

# Spelthorne Committee Access Now



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1992 – 2023



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## **NHS England Halts GP Super-Hub Pilot Due To Lack Of Funds** <https://www.pulsetoday.co.uk/news/premises/nhs-england-halts-gp-super-hub-pilot-due-to-lack-of-funds/>

A national pilot scheme to create six super health and wellbeing hubs, also known as Cavell Centres, has been halted by NHS England (NHSE) due to a lack of capital funding.

The Cavell Centres – named after Edith Cavell, a British nurse during World War I – aimed to bring health and social care services together in one building, including GP practices and other health services such as pharmacies, dental clinics and mental health support.

The six sites under consideration were Sleaford in Lincolnshire, **Staines in Surrey**, Hucknall in Nottinghamshire, Plymouth in Devon, Derby in Derbyshire, and Shrewsbury in Shropshire. Though plans were still in development and subject to both ICB and NHSE approval, a business case had been approved by NHS Devon ICB in August 2022 for the Plymouth site.

Demolition work was already underway for the proposed £60-million centre at Colin Campbell Court in Plymouth's West End, but a regional review concluded that 'the lack of an identified source of capital' could prevent the business case from progressing further.

Doubts were raised about the future of the Plymouth site in October 2022 after it emerged that £41 million of NHS funding would not arrive. And Luke Pollard, MP for Plymouth, Sutton and Devonport, asked former health minister Robert Jenrick to restore the funding or find it from elsewhere.

But a Devon ICB report published this month revealed that there was no national capital available. Alternative sources of funding, such as ICB capital, were explored but deemed unaffordable.

It said: 'Originally the national Cavell team were expecting to receive capital funding for the six pilot sites through the last Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR). 'Unfortunately, they were unsuccessful and although funding was never promised for the project, NHS Devon was one of the six pioneer sites who were encouraged to develop the business case at pace while national colleagues sought the capital from underspends on other capital projects.

'We have since been told that no national funding is currently available, and that the Plymouth Cavell will next be considered as part of the CSR in 2024/25.' NHSE since confirmed that the scheme would not go ahead in the other five sites either.

A spokesperson said: 'NHSE has paused the development of the project business cases to focus on developing the programme business case ahead of a bid for capital funding for the programme at the upcoming spending review.'

## Blind Man Refused Entry With Guide Dog

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1761617/blind-man-subway-worker-refused-entry-guide-dog>

Stephen Anderson, 32, from Harrow, London, was making his way home from work when he entered the fast-food restaurant with his beloved guide dog Labrador Barney from the Seeing Dogs Alliance. Mr Anderson said he was met by a member of staff who told him “pets are not allowed”. Despite Mr Anderson being blind and Barney clearly being a guide dog, both were eventually forced to leave without a sandwich after staff refused to allow them proper access.

“I advised her that Barney is a guide dog, and as soon as I did so she continued to reiterate it doesn’t matter and that he is still not allowed. “Barney wears a bright yellow jacket and a black harness which clearly identifies him as a guide dog, as well as the fact that I told them three or four times that is what he is. “He’s clearly distinguishable, there’s no excuse, it’s been law for 28 years. It raises serious questions about how Subway train their staff.

Stephen said he contacted Subway via the company’s Twitter account and asked where he should send legal papers as he was considering taking action against the firm. He said: “They are refusing to give me an address to send the paperwork to. I’ve reminded them it is illegal to fail to supply that information upon request.”

A spokesperson for Subway told Express.co.uk: “We are sorry to hear about this incident and want to reassure guests that it is our policy for working guide dogs to be allowed in Subway® restaurants nationwide, even though other animals are not permitted.

“All Subway® restaurants are independently operated by franchisees. The franchisee is aware of this incident and is in the process of contacting the guest to take appropriate action.”

Correspondence sent to Mr Anderson from a spokesperson for the restaurant's franchisee said: "I apologise that you had a difficult experience during your recent visit to our store when accompanied by your guide dog. I have investigated your comment with the staff who were on duty, and they are aware of our guide dog policy. I have been informed that the previous customer raised his concern with the staff and questioned whether to continue serving his food while the dog is present. "I think the situation could have been handled much better from our side with a courteous approach and greater communication explaining the temporary situation."

The spokesperson added that an action plan is being put in place to retrain staff.



## **I Collapsed, Ended Up In A Wheelchair - So I Joined The Circus** <https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/swansea-leyton-john-circus-ms-26762595>

Leyton John knew his health was deteriorating after he first started to limp, before one day he simply collapsed. He was rushed into hospital where he remained for six months after being diagnosed with the condition that affects the brain and nerves. He was then moved to rehabilitation at Bonymaen House for seven months, then to supported living in Llansamlet, something that, as a fiercely independent man, he was not prepared to see out long term, deciding to find a flat in Sketty, Swansea, and refusing the help of carers.

"I had really given up. I honestly felt life wasn't worth living. It was absolutely miserable. I just thought I was not prepared to live like it. I was not prepared to accept other people's opinions. I was told I was going to constantly have to have care and two people hoist you out of bed in the morning and two people to put you into bed that night but I wasn't prepared to live like that."

Then the local area care co-ordinator said she had a bookcase and a bedside cabinet if I would like it, which I accepted. She brought it with her sister-in-law, who asked about my interesting books.

I told her that I used to be a performer and a teacher so it was left over from those days. She said that she was a performer' and worked in the circus'. 'Next time I'm in Swansea I could give you a ring and we'll meet up. You never know, maybe one day we'll work together'.

Later she phoned me and said, 'We've got an Arts Council grant', and I said, 'what for?' and she said, 'The things you were telling me about, your life.'

He decided it was too good an offer to refuse, and began working with NoFit State circus, which recently performed at Swansea's recreational ground in a show entitled Smile - based on Leyton John's personal life story. It shows his journey from receiving 24 hour bed care to now flying through the air in his wheelchair and cracking jokes.

I rely heavily on verbal comedy. He admitted that his condition posed some difficulties, but that he had been able to achieve amazing things on stage that he was unable to do in real life - describing it as 'Dr Showbusiness'.

He said: Multi-tasking is a big issue and memory is a huge issue. Learning lines can feel like I have a book to learn. I would spend 10 hours learning five lines, then get up in the morning thinking I have to learn them again.

"The wheelchair does a lot of work for me, it is very graceful gliding around the stage in figures of eight. Being part of the circus

has saved my life, and I don't think that's an exaggeration. "About two or three months ago when I was transferring from the bed to the chair, I slipped onto the floor, and ended up in hospital for two weeks.

When I was in the circus, I was going down the ramp and fell out of the chair onto concrete head first. I thought my circus days were over, but the circus people lifted me up and put me in the chair and the next morning I went on stage and performed. I wasn't even in pain the next day. "It amazes me really, I call it Dr Showbusiness. It's a bit of a miracle thing what I'm able to do on stage and what I can't do off stage. Its sheer willpower."



## **Airlines Are Failing On Access,**

<https://www.disabilitynewsservice.com/airlines-are-failing-on-access-regulator-concludes-after-four-year-review/>

The review by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) began four years ago, but it was interrupted by the pandemic. It examined airlines' websites, observed their operations at UK airports and sent them questionnaires, although many airlines failed to return them.

Some of the issues raised in the review report have been repeatedly highlighted in the media in recent years, including the delays experienced by many disabled passengers at the end of their flights.

The report says the interests of disabled passengers "were not always, in our view, fully considered" when aircraft were being emptied of passengers after landing, with some passengers "encouraged to walk off aircraft rather than wait for assistance".

It also raises concerns about the provision of assistance to use in-flight toilets, and damage to mobility equipment carried on flights, two other high-profile issues.

The report says the performance of some airlines on how they deal with pre-flight requests for assistance is "sufficiently poor for us to question whether airlines are doing enough to capture assistance requests". It also raises concerns about how some airlines are restricting the number of disabled passengers on each flight, and how they require medical clearance before they allow some passengers with health conditions to travel when "there may not always be a valid reason to do so".

The CAA says in its report: "Our view is that some airlines are not doing enough to ensure that their processes are sufficiently robust to ensure that fair and proportionate decisions are being made on access to air travel for individual passengers with complex needs."

There are also concerns that some check-in staff are not adequately trained to identify passengers who may require special assistance.

Now, four years after the review began, the CAA has announced plans for a new airlines accessibility framework that will rank airlines on how they serve their disabled passengers in areas such as website accessibility, how they carry mobility equipment, access to onboard toilets, and how they deal with assistance dogs and pre-flight requests for assistance.

The CAA said it did not plan to assess airlines against the new framework “all at once or necessarily on an annual basis” but aimed to assess the largest 20 airlines by passenger volumes in the first two years.

The regulator – which is responsible for enforcing UK regulations on the rights of disabled air passengers\* – has now launched a three-month consultation on its draft plans for the framework.



## **Wheelchair User Left To Crawl Off Ryanair Flight**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/news-and-advice/ryanair-wheelchair-passenger-crawl-flight-b2331444.html>

Adrian Keogh, 37, from Wicklow in Ireland, said “I paid extra for special assistance to be lifted off the plane down to my wheelchair. It's unacceptable to expect me to crawl down the steep metal steps but on arrival I was informed that it would be at least one hour before they would have the lift available to help me off the plane so what option had I but to crawl off the plane.”

He said he decided to crawl off the plane because he was in pain and did not want to have to wait until midnight to leave. “It was very destroying to be honest going through that because all anyone wants is to be treated equally. “For someone to say you have to be an hour waiting on the plane for no fault of my own is totally ridiculous. “A person in a wheelchair has different issues, I have spinal injuries personally myself, some people have other issues but with any disability we just want to be treated equally.” He added: “My brother wanted to lift me down but I decided not to because it’s too unsafe in case we fell. “He was at the bottom of the steps making sure my wheelchair was ready.”

In an Instagram post, Mr Keogh shared images of how he had to make his way down the metal steps in a seated position. The post said: “Please excuse the bad picture but this is a photo of myself having to crawl off a Ryanair flight which landed in Landvetter Airport tonight at 11pm.

Landvetter Airport commented on Mr Keogh's post apologising for the delay in assistance and said delays occurred due to another medical emergency. The airport said: “Dear Sir, we are sorry for your experience. Due to some delays last night, there were more planes landing around the same time as your flight. With several

booked assistants requirements, including yours, and a medical emergency simultaneously, caused a pushed [sic] forward.”

Mr Keogh said he hopes this incident is the last time it happens, adding that disabled people receive this treatment across the world.

A Ryanair spokesperson said: “Special assistance at Landvetter Airport is managed by a third-party provider - not Ryanair. “We regret that Landvetter Airport failed to provide Special Assistance to this passenger upon arrival at Landvetter and we are working with Landvetter Airport to ensure this does not recur.”



## **There's One Reason A Wheelchair User Crawled Off**

**Airplane** - *Opinion By Independent Columnist James Moore who became a wheelchair user after he was seriously injured when cycling in London in 2011. He was knocked off his cycle and under the wheels of an oil tanker.*

Imagine if... passengers were held aboard a plane at an airport because they were bound by restraints which prohibited the use of their legs.

Imagine if.... upon landing, they were told they would have to wait for more than an hour for those restraints to be removed. Imagine if they were held back, while disabled passengers (who weren't restrained) exited the plane freely.

Imagine the MPs who might demand an investigation.

Imagine the outcry.

Imagine if this (admittedly unlikely) scenario were to occur more than once. If planes full of able-bodied passengers got stranded every few weeks – and the airline or the airport trotted out excuses, together with apologies of dubious sincerity, while blaming each other and anyone else they could think of.

Well, this is the (frankly scandalous) everyday reality faced by the disabled traveller. The latest to suffer, Adrian Keogh, from Wicklow in Ireland, who descended the stairs of the plane in a seated position, while his brother waited with his wheelchair below. He described his treatment as “unacceptable”.

One has to credit his diplomacy there. I would have been inclined to use a four letter word beginning with “f” and ending in “ing” before the word “outrageous”, were I put in the same position (which is entirely possible, given that I also use a wheelchair). Keogh, who had booked assistance to get off the plane in advance, also said he hoped it would never happen again. I wish I could be confident that it wouldn't.

For despite the apologies that were issued, and Ryanair's insistence that it is working with the airport (whose responsibility it

was to get Keogh off the plan) to ensure that it won't happen again, this is far from the first such incidence of a disabled passenger being left stranded on an aircraft.

The BBC's Frank Gardner seems to tweet about these incidents every few months. He is usually remarkably good humoured about them – I suppose he has to be. He has a jet-setting job and so it's either that, or self-combust with fury. Or, of course, stop flying. Which is my solution. Yet I admit it is not a good one, because the fewer disabled people who fly, the easier it is for airports and airlines to get away with such dismal behaviour – that at times amounts to naked ableism.

Here's what the airport's response should have been: "We messed this up. While we were busy that should not be read as an excuse and we do not accept it as an excuse. We got it wrong. We are really sorry to Mr Keogh. This should not have happened. We have launched an immediate review of our procedures. It will not happen again." Why is more preventative action not being taken when these stories keep emerging at a time when people are so very keen to bang on about how inclusive they are and how they love diversity? There's that word, "ableism" again...



## **Kew Gardens Walking Tours for People Living with Dementia, Sight or Hearing Loss (incl. BSL) and Community Well Being.**

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**

Sunday 11 June 2023 11am to 12pm

Sunday 9 July 2023 11am to 12pm

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

### **Forthcoming Dementia Friendly Tour Dates**

Wednesday 14 June 2023 11am to 12pm

Wednesday 12 July 2023 11am to 12pm

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

### **Forthcoming Sensory Tour Dates**

Sunday 11 June 2023 2-3pm



Sunday 9 July 2023 2-3pm

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

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](mailto:discovery@kew.org) or Telephone 07341 114533.



## 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.*

[stainesshopmo@gmail.com](mailto:stainesshopmo@gmail.com)

[www.stainesshopmobility.com](http://www.stainesshopmobility.com)

[www.facebook.com/stainesshopmobility](https://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 Para Sports Club



**Spelthorne  
ParaSports 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](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/parasportsclub)



## **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](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/boccia)



## **Campaigner's Legal Fight Forces Council To Scrap 'Ludicrous' Pavement Policy**

<https://www.disabilitynewsservice.com/campaigners-legal-fight-forces-council-to-scrap-ludicrous-pavement-policy2/>

Flick Williams, a visually-impaired powerchair-user, left a shoe shop in York last May (2022) to find that tables and chairs were blocking her exit in both directions. The two businesses had been given permission to block the pavement with their furniture by City of York Council, even though this was in breach of government guidance introduced during the pandemic.

The high kerb meant the medically-retired disability equality trainer and access consultant had no exit route and had to shout for help. But when some young passers-by started to move some of the furniture onto the road for her, the landlord of one of the businesses came running out to challenge them.

He told Ms Williams the council had given him permission to block the pavement with his tables and chairs, but he eventually apologised after she explained her situation. She said: "That's what I found so upsetting about the whole event; it put me directly in conflict with this business owner who is standing over me in the pavement, shouting, 'I've got a license, the council lets me do

this.’ “I’m very calmly saying, ‘I don’t doubt it for one minute, but you can see the problem. I am trapped on this pavement,’ and he looked at the kerb and looked at me and back again and kind of said, ‘I’m kind of sorry,’ in a not very sorry sort of a way, and moved the furniture enough to let me get past. “I hate the word ‘vulnerable’, most of us do, but it just put me in a very vulnerable situation.”

Despite her repeated attempts to persuade the council to change its policy, it refused to do so, and Williams was forced to begin a county court action. She said: “I tried the nice way, I wrote emails and letters and they just tried to justify what they were doing. “I didn’t file with the court until September, so it really was a last resort. “As someone who has been disabled since before we even had legislation to protect us from discrimination, I decided that I must use this hard-fought-for legislation to try to rectify the situation.”

The council has now settled the case out of court, introducing a new policy and paying her costs and compensation. Ms Williams said the new policy seems to be working so far. She said: “There is a very noticeable difference. I am quite sure that when the weather improves, we will see some more infractions.

“All the disability groups within York have been circulating the information about how to report infractions because we feel that if cafes are breaching the new policy then they need to be reported quickly because otherwise the whole thing very quickly gets out of hand. “It’s just a shame, as always, that we had to get there the hard way. If they had listened to us properly in the first place, none of it would have been necessary.”

Ms Williams also plays a leading role in the Reverse the Ban coalition of 27 groups who continue to push City of York Council to reverse its decision to ban the vehicles of blue badge-holders from the historic city centre.

She said: “It is noticeably making a positive difference for disabled people who can still actually get to the city centre, despite the blue badge ban, and that fight continues.”



## **I Got Job After Being Rejected Twice For Being Different** <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1765260/down-syndrome-woman-job-tesco-real-life-stories>

A woman with Down’s syndrome has bagged a job at Tesco as a part-time receptionist after being rejected from two other public-facing roles for “being different”. Charlotte Laitner, 23, joined Tesco’s head office after completing a six-week course with the team.

She told Express.co.uk: “I was so excited to get the job. I love

being at the reception desk with my colleagues and I love greeting people when they arrive for meetings. “I try and make them feel welcome and relaxed when I log their details on the system and take their photos for their visitor badges. “I think the job suits me because I am happy and friendly and funny and I like making other people feel happy. I also have good computer skills now that I have done my course.”

However, she has her own share of struggles as well. After graduating from the University of Middlesex, Charlotte had been looking for a job for a year. A resident of Hertfordshire, Charlotte put her best foot forward to grab a job. She said: “For almost a year I was looking for a job. I approached two cafes near my home that had advertised vacancies in their place. However, both times I was told that the vacancy has been filled. “I could sense that they did not want to hire me because I was different as the vacancy board was displayed outside the cafe. It was disheartening.”

Later, Charlotte’s mother’s friend saw a post from the Down’s Syndrome Association’s (DSA) WorkFit programme looking for two people with Down’s syndrome to do a placement at Tesco Head Office in the Property department.

She was asked a question about how would she react if there was a power cut and her sweet response was praised by the interviewers. Charlotte said: “I told them that I can make the employees, staff and the customer smile all day. They were really happy with my response.” Lots of people think that if you have a learning disability you can’t work. “Of course, we can, it might take us longer to learn things but we have skills just like anybody else does. The more people like me who do work, the more people and companies will see that we have skills and are valuable at work instead of seeing us as not employable, then there will be more possibilities for us to work.”

Carol Boys, Chief Executive of the DSA, said: “Success stories like Charlotte’s are an inspiration. I hope her story will encourage more employers to consider recruiting someone who has Down’s syndrome. “The candidates that the DSA has supported through WorkFit demonstrate that people who have Down’s syndrome have a range of skills and abilities to offer and should have access to the same opportunities as everyone else.”



***As A Wheelchair User, A Video of Rob Burrow Made Me Cringe*** – Edited from Metro Article by Samantha Renke, Writer, Disability Rights Campaigner, Diversity & Inclusion Consultant, <https://metro.co.uk/2023/05/17/as-a-wheelchair-user-the-response-to-the-rob-burrow-video-made-me-criinge-18797267/>

In a piece of video footage that went viral in May former rugby league star Kevin Sinfield stopped before the finish of the new Leeds marathon, and removed teammate Rob Burrow from his wheelchair, and carried him over the line. Rob has motor neurone disease.

It was an act of friendship and devotion that captured hearts around the world, but the way some responded sparked a familiar and unwelcome feeling in me; that is, non-disabled people see our disabilities as something to overcome, as the BBC coverage noted at the time, Sinfield, who pushed Burrow the entire 26-mile length of the course 'lifted Burrow up and carried him, to the delight of spectators.' A crowd cheering someone being removed from their wheelchair made me think of how disabled people around the world are reminded daily that our lives are lesser than our non-disabled peers.

I cringed a little. Firstly, because I wouldn't let anyone pull me out of my wheelchair even if it was my best mate. But also because the response to Sinfield's act of kindness reminded me of 'inspiration porn', a term coined to describe how non-disabled people often frame our experiences as a way to give an uplifting message to audiences, rather than reflecting the reality of our lives. Of course, no one knows the true story outside of those involved. Perhaps this was the plan all along and both had discussed and consented to lift. I won't speculate, but what I can comment on is the way their actions have sparked conversation.

My wheelchair represents my independence and my autonomy, not some tomb that traps me or something I want to escape. Why wasn't Burrow allowed to cross the finish line in his chair? Why did he need to be lifted? Personally, carrying me away from my chair does exactly the opposite, it makes me more vulnerable and disabled, and I'd hate to think of a crowd cheering this happening to me.

As a society, we still struggle with the concept that being less than healthy, or less than what cultural standards deem healthy, means you can't experience happiness. It meant that, while my parents adored me, most of my childhood was tinged with sadness that stemmed from comments that assumed I wasn't normal, that I must be suffering, that my disabled life was 'a shame.'

I am not here to invalidate the experience of Rob Burrow, I am simply here to present another angle and my perspective, that this may lead to them coming away with a view that has a damaging impact on disabled people. A view that life would automatically be better for us if there were a cure, or if we pushed our bodies beyond our limits to 'overcome' our disabilities.

For some people, that may be true. Others, like me, really have no issue with the cards they are dealt and actually suffer more from

other people's ignorance and ableist views on disability rather than the impact my disabled body has on the way I navigate my day-to-day life.

I don't doubt Sinfield's sincerity, but my fear, and one that is informed by my lived experience, is that too often that empathy is viewed through the lens of the able gaze. What the response to that moment with Sinfield and Burrow highlighted, is that messaging around disabled people and our culture is still heavily steered by a non-disabled world.



## **Disabled Mum Left 'Shaken' After Row Over Blue Badge**

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-12084533/Disabled-mum-left-shaken-row-blue-badge.html> A disabled mother was left feeling 'shaken' when she was confronted by a stranger in a car park over the use of her blue badge. Hannah Campbell, 22, who was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) five years ago, was in total shock when a man demanded to know why she had the blue badge - and even suggested she'd stolen it.

MS is a condition that affects the brain and spinal cord, causing a wide range of symptoms including problems with vision and physical movement. Following her recent ordeal, Hannah says she is committed to raising awareness of the illness - which she says is not always obvious at first sight.

Hannah said 'I had just put the trolley back after shopping and made my way back to my car when the man stopped me and told me that someone had been taking pictures of blue badges in cars. Then he made out he was warning me to be careful and implied I had stolen it and he didn't want me to get caught.'

Hannah said she was taken aback by the man's comments and immediately removed herself from the situation by rushing to her car as quickly as she could. She added that although she tried to ignore him, she was left feeling 'really shaken' and realised just how much she had been judged on her condition.

The former student warned that although people may not see her disability, it doesn't mean it's not there, and that she'd rather not wear a blue badge but she clearly needed to.

Hannah first suspected something was wrong when she was 17 and woke up one day with double vision - which was later accompanied by severe headaches and fatigue. It took six months for experts to work out what was wrong and make a formal diagnosis. And although her father also has MS, The NHS states the condition isn't directly inherited, but people who are related to someone with the condition are more likely to develop it.

Speaking on the impact the illness has had on her life, Hannah added: 'The thing is, I have good days, and bad days when the

pain is so bad I can hardly get about and need crutches. And another day when it eases, but it still isn't right and I am determined not to use crutches - nobody wants to be disabled.'

She revealed that she was finally ready to raise awareness of her disability which at times appeared to be invisible, while at other times very visible - and even recently took part in the national MS Awareness Week back in April.

She went on to say that young people also lived with MS, and that they too could also be labelled as disabled. Her mother Jackie adds that although she was initially worried about cruel remarks from strangers, she is now very proud of her daughter who she says is doing her best to build herself up to face the future.



## **Disabled Afghan Veteran Asked to Justify Blue Badge**

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1772242/parking-Afghanistan-war-blue-badge>

An injured veteran of the war in Afghanistan has said they shouldn't have to re-explain the worst day of their life every time they park. Former Royal Marine, Ben McBean, who suffered horrific injuries in Helmand Province in 2008, was fined for using a disabled parking space despite showing the traffic warden his blue badge.

Ben lost an arm and a leg in the landmine blast, said the warden wouldn't accept his offers to check and scan the badge and insisted it was "fake". The 36-year-old, who now works as a motivational speaker, said he is now waiting for the council to fine him or take him to court over the incident which happened in Plymouth, Devon, in May.

Ben explained in a video on Twitter that within minutes of parking his car in a disabled parking bay a woman began tapping on his window and shaking her head. When he returned to his car 15 minutes later he found the woman accompanied by a traffic warden and two other men.

Ben said that the warden claimed his badge was fake, but his attempts to show the warden to verify that it was real were ignored so he left the scene. He said: "to get out I drove came past them. They all started clapping me as I'm driving past saying 'I'm getting a fine or going to court'."

After the despairing experience, Ben shared his experience on social media where it quickly went viral. He said: "I think highlighting this was important. However, what I'm not trying to do is get a man sacked when it's hard enough as it is for work. He probably has a family and so on. I think the main point is people's view on what they think is disabled. This isn't the first time Ben has had problems with his blue badge and Plymouth Council. It

was reportedly taken away from him after he was spotted running the London Marathon on his prosthetic leg.

Plymouth Council has said it is "deeply concerned" by the incident and that it has made contact with Be so it can investigate the matter. Ben said issues with his blue badge have meant he stopped using disabled bays entirely. He said: "The badge is proof of my disability. So rather than me saying I'm disabled - I put it in the window (of my car) It's sad really isn't it how you've got to prove your disability to people or else?"



## **'I Hated My Face But Now I'm Proud Of It'**

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1772395/jono-lancaster-face-condition>

Jono Lancaster, a 37-year-old man from West Yorkshire has revealed how he was rejected by his birth parents because of a facial condition, leaving him full of "hate" for his appearance was born with a rare facial condition which impacts his appearance, but he's using it to his advantage as a campaigner.

Jono Lancaster has Treacher Collins Syndrome which affects the development of a child's facial structure in the womb. Touching his ears, he said: "I call them my little Bart Simpson ears."

The motivational speaker said despite plenty of positive experiences at school, he was always trying to fit in and be like everyone else.

He said: "Looking back at high school, I had so many amazing memories but behind those moments there was me trying my best to fit in. "The older kids would pull their eyes. They would sing or make chants up about myself."

He added: "As I got older and people started getting into relationships, that kind of didn't really happen for me.

At the age of 24, he discovered a document that confirmed his worst fears, that his mum and dad had left him because of the way he looked. He said: "So I sat down and read these notes and the language was horrible. "It goes on to state that my birth parents were horrified by my appearance.

He continued: "I wanted to hurt them as much as I was hurting, I was in a really dark angry place when I thought about my birth parents."

Despite this rage, he found it within himself to contact the people who had abandoned him because of his physical features. "So we wrote a letter and a couple of weeks later we got a letter back." In an appalling twist, Jono's parents simply said: 'We do not wish any contact, further attempts will be ignored' and both of them had



signed it.” He noted: “Being rejected by those two people again, it hurts.”

Despite the hurdles Jono has had to overcome, he is using his experiences to change the lives of other people. After giving a school talk, which prompted numerous children to come up to him in the playground and share their own challenges, he realised he wanted “to do more” to help those who are struggling. As part of his work changing lives for the better, he has released a book called ‘Not All Heroes Wear Capes’, in which he discusses the heroes in his life, that have helped him become the man he is today.

Most notably, Jono tells the story of his adoptive mum, Jean. “I met Jean who fostered me at two weeks old and she adopted me when I was five. “And throughout that entire process she fostered other children, all with different disabilities.” He added: “Ultimately, I became my own biggest hero. “Truth is, my life has been full of a lot of love and adventure.”



### **North West Surrey Drop-In Hubs**

**Addlestone** – 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each Month

**KnapHill** – Every Monday

**Shepperton** – 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each Month

### **Surrey Downs Hubs**

**Epsom** - 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each Month

**Hersham** - 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each Month

**Leatherhead** – Every Friday

To contact Action for Carers Surrey, Telephone 0303 040 1234

Email [CSAdmin@actionforcarers.org.uk](mailto:CSAdmin@actionforcarers.org.uk) Text 07723 486730

Web site [www.actionforcarers.org.uk](http://www.actionforcarers.org.uk)



### **Disability Rights UK (DRUK)**

#### **Disability Rights UK 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](mailto:personalbudgets@disabilityrightsuk.org)

#### **Disabled Students Helpline**

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

Telephone: 0330 995 0414 [students@disabilityrightsuk.org](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:info@spelthorneaccess.org.uk) or use the ‘**Contact SCAN**’ form on [www.spelthorneaccess.org.uk/](http://www.spelthorneaccess.org.uk/)*



## **Communities Together Charity Marketplace**

Communities Together North Surrey will bring together groups and voluntary organisations at Egham Orbit Vicarage Road, Egham nearest buses 441 on Pooley Green Road

This free event offers people the chance to find out more about the community support available to them and is North Surrey’s biggest showcase of volunteering opportunities.

The Charity Marketplace is organised by Voluntary Support North Surrey. Organisations that would like to book a free stall should contact [info@voluntarysupport.org.uk](mailto:info@voluntarysupport.org.uk) or call 01932 571122.

Thursday 29 June at Egham Orbit Leisure Centre, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Good level access refreshments available

There will be stands and people to meet, questions to ask and your possible offer of volunteering available.

Enquiries to [Jo@voluntarysupport.org.uk](mailto:Jo@voluntarysupport.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.

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> September at 10.30am *hybrid meeting at Goldwater lodge*

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November at 1pm

## **Surrey Wide Meeting dates for 2023**

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September at 6pm

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November at 6pm

**For more information, please contact:**

[Involvement@surreycoalition.org.uk](mailto: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](mailto:info@spelthorneaccess.org.uk) or fill in the 'Contact SCAN' form on our website pages at [www.spelthorneaccess.org.uk/](http://www.spelthorneaccess.org.uk/)

Our next meeting will be on **Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023** starting at 12 noon and be Hybrid - held in person at the Goddard Room, Council Offices Knowle Green and via Zoom

Further details for Spelthorne's Physical, Sensory and Cognitive Disability forum are on SCAN's web site at [www.spelthorneaccess.org.uk/news/scan-news/spscd-forum/](http://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 also 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](mailto: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/](http://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. Electronic versions of Richard's book can be viewed on the Headway website.

### A Personal Glow

*There's a light that shines for all people,  
when things are dark, it sees us through.  
Hold up your head, keep your spirits high,  
the light shines especially for you.*

*So, whatever happens, don't be afraid,  
remember your twinkling star.  
It's the one thing that can't be taken from you,  
no matter whoever you are.*

*It's a flame that never flickers,  
it's there till your life departs.  
It's on your side and will never leave you,  
it's yours to be kept in your heart.*



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