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info@spelthorneaccess.org.uk
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1992 – 2026

Spring 2026

Barriers to transport for disabled people

https://www.transportforall.org.uk/blog/2023/12/05/are-we-there-yet-barriers-to-transport-for-disabled-people-in-2023/
Transport for ALL research into disabled people's experiences of transport in England: the barriers we face, and priorities for change. *Authors Ezra Johnson, Alisha Pathania, Katie Pennick, Madeleine Stewart, Caroline Stickland, Emma Vogelmann*
Access to transport is integral to a just society; it’s how we access essential services, education and employment, healthcare, leisure, and our social lives. Without the ability to get from A to B, the world stops at the front door.

1 in 4 people in the UK are disabled, and we do not have equal access to transport. We make roughly 30% fewer journeys per year than non disabled people, the same figure as over 20 years ago. But it doesn’t have to be this way. Indeed, it cannot continue to be this way. For disabled people to truly be equal members of society, this disability transport gap must be closed.

It is the responsibility of decision makers and transport operators to listen to the disabled community’s experiences and to remove the barriers that stand in our way. Yet throughout our work campaigning for transport justice, a question we are often asked by decision makers is ‘Where is the evidence?’

At Transport for All we want to see progress for all disabled people. By disabled, we mean anyone who faces access barriers due to an impairment – including people who don’t use the word ‘disabled’ to describe themselves. This explicitly includes those of us who are Deaf, neurodivergent, chronically ill, have a mental health condition, have age related impairments, and people with both visible and non-visible impairments.

Safe, accessible streets should be something we can count on. Yet 96% of disabled people told us they run into barriers whenever they leave the house.

Top FIVE Barriers to transport for disabled people

- **Quality of pavements (bumps, potholes, tree roots,** cracked tiles, narrow) 77%
- **Street clutter (A-boards, bins, signs, bollards,** outdoor dining, e-bikes and e-scooters) 65%
- **Pavement parking 57%**
  E-scooters/ bikes being ridden on pavements 50%
- **Lack of dropped kerbs 50%**
- **Crossings are inadequate or hazardous for me to** use (shared space, lack of controlled crossing) 44%

My Maddening Experience With The NHS Wheelchair Service https://www.pslhub.org/blogs/entry/9294-%E2%80%98i-wish-i-could-say-i-kept-my-cool%E2%80%99-my-maddening-experience-with-the-nhs-wheelchair-service/

I was lying on my back in an east London hospital, sometime in August 2023. My phone rang. I managed to answer, even though I had largely lost the use of my hands. (Luckily, a member of staff had left it lying on my chest.) Nonetheless, I answered.

The person on the other end said they were calling from my local wheelchair service. I sort of registered this was important. Wheelchairs were going to be a big part of my life. But given I wasn't going to be discharged from hospital for at least six months, I figured the local wheelchair service could wait until I was a bit more up for the conversation. I apologised, and said I wasn't able to talk right then. I assumed they would understand it wasn't a good time, and call back later. I assumed wrong.

A month or so went by. My mum was down from Merseyside, staying in my old flat. She checked the post and found a letter from AJM Healthcare's Waltham Forest wheelchair service, a regional subsidiary of AJ Mobility Ltd

The letter stated that because AJM had been "unsuccessful in our attempts to contact you … your referral has now been closed". In other words, because I had failed to engage on the phone the one time that it called me, I had been removed from the waiting list for a wheelchair.

I was in hospital, paralysed. I could not leave hospital until I had a wheelchair. The local wheelchair service notified me that I wouldn't be getting a wheelchair, after speaking to me on the phone for less than 30 seconds. It did so by writing to my home address. Which I could not reach, because I was in a hospital. Without a wheelchair.

So began my involvement with England's wheelchair services, the patchwork of private companies contracted by the NHS to provide disability equipment to some of the people who need it most. It would prove to be quite a ride.

Before the accident, I did not yet know that local wheelchair services are a lottery, in which some of the most vulnerable people in society roll the dice. A lottery in which the taxpayer acts as permanent lender of last resort – while private companies profit.

On average, people have to wait at least 10 months between being discharged and being assessed, let alone getting the wheelchair that is right for them. Often this is because local wheelchair services will refuse to assess a patient until they have left hospital and are back at home. I waited about 10 months for my prescription wheelchair to be ready. Collecting it meant visiting an industrial estate in Leytonstone, about a 20-minute bus ride away..

When we got there, I met the clinical lead and he asked me to get out of the chair that I was in and position myself on the nearby plinth. I explained because I’m a quadriplegic, I require hoisting in situations like this. He looked somewhat concerned. Hoisting? He got a colleague, who then directed the clinical lead through the hoisting process. It struck me as quite odd that the clinical lead at a wheelchair service didn’t seem to be familiar with hoisting.

A few days later, my private physiotherapist came round to do my weekly rehab session. She took one look and ordered me out of the chair – with strict instructions not to sit in it again until an engineer had been out to make it safe. At present, she said, I was running the risk of getting pressure sores and muscle damage. She hoisted me on to my bed, and spent most of our session writing down the measurements required to adjust the wheelchair to fit my body.

If I hadn’t had her, who knows how long I would have spent in a chair that could have landed me back in hospital? It was becoming apparent that – just like everywhere else – in the world of wheelchairs, having a bit of money makes life a hell of a lot easier.

In many ways, I am lucky. I was able to keep my job teaching at a university, including a generous year of paid sick leave after the accident. Also, friends and family clubbed together to raise extra money through GoFundMe, enabling me to buy a high-spec private wheelchair that the NHS would never have agreed to pay for.

The parliamentary ombudsman wrote to AJM in May 2024, raising concerns after a rise in complaints reported by wheelchair users. In October 2025, the government was forced to acknowledge these complaints – though, rather uselessly, it then advised those with concerns to contact “the relevant integrated care boards”.

Disability News Service

DWP refuses to say who will lose out in 2billion cuts to disability benefits – Disability News Service

DWP refuses to say who will lose out in £2 billion cuts to disability benefits, six weeks after budget – Disability News Service

Despite requests for clarity from both Disability News Service (DNS) and the Liberal Democrats, ministers have rejected repeated opportunities to say exactly where the £1.95 billion cuts will fall.

Treasury documents, published on the day of the budget, showed that ministers will cut £85 million in 2026-27, £310 million in 2027-28, £520 million in 2028-29, £580 million in 2029-30 and £455 million in 2030-31, from spending on disability benefits.

The documents show the changes, to be introduced from April, are linked to plans to increase DWP’s “capacity” to reassess claimants of out-of-work disability benefits through the work capability assessment (WCA), increase the number of face-to-face benefit assessments, and extend personal independence payment (PIP) “award reviews periods”.

Although DWP has now apologised for its initial incorrect response to questions from DNS about the cuts, it still refuses to say which disabled people will lose out, how many will be affected, and by how much.

It originally claimed the cuts would be delivered through measures such as “tightening eligibility for overseas pension accrual” and “reforming Motability”, as well as “reducing duplication in benefit administration”.

But it has now admitted that it “made a mistake” and has apologised to DNS – apparently for mistakenly referring to pensions and the Motability cuts, which were separate budget measures not included in the £1.95 billion.

Despite the apology, DWP is still refusing to explain exactly where the cuts will come, and how they will be split between those receiving PIP and recipients of out-of-work disability benefits.

Instead, a DWP press release issued last month provides some further detail of the reassessment, face-to-face assessment and award review measures, while failing to provide any figures to show how many disabled people will lose out, which benefit groups they belong to, and how much they will lose.

DWP said in the press release that the proportion of face-to-face assessments for PIP would increase from six per cent in 2024 to 30 per cent of all assessments, while face-to-face WCAs would increase from 13 per cent of assessments in 2024 to 30 per cent, which DWP says will produce “savings”.

Delaying award reviews for PIP could also lead to further savings, DWP has told DNS, as will increasing repeat WCAs.

As a result of the changes, most PIP claimants aged 25 and over will not have their award reviewed for at least three years after a new claim, and then for a further five years at their next review if they “remain entitled”.

PIP claimants will still be able to request a review themselves if they tell DWP about a change in their circumstances, while DWP could trigger an earlier review if it receives information suggesting there has been a relevant change.

* * *

Consultation on electric wheelchairs, scooters and powered attachments could see end to legal confusion –

https://www.disabilitynewsservice.com/consultation-on-electric-wheelchairs-scooters-and-powered-attachments-could-see-end-to-legal-confusion/ The consultation, launched by the government on January 6th 2025, suggests options for updating legislation on the use of devices such as powered wheelchairs and mobility scooters that dates as far back as the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970.

The consultation, which applies to England, Scotland and Wales, follows a “rapid review” that has been taking place over the last few months and has involved disability groups and the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC).

The Department for Transport (DfT) says that powered mobility devices “are often a lifeline for people, offering freedom and independence”, but that some aspects of the law are now out of date, and “do not reflect the devices disabled people, and people with reduced mobility, need or want to use”.

DfT says that any reforms should allow people who need a mobility device to use it legally; lead to greater choice of devices; and enable people to feel and be safe when using roads and pavements.

Among the changes proposed is to scrap the use of the term “invalid carriage” in legislation and replace it with “mobility device”.

The consultation also seeks views on which types of mobility device should be able to use cycle lanes on roads and off-road cycle tracks; if weight, speed and minimum age limits for different classes of powered mobility devices should be altered; and whether disabled people should be allowed to carry passengers on their devices in certain circumstances.

But it will also examine whether wheelchairs with devices such as power, hand cycle or hand e-cycle attachments should be recognised as powered mobility devices under the legislation for use on roads and pavements. And it will look at whether pedal cycles, e-scooters and e-cycles should be recognised as mobility devices and treated differently when used on pavements and in public spaces by a disabled person.

Simon Lightwood, the minister for roads and buses, said the consultation was “the first step to delivering on that commitment as we seek views on the potential changes to legislation” and that it was “clear the legislation in its current form does not account for the modern mobility devices people need or want to use”.

The consultation follows years of lobbying and campaigning by the disabled people’s organisation Wheels for Wellbeing (WfW), including “intense work” after the confiscation of Israel Vidal’s wheelchair by the Metropolitan police last May.

He was left without his wheelchair for 19 days because police officers objected to him using a “not in class” powered wheelchair attachment at walking-speed, and impounded both his manual wheelchair and the clip-on powered attachment, treating them as an uninsured motor vehicle.

The law currently says such attachments can only be used legally on roads if they have an MOT certificate, insurance and licence plate, and the user has the appropriate driving licence.

Isabelle Clement, director of WfW, said: “We are delighted to see the Department for Transport consulting on modernising laws on ‘powered mobility devices’. She said reform “has the potential to improve the independence, physical and mental health, employment, educational and social options of disabled individuals and our families” across Britain.

Sir Stephen Timms, the minister for social security and disability, said: “We are determined to break down barriers to opportunity for disabled people and improving access to assistive technology, as well as making sure that the laws around its use are up to date, is essential to this. “I encourage disabled people to respond to the Department for Transport’s consultation so their views and voices are used to shape this policy.”

Nick Goldup, chief executive of the Wheelchair Alliance, whose board members include wheelchair-users – including its president, Baroness [Tanni] Grey-Thompson – and representatives of charities and service-providers, said: “The Wheelchair Alliance wholeheartedly welcomes this government review of powered wheelchair legislation. “For too long, wheelchair-users have been sidelined by outdated legislation and offensive terminology. “Many individuals using wheelchairs over 150 kg have been left feeling anxious and worried about breaking the law. “Having worked closely with Simon Lightwood MP for over a year, we are beyond proud that our campaigning has secured this commitment to change. “We will continue to amplify the voices of our community to ensure this review delivers a fairer, more inclusive future for all.”

The consultation will run for 12 weeks and closes on 31 March.

Support from across UK for CEO who turned down MBE over government ‘demonisation’ of disabled people

https://www.disabilitynewsservice.com/support-from-across-uk-for-ceo-who-turned-down-mbe-over-government-demonisation-of-disabled-people/ Disabled people across the country have backed the chief executive of a disability organisation after she turned down an MBE because of how successive governments have “demonised, dehumanised and scapegoated” disabled people.

Tressa Burke, founding chief executive of the disabled people’s organisation Glasgow Disability Alliance (GDA), received a letter from the UK government on the day of the budget, 26 November, telling her she would be awarded an MBE in the new year honours for services to disabled people.

But in her response to that letter – released on social media on 30 December – she said she could not accept such a “personal honour” at a time when disabled people were being “so dishonoured”.

Burke told Disability News Service (DNS) that she had been left in tears and “blown away” by the reaction to her decision to turn down the MBE from disabled people across the UK, both in emails and on social media. She said this response had shown her that rejecting her MBE had left other disabled people – and disabled people’s organisations – “feeling heard”.

In her letter to the government, Burke highlighted “unfair, inadequate and inaccessible work”, “barriers to securing work”, inadequate benefit levels, and rising disability-related costs.

She said the “political choices” made in November’s budget had “supercharged the inequalities and unfairness disabled people face” while the budget was “another missed opportunity to make real changes which would have improved disabled people’s lives”.

Among the UK government’s planned changes to social security, she highlighted increased face-to-face assessments for personal independence payment, the halving and freezing of the health element of universal credit for most new claimants from April, and “unfair and unjust” changes to Motability, including tax changes that will add hundreds of pounds to upfront payments to cars leased through the scheme.

In response to the letter, there was a flood of support praising her “profound act of leadership” and “courage and grit”.

Others praised her “moral stance” and “rare and inspiring” integrity, and for sending “a strong message to Westminster and also to all people experiencing the impact of the punitive measures”. “Unless you live this I don’t think anyone gets how incredibly challenging 2025 was for us.”

* * *

Don’t Help unless You Ask First – Visually Impaired People and Their Dogs.

Car Drivers - Don’t use your horn if you see a guide dog at a dropped kerb junction with its owner waiting to cross. Although this is something that might feel helpful from behind the wheel but it can actually be unsafe for someone who is visually impaired and working with a guide dog.

Pedestrians – Do not touch the VIP or their dog and try to take them across the road without asking the VIP first if they require assistance.

When a guide dog team stops at a curb, there’s a process happening that isn’t always obvious to people in a car or other pedestrians. First, the dog is doing exactly what he/she’s been trained to do, stopping at the curb.

Then, the visually impaired person (VIP), will listen, assessing where traffic is and whether it’s safe to cross.

Only then they will give their dog a command to move forward, however the dog is trained to refuse the command and it’s one of the most important safety skills a guide dog has. They aren’t being stubborn; they are doing what they’ve been trained for to keep their VIP safe.

That entire process depends heavily on sound and focus, which is why honking a horn or attempting to aid a VIP can cause problems. A horn doesn’t clearly communicate intent, and it can mask important traffic sounds. Also any attempts at manually assisting a VIP will confuse the dog and confuse and possible frighten the VIP.

For drivers, the safest and most respectful thing to do when you see someone with a guide dog or a white cane waiting to cross is simple: stop, remain stopped, and give them the space and time they need to cross safely.

If you believe a person with a guide dog needs help, it’s okay to calmly ask, but never assume, and never touch the dog, harness, or person unless you’re invited to do so. Guide dogs are highly trained professionals, and when they’re in harness, they’re working.

So if you encounter a guide dog team please let them do what they need to do. They’re not ignoring you, they’re not hesitating without reason, and they’re not trying to hold up traffic. They’re making sure they can cross safely.

* * *

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

Every Journey, Everyone: Why Mobility Aid Regulations Need to Change - and How You Can Help

Wheels for Wellbeing are a nationally and internationally recognised pan-impairment Disabled People's Organisation working for equal access to walking/wheeling, cycling and multi-modal journeys for all Disabled people. They have been consulting with Disabled People's Organisations, charities, industry bodies and Disabled individuals on inclusive requirements for changes to mobility aid laws for a number of years. Wheels for Wellbeing wrote for our blog about the ongoing consultation into changing mobility aid laws and how you can get involved.

On 6th January 2026, the government launched a consultation about changing mobility aid laws. The consultation was due to close on 31st March 2026, but following the publication of BSL and Audio versions, the deadline to send responses has been extended to 22nd April 2026.

Over the last 50 years, mobility aid technology and equality laws have changed almost out of all recognition. Yet, laws about which mobility aids we can use, and how and where we can use them, have hardly changed at all.

Our outdated, discriminatory laws are restricting Disabled people's ability to get around our own homes and communities. They're stopping us from caring for our families, getting to education, employment and healthcare and are preventing us from taking part in society in the ways we want to, and should be able to.

At Wheels for Wellbeing, we're really excited about how changes to mobility aid laws could transform Disabled people's mobility rights and options. We want Disabled people to have the same rights to pedestrian movement and cycling or cycling-equivalent movement that all non-disabled people already have.

Everyone should have the right to use aids that enable us to move independently indoors and outdoors, on a wide range of surfaces. We should have the right to use aids which allow us to support family and friends who need help moving around, keep up with the people we're walking/wheeling or cycling with, and transport our babies and children.

We need the right to use aids that allow us to make trips at the same sorts of speeds that non-disabled pedestrians and cyclists can and we need to be able to hurry away from danger.

We need better access to public transport with our mobility aids, and to be able to start and finish trips on higher-speed aids by slowing to pedestrian speeds on pavements.

Unfortunately, the government's consultation is not well written. Some of the things it suggests could even result in outcomes which ban Disabled children using any wheelchairs at all, or ban many mobility aid users from travelling on different types of routes, including pavements, roads and cycle tracks.

We're producing lots of resources including webinars and a range of documents to help everyone understand current mobility aid regulations, and how different changes to the regulations could affect different people.

Mobility aid regulations affect us all, directly or indirectly, now or in future.

Please take a look at our resources, come along to a webinar or watch a recording, talk to us on Facebook, Bluesky, Instagram or via info@wheelsforwellbeing.org.uk, and respond to the government's consultation by 22nd April.

Report highlights flaws In the Access to Work scheme

With growing numbers of Disabled people having their employment put at risk by delays and cuts to Access to Work, the National Audit Office (NAO) has published a report that finds that delays and backlogs have dramatically increased.

The report, released on 6 February 2026 shows that the average time taken to process ATW applications increased from 28 days in 2020-21 to 109 days in November 2025, affecting people's job security and employers' cashflow. Demand for the scheme has "increased significantly" in recent years, with the number of applications rising from 76,100 in 2018/19 to 157,000 in 2024/25.

The NAO said these delays and increased demand for the scheme has had “a negative impact on individuals and employers”.

The NAO notes that DWP's spending on Access to Work in 2024-25 was almost twice as much as 2018-19 (from £163m to £321m.

Complaints about Access to Work rose from 234 in 2022–23 to 657 in 2024–25, with 800 in the first six months of 2025–26, most relating to delays in processing applications.

New rules have been introduced which prevent digital sharing of applications and documents and instead require communication by post, making the process inaccessible for many.

The Disability Poverty Campaign Group, co-chaired by DR UK and Inclusion London, recently ran a survey on ATW. Its findings noted that there were:

Significant cuts in support hours

Refusals to fund essential support for travel or personal care

Delays in payments or approvals

Employer refusal to provide necessary equipment

The NAO has made recommendations on how ATW can be improved such as:

Dan White, policy and campaigns officer at DR UK said “The NAO findings add to the growing bank of evidence on the failures of ATW to meet the needs of Disabled people. The Scheme has worsened even further since the NAO analysis, with delays now of 210 days and with Disabled workers experiencing significant cuts to support worker hours. Some Disabled people have lost their jobs due to the cuts and for others, the clock is ticking.”

“The Government needs to act now to cut backlogs and delays, provide the personalised support Disabled people need to work, and restore confidence in the Scheme. Access to Work was designed to ensure equality and create a level playing field for Disabled workers, the Scheme needs to fulfil this commitment.”

DPCG response to changes in funding of Warm Home Discount
A major overhaul of how the Warm Home Discount (WHD) is funded is prompting concern among disability organisations, such as the Disability Poverty Campaign group (DPCG), which has written to the energy minister warning that the change could lead to some Disabled people facing even higher energy bills, despite the Government claim that changes will reduce energy costs for poorer households.

The DPCG is a coalition of DPOs (Disabled People’s Organisations) and allies from disability and anti-poverty charities, research institutions, and carers organisations. DPCG works to end the scandal of disability poverty in the UK. It is co-chaired by DR UK and Inclusion London.

The Warm Home Discount is a government-backed scheme that offers a reduction of £150 from electricity bills for the winter period. The money isn’t paid directly to the customer. Instead, a discount is applied to the electricity bill. It is also possible to get money off gas bills, if the supplier provides both gas and electricity

The Government confirmed that from 1 April 2026, energy suppliers will stop recovering Warm Home Discount costs through the fixed standing charge and instead apply the levy to unit energy rates, meaning households will pay according to their usage rather than a flat daily fee. The policy follows a consultation held between December 2025 and January 2026 and forms part of a wider package of measures intended to cut average energy bills from next year. However, the Disability Poverty Campaign Group say the move risks increasing bills for Disabled people who use high amounts of energy for essential medical and mobility equipment, even though they live in the poorer households the government wants to support.

The Government has acknowledged concerns about “households with unavoidably high energy needs,” including those who use medical equipment or rely on electric heating, warning that some may see higher costs under the new model.

In its letter, the DPCG asks that the Government urgently rethinks the recovery arrangements and instead:

Increases support for Disabled people’s essential energy needs, including by adding PIP, AA, and DLA to the Warm Home Discount eligibility criteria; and

Redesigns the cost recovery system for the Warm Home Discount in consultation with Disabled people and our organisations, to ensure that Disabled people with unavoidably high energy costs are not penalised.

Suggests more ethical and responsible options for funding the Warm Home Discount, including through general taxation or a tax on energy firm profits.

Energy bills show no sign of decreasing. A report late last year released by Public First found the fuel poverty gap - the amount by which energy bills would have to reduce to lift a household out of fuel poverty - has doubled since 2020, and now stands at over £400 a year, and that annual energy bills are, on average, £700 more expensive compared to five years ago – and expected to remain high into late 2026, evidenced by further energy price cap rises.

Indeed, Ofgem is set to announce a new energy price cap from April shortly, with annual bills expected to fall to £1,641 from April 1, but campaigners such as the DPCG warn fuel poverty will continue year-round, with no further support planned. Many fuel poverty charities state that people are still paying hundreds of pounds more on energy bills, than they were a few years ago. In addition, the cost of living has risen across the board, meaning for many households, specifically Disabled households, energy costs are unaffordable.

Dan White, Disability Rights UK Policy and Campaigns Officer and co--chair of the Disability Poverty Campaign Group, said: “Shifting the levy for the Warm Home Discount onto unit rates risks punishing Disabled people simply for needing the energy that keeps us alive. Many Disabled households rely on feeding pumps, ventilators, electric wheelchairs, hoists and heating for health reasons. These are not optional extras — they are essential.”

“At a time when Disabled people are already disproportionately in deep poverty and facing unaffordable bills, the Government must not introduce reforms that make life even harder. Instead of loading costs onto those who use the most energy out of medical necessity. The Government need to digest our asks, and action what we believe to be fair and just recommendations."

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Adults Wellbeing & Health Partnerships Briefing

Talking Therapies: ieso changes to Mindler

ieso are one of the four NHS Talking Therapies Providers working in partnership with NHS Talking Therapies in Surrey to provide free Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) for residents.

Following Mindler Ltd’s acquisition of ieso Digital Health (UK) Limited, they are undergoing a full rebrand from ieso to ‘Mindler’.

However, there are no changes to their service, self- referral process, or patient care, and no changes for residents, they can continue to self-refer 365 days a year, 24/7.

They have launched the new Mindler website but their the existing ieso website will remain at the moment to continue to accept self-referrals.

Please update your records and signposting information to reflect their new name and website.

For further information, or to request printed or digital leaflets, please contact:

- Email: talkingtherapies@mindler.co.uk
- Website: www.mindler.co.uk/surrey

Moving and positioning training sessions available

Surrey Independent Living Charity (SILC) has a limited number of face-to-face Moving and Positioning training sessions available to book for Direct Payment or Personal Health Budget recipients to train their PAs, funded by Skills for Care. Practitioners and social care teams can also make referrals on their clients’ behalf.

The training is an opportunity for people to have a trainer visit their home and train their PAs on the correct procedures for safe moving and positioning, bespoke to the individual, and using the equipment in their home.

All enquiries must be made before the end of March 2026 to receive this fully funded training.

For further information, or to book please contact:

- Email: training@surreyilc.org.uk
- Telephone: 01483 458111.

Let’s talk tech from Sight for Surrey

Sight for Surrey is running a friendly and informative Let’s Talk Tech webinar series covering a wide range of technology topics including accessible technology, new digital tools, or tips for everyday tech use. Sessions run bi-monthly, usually on Wednesdays from 11am to 12.30pm and sometimes on Mondays from 2pm to 3pm.

To book a place, please call 01372 377701 and mention that you’d like to join the upcoming Let’s Talk Tech webinar, or email technology@sightforsurrey.org.uk . Please include the webinar session you’d like to attend in your message.

Webinar Dates 2026

- Wednesday, 25 March: An Introduction to Windows Screen Readers

- Wednesday, 27 May: AI apps, what are they and how can they help you?
- Wednesday, 29 July: Synapptic, the app that makes an Android device easy to use
- Wednesday 30 September: Using a Screen Reader on your Smartphone or Tablet
- Wednesday, 25 November: Windows 11 Accessibility Features

SABP: Winter Pressures Campaign – Toolkit

Winter can increase demand on health and social care services, making early intervention and clear communication vital. Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SABP) has launched a Winter Pressures campaign with a Partner Toolkit to help professionals share key messages and signpost support including crisis support and Safe Havens.

Toolkit includes:

- campaign materials for social media and print
- guidance for professionals
- signposting to local and national mental health services

For further information or to access the toolkit, please visit:

- Website: www.sabp.nhs.uk/our-services/mental-health/winter-pressures-partner-toolkit

Important announcement regarding QEF services

Queen Elizabeth’s Foundation (QEF) for Disabled People started a formal wind-down process on 11 November 2025 and will be filing for administration.

This process will affect all QEF services, including:

- QEF Mobility Services
- Transport Advice Service (formerly Hubs Mobility Advice Service)
- MERU
- Care and Rehabilitation Centre, Leatherhead

Steady on Your Feet website and interactive self-assessment tool

The Steady on Your Feet website and interactive self-assessment tool is part of an NHS national campaign to help reduce falls. The East Surrey Ageing Well Steering Group has supported First Community to develop this tool to help prevent falls and support individuals to maintain their independence.

The fully accessible website provides a range of advice, guidance, videos and online resources for anyone worried about falling. The site aims to provide users with the confidence to maintain their mobility and reduce the risk of falls. There is information on managing hazards in the home, diet tips, exercises, support groups and partner organisations who can help support.

The website is free to use, and an assessment can be completed by an individual or with support from a friend, carer or health professional to generate an action plan to reduce the risk of falls.

Changes to Surrey County Council's charging policy for adult social care in the community

Two changes are being introduced that may affect how much some people pay for adult social care support at home or in the community.

After a recent public consultation, the county council's cabinet approved updates to the charging policy to help keep adult social care sustainable in the future.

The changes only affect care provided at home or in the community. There is no change in the policy for people living in residential or nursing care.

1. The first update will affect people who have capital above £23,250. Capital means the money or assets that people own (such as savings in the bank or building society) but does not include the value of the property they live in.
   From 2 February 2026, if someone has more than £23,250 in capital, they will need to pay the full cost of their care. At the moment, the threshold amount is £24,500.
2. The second change is about how Surrey County Council works out what people pay for their care if they have capital between £14,250 and £23,250.
   From 2 February 2026, if someone has capital between the lower threshold of £14,250 and the amended upper threshold of £23,250, Surrey County Council will add a little bit of extra money each week to what they pay - £1 for every £250 of capital. This is known as charging 'tariff income' - where an amount of savings is treated like weekly income.
   The maximum amount of tariff income that anyone will pay per week is £36.

Surrey County Council has written to all those people currently known to adult social care who may be affected by the changes.

In addition, Surrey County Council is holding five library drop-in sessions during January to help explain what the changes could mean for people. Staff will be available to explain the changes, talk through how financial assessments work and answer any questions.

Further information about the changes to Surrey County Council's charging policy is available online.

Latest from Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board

Annual report 2024/2025

The Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) has published its 2024/25 annual report, highlighting key activities and priorities.

The report is available to read online.

SSAB questionnaire

The Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) is gathering feedback on its website and invites people to share their views by completing a short questionnaire.

Service User Network (SUN) for complex emotional needs and personality disorder

SUN is an open-access, facilitated peer support service for adults who experience difficulties with complex emotions, often associated with personality disorder. The service is based on the principles of a therapeutic community and is co-produced by Surrey and Borders (SABP) NHS Foundation Trust in partnership with The Mary Frances Trust. SUN is delivered by a team of clinicians alongside practitioners with lived experience.

SUN offers daily support through six groups held each week, delivered both online and face-to-face. These groups provide a safe and supportive space for adults to share experiences and offer one another help and advice.

Further information about SUN is available online.

One-to-one support available through Community Connections

Structured one-to-one support for up to six months is available through Community Connections for individuals experiencing low-level mental health concerns such as anxiety, depression, low mood, or social isolation, helping to build coping strategies, set goals, and support overall wellbeing.

Further information about the service and how to make a referral is available online.

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North Surrey Sports Association for Disabled People (NSSADP) - has been established by local volunteers to provide funding for sports clubs to provide activities for disabled people. If anyone is involved with a sports club which has capacity to provide sport for disabled people please contact NSSADP via text on 07809 586153

Spelthorne Boccia Club -Team Spelthorne Boccia Club is supported by the association and meets at the Eclipse Leisure Centre, Knowle Green. Training sessions are every Thursday evening between 6.30 and 7.30 using two marked Boccia courts in the main sports hall. The cost is £3.

There are 4 Boccia courts marked out in the sports hall and these are theoretically available to book on the same basis as badminton courts although the company running the Eclipse Leisure Centre, Places Leisure, fails to publicise this despite being requested to do so.

This may be because the Centre is not designed to provide safe and convenient access and facilities for disabled people. However, if anyone does want to book a Boccia court or establish how to gain access to the Centre, it is recommended that the Centre is contacted by phone. (01784 493493).

Although the days of 'phoning ahead should have been quashed by the Equality Act 2010, sadly that is not the case for the Eclipse Leisure Centre .

SCAN has been actively seeking improvements for disabled people since the Centre opening in October 2024 although neither Places Leisure nor Spelthorne Council, which owns the building, are prepared to co-operate. The matter has recently been taken up with the Local Government Ombudsman and SCAN is hopeful of action.

Spelthorne Parasports Club

The club was brought to the attention of the local MP, Lincoln Jopp MC and he spent a session at the club speaking to members and their carers. As a result of discussions between Places Leisure and Spelthorne Council, the Parasports Club has recently been transferred over to the management of Places Leisure will run by them.

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

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

These 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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