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**RIGHT CHAIR
RIGHT TIME
RIGHT NOW**

**WHEELCHAIR
ALLIANCE**



Welcome to our Winter 2025 newsletter!



A message from our COO

Our newsletter comes to you on a special day - International Wheelchair Day. This is a day designed to raise awareness of the daily experiences of wheelchair users, promote understanding and knowledge about mobility solutions and disability rights, and encourage active participation and collaboration in creating accessible environments for all.

This is something that aligns with our own values and we encourage you to get involved today if you can using the hashtags #Unstoppable #AppropriateChair and #InternationalWheelchairDay2025 if you are posting about using a wheelchair on social media today.

This year our friends at the International Society of Wheelchair Professionals have taken ownership of the day, so please do check out what they are doing at <https://iswp.org/>.

Much has happened since our last newsletter, which you will see as you read on.

In November, we launched our third report. The report, entitled [*Wheelchair Provision: How to Drive Effective Change*](#), was launched at the House of Lords by the Alliance and our President Tanni-Grey Thompson, and completes a trilogy of annual reports released in 2022, 2023 and 2024.

Since then, we've been working really hard behind the scenes on what we have internally been calling the 'not in class work', carrying out a valuable survey, establishing a working group of related charities and pushing for change in the legislation relating to the use of power wheelchairs over the weight of 150kg. Thank you to everyone who has fed into this important work so far.

Towards the end of last year, we also welcomed a new patron to the Alliance - Disabled Adventurer, Nick Wilson.

As I read this latest newsletter, it emphasises to me just how important communication is in what we do. Helping to amplify the voices of wheelchair users through our reports, surveys and working with our growing group of partners is vital, as is sharing first-hand experiences through film, social media and the wider press.

Communication - alongside innovation and national accountability - is one of the three pillars that are at the foundation of everything we do.

Looking to the future, we have lots coming up that I am looking forward to sharing with you when we can. We have been liaising with politicians and universities about various projects and collaborations, and we are excited about speaking and exhibiting at the [NAIDEX](#) exhibition on 19 - 20 March at the NEC in Birmingham.

In our next newsletter, we will be focusing on another of our three pillars, looking at innovation in wheelchair provision, and we have news of a big milestone to share!

Nick Goldup, chair and chief operating officer at the Wheelchair Alliance



New report highlights that drastic change is needed in wheelchair provision in England

Our latest report, entitled [Wheelchair Provision: How to Drive Effective Change](#), was launched at the House of Lords in November by President of the Wheelchair Alliance, Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson.

This third and final report of a series of three, was funded by [Motability Foundation](#) and produced by independent research companies [Frontier Economics](#) and [Revealing Reality](#), outlines several recommendations that - if implemented - could greatly improve wheelchair provision in this country and go some way to tackling the postcode lottery, long waiting times, issues in the supply chain and ensuring that the voices of wheelchair users are heard.

These include:

1. There should be a senior responsible officer within NHS England (NHSE) and dedicated wheelchair service commissioners within Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) to oversee wheelchair services in England.
2. That NHSE addresses the regional and local variation in service quality, known as the postcode lottery, by defining a national eligibility criterion and by holding each ICB dedicated wheelchair commissioner to account for the governance and quality of the service they are providing.
3. The Department of Health and Social Care take a more active role in ensuring the quality and efficiency of wheelchair services through better procurement and supply chain management.

To read our other recommendations and how they could change wheelchair provision for the better, read the full story and view the report by clicking the button below.

[Read the story in full](#)



Not in a class: updated guidance could affect powered wheelchair users

Before Christmas, we urgently called on all powerchair users to complete a vital survey to help us raise concerns over a recent change in class for powered wheelchairs.

The call to action followed concerns on the categorisation of powered wheelchairs after the UK Government updated guidance with the addition of a new classification of mobility scooters and powerchairs entitled 'not in a class'.

According to the updated guidance, a not in a class mobility scooter or powerchair can go more than 8mph, is wider than 0.85 metres, and weighs more than 150kg (or 200kg if any medical equipment is attached).

The guidance states that a not in a class mobility vehicle can only be used on roads, users must have a valid driving licence, and the vehicle must be registered with the DVLA and insured like a motor vehicle.

Responding to this guidance change, the Wheelchair Alliance sent an open letter to the Secretary of State for Transport, highlighting these concerns.

The Alliance then approached other charities working with wheelchair users and their carers to see if they were aware of these changes. A subsequent roundtable meeting was held that saw representatives of Whizz-Kidz, Spinal Injuries Association, BLESMA, Back Up Trust, Duchennes UK, MND Association, Motability Foundation, and the Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board wheelchair service commissioner to discuss the impact of this issue.

Following the roundtable discussion, it was collectively decided that more data was needed from those who use powerchairs to truly assess the impact of this new guidance.

Funded by the Motability Foundation, the Wheelchair Alliance coordinated a survey and is producing a report of its findings.

Last week, the Alliance met with the Department for Transport to discuss the issue further.

This is a developing matter and we hope to update you with more information on this in our next newsletter.

Our Partners



Membership is growing

Since our last newsletter, we have seen some big name supporters join us in our mission to strengthen the voice of wheelchair users and provide information to empower those who use a wheelchair, their families and carers.

We would like to say a massive thank you and welcome to The MND Association, Whizz Kidz, Newlife, Back Up Trust, Muscular Dystrophy UK, Spinal Injuries Association and Wheelshare.

We will be featuring each of these wonderful and impactful organisations and shining a light on the great work they do in future newsletters.

[Find out more about our partners](#)



New patron announced

Nick Wilson, speaker, disabled adventurer and content creator, has joined the Wheelchair Alliance as its patron.

Nick (pictured above on the far left), spent 14 years in the Army before he was forced to retire due to prolapsed discs in his spine. He now works as a disabled adventurer, speaker and content creator.

Wheelchair adventurer Nick recently became the first person with disabilities to reach the highest accessible point on a powerchair completely unaided, by climbing Mount Snowdon.

Through his various social media channels he has forged a new life raising awareness of the impact that accessibility, loneliness and suicidal thoughts have on people with disabilities, by the sharing of his own experiences.

“As a disabled adventurer, I know first-hand how challenging it can be to navigate the world while living with a disability,” said Nick.

“As an ambassador for the disabled community, I am committed to breaking down barriers and advocating for greater accessibility in all aspects of life.”

On Friday 31st January, Nick invited Wheelchair Alliance to an exclusive viewing of his documentary 'Project RockClimber', which chronicled the production of his specially made wheelchair - RockClimber - and his Mount Snowdon challenge. Nick Goldup was honoured to be asked to say a few words about the Wheelchair Alliance at the screening.

To follow Nick Wilson's adventures, visit his website at <https://www.disabledadventurer.com/> or follow him on Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/disabled.adventurer/>

Find out more about Nick's appointment as patron



Sharing stories of wheelchair user experiences through film

When compiling our latest report at the end of last year, we worked with three fantastic organisations - Frontier Economics, Motability Foundation and Revealing Reality.

This work not only resulted in the production of our ***Wheelchair Provision: How to Drive Effective Change*** report, it also gave us access to some real life case studies.

In a series of videos produced by Revealing Reality, we hear from Sophie, Adam, Stephen and Sarah, who talk about their experiences of getting access to the right wheelchair at the right time and how it is not as easy as it should be.

We hope to use these videos widely over the coming months to illustrate the difficulties faced by wheelchair users in this country.

Watch the main, 10 minute film, by clicking on the play icon in the photo above and stay tuned to our [LinkedIn page](#) as we release more of these beautiful, powerful videos.

Whizz Kidz seeks wheelchair users aged 16-23 to join Youth Board

Whizz Kidz are looking for young wheelchair users to join their Youth Board and shape the work done by the organisation.

Who are the Youth Board and what do they do?

They share their ideas and opinions to steer Whizz Kidz on what is most important to young wheelchair users, making sure that their voices, and the voices of young people from their areas, are at the heart of every decision Whizz Kidz makes.

The Youth Board also works with businesses, charities, and community groups to campaign, raise awareness and make change. This is done through leading projects, speaking at events, writing blogs, giving feedback through audits and focus groups and highlighting areas for improvement.

Whizz Kidz Youth Board members will:

- Participate in quarterly weekends away and monthly online meetings
- Lead on projects and campaigns to make a difference for young wheelchair users
- Shape Whizz Kidz and the work it does
- Have the opportunity to grow skills such as public speaking, leadership and communication
- Meet and connect with other young wheelchair users

To find out more and how to apply, see <https://www.whizz-kidz.org.uk/about-us/youth-board/>



Poster download

We have created a downloadable PDF poster about the Wheelchair Alliance following demand from doctor's surgeries.

The A4 poster is aimed at wheelchair users and features a QR code signposting them to our website and additional information and resources.

If you would like to display a poster in your organisation, feel free to download and print a poster using the button below.

Download our poster

Making the headlines!

Since our last newsletter was sent out in October, we have amassed **57 pieces of media coverage**, reaching more than **eight million people in the UK!** This does not include our reach on social media.

This included Disability News Service, BBC Radio Five Live, Disability Review, AT Today, Charity Today, National World, UK Newsgroup and many more.

Click on the logos below to read and listen to some of our favourites.



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*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 Wheelchair Alliance does not endorse any particular organisation, service or product that may be advertised on third party websites. The Wheelchair Alliance assumes no responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions in the content of these third party websites.*

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