

UK DISABILITY HISTORY MONTH FACTSHEET



Access: “How Far Have we Come? How Far Have we to Go?”

18th November – 18th December 2020

The UK Government ratified the United Nations the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2009). Article 9 stipulates:



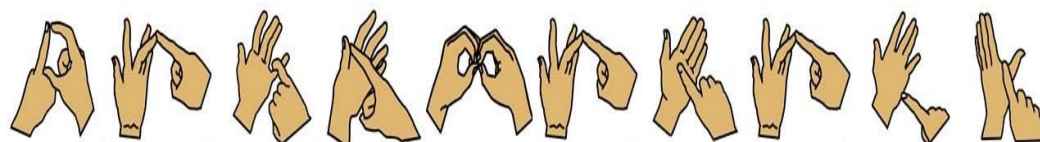
“To enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life, States’ parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communication including information and communication technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and rural areas. These measures shall include the identification and elimination of obstacles and barriers to accessibility.”

It is important to address accessibility in all its complexity, including the physical environment, transportation, information and communication, and services. If goods, products, and services are open or provided to the public, they need to be accessible to all, regardless of what Sector provides and operates them.

“Universal design” means the design of products, environments, programmes, and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. “Universal design” shall not exclude assistive devices for groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed.

Achieving equal rights like access has only happened because disabled people have organised through their trade unions, community groups and organisations. These rights are already under attack because of huge cuts in public spending and blatant ideological attacks on benefits which support disabled people to work or live with dignity without work. These challenges will be greater as we continue to emerge from the Coronavirus Pandemic and begin to forge a “new normal”.

Disabled History Month is an opportunity for UNISON members to reflect on the experience and struggles of disabled people in Britain and around the world, and to celebrate and encourage individual and collective activism to challenge discrimination.



Disability History Month helps support UNISON's priority of equal and fair treatment at work under the principles of the Fair Work Convention and helps generate some early momentum in the build-up to

UNISON YEAR OF THE DISABLED WORKER 2022



Purpose of Disability History Month

- ✦ To raise awareness of the unequal position of disabled people in society and to advocate disability equality.
- ✦ To develop an understanding of the historical roots of this inequality.
- ✦ To highlight the significance of disabled people's campaign for equality and inclusion and the 'social model' of disability.
- ✦ Throughout DHM it is important to recognise that disabled people have multiple identities, are sometimes members of other groups subjected to discriminatory practice, and to ensure that the diverse nature of disabled people is recognised in terms of the range and types of impairment that are included e.g. neuro-diverse, mental health issues, learning difficulty, physical, invisible and sensory impairments.

Key focus of Disability History Month 2020

- ✦ Understanding the importance of the struggles of Disabled People for Access.
- ✦ Understanding the Human Rights Principle of Access for Disabled People.
- ✦ Applying Universal Design to environmental, communication, educational, occupational, organisational issues to minimise barriers to Disabled People and maximise our participation.



Why UNISON supports Disability History Month

- ✚ In the way we organise ourselves and campaign we always strive to ensure we are representing **all** of our members. We work with members to promote equality and tackle discrimination in the workplace, society, and the wider world.
- ✚ Disability History Month is therefore essential in providing information and raising awareness of the contributions that disabled people make, and the challenges, and discrimination they have faced, and continue to face.

How UNISON supports Disability History Month

- ✚ Encourages Branches and Regional Disabled Members Committees to set a budget, organize, promote and share information about Disabled History Month events. This information should be available in all accessible formats, where necessary, including British Sign Language (BSL)
- ✚ Produces materials for use in Regions and Branches.
- ✚ Encourages promotion of Disability History Month by highlighting events that have been held and sharing information about these on websites and in publications.



How can branches get involved?

- ✦ Display and distribute our Disabled History Month Factsheets & Posters.
- ✦ Organise a Disabled History Month event in your branch or workplace.
- ✦ Check for Disabled History Month events on UNISON websites.
- ✦ Get your branch website & social media platforms full of content and pictures celebrating Disability History Month.
- ✦ Carry out a Physical Accessibility Audit of branch offices and venues used for face-to-face engagement such as branch meetings, committee meetings, AGMs, and individual/collective representations. It's vital these are accessible to everyone that will be visiting or attending.
- ✦ Carry out an Accessibility Audit of branch Communications & Campaigns activity including newsletters, magazines, flyers, website, Facebook and social media platforms.

Important issues to consider

Transportation Links – Parking – Reception - Accessible Toilets – Accessible Buildings (Ramps & Lifts) – Open Spaces - Seating – Sound – Lighting – Catering & Special Diets - Air Quality - Emergency Evacuation Procedures - BSL Signer Availability - Guide /Assistance Dogs



S.C.U.L.P.T.

SCULPT is simple guidance to create accessible documents and web content. It is an acronym of six simple things to do correctly to meet basic accessibility requirements. www.worcestershire.gov.uk/sculpt

1. **S**tructure (heading styles) - Use heading styles in your document.
 2. **C**olour and Contrast - The colours you use and the contrast between text and background.
 3. **U**se of Images - Use alternative text on your images.
 4. **L**inks (hyperlinks) - Describe your link, never 'click here'.
 5. **P**lain English - Use clear uncomplicated language with no jargon.
 6. **T**able Structure - Use simple tables without merged or split cells.
- ✚ **Finally** make sure you send us your Disabled History Month Event stories & pictures for inclusion on our Facebook Page and Newsletter.



Contact us in the first instance through UNISON Scotland at West Campbell Street or you can private message us through our Facebook Page with your contact information and we'll get back to you.



<https://www.facebook.com/UNISONScotlandDisabledMembers>

#IamMoreThanMyDisability

#AdjustYourThinking

#FairnessNotFavours