, Shepperton
Saturday 9th September 2023	Fordbridge Centre, Ashford
Saturday 16th September 2023	Greeno Centre, Shepperton
Saturday 23rd September 2023	Fordbridge Centre, Ashford
Saturday 30th September 2023	Greeno Centre, Shepperton

Fordbridge Centre: Telephone 01784 243880

Email fordbridgecentre@spelthorne.gov.uk

Greeno Centre: Telephone 01932 246173

Email Greenocentre@spelthorne.gov.uk



North Surrey Sports Association for Disabled People (NSSADP)

has been established by local volunteers to facilitate the provision of sports for disabled people within North Surrey and adjacent areas.

The association will initially focus on Boccia, with coaching for disabled people, training for coaches and arranging some competition. It is intended that the association will extend this principle to other sports, both paralympic or main-stream, facilitating the creation of other clubs aimed at providing sport for disabled people.

Membership is open to both individuals and organisations interested in furthering the association's work. For more information please contact nssadp@gmail.com



Staines Shopmobility

making staines accessible



**Two Rivers (West Car park),
Mustard Mill Road,
STAINES, TW18 4BL.
Telephone 01784 459416**

The service will be available Tuesday to Saturday from 9.30am until 4.15pm, with the last equipment hire time of 3pm.

*All equipment is to be returned by 4.15pm.
The service will be closed on Tuesday 3rd October and Tuesday 10th October.*

stainesshopmo@gmail.com
www.stainesshopmobility.com
www.facebook.com/stainesshopmobility

Membership Charges

Membership is available on a daily or annual basis. Please contact manager for details

Holiday Hire

Wheelchair- Overnight, Weekend, Week, Fortnight - maximum hire period of 6 weeks.

A Cash Deposit Of £50 Is Required.

Scooter - Overnight, Weekend, Week, Fortnight - maximum hire period of 4 weeks.

A Cash Deposit Of £100 Is Required.



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Spelthorne Boccia Club

Boccia is a disability sport that is similar to bowls and petanque. The aim of the game is to propel leather balls, coloured red or blue, close to a white target ball (the jack).

It is played from a seated position and the ball can be moved with players' hands, feet or an assistive device eg a head or hand pointer. Our club is aimed at people aged 16+ with disabilities (young people aged 14+ may join with an adult carer present)

Where - Spelthorne Leisure Centre, Knowle Green, Staines

When - Every Thursday 6pm - 6.55pm

Cost - £3 per week (no need to book, just turn up and join in)

For more information please visit the council's web site
www.spelthorne.gov.uk/boccia



Spelthorne Para Sports Club

Aimed at young people aged 5-25 and their siblings, Spelthorne Para Sports Club provides opportunities to play a wide range of sports as well as offering sport specific coaching for those interested in developing skills.

All sessions are overseen by enthusiastic volunteers although parents/guardians are encouraged to stay on side during the sessions. No need to book - come and try - first session free!

Where - Spelthorne Leisure Centre, Knowle Green, Staines,

Cost - £3 a session (£2 for siblings) payable on the day.

When - 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month 10:15-11:45am (term time)

For more information please visit the council's web site
www.spelthorne.gov.uk/parasportsclub



Shopping Delivery Cancelled By Driver on Day of Delivery

<https://www.getsurrey.co.uk/news/surrey-news/guildford-man-cerebral-palsy-accused-27406588>

A disabled man from Guildford has accused Asda of discrimination after a delivery driver cancelled his order just metres from his home. Daniel Jakus, 25, has cerebral palsy and was waiting patiently for his order at his flat on Epsom Road when he received a call from the delivery driver.

Describing his tone as impatient, Daniel informed the driver he was parked on the wrong street on Warren Road just around the corner following an error. He claims he informed the driver of his actual address and told him to bring the shopping to the door due to his disability.

Daniel then received a text 30 minutes later saying his order had been cancelled. Accusing Asda of discrimination, which the supermarket said there was no evidence of, he said the order was vital as it would supply him for the next two days.

Daniel finds it difficult to walk to the shops due to his cerebral palsy which causes issues with his muscles. After ringing up Asda following the incident on July 17, he says he was denied his request for his shopping to be redelivered, instead accepting an offer for £5 to be put on his account. "I accepted it [the £5 offer] but I don't think the price of discrimination is a fiver. There are issues in the world that get a bigger apology and it's not quite fair

discrimination towards disabled people doesn't get the same treatment.

"You're customer facing, there's every chance you could come across someone with a disability. In general I feel like any business should be aware of this."

Daniel, who works as an IT consultant says he has experienced similar incidents in the past. He says he was once accused of being drunk by one takeaway driver, with his cerebral palsy causing his speech to be slurred, and he says he has been turned away by taxi drivers on nights out who also think he was too intoxicated.

He has called on the supermarket to undertake further training for their staff when interacting with customers who have disabilities. In response to the complaints Asda said could not respond to the discrimination allegations as they had not seen any evidence of this.

A spokesperson added: "We successfully deliver 800 thousand orders every week and we apologise that on this occasion we didn't meet our usual high standards. We are pleased that Mr Jakus has accepted a gesture of goodwill and we look forward to delivering to him in the near future."



Wheelchair User Watched Flight Take Off Without Her <https://www.express.co.uk/travel/articles/1799986/Ryanair-flight-special-assistance-Liverpool-airport>

Joanne Vasey, 38, had arrived at the airport early and followed all the necessary procedures for special assistance. However, she was informed at the last minute that it was "too late" for her to board the plane. Joanne, who relies on a wheelchair for mobility due to a car accident as a child, had booked the special assistance service in advance. She had been told to get to the desk at 5.20am and actually arrived at the desk five minutes early, ready for her Ryanair flight to Dublin, which she had planned as a surprise trip for her nephew's 20th birthday.

Despite making her presence known to airport staff, Joanne was kept waiting inside the terminal until just moments before the plane was scheduled to depart. It was then she was told she could no longer board the flight. According to Joanne, she and her nephew were instructed to go to the gate where someone would assist them. They waited anxiously as they watched other passengers being boarded onto the plane. Finally, an assistant arrived and assured them the plane would wait for them. However, due to delays with the ambulift (a device used to assist wheelchair users onto the aircraft), they were ultimately denied boarding.

We could see the lift going to the plane. (The assistant) was on a

radio and the next minute she said they're not letting you on the plane. because the ambulift was late to the plane, the pilot had refused it."

Joanne said: "If I was able-bodied, this wouldn't have happened. It wasn't our fault we missed the flight - we were there on time. You're conscious of being in a wheelchair, and when something like this happens, it puts you off doing anything. You ask yourself if you would trust them again. I'm annoyed and I'm hurt. "I don't really use public transport. Even when it comes to trains, I won't go on my own because there might not be a guard to help you. You don't like to go places alone in case something happens. But you should be able to travel on your own.

Ryanair, the airline Joanne had booked with, said the incident was "abysmal" and assured Joanne they would work with the airport to prevent such incidents from happening again. "Liverpool Airport have failed to provide special assistance services booked by this passenger for their flight from Liverpool to Dublin (4 Aug) despite Ryanair paying for this service and as a result, this passenger missed their flight.

In response, ABM airport management services, the passenger service provider at Liverpool John Lennon Airport, expressed regret for Joanne's negative experience.

They said: "We understand the importance of the special assistance service we provide passengers at Liverpool Airport. We regret that on this occasion, Ms Vasey's experience did not meet that standard. "As such, our team has made every effort to support and compensate Ms Vasey. This includes rebooking her flight at ABM's expense and organising her special assistance, as well as offering to reimburse the cost of her missed tour. We are grateful to Ms Vasey for her positive feedback on how the team has handled an unfortunate situation and how we can learn from it."



Nothing Good Can Come From Shutting Train Ticket

Offices <https://metro.co.uk/2023/08/09/train-staff-are-invaluable-to-people-like-me-for-this-vital-reason-19236534/> by Erik Matthies who is a Freelance writer. Erik has been partially sighted his whole life and grew up in the U.S., moving to the UK in 2006. He is a Policy Officer for the RNIB, represents the RNIB on the Covid Health Equity Manchester disabled people's sounding board, and is a member of Transport for Greater Manchester's Disability Design Reference Group.

Using my white cane to step safely off the train, I stood to one side patiently to wait. But after several minutes, it became clear the passenger assistance I'd booked wasn't coming.

Registered blind, I took a few embarrassing and increasingly

stressful false starts to get across to the other platform, where I eventually found the ticket office.

I joined the queue there and, when I reached the front, the staff member at the counter said, 'You must be the chap who booked the assistance. I'm sorry I couldn't get over there to help, it's just me here and I had a queue.' he then broke further bad news. 'You shouldn't have come this way at all. If you'd gone straight to Manchester Piccadilly, you'd have four trains an hour to Leeds. Here there's only one. And the next one's just been cancelled. I tried to call Mauldeth Road [starting station] to have them let you know...' As I looked at him in dismay, I explained there were no staff at that station.

It is difficult enough for myself and other blind and partially sighted people to navigate train travel with their help – and without them, it will be almost impossible. Just for this journey, I'd bought my tickets online, which is technically 'accessible' but I hadn't been able to tell I'd inadvertently booked an overly-complicated and unnecessarily lengthy route.

We're twice as likely to be 'digitally excluded' as sighted people, which means more of us lack access to the internet. And even those of us with smartphones can find travel websites and apps particularly difficult.

Even the term 'ticket office' might be a misnomer – their worth is so much greater than the number of tickets sold there. Ticket office staff are skilled in providing multiple kinds of support that people can't get from an app or a machine. They have prevented me from accidentally buying the wrong ticket, told me about concessions that I wasn't aware should apply to my journey, contacted staff at my onward stations to rearrange assistance while I panicked about delays and cancellations, checked if I was OK using stairs when a lift was broken, and guided me safely down the platform and onto my train.

The ticket office closure proposals say they want to bring staff out from behind the glass, as if they're fish trapped in a bowl. To me, that's far from a positive thing. The static location of a ticket office, which I can learn and reliably navigate to, is invaluable to me as a registered blind person, and I have yet to hear any proposal that explains how moving them to a roving or floating role around the station will help me locate them.

I don't have a choice about using trains because of trips that I have to make for work. But like many blind and partially sighted people, I'm increasingly making my journeys around the availability of family, friends or others who can assist me on the journey.

People might be surprised to hear a colleague of mine describe this as 'a new Beeching', referring to the major route closures and

service changes in the 1960s under Dr Richard Beeching, but it doesn't seem like an exaggeration to me. Only this time it wouldn't be whole lines closing, just lots of individuals cut off from the railway – and the world.



Right To 'Turn Up And Go' For Disabled Rail Passengers 'Under Serious Threat'

<https://www.disabilitynewsservice.com/right-to-turn-up-and-go-for-disabled-rail-passengers-under-serious-threat/>

The right of disabled people to enjoy spontaneous travel on the rail network is under “serious threat” because of the planned closure of nearly 1,000 ticket offices across England, campaigners warned this week. One disabled activist warned that the time for direct action over the “outrageous” threat to disabled people’s independence – through their right to “turn up and go” assistance at rail stations – was “fast approaching”.

Research by disabled people has already shown how the government-backed closure plans will have a “disastrous” impact on disabled passengers, and lead to a significant fall in the number of staff available to support them. But disabled activists have now told Disability News Service (DNS) that they believe their right to spontaneous travel through the turn up and go (TUAG) system is now under clear threat.

TUAG refers to the right of disabled passengers to secure immediate assistance with boarding a train without having to book in advance. The Office of Rail and Road says that, under TUAG, disabled passengers can “turn up at any station that they have identified is accessible to them and request assistance on to a train”, although this “depends on conditions at the time of your travel, such as staff availability”. But evidence that has emerged during the ongoing consultation on the closures is raising increasing concerns that the right to TUAG could effectively be ended at many stations if the closures are allowed to go ahead.

Calculations by disabled activist Doug Paulley have shown that Northern’s staffed station hours will decrease by three-fifths under its ticket office closure proposals, from 10,793 to 4,238 hours per week, with nearly all the cuts at weekends and evenings. And figures produced by the RMT union show that more than 2,200 jobs will be cut due to the closures across England.

Mr Paulley said: “Given the de-staffing, there’s no way they are going to be able to facilitate TUAG. There will just not be staff at the stations. “Everybody else can turn up and travel and buy a ticket and travel on the spot. We should be able to, too.”

Sam Jennings, a wheelchair-user who campaigns for a more accessible rail network, said she also believed that disabled

people's right to spontaneous travel was under threat. She said: "I'm terrified that that is what is going to end up being lost. "That's not an exaggeration at all. It's under threat and I feel it in my bones." But she said she did not think the right to TUAG would vanish immediately. She said: "The cuts will start coming in and then it will just decline so much that you will have to book the day before because you won't be able to find the staff if you just turn up without booking."

Tony Jennings, co-chair of a rail accessibility panel and co-founder of the Campaign for Level Boarding, said disabled people's right to TUAG and "spontaneous and independent travel" would be under "serious threat" if the closures went ahead.

The consultation process run by two passenger watchdogs, Transport Focus and London TravelWatch, ended on 1 September. They then have 35 days to examine the responses before deciding whether to object to any of the proposed closures.

If any of the train companies decide to ignore those objections, the disputes will be referred to transport secretary Mark Harper.



Postal Scams



Old fashioned maybe, but scams can come at us in this way too, through the letterbox.

There's different types and of course new ones being invented daily. After the initial congratulations there's a common theme. A request for us to send money to initiate release of the surprise; for a lottery win or an inheritance.

Psychics and clairvoyants might send a letter claiming to have seen something in our future and ask for money to disclose what it is.

Pyramid investment schemes will ask us to pay a fee or buy products and recruit friends or family to take part in the scheme. All before we get a return on our "investment".

Advance fee fraud is one of the oldest scams where we are asked to help transfer money out of another country in return for a substantial reward. Often the letter will claim to be from a lawyer.

Fake job offers generally involve an offer of home working, after we send a registration fee. We might even get a telephone interview.

We might get an invoice from a company we've never ordered anything from. Again all after the same thing. Our money!

In addition to the request for money up front, signs of a scam include;

Pressure to reply quickly
Replies to PO boxes instead of full addresses
Photos, of expensive cars, luxury holidays, beautiful homes
A request to keep winnings a secret

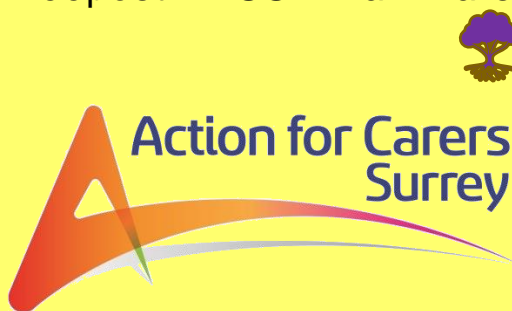
If we respond to a scam this triggers criminals selling our information to others and we'll then be on a target list.

Someone we know may have been targeted thus, and signs of that are

Receiving more mail than usual, often with foreign post marks
Financial hardship as a result of spending on responding
Lots of low value 'free gifts' around the home.
Self-neglect, due to financial hardship
Racing through cheque books and buying more stamps than usual

If we receive something that could be a scam letter, simply we should ignore it.

Positively we could become a Scam Marshal volunteer with National Trading Standards to take a stand against scams. See www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/scammarshals or write to Freepost NTSST Mail Marshal.



Action for Carers – Surrey
North West Surrey Drop-In Hubs
Addlestone – 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each Month
KnapHill – Every Monday
Shepperton – 1st and 3rd Wednesday

of each Month

Surrey Downs Hubs

Epsom - 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each Month

Hersham - 2nd and 4th Monday of each Month

Leatherhead – Every Friday

To contact Action for Carers Surrey, Telephone 0303 040 1234

Email CSAdmin@actionforcarers.org.uk Text 07723 486730

Web site www.actionforcarers.org.uk



Disability Rights UK (DRUK) - Helplines

Our helplines are operating as normal:

Personal Budgets Helpline

Opening hours: 9.30am-1.30pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays

Telephone: 0330 995 0404 personalbudgets@disabilityrightsuk.org

Disabled Students Helpline

Opening hours: 11am-1pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays

Telephone: 0330 995 0414 students@disabilityrightsuk.org

Welfare Rights Helpline for Member Organisations

Opening hours: 10.30am-12.30pm Tuesdays and Thursdays

Telephone: 0203 687 0779 ken.butler@disabilityrightsuk.org

PLEASE NOTE – *The news Bulletins received from **Disability Rights (DRUK)** and the **Surrey Adult Social Care Information & Engagement Team** is now being distributed as enclosures with each monthly SCAN Newsletter.*

Please contact me if you wish to receive these enclosures by sending a text message (with your name and postal address) to 07859 639025.

If your preference is for an electronic copy then please email me on info@spelthorneaccess.org.uk or use the 'Contact SCAN' form on www.spelthorneaccess.org.uk/



Disability Empowerment Network – North Surrey & Surrey Wide

Administration and management of the Disability Empowerment Network (DEN) meetings is arranged by the Surrey Coalition of Disabled People (SCDP)

All Empowerment Meetings Continue To Be Held Via Zoom unless otherwise noted

North Surrey Meeting Dates 2023

Runnymede, Spelthorne, Woking & Surrey Heath.

hybrid meeting at Goldwater lodge

Monday 4th September at 10.30am

Surrey Wide Meeting dates for 2023

Monday 11th September at 6pm

For more information, please contact:

Involvement@surreycoalition.org.uk or Tel/SMS 07492 249 513 for details of how to participate in meetings remotely.



SCAN and Spelthorne Physical, Sensory & Cognitive Disabilities Forum (SPSCDF)

The meetings bring together

service providers and users to influence the solutions to any problems or access issues encountered by people with physical, sensory and cognitive disabilities. We receive reports from a number of local groups and service providers. Send your news or

reports to info@spelthorneaccess.org.uk or fill in the 'Contact SCAN' form on our website pages at www.spelthorneaccess.org.uk/

At our AGM on **Tuesday 10th October 2023** we welcome the Worshipful Mayor of Spelthorne Councillor, Denise Saliagopoulos and we have a guest speaker who is a **SCAM Champion** from Trading Standards. After a short break for a buffet lunch, there will be an abridged meeting of **Spelthorne's Physical, Sensory and Cognitive Disability** forum.

These meetings will be held in the Goddard Room in the council offices, Knowle Green starting at 12 noon for those who are able to attend in person. If anyone wishes to use ZOOM to attend please let me know as soon as possible. Further details for this forum are available on SCAN's web site at www.spelthorneaccess.org.uk/news/scan-news/spscd-forum/



Donations for SCAN's Newsletters

This project will require new sponsorship from April 2024 as demand for paper booklets continues to evolve after the pandemic. It had been intended to increase distribution in 2020 and funding was applied for and approved, but the pandemic meant we couldn't use the award and the demographic has also now changed.

Sponsorship and membership subscription packages are available to any individuals, councillors or organisations interested in supporting SCAN's newsletter project – please use the contact options below for information about making donations.

If you have news that you would like included in the newsletter or on our web site, or to be reported at the quarterly meetings, please send an email to info@spelthorneaccess.org.uk or fill in the 'Contact SCAN' form on SCAN's web page where you will also find more details about SCAN's work www.spelthorneaccess.org.uk/



From A Former Contributor to SCAN's Newsletters

Richard sustained a severe brain injury in a motorcycle accident in 1983 and he felt that although people tried to relate to his situation, they often couldn't understand.

He put his thoughts and experiences together as a collection of poems and articles about his life after his injury to help others in a similar situation to realise that they're not alone, and to try to give 'able-bodied' people a small insight into the world of disability.

Richard died in 2014, and his son shared his father's book with Headway who provided a link to the book from their website <https://www.headway.org.uk/>. Richard's personality and wit shines through the book.

Some of the poems and the, often very poignant, drawings that went with them will be difficult to publish as the local artist who drew them for Richard's book **has also died**. Electronic versions of Richard's book can be viewed on the Headway website

Parking

*When we are out and about
and you're pushing me in my chair
if you ever have to leave me
don't park me by the stairs.*

*It makes me very envious
to see them being scaled,
I took it all for granted
'til my legs began to fail.*

*I promise to scream outside the shops
if I'm left with the prams & babies,
it's just about as humiliating
as being dumped by the door of the ladies.*

*Please don't leave me facing a wall
like a naughty boy in class,
or somewhere where I'm continually cursed
because nobody can get passed.*

*What I need is a quiet bar
where I can catch the Tender's eye,
enjoy a nice peaceful pint
and watch the world go by!*



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