

[View in browser](#)



**RIGHT CHAIR
RIGHT TIME
RIGHT NOW**

**WHEELCHAIR
ALLIANCE**



Welcome to our April 2026 newsletter!



A message from our CEO

As I sit down to write this message and reflect on the great things that we shared in our last newsletter in January, it really hits home about the incredible things we have

achieved since the beginning of this year.

Our brilliant team has been working hard to raise the profile of the Wheelchair Alliance, championing wheelchair users throughout the UK. Part of this work included the launch of The Wheelchair Collective, the first national council of wheelchair users, which has been kindly funded by the **RFU Injured Players Foundation**.

This pioneering council brings together ambassadors from every nation and region of the UK and the interest we had in the voluntary positions was incredible. We are proud to now be able to reveal the new representatives and you can find out more on who they are in this newsletter.

Last month we also brought together partners and supporters, alongside our patrons, at a meeting for the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Wheelchair Users at the House of Commons.

After a year of effort to launch the group, which is dedicated to wheelchair user voice focusing on the need for leadership and better data to improve commissioning, it was a momentous occasion to have everyone in the room.

At the meeting we also shared an update on our campaigning. For the last year we have been working with Simon Lightwood, MP and Under Secretary of State for Transport regarding the outdated laws on powered mobility devices, which resulted in the government launching a public consultation on this. Last month, our Chair, Karen Pearce was interviewed live on LBC Radio and Radio Berkshire/Oxford regarding the Alliance's stance on this.

If you are a wheelchair user, carer, an accessibility organisation or work in the industry, I would implore you to complete the survey ahead of the deadline on Wednesday 22nd April to ensure that your voice is heard.

Alongside campaigning, we have also continued to expand our team to support our projects. Patience Young has joined us as a project manager and we are so happy to have her as part of the Alliance team.

As our team continues to grow, so do the number of our charity partner members. We now have an amazing 35 partners, alongside over 1000 members!

This is fantastic news which highlights the hard work and dedication of the team and everyone that continues to support us.

There is so much news to share and I hope that you enjoy reading about all the achievements I've touched on in this newsletter.

As ever, a big thank you goes out to each and every one of you for your support, including wheelchair users, sponsors, partners and of course our dedicated team.

Until next time.

Nick Goldup, chief executive officer at the Wheelchair Alliance



Have your voice heard before Government consultation ends

Don't miss the chance to have your voice heard on modernising outdated laws on powered mobility devices, including powered wheelchairs and mobility scooters.

Current legislation dates back nearly 40 years and doesn't reflect the technological advances that have transformed these essential devices.

Last month, the Alliance's Nick Goldup and Karen Pearce attended a roundtable discussion at Westminster regarding the consultation on the 'Use of Invalid

Carriages on Highways' legislation.

The meeting was chaired by Simon Lightwood, MP and Under Secretary of State for Transport. Also at the meeting was Lilian Greenwood, MP and Under Secretary of State for Local Transport.

Over the last year we have worked closely with the Department for Transport on this issue, so we welcomed the opportunity to contribute further context on behalf of wheelchair users during the roundtable discussion.

We are pleased that Simon agrees that the 40-year-old legislation is completely out of date, using outdated and inappropriate terminology, as well as not reflecting the innovations in wheelchairs as well as other forms of mobility devices over the years.

During the roundtable, Simon iterated that the Government is committed to changing this although he did acknowledge that this may take time to deliver, as the views of all those that would be affected by the change must be considered – including all pavement and road users.

We were also pleased to have been asked to comment on key aspects that the ministers were interested in, alongside making suggestions to help improve the law, ensuring that wheelchair users are not discriminated against.

It's crucially important that wheelchair users have their voice heard. Throughout the consultation, wheelchair users, accessibility organisations, industry, and the public are being invited to share their views on a variety of areas critical for updating these laws.

The consultation closes on Wednesday 22nd April 2026.

[Click here to make sure your voice is heard](#)



APPG meeting held at the House of Commons

On Thursday 20th March, the Alliance was proud to hold a meeting for the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Wheelchair Users at the House of Commons.

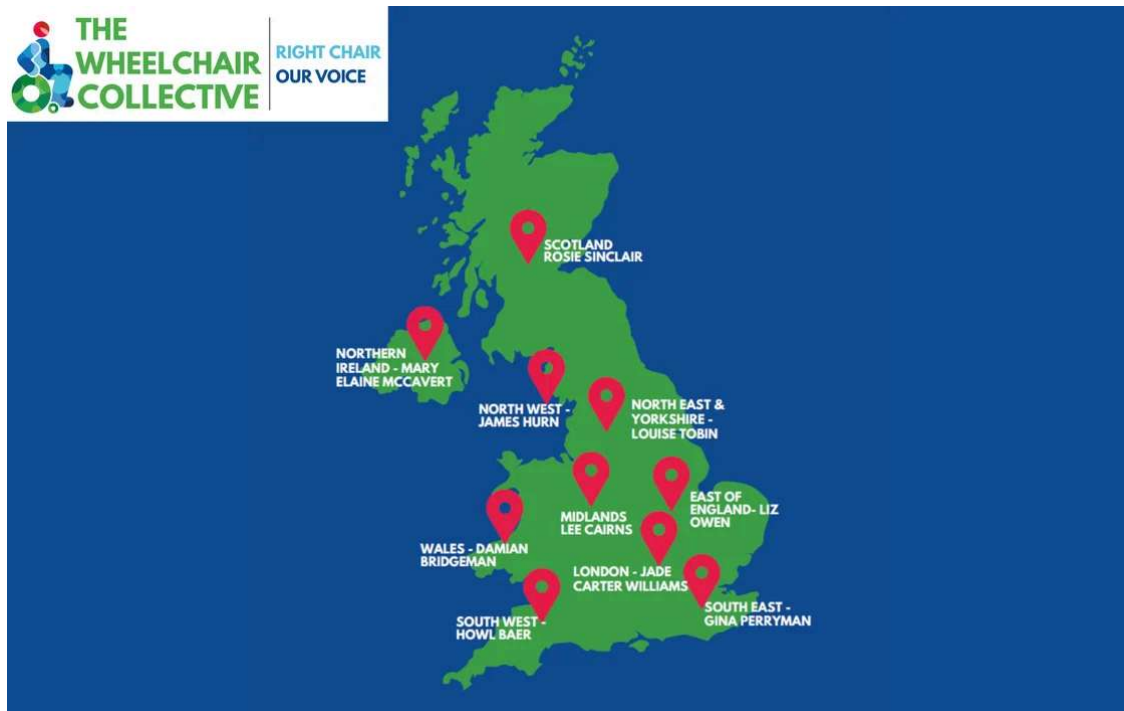
Hosted by Daniel Francis MP on behalf of the Alliance, it was an opportunity for partners and supporters, alongside our patrons, to come together to discuss wheelchair provision in the UK.

It was great to see so many faces in the room – all of whom share the same goal of ensuring that every wheelchair user has the right chair, at the right time.

Insightful talks were given including from our CEO Nick Goldup on current wheelchair provision and the need for change and our chair, Karen Pearce who gave an update on the campaigning which has culminated in the launch of a consultation by Government to review outdated legislation around the use of powered wheelchairs.

Patrons of the Alliance, Mo Belal and Nick Wilson also shared their lived experience as wheelchair users, emphasising how having the right chair, at the right time, has played a key role in enabling independence.

Lizzie Hawkins also provided an exciting update on the launch of The Wheelchair Collective, a national council of wheelchair users. All council members have now been appointed, along with its chair, Damian Bridgeman (more on this can be found in this newsletter!)



Reps of UK's first national council of wheelchair users announced

Earlier this year, the Alliance was immensely proud to have launched The Wheelchair Collective – the UK's first national council of wheelchair users.

Supported by the [RFU INJURED PLAYERS FOUNDATION](#), this pioneering council will bring together ambassadors from every nation and region of the UK that will work with the Alliance to shape future strategy.

After a nationwide search, we can now confirm the voluntary representatives for all ten regions, alongside the roles of a youth leader and chair.

Chair - Damian Joseph Bridgeman

Youth Leader - Amber Daw

London - Jade Carter-Williams

East of England - Liz Owen

Midlands - Lee Cairns who is also Deputy Chair

North East and Yorkshire - Louise Tobin

North West - James Hurn

South East - Gina Perryman

South West - Howl Baer

NI - Mary-Elaine McCavert

Wales - Kerensa Phelps

Scotland - Rosie Sinclair

Our successful regional representatives have large networks with an impressive, combined reach of over 30,000 wheelchair users nationally.

Each will bridge the gap between their local community and national policy, ensuring their lived experience informs the highest levels of government and the NHS.

For too long, wheelchair provision has been a postcode lottery for an estimated 1.2 million wheelchair users in the UK and we can't wait to change that with The Wheelchair Collective.

More information on the representatives will be shared shortly.

In the meantime, please join us in welcoming them to the Alliance team.

Find out more about The Wheelchair Collective, [here](#)



Alliance joins steering group for new research project

The Wheelchair Alliance is proud to announce that it has joined the Steering Group for a new research project focusing on updating UK regulations for powered mobility aids and micromobility devices.

Commissioned by the **Motability Foundation** and led by independent transport research organisation, **Transport Research Laboratory Limited** (TRL), the project will help inform the future of micromobility and powered mobility aid regulation and

policy in the UK, with a focus on improving accessibility and safety for disabled people.

TRL will be supported by the **RiDC (Research Institute for Disabled Consumers)**, and a Steering Group consisting of representatives from the Wheelchair Alliance, **Wheels For Wellbeing**, **RNIB (Royal National Institute of Blind people)**, **Spinal Injuries Association**, and **Disability Rights UK**. Together we will be tasked to contribute expertise, guidance, and help co-produce recommendations for future policy.

The research comes at a critical moment, as the UK Government carries out a consultation on the law around powered mobility devices (see the news story in this newsletter on how to have your voice heard as part of the consultation).

[Read more on the project here](#)

HAS THE PERSON YOU CARE FOR HAD A NEW WHEELCHAIR IN THE LAST FEW YEARS?

Share your experience in our focus group...

...and you'll receive £75 as a thank you!

Find out more information and sign-up through the link or QR code

CONTACT US: georgiana.gillespie@revealingreality.co.uk

HAVE YOU HAD A NEW WHEELCHAIR IN THE LAST FEW YEARS?

Share your experience in our focus group...

...and you'll receive £75 as a thank you!

Find out more information and sign-up through the link or QR code

CONTACT US: georgiana.gillespie@revealingreality.co.uk

Can you help shape provision of wheelchairs across the UK?

The Wheelchair Alliance is excited to be supporting a project that is investigating the provision of wheelchairs across the UK.

Funded by the [Motability Foundation](#), the research is being led by the independent research organisation [Frontier Economics](#).

The interviewing and focus groups are being led by [Revealing Reality](#). They are

looking for wheelchair users - and parents, carers, or family members - to take part in online focus groups as part of the new Motability Foundation research project.

The project explores people's experiences of wheelchair provision in the UK - what's working, what isn't, and how services could be improved. Your views will directly shape evidence that could inform how wheelchair services are redesigned.

You'll receive £75 for each focus group as a thank you for taking part.

Sessions take place online, run by researchers from Revealing Reality, who will give you a ring beforehand to explain the research in more detail and what taking part involves.

If you are interested in taking part, sign-up using the links below.

Wheelchair users, [click here](#)

Parents and carers of wheelchair users, [click here](#)



Our patron, Lord Hunt, raises question in House of Lords

In February, the Lords Grand Committee met to discuss the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill, which had reached Committee Stage.

During the discussion, our patron Lord Philip Hunt highlighted Clause 44 of the Bill.

Clause 44 is concerned with the health, wellbeing and public service reform and specifically health improvement and health inequalities. It lays a new duty on combined authorities to have regard to the need to improve the health of the people in its area and to reduce health inequalities. It also defines health determinants. This is very welcome.

However, Lord Hunt believes that current wheelchair provision service is a 'disgrace' and this Bill could go further to help improve it. He has asked for the following addition:

“(f) the degree of ease or difficulty with which persons have access to high quality wheelchair and community equipment provision,”

This amendment seeks to include wheelchair and community equipment provision in the list of ‘general health determinants’ that authorities need to have regard to as a cause of health inequality.

Lord Hunt liaised with the Wheelchair Alliance before raising this in the House of Lords and we are grateful for his support in advocating for wheelchair users at the highest level.

You can watch Lord Hunt's speech here



A big welcome to our new partners

Support for the work that we do continues to grow and we're incredibly grateful to every organisation who has come onboard to support us.

A very warm welcome and a big thank you goes to [Variety the children's charity](#), [International Society of Wheelchair Professionals](#), [Myotubular Trust](#), [Go Kids Go!](#), [Action on Disability](#), The [British Association of Prosthetics and Orthotics](#), [Alliance Scotland](#) and [AFK](#) who have recently signed up as partners of the Alliance.



Could you be our new Board Director?

The Wheelchair Alliance CIC is committed to improving the lives of wheelchair users through ensuring support, collaboration, innovation, and access to appropriate mobility equipment.

We bring together stakeholders across healthcare, government, and industry to ensure that wheelchair users' voices are heard, their needs are met, and their rights are upheld.

At this exciting time for the Alliance, we would like to bolster our brilliant Board of Directors by recruiting a new CIC Board Director with experience in Fundraising.

The Alliance has big ambitions to grow and we need your help to achieve our ambitions.

The role is a voluntary role, and it is an opportunity to join an impactful organisation who are representing more and more wheelchair users, charities and organisations each week.

Due to the nature of the role, you will be required to attend regular face-to-face meetings, so this position would ideally suit those based in the UK.

If this sounds like you, please do message us with your interest and CV at admin@wheelchair-alliance.co.uk

[Click here for the job description](#)



New starter at the Alliance

Here at the Alliance, our team continues to grow.

Following the appointment of project managers, Phil Hoare and Lizzie Hawkins earlier this year, we are proud to welcome Patience Young to the fold.

With a wealth of experience as an occupational therapist, she joins us as a project manager and will be working part-time on a project investigating the provision of wheelchairs across the UK (see 'Can you help shape provision of wheelchairs across the UK?' story in this newsletter).

As part of the project, Patience will be looking at current wheelchair service provision, focusing on engagement and brainstorming new ideas to feed into how wheelchair services are redesigned.

Of joining the Alliance, Patience said: "I'm excited to be part of the Wheelchair Alliance at a time when it feels as if positive change in wheelchair provision and legislation is within our grasp.

"I look forward to seeing what amazing work the Alliance, as a collective, can achieve."

It's fantastic to see our team continue to grow so that we can forge forward in our plans to ensure that everyone gets the right chair, at the right time.



Did you go to Naidex this year?

If so, you may have bumped into our very own Phil Hoare and Lizzie Hawkins who attended **Naidex** on Wednesday 25th March.

Held at the NEC Birmingham from 25th-26th March, Naidex is a hugely important event in the disability community calendar, with cutting-edge accessibility solutions and innovations on display and important conversations taking place. There were also some great key note speakers.

Both Lizzie and Phil had a great time meeting lots of new people, telling them all about the work being done by the Alliance.

Partner spotlight



Just4Children: providing support for families

A warm welcome goes to one of our newest partners, Just4Children.

Just4Children is passionate about providing support for families to help their children with disabilities and sickness, focusing on the relief of sickness and preservation of good physical and mental health of children and young people under the age of 25 years resident in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

The charity helps families fundraise for their children to enable them to obtain medical treatment, therapies and equipment which would not otherwise be available to them.

Just4Children is championed by British swimmer, Stephanie Millward, its patron and ambassador. Diagnosed with multiple sclerosis at the age of 17, her determination and talent led her to excel in competitive swimming despite the challenges she faced. She has won multiple medals across several Paralympic Games, securing a mix of gold, silver, and bronze medals.

Of the partnership with the Wheelchair Alliance, Jeremy Marris, from Just4Children said: "We are very excited about entering into this new partnership with the

Wheelchair Alliance.

“Our goal is to help families most in need by supporting parents to navigate their fundraising options and create a clear path to support their children, alongside raising funds for life-changing therapies, equipment, and mobility support.”

[Click here to find out more](#)



A big thank you!

Here at the Alliance, we would like to say a very fond farewell and good luck to one of our founder members, Jean Waters.

As a wheelchair user, for many years Jean has actively campaigned to improve services for disabled people and their carers.

She also chaired the working groups that developed and reviewed the Wheelchair Charter, a set of six principles that seek to ensure that everyone who needs a wheelchair gets one, and no one is left without the equipment they need because of where they live.

Jean has decided to step down from her role at the Alliance to take some much-needed time out. However, she has promised to stay in touch.

Of the card and flowers she has received as a ‘thank you’, Jean said: “Please thank everyone for the card and kind words, which mean a lot.

“I shall miss you all but hope to have some use once in a while! Very best wishes to all.”

Thanks again Jean for all that you have done for the Wheelchair Alliance.



An accessible website for all

As a community interest company, accessibility for wheelchair users plays a key role in everything that we do here at the Alliance.

That is why we are pleased to reveal an updated and refreshed website. We've streamlined navigation to ensure that essential resources, policy news, and advocacy toolkits are just a click away.

Our enhanced website prioritises accessibility, ensuring a seamless experience for wheelchair users, carers, and professionals alike. By integrating clearer layouts and real-time updates on our national campaigns, we are making it easier than ever to unite our voices.

The Alliance's project manager, Phil Hoare, has used his experience in creating content and design to lead on the development of our website, ensuring that it

remains accessible for all while aligning to our values.

He said: "The Wheelchair Alliance website has a much cleaner look than before, aligning perfectly with our brand, and its professional design demonstrates that we are serious about advocating for better wheelchair access for all.

"Attention has been specifically pointed towards accessibility and inclusivity. We believe that all services should be available to everyone, and the web is no different.

"Our site takes steps to ensure that this access is available to everyone who uses it. We still have lots of work to do, particularly around our upcoming Academy page which is an insightful resource for wheelchair users and commissioners alike.

"I look forward to sharing further updates on this and our other web projects with the community soon!"

[Visit the website here](#)

Partner spotlight



Focusing on a clear vision of support

Muscular Dystrophy UK connects a community of more than 110,000 people in the UK living with one of over 60 muscle wasting and weakening conditions, and all the people around them. They do this so that everyone can get the healthcare, support and treatments needed to feel good, mentally and physically.

In September 2025, the charity launched their new ten-year strategy, which focuses on a clear vision: a world without limits for people living with muscle wasting conditions.

To realise this vision, over the next decade Muscular Dystrophy UK will focus on four key goals:

1. - **Transforming diagnosis** – help speed up and improve the accuracy of diagnosis.
2. - **No one faces their journey alone** – reach everyone with information and support at the point of their diagnosis and be there for them at every stage of their journey.
3. - **New treatments, universal support** – help accelerate the development of new treatments for every condition and ensure quicker and easier access to specialist support when and where people need it.
4. - **Living your life to the full** – campaign for a more equal and accessible world and support more people to live independently with better physical and mental health.

A Muscular Dystrophy UK spokesperson said: “This is an ambitious strategy, and while we’re passionate about delivering it, we can’t do this alone.

“The transformation starts right here, right now. And we're grateful to have the Wheelchair Alliance as a partner with us as we take this next step. We look forward to continuing working together.”

For more information on Muscular Dystrophy UK, [click here](#)

Being unable to socialise is unfair

“There’s generally steps everywhere [...] you have to pay a premium to enter a place that has step-free access.” **Hammas**



UK-wide study on inclusive design launched

The world is full of barriers for disabled people which is why one of our partners, [Designability](#), has launched The Unfair Index: a UK-wide study to assess how inclusive design could remove everyday barriers for disabled people.

Society isn't designed with everyone in mind. For disabled people those barriers can take away things that everyone deserves - freedom, confidence, opportunity. But it doesn't have to be that way.

Designability have been working with a Lived Experience Advisory panel, including Zoe, Christopher and Hammas, to co-design this research, keeping disabled people's voices at its heart.

The survey will close at 9am on Monday 27th April 2026.

To take part in The Unfair Index survey, [click here](#)



Record-breaking media coverage

Last year saw the Alliance achieved a fantastic amount of media coverage. However, we are thrilled to share that 2026 is off to a record-breaking start. Our coverage in the first three months alone has already surpassed our entire total for last year!

Since January we have secured 86 pieces of coverage in major outlets including the Daily Mail, The Telegraph, Disability News Service and The London Weekly, reaching an incredible 17.8 million people!

It's an incredible achievement which highlights just how far we have come as a community interest company.

Traction is being made in our campaigning which has seen a range of national titles covering the work that we are doing, particularly around the launch of the government consultation.

Only last month, our Chair Karen Pearce was asked by The Times to contribute the Alliance's views on the questions featured in the government consultation. As a result of that coverage, she was then interviewed on LBC Radio and BBC Radio Berkshire/Oxford.

With the support of our PR agency, [Ballyhoo PR](#), we have been able to raise the awareness of our mission while continuing to attract new sponsors and partners. This has also resulted in an increase in our membership base.

Can you support us?

Our volunteers work tirelessly to pursue the vision and the mission of the Alliance, with the aim of improving the lives of wheelchair users everywhere.

However, we can't do this work alone.

We are lucky to have the support of our wonderful partners and sponsors but any contributions made will help us to do more to get the voices of wheelchair users heard.

If you are able to donate, please do so. We thank you in advance for any support you may be able to provide.

Make a donation



Are you looking to reach wheelchair users?

ASK US ABOUT ADVERTISING IN OUR EMAIL NEWSLETTER*

Email admin@wheelchair-alliance.co.uk for a ratecard

*As a CIC, we need revenue to fund our good work. However, we also feel strongly about building a safe, engaged community of wheelchair users, so any potential advertisers do need to go through a process of due diligence.



Disclaimer: *To support wheelchair users in finding the information they are looking for, the Wheelchair Alliance will at times provide links to websites that we believe may be of interest. The Alliance does not endorse any particular organisation, service or product that may be advertised on third party websites. The Alliance assumes no responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions in the content of these third party websites.*

email: admin@wheelchair-alliance.co.uk

Wheelchair Alliance, 167-169 Great Portland Street, London, United Kingdom W1W 5PF

[Unsubscribe](#) [Manage preferences](#)

