

Spelthorne

Committee

Access

Now



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1992 – 2025



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Spring 2025



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Lord Blunkett Demands Action On 'Death Trap' Tube Platforms

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/david-blunkett-fell-down-gap-tube-london-underground-injured-blind-westminster-tfl-b1194465.html> Lord Blunkett is calling for action on “death trap” Tube platforms after he was injured falling down the gap at Westminster station.

The Labour peer, who is blind, called on Transport for London to do more to keep visually impaired people safe. He was getting on a District Line train with his guide dog three weeks ago when his feet slipped. “As I took a step to get on to the Tube train I suddenly felt both my feet disappearing down the gap,” Lord Blunkett, 77, wrote “In an instant my body had been propelled forward into the carriage and I was face down on the floor. “My legs had somehow been scraped out of the gap and into the carriage. I didn’t fully know what had happened. I felt enormous pain in both my legs; they were bruised and grazed.”

“Whenever you step into a tube station in London you hear the tannoy warn people to ‘mind the gap’,” wrote Lord Blunkett, who was MP for Sheffield Brightside and Hillsborough from 1987 to 2015. “But too often there are no staff members to actually help you if, like me, you cannot see.”

He is calling for TfL to make efforts to fill the widest gaps on platforms and make sure there is always someone there to help, especially during rush hour. “Some of our platforms are death traps. He will soon meet TfL to ask for answers and an urgent review into the safety of the busiest Tube stations.

Nick Dent, London Underground’s director of customer operations, said: “We were extremely sorry that Lord Blunkett was injured on our network. “We have written to, and will be meeting with, him to discuss how we could have managed the incident better and to ensure that lessons are learned.

According to TfL, the number of “platform train interface (PTI) incidents” across the Underground rose to 1,941 in 2023, up almost 500 on the figure in 2016. Last year’s total included 261 “falls between platform and train”. Of these, two were classed as “serious”, down from a peak of 34 serious injuries in 2019 – though the definition of what constituted a serious injury was tightened in 2020.

On average, 21 people a month are involved in a PTI. These include falls from the platform, falls between the train and the platform, contact between a person and a train and being caught in or struck by train doors, also known as “trap and drag incidents”.



My Wheelchair Got Stuck At London Underground Step-Free Station <https://www.mylondon.news/news/transport/my-wheelchair-stuck-london-underground-30494887>

During a Transport Committee meeting at City Hall held on Wednesday (November 27) a wheelchair user shared his frustration with the London Underground, and how inaccessible it still is despite TfL's claims.

Nathan Rollinson, who uses a power wheelchair, told committee chair Elly Baker that he uses Green Park station a lot as it's step-free - meaning he can get from the entrance of the station and onto the Tube without having to go down any steps or needing a ramp. However, he said the problem at many of these stations is that while the train is at the same level as the platform, the gap between the two is so big that it's impossible to roll directly onto the train without a ramp. He said: "They say it's wheelchair accessible but with a gap like that... My chair got stuck at Green Park and they had to shut down the line for 25 minutes." He added: "With gaps like that, you're going to get stuck."

The step-free Tube map provided by Transport for London is also incorrect, attendees claimed. Indigo said: "Euston says it's step free but it doesn't understand the difference between mainline train and underground." Different Tube and mainline rail trains need different ramps, Nathan said, which are all very heavy, making it harder for staff to provide positive support to people.

These concerns are leading to increasing numbers of disabled people being too scared to travel, they told the committee members. Adam Gabsi, co-chair of Inclusion London, said many are concerned about whether emergency exits are accessible for disabled people, or whether emergency procedures actually factor in less able people.

Mark Evers, Chief Customer Officer at TfL, said: "Our vision is a London where everyone can move around the city equitably, safely, comfortably and sustainably. Access to public transport is fundamental to this, and while we have taken steps to make our network more accessible, we know that much more needs to be done. All our staff members and operators receive ongoing Customer Service and Disability Equality Training. We are focussed on delivering a world-class customer experience and if we ever fall short of this, we always seek to learn from it so that we can continue to improve our services."



Record Number Of Mobility Scooter Deaths Prompts Demand For Tougher Safety Rules

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/11/17/record-number-mobility-scooter-deaths-tougher-safety-laws/> A record number of

deaths involving mobility scooters has prompted demands for tougher safety rules. In 2023, 16 people died in fatal collisions while another 90 were left with serious injuries, figures from the Department for Transport show. In another 222 incidents, people suffered minor injuries.

Failing to spot hazards was the most common cause of a collision, followed by being blinded by the sun, disobeying traffic signs and losing control in bad weather. The latest figure of 328 injury crashes is more than double the 156 recorded in 2013, of which five resulted in death.

Natalie Young died five weeks after being hit by a mobility scooter at a Morrisons supermarket in Taunton on March 9 2022. Following an inquest into her death in 2023, Samantha Marsh, the senior coroner for Somerset, called on Mark Harper, then transport secretary, to look at introducing similar assessments to those for cars. She warned that the complete lack of regulation around scooter use could lead to more deaths.

In a prevention of future deaths report, Ms Marsh said: “Mobility scooters can reach a fast enough speed to pose a significant risk to the entire community and population but specifically, small children, pregnant mothers and the elderly who are all particularly vulnerable to being impacted at speed by a blunt-force object and dying as a result of the injuries they sustain. “I am concerned that the lack of regulation around mobility scooters will continue to result in further deaths, especially when there continues to be no regulation around those who are deemed fit to operate and use them.”

London had the highest number of collisions with 104 in the past five years. In the West Midlands there were 76, there were 75 in Notts and 72 in Lincs. There are believed to be more than 300,000 mobility scooter users in the UK. At present you do not need a licence to drive any type of mobility scooter, including those that can travel at eight miles per hour.

Drivers over 70, however, must renew their driving licences every three years, complete a medical declaration form and pass an eye test.

A Department for Transport spokesperson said: “To ensure mobility scooter users remain safe, we have provided funding for a training scheme to educate users.”

The Driving Mobility scheme, also known as the Motability Scheme, is supported by the Government to train sellers in carrying out driving safety assessments and issuing guidance to customers.



Baroness Wilkins, Disabilities Campaigner – Obituary

<https://www.disabilitynewsservice.com/rosalie-wilkins-disabled-peer-had-unwavering-belief-in-justice-and-equality/> Baroness

[Rosalie] Wilkins, who died on 1 December, at the age of 78, had become involved in disability politics soon after becoming disabled at university in 1966, campaigning with the Disablement Income Group, and working for the Central Council for the Disabled (which later became RADAR).

She began her career in television in 1972 with a documentary she presented for World in Action on a village for disabled people in the Netherlands. This led to her presenting ITV's fortnightly LINK magazine programme from 1975 to 1988.

She later became a freelance television producer and presenter, producing documentaries that highlighted the movement's development, before working for the National Centre for Independent Living, and then being made a life peer in 1999, where she sat on the Labour benches.

In her maiden speech, on 23 November 1999, Baroness Wilkins focused on the independent living movement, highlighting how centres for independent living had “sprung up around the country” since the 1980s. She referenced disabled people's organisations such as the West of England Coalition of Disabled People and Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People, and called on her government to promote the “social inclusion of disabled young people leaving care”.

Her final speech in the Lords she spoke of the “catastrophic” impact of the shortage of accessible housing, and of how a government policy to weaken accessible housing standards “put accessible home building at risk” at a time when disabled people were “facing a growing crisis in finding suitable accommodation”.

She said the government's policy was “economic folly” and that ministers had “decided to favour the short-term profits of private developers, for which not only our generation but future generations will pay the price”.

Baroness Wilkins also served as a board member, vice-chair and chair of the London-based disabled people's organisation Action on Disability (AoD, formerly Hammersmith and Fulham Action on Disability, HAFAD).

Among her other roles were positions on the Central Health Services Council, the BBC General Advisory Council, and the Prince of Wales' Advisory Group on Disability, and she was president of the College of Occupational Therapists for five years.



This One Everyday Occurrence Could Cost Me £10,000

<https://metro.co.uk/2024/11/19/autumn-leaves-fun-a-danger-21974704/>

Samantha Renke is an actor, presenter and disability rights campaigner.

As the days get shorter and the weather gets colder, many Disabled or chronically-ill people like me will face more disabling factors than normal.

For me personally, I have osteogenesis imperfecta (OI), which means that I have brittle bones. So the damp air and rain really adds to my bone ache. As a result, my day-to-day activities take longer, I expel more energy, and even my dexterity drastically decreases – struggling to grip a mug or a pen at times, which doesn't usually happen to me.

The beautiful golden leaves falling from trees may be romantic to you, but they can be rather dangerous if you use a mobility aid. Just the other day, a pile of these leaves covered up a large pothole and nearly catapulted me out of my wheelchair. On another occasion recently, I went on a spontaneous solo outing in my power-wheelchair to the supermarket, but I found myself trapped there for nearly an hour by a torrential downpour. Water damage to my electric wheelchair – which then cost £10,000 to repair – is not like dropping a phone in a puddle and I can't just go and grab a new one. So when it rains more, I stay in more.

Don't even get me started about it getting darker earlier. The combination of poor streetlights and badly maintained pavements all add to a lack of wanting to venture out. Can you see how exhausting all of that is to even think about as a Disabled person?

So I want to urge non-Disabled people to please be patient, show empathy and check in on us a little more. This is especially important for me to highlight because Disabled people can already be subjected to stereotypes that may frame us as being lazy, incapable or even anti-social. But we are none of those things – rather, external barriers create disabling barriers.

Disabled people are just that people with an added layer of identity to consider. We still want to get involved in Christmas shenanigans, hang out and be merry. We still want to enjoy the seasons change and the magic of nature and we still want to feel included within society and our local communities.

We may now more than ever need a little more empathy, forethought and inclusive practices as we head into Winter and the New Year.



Disabled London Student Left Stranded As Dozens Of E-Bikes Block Pavement

<https://www.mylondon.news/news/zone-1-news/disabled-student-left-stranded-dozens-30427868>

A disabled student was left stranded on the side of a road in North London as dozens of e-bikes blocked the pavement. Katie Pennick, a wheelchair user and student in London, took to X to share videos of dozens of e-bikes blocking her way to her university lecture.

She said: "Today's reason for being late to my lecture: I can't cross the road opposite uni because there are about two dozen dockless bikes obstructing the dropped kerb."

The first video included in the post on November 18 shows several e-bikes parked right up against the dropped kerb on the pavement. While people walking can easily weave in between them to get through, it's clear Katie cannot.

Lime responded to the post, saying: "Thanks for bringing this to our attention. We're sorry for the disruption this has caused for you. A member of the local team will be in touch with you shortly to discuss this matter further."

Camden Council also responded: "Very sorry to see you've experienced this Katie. Thank you for making us aware. We expect dockless bike companies to keep our paths accessible. We will of course step in to clear this area to ensure all our residents can travel easily and safely. We will keep you updated on progress here."

This comes as several councils have raised safety concerns about the e-bikes and how they're parked. In September, Brent Council threatened to remove all Lime bikes from its pavements due to safety concerns. These included issues with "inconsiderate" parking and "abandoned" e-bikes, which can be particularly hazardous for those with visual impairments.

And Sadiq Khan has said officials are exploring an idea to further regulate London's e-bikes so that all dockless bicycles and scooters are managed under one coordinated scheme as many are reportedly left abandoned in paths. The Mayor of London said this would also involve combatting 'poor bike parking behaviour' by ensuring there are more places to park.

On Tuesday, November 26, Transport for London (TfL) set out a new plan for tackling dockless rental e-bike parking on London's red route roads. The new policy says TfL will consider taking action against operators who allow their bikes to be parked outside of designated places on red routes, as well as on TfL land which includes areas such as station forecourts and bus garages.

For the cost of nearly £1 million, TfL will also fund 7,500 new parking spaces across London boroughs, with 800 planned by next

summer and 3,000 by the end of 2026. TfL is also asking the Government to give new powers to certain transport authorities to help manage the e-bike parking issues longer term.



Rory Cellan-Jones Says....

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/bbc-news-parkinsons-alan-yentob-jeremy-paxman-obe-b1200826.html>

The former BBC News journalist announced in 2019 that he had been diagnosed with Parkinson's. The broadcaster's former technology correspondent, 66, was formally made an OBE by the Princess Royal for his services to journalism in December 2024.

Cellan-Jones announced in 2019 he had been diagnosed with Parkinson's and has since contributed to a podcast, Movers And Shakers, discussing life with the disease.

Discussing the success of the podcast, which also features former BBC colleague Jeremy Paxman, Cellan-Jones told the PA news agency: "It's been an absolute scream. "We've had the most extraordinary reaction from the Parkinson's community.

There is a community which felt absolutely left out in the cold and this award was for services to journalism, but I can't help but think that maybe that played some part too."

Cellan-Jones said he talked to Anne about fundraising for Parkinson's and how technology could possibly be used to monitor the disease. The journalist added: "She showed real interest in it. "Mike Tindall, whose father's got it, is very active in fundraising – so we talked about that."

Cellan-Jones said the OBE was "very unexpected when it came", adding that he felt "very privileged". He said his rescue dog from Romania, named Sophie, was "making slow progress" after becoming a social media sensation with thousands of people following her recovery online. Speaking at Buckingham Palace, Cellan-Jones said several courtiers had asked after Sophie, adding: "She's still incredibly nervous. She's waiting at home, she wouldn't have liked it here – a bit too busy. "She's making slow progress, but she's wonderful, and she's been very important to us."



Boy, 14, Left With 'Life Changing' Injuries In E-Bike Hit-And-Run

<https://www.mylondon.news/news/south-london-news/boy-14-left-life-changing-30500461> A teenager has been seriously injured in a hit and run incident in Eltham. Police were called earlier today (Monday, December 2) reports of a car colliding with a boy riding an e-bike in Newmarket Green.

Officers and paramedics from the London Ambulance Service attended the scene, where the 14-year-old was found with significant injuries. He was then taken to hospital, where the injuries to his leg were deemed potentially life-changing, the Met Police said.

The vehicle involved did not stop at the scene. Enquiries are ongoing to locate the vehicle and driver. No arrests have been made at this stage.

A London Ambulance Service spokesperson said: "We were called at 11.08am today (2 December) to reports of a road traffic collision on Newmarket Green, SE9. "We sent resources to the scene, including an ambulance crew, a paramedic in a fast response car and an incident response officer. We also dispatched London's Air Ambulance. We treated a teenager at the scene and took them to hospital."

Any witnesses yet to speak with police or anyone with dashcam or other footage is asked to call 101, ref 2591/02dec. To remain anonymous, you can contact Crimestoppers.



Staines Shopmobility

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**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

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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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



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



I Have Same Condition As Chris McCausland. I'm A Champion Ballroom Dancer

<https://www.dailystar.co.uk/tv/i-same-condition-strictlys-chris-33678736> Shaun Hayward followed Chris McCausland progress on Strictly Come Dancing with interest as the champion dancer has the same condition as the breakout star.

And Shaun Hayward, and his golden retriever/yellow Labrador cross Guide Dog Kevin - will be championing the actor and comedian to fall in love with dancing as much as he has.

Shaun says: "I'm really pleased Strictly have finally gone and done this. "It's not easy getting blind people out of their comfort zone but dancing modern jive is really simple, you get to meet

people and it's fun. "Once you've got that nailed you fly and feel emotion. I am all about positivity and possibility and really hope Chris falls in love with at least one of the dances – a Quickstep, a Cha Cha, whatever and he will understand the liberty dancing gives to someone with sight loss.

"I was the first blind person to qualify for the Winter Gardens and qualified in 16 months of ballroom dancing. "I did the training and got third in the UK – it was a great moment."

Since being diagnosed in July with Crohn's disease, Shaun has been in and out of hospital as he learns to live with the condition. And it's gorgeous Kevin, who was part of the Guide Dog's sponsored pup scheme and raised around £3million for the charity, that has been by his side aiding his recovery with pooch positivity.

"I was a cane user for 20-odd years and never wanted a dog as I travelled a lot but through life I've accumulated injuries – I've been run over three times. When my mate Terry died of bone cancer I missed his dog, Gus, who had a habit of stealing socks, and approached Guide Dogs who placed Alfie with me.

"He was brilliant – we went to Tenerife and Fuerteventura, it was magical. When Alfie came up for retirement he went to live with my friend Becky, who has a small holding in Yorkshire.

On Valentine's Day 2023 Shaun received a call saying Guide Dogs had found him a match in Kevin. Shaun says: "You can't change the world but you can change your head - it's all subconscious work. "You do weeks of training with a 22-month-old dog. "People presume you pick up an ear and tell them: 'Go to Aldi' but it's not like that."

"Sight loss can be devastating however disability happens to people, I wish people would remember that. "It's individual – remember it can happen to you."

And despite suffering a blood clot in his neck this year, Shaun's optimism and friendly personality radiates when we speak. "The love, hugs and cuddles from Kev gets me through," he says.

It takes two to tango – and Shaun and Kevin are already holding the glitterball as winners in their own right.



Adaptive Fashion Hits The High Street

<https://corporate.primark.com/en-gb/a/news/corporate-news/adaptive-fashion-hits-the-high-street-as-primark-launches-first-men-and-womens-range-with-victoria-jenkins>

The collection features more than 40 affordable and stylish wardrobe staples across womenswear and menswear, adapted to meet a range of needs.

Primark has unveiled a new affordable 49-piece adaptive clothing range for men and women which includes wardrobe staples based on Primark's bestsellers - from trench coats and tees, to jumpers and jeans, all with features designed around the needs of disabled people or those experiencing temporary disability.

The new collection, which has been developed with award-winning adaptive fashion designer and disability campaigner, Victoria Jenkins, founder of Unhidden, available from Tuesday 28th January in 31 stores nationwide and through the 113 UK stores offering Click & Collect.

The collection's adaptive features are designed to make dressing simpler, from magnetic zippers and snap fastenings to waist loops that help to pull up trousers and hidden openings for tube, stoma or catheter access. There is also a range of options for people who are seated, such as wheelchair users.

Created to reflect a diverse range of needs, the collection was shaped through a series of focus groups and hands-on fit sessions with members of the disabled community.

Despite 24% of people in the UK living with disability*, new research, shows that three quarters (75%) find it difficult to get accessible clothing. Seven out of ten (70%) of those surveyed state they must spend more on clothing that meets their needs while 80% say they feel excluded from buying fashionable clothes.

The findings highlight the challenges and frustrations that come from not being able to find the right clothing. Three quarters (75%) said that this has led to them being in a situation where they have felt uncomfortable, such as in social settings, on holiday or attending weddings. Two in five (42%) said that they often cancel plans due to difficulties in finding the right clothing.



Current Scams

<https://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/>

The Pearls or Perils of Buying Online

Currently over 80% of us make online purchases and in the coming years this is expected to grow even further.

For sure we should be vigilant about this type of purchasing for many fraudsters earn off online traffic. There's a lot we should consider before parting with our card details.

A lot. The padlock icon in the address bar tells that traffic between us and the website is encrypted. Information we send over the internet to the site, like our password and card details, are scrambled; to make it practically unreadable if intercepted. But the padlock doesn't guarantee honesty of the website operator. A scammer can add a padlock to their website. We would transmit securely, but to the fraudster!

On the website, is there an office contact number; not just a mobile, with full address and email address? If not, then it's a risk. If it's a UK company we can name check it out on Companies House register. If it's there it doesn't guarantee honesty but we can see who is/are the director(s). Other details too; like when it was established. If it is unregistered then it's more of a risk.

Even the stars on retailer review platforms can be manipulated. Reviewers can be rewarded by the seller to give 5 stars. Even if products are first class, in real life some will say they are rubbish, for that's human nature. Reviews with nearly/exactly the same words suggests same "handwriting". Is there a returns policy clearly stated?

If using a search engine to look up a business by name, then it's generally safer to ignore sponsored results, particularly those on social media. Prices much lower than comparable product/same product even at a huge discount, elsewhere? We know, don't we, that if it's looking far too good to be true then..!

For something costing over £100 we should pay by credit card. If we don't get something we've paid for by debit card, by simply the supplier refusing to refund us then we can ask our bank to refund us by reversing the transaction. (Chargeback) Our bank asks the supplier's bank to cough up, which means that even if our seller has gone bust we get paid. Again there's no 100% guarantee that the fixing will happen.

Read up on Section 75 of the Consumers Credit Act if goods are damaged, not as described or haven't been delivered. Remember too that bank transfers since last October now give us more protection than before but still there is no cast iron guarantee that if we are deceived we will get back all of our stolen payment in all cases. We should contact our bank if we hit any hurdles in concluding an acceptable purchase.



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) –



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

News Issued By DRUK

Head over to our News page to read more of our policy updates and stories.

<https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/civicrm/ mailing/ url?u=66611&qid=12166094>

Fazilet Hadi, Head of Policy at Disability Rights UK, awarded MBE in New Year Honours List

<https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/news/fazilet-hadi-awarded-mbe-services-promoting-interests-disabled-people>

In 2020, Fazilet joined us as Head of Policy, bringing her wealth of experience and her unparalleled passion for justice and human rights for all Disabled people. Her role has been pivotal in shaping the organisation's strategic policy direction and approach. This has enabled DR UK to amplify the voices of Disabled people at the highest levels of policymaking.

At Disability Rights UK, Fazilet has been key to our work to challenge inequality and our aspiration that Disabled people must have an equal say in shaping the policies and services that affect our lives.

Fazilet's ability to navigate the complex intersection of policy, lived experience, and advocacy is instrumental in our campaigning and influencing work.

Whether advocating for stronger disability rights legislation, pushing for accessible infrastructure, or highlighting the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Disabled

people, Fazilet's voice has been a beacon of clarity and conviction.

New Year Message on the Access to Work scheme - Fazilet Hadi, Policy lead. <https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/news/new-year-message-access-work-scheme> Wasn't it great to see Chris McCausland, blind comedian and winner of Strictly, deliver the Channel 4 alternative Christmas message on "Access to Work"? Chris asked for all Access to Work applications to be dealt with within 4 weeks, a call we should all get behind.

For those who don't know what "Access to Work" is, it's a government scheme that provides personal support, accessible equipment and fares to work, for Disabled people in employment. When it works well, it is an amazing Scheme, and I for one, certainly couldn't have worked without it.

For a government with the much-repeated ambition of getting Disabled people into work, you'd think that "Access to Work" would be high on its priority list. But you'd be wrong. It didn't even get a mention in the recent Government White Paper "Getting Britain Working." There were lots in the White Paper about restructuring government services and improving employment planning by Mayors and Local Government but nothing about "Access to Work", a Scheme which directly supports thousands of Disabled people to work.

In reality the Scheme is under great strain and every day lets Disabled workers down. It is under funded and over stretched. This is leading to Disabled people having claims rejected and support reduced. Instead of assisting Disabled people into work, the Scheme is leading to Disabled people losing jobs.

So, let's all ask Government, to respond to Chris McCausland's call for claims to be dealt with in 4 weeks.

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

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





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This means you can raise FREE donations for us no matter what you're buying. If you haven't signed up to support us yet, it's easy and completely FREE. These donations really help us, so it would be great if you could take a moment to get started! You can find our easyfundraising page here:

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/spelthorneaccessnow/>?



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/

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/



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