

# SPELTHORNE COMMITTEE ACCESS NOW (SCAN)



## MAY 2020

[info@spelthorneaccess.org.uk](mailto:info@spelthorneaccess.org.uk)

[spelthorneaccess.org.uk](http://spelthorneaccess.org.uk)

**CORONAVIRUS – COVID19  
SPECIAL ISSUE - 4**

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### **DISABLED PEOPLE 'BEING JUDGED FOR TRYING TO SHOP SAFELY'** *Edited from iNews May 2020*

Disabled people are being "judged" and forced to explain their situation when trying to safely buy food at supermarkets during the coronavirus pandemic, a leading disability charity has warned.



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From risking their health because they can't get delivery slots, to facing negativity from other shoppers, buying food and essentials continues to be a source of enormous worry for many disabled people who are left feeling vulnerable by the experience, new research by Scope suggests.

More than one in three (36 per cent) disabled shoppers surveyed by Scope said long queues were aggravating their conditions or impairments, with 26 per cent saying they have faced negative attitudes from other shoppers.

Supermarkets have introduced priority delivery slots and dedicated shopping hours for vulnerable customers, with some offering assisted shopping for those in need, but many disabled people are still finding food shopping a difficult experience. Scope has called on supermarkets to develop a "consistent and co-ordinated approach" for disabled customers, and to expand their lists of vulnerable people who are eligible for help.

James Taylor, Scope's Executive Director of strategy, impact and social change said: "Shopping is already a difficult task for many disabled people, and now many are telling us they feel judged and compelled to explain their condition just to be able to shop safely. It's crucial that new rules to protect people, such as asking people to queue outside supermarkets, don't make it harder or impossible for disabled people to shop. The Government and supermarkets need to listen to disabled people and develop a consistent and co-ordinated approach and urgently act to expand its 'vulnerable' list, to make sure all disabled people can safely get the food and essentials they need."

The iNews has approached the Government Equalities Office for comment.

<https://inews.co.uk/news/health/disabled-people-judged-food-shopping-supermarkets-vulnerable-covid-19-coronavirus-2653719>



## **CORONAVIRUS – COVID19 - TELL US HOW YOU'VE BEEN AFFECTED**

SCAN is conscious that groups represented at the Spelthorne Forum are experiencing a range of challenges at the moment and will continue to do so for at least the next 12 weeks.

Local Organisations with an involvement in Disability and Health



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support services across Surrey are encouraged to submit regular reports and updates. Are you arranging 'virtual' open meetings and events? – let us help to publicise them. Nominate any 'Local Heroes'.

Please contact me on [info@spelthorneaccess.org.uk](mailto:info@spelthorneaccess.org.uk) or text me on 07853 038933.



## **DISABILITY RIGHTS UK (DRUK) – News in Brief**

### **Access to Health Care**

Following the open letter to the NHS, published on DR UK's website <https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/news/2020/april/covid-19-and-rights-disabled-people> and signed by over 2,000 individuals and organisations, asking that disabled people receive equal access to health care, the British Medical Association (BMA) have replied.

However, concerns about access to health care have continued. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) also wrote to the BMA, asking that their guidance in relation to disabled people be reviewed, to ensure that non-pertinent health conditions and impairments do not affect treatment decisions.

The BMA have now also sent a reply to the EHRC, and both letters can be accessed via their website by clicking here.

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-work/news/coronavirus-pandemic-letter-british-medical-association>

### **Nearly Two-Thirds Of Disabled Adults Say COVID-19-Related Concerns Are Affecting Their Well-Being**

An Office for National Statistics (ONS) survey finds that nearly two-thirds (64.8%) of disabled adults say COVID-19-related concerns are affecting their well-being. The main reasons cited by disabled adults for their well-being concerns during the COVID-19 pandemic were feeling worried about the future and being stressed, anxious or bored.

<https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/news/2020/april/nearly-two-thirds-disabled-adults-say-covid-19-related-concerns-affecting-their-well>

### **Disability Rights UK Continues To Campaign For Safe Access To Food And Other Essential Items For Disabled People During The Covid-19 Pandemic.**



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In partnership with a number of disabled, older people's and unpaid carers' charities, we are inputting into the Department for Environment and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to improve access to food.

In a shared letter, we wrote to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on the 15th April, to notify him of the lack of instore and online reasonable adjustments provided by supermarkets, for many disabled and older people who fall outside of the 1.5 million identified by the government, as "clinically" at risk of COVID 19.

Prior to this, Disability Rights UK wrote to the CEOs of nine major supermarket chains, about the lack of priority for online delivery slots and failure to make sufficient reasonable adjustments in store, which continue to make shopping difficult, even impossible and unsafe, for many disabled and older people and their carers. We are extremely disappointed that the biggest supermarkets including Tesco's, Sainsburys, Morrisons and Asda have not replied and insist that they will only talk to disability organisations through government. We find this unacceptable.

### **DR UK Response to Women and Equalities Committee (WEC)**

DR UK today submitted our response to WEC on the impact of Coronavirus on disabled people. We raised the devastating effects the virus is having on millions of disabled people including reductions in social care, challenges with health care and problems with supermarket shopping. We also highlighted failure to consult with disabled people and inaccessible information.

<https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/news/2020/april/dr-uk-response-women-and-equalities-committee>

### **Incapacity And Disability Benefit Claimants Feel Particularly Hard Hit During Coronavirus Outbreak, MPs Find**

The Work and Pensions Committee of MPs has published the results of a survey to find out people's experiences of the benefit system during the coronavirus outbreak. The survey shows that incapacity and disability benefit claimants feel particularly hard hit

More than 6,000 people responded to the Committee's call for submissions from people claiming benefits for the first time, from existing claimants, and from people who need support but have found they are unable to claim any benefits.

The suspension of face to face assessments for disability benefits has caused problems for people whose assessments have been



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cancelled and not yet rescheduled, leaving them uncertain about when they will take place.

<https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/news/2020/april/incapacity-and-disability-benefit-claimants-feel-particularly-hard-hit-during>



## **DISABLED LIVING UK - News in Brief**

### **Safer Use of Walking Frames: University of Salford publish guidance documents**

The University of Salford have been involved in a research project relating to the safer use of walking frames. Senior Research Fellow, Sibylle Theis Phd, provides an update on the project to date.

Informed by our research over the last few years and based on feedback from healthcare professionals, we have now completed development of two guidance documents concerned with safer use of walking frames, and have also developed associated training videos and a web page that holds all resources (leaflets and videos). Specifically, we developed the following two documents:

- 1) a Safety Information Leaflet for users of front-wheeled walking frames, and
- 2) a Good-Practice-Guide for those involved in prescription of these frame and training of users.

Each document is supported by a video guide. All resources (documents and videos) can be accessed via the following web page: <http://hub.salford.ac.uk/research-walking-frames/>

We hope these resources are a first step towards safer use of front-wheeled walking frames. Please feel free to share this web site on your page and/or within any newsletters or correspondences with relevant organizations that may benefit from these resources. Especially now where face-to-face consultations are limited due to the Coronavirus these electronic resources could come in handy during phone consultations or similar.

For help or advice please visit our website:

[www.disabledliving.co.uk](http://www.disabledliving.co.uk). You can also call us on 0161 607 8200.



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# Staines Shopmobility

making staines accessible

Two Rivers (West Car park),  
Mustard Mill Road, STAINES, TW18 4BL.  
Telephone 01784 459416

The service will offer reduced opening hours

**The service will be open:**  
**Wednesday 9am-3pm, Thursday 8am-3pm,**  
**Saturday 9am-3pm**

Check For Any Updates At:

[www.stainesshopmobility.com](http://www.stainesshopmobility.com)  
[www.facebook.com/stainesshopmobility](https://www.facebook.com/stainesshopmobility)

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Membership is available on a daily or annual basis.  
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## CORONAVIRUS: 5 TESTS THE UK WILL HAVE TO MEET BEFORE RELAXING LOCKDOWN - Edited from iNews

Here are the five tests outlined by the Government, and how far away the UK is from meeting their criteria:

### 1) **The NHS has the capacity to provide critical care right across the UK**

The first test is whether Britain has the capacity to look after those seriously ill with coronavirus - which can be measured by spare beds in intensive care.

Hospitals have not been overwhelmed by patients so far in the pandemic, and in some places have been aided by the opening of the new NHS Nightingales.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said on Monday that there were 3,190 spare critical care beds in the health service, and that in most parts of the country, the number of people in hospital with coronavirus is beginning to fall.

This test, therefore, appears to have been met.



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## **2) A Sustained And Consistent Fall In Daily Deaths**

Scientists estimate that England's daily hospital death toll peaked around 8 April, and it has been very steadily falling since.

However, the picture is less clear when deaths in the community are included, with some suggestions that deaths in care homes may still be increasing.

More data is needed to be clear whether this test has been met.

## **3) The Rate Of Infection Decreased To Manageable Levels Across The Board**

The "R" value - or infection rate - is now thought to be somewhere between 0.5 and 1, meaning that each person infected with the virus passes it on to less than one other person. This in turn means the total number of cases is falling. But, if R rises above 1, there could be another exponential rise in infections.

It is likely this test has been met across the board, but the Government will be extremely anxious to ensure the rate of infection does not rise again.

## **4) Operational Challenges Including Testing And PPE Are In Hand With Supply Able To Meet Future Demand**

While more than a billion items of personal protective equipment (PPE) have been distributed, concerns over shortages remain - particularly among care home staff.

Given the global spread of the disease, operational challenges in sourcing PPE may continue for some time. So far, this test does not appear to have been met.

## **5) Confident That Any Adjustments To The Current Measures Will Not Risk A Second Peak Of Infections**

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said that he would not risk a second peak in the disease by relaxing restrictions too quickly. However, Downing Street came in for questioning a day later when it published its "five tests" document with altered wording, leading to speculation the Government is preparing to ease the lockdown restrictions.

Rather than stating that ministers had to be confident an adjustment would not "risk a second peak of infections", the wording was changed to say no weakening of restrictions would be made that would risk a second peak that "overwhelms the NHS".



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Health Secretary Matt Hancock said during the No 10 press conference that the NHS had coped with the first peak of infections, which is thought to have occurred around Easter.

The Government's scientific advisers are presenting a series of options to ministers about easing lockdown measures, a combination of which would keep the R value below 1.

Ministers could use the new advice issued to them, along with the altered wording, to lift a number of the social distancing measures in place and help get Britain back to work.



## **HOW THE DEAFBLIND ARE COPING WITH SOCIAL DISTANCING – *Edited from The Independent April 2020***

James Groff, a graduate student at Gallaudet University (a school for deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals) in Washington DC is deaf and blind and because of social distancing expectations, he often can't rely on touch.

If you peeked into a building on the university's campus on a recent day, you would have seen a 6ft3 man crawling on the floor. He was not hurt. He was not sick. He was trying to find his name on a case of water. During another time, the task would have been easy enough. The case had been left for him in a building not far from his dorm. The problem was that his case was not the only one there, which meant he had to locate the one bearing his name, and he had to do that with limited use of three of his senses.

"I had to get on my hands and knees to be able to read each one without touching it," Groff says. "I am a grown man and can provide for myself and find or make ways. But this was hard for me to do since I could not touch what was not mine, yet I had to be close enough to see my name. If it is that hard for me, imagine how hard it is for someone more medically blind than I am."

Groff, who hopes to one day become a US senator, describes himself as DeafBlind, with both words capitalised and combined to convey not only his disabilities but also a sense of cultural identity. The DeafBlind community includes people who have zero ability to see and hear, and those who have so little that they have been medically deemed deaf and blind.

Groff describes his vision as "a mix between being underwater and getting shot while playing Call of Duty". Everything is blurry. He



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can't see lips well enough to read them or tell if someone near him is laughing. He needs touch to do that.

He uses his hands to get his bearings in unfamiliar environments and to communicate. Like many people in the DeafBlind community, Groff often relies on Pro-tactile American Sign Language, which incorporates hand-on-body motions to convey what the eye and ear can't detect. To signal to Groff that someone is laughing, an interpreter trained in that form of tactile sign language would make a motion that resembles a tickle. "Without signals like this," Groff says, "I might miss out partially or wholly on what is happening around me."

Rossana Reis, a retired counsellor and advocate turned artist who lives in Washington, has already devised a backup communication plan in case she ends up at the hospital. She plans to use a device that would allow her to communicate through typing. Even so, she has questions. "I've been reading stories of how doctors speak behind a glass and not sure how much the mic will transmit speech into text from a distance," she says. "Would the medical staff be willing to type on my device if it comes to that? Otherwise, I'm learning that many hospitals across the nation are not allowing interpreters in treatment areas. That would be problematic for me, as I am not able to rely on remote interpreting via video."

The experiences of the DeafBlind community may be unique, but their concerns shouldn't be theirs alone.

[https://www.independent.co.uk/news/long\\_reads/deafblind-coronavirus-lockdown-social-distancing-touch-a9468646.html](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/long_reads/deafblind-coronavirus-lockdown-social-distancing-touch-a9468646.html)



## **ADULT SOCIAL CARE – INFORMATION AND ENGAGEMENT TEAM – 14<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

### **Revised Details About Coronavirus Testing In Surrey – Where To Find Information.**

People in Surrey who are eligible for a coronavirus test can find answers to their essential questions by visiting

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/emergency-planning-and-community-safety/coronavirus/coronavirus-testing>

A revised, bespoke page on the Surrey County Council website clearly sets out who is now eligible for a test, how to book, information about the different types of tests available, and useful videos explaining how testing is carried out.



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Under new guidance, in addition to key workers, testing is now available to anyone over the age of 65 with symptoms, anyone with symptoms who cannot work from home, and care home staff and residents. All key workers in Surrey who have symptoms can book a test by registering on the Surrey testing hub <https://surrey.trustwide.live/swabbing/>.

A member of the testing team will then be in contact to book the appointment.



### **New Virtual Wellbeing And Mental Health Interactive Hub Launches**

A new online wellbeing hub has recently been launched to enable Surrey residents to access a range of mental health and emotional wellbeing sessions virtually from the comfort of their own home.

Surrey Virtual Wellbeing <https://www.healthysurrey.org.uk/mental-wellbeing/adults/virtual> is designed to become a one-stop-shop where those who require mental health or emotional wellbeing support can view, register and access online activities including virtual coffee mornings, group chat sessions and tailored exercise classes – all sessions that ordinarily would have been held face to face prior to the current lock-down measures.

Those who are unable to access the online service, can access emotional wellbeing support through a free, 24-hour confidential helpline: Telephone: 0808 802 5000 (in high demand periods an answerphone system may be in place). SMS Text: 07537 432411 (staffed Monday to Friday 9am-2pm)



### **Healthwatch Surrey Asking Residents To Share Experiences**

Healthwatch Surrey is supporting the NHS and social care in helping them to understand what has been working well and not so well for local people in health and social care services during the COVID-19 pandemic. They would like to hear about all health and care experiences during this time, whether it's COVID-19 related or non-related.

Experiences can be shared by completing Healthwatch Surrey's [https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Healthwatch Surrey Health Social care during pandemic](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Healthwatch_Surrey_Health_Social_care_during_pandemic) (it can also be completed on someone's behalf).



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To request a paper copy of the survey or the survey in an alternative format, contact Healthwatch Surrey: Telephone: 0303 303 0023 Text: 07952 787 533 Email: [enquiries@healthwatchesurrey.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchesurrey.co.uk)

Please share this information widely, as Healthwatch Surrey would like to hear from a diverse range of people.



### **Surrey Carers Receive A Helping Hand - Online Sessions**

Three hundred unpaid carers across Surrey are set to receive access to free online awareness sessions to help support them and their vulnerable loved ones throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Surrey Heartlands Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Surrey County Council working in collaboration with Surrey Heath CCG and North East Hampshire and Farnham CCG have joined forces with not-for-profit community interest company, Community Practitioner Alliance (CPA), to roll out free, digitally-supported one-to-one carer awareness sessions across the county.

The project, titled 'SUCH' (Supporting Unpaid Carers at Home), will help unpaid carers gain awareness of some of the steps they need to take to create a hygienically safer environment during the pandemic, with the aim of reducing infection rates.

Carers can access the sessions by requesting a referral by way of a Surrey Carers Prescription from any health or social care professional. Alternatively, they can contact Action for Carers Surrey: Telephone: 0303 040 1234 SMS: 07714 075993 Email: [CarerSupport@actionforcarers.org.uk](mailto:CarerSupport@actionforcarers.org.uk)



### **Eye Care Services Open For Urgent Or Emergency Appointments**

Routine eye care is currently suspended in all opticians. This means that regular eye tests are not currently taking place. Optometrists are currently providing urgent or emergency and essential eye care services only. However, if you have any concerns about your eyes or the people you support, vision or glasses, you should phone your usual optical practice or the nearest one for their advice.



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This includes: changes to your vision, a painful or red eye, broken or lost glasses where you need a replacement pair to function, a problem with contact lenses.

If you are advised to go to the opticians and you think you have any coronavirus symptoms, tell your practice, but do not visit them.



### **Surrey Fire & Rescue Service Support Ambulance Service**

Surrey firefighters are assisting their blue light partners, South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECamb), in the battle against COVID-19. The team of five are all operational firefighters from Godstone, Guildford, Camberley and Reigate fire stations.

Five staff members have completed training delivered by SECamb in preparation for their new temporary roles as Ambulance Assistants. They have been upskilling their clinical care knowledge as well as some additional driving training so that they can work closely alongside paramedics, if required, crewing frontline ambulances.



### **Action For Carers Is Running Support Groups By Video Link**

After a successful trial, Action for Carers will be running their general support groups for carers, by video (using the 'Zoom' app). Carers can join using a computer, tablet or mobile.

The groups called 'Coffee, Chat and Support' start from 12 May and will be held every other week. Please note that booking is essential. Once registered, joining instructions, a brief guide to using Zoom and a password for the chosen group will be sent.

Register by: Leaving a voicemail: 0303 040 1234 option 1

Emailing: [CSAdmin@actionforcarers.org.uk](mailto:CSAdmin@actionforcarers.org.uk) Visiting:

<https://www.actionforcarers.org.uk/coronavirus-advice-for-carers/action-for-carers-support-during-coronavirus/events/>



### **Co-Op Introduces Gift Card Scheme For Vulnerable Customers**

The Co-op supermarket group has launched a gift card scheme

[https://memberpioneer.newsweaver.com/icfiles/4/80866/226762/548702/8b7332d3862e00fe7b0b54f6/co-op\\_gift\\_card\\_3.pdf](https://memberpioneer.newsweaver.com/icfiles/4/80866/226762/548702/8b7332d3862e00fe7b0b54f6/co-op_gift_card_3.pdf) for those

shielding or self-isolating and reliant on others to do their shopping



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or who are volunteering to help someone they know, including as part of a local support group.

By calling a dedicated Co-op phone line on 0800 029 4592, they can purchase a gift card which can be shared with friends, neighbours or volunteers to pay for shopping in their local Co-op store. If a volunteer group wishes to buy multiple cards to support vulnerable people, they can do this by emailing their requirements to [giftvouchers@coop.co.uk](mailto:giftvouchers@coop.co.uk)

Additionally the Co-op Health app <https://www.coop.co.uk/health?pid=LocalCouncilComResp> connects people in England securely to their GP so they can automatically view and order the medications they need, from their mobile phone. Home delivery is at no extra cost to them or the NHS.



### **Mencap Launches New Online Channel – Mencap TV**

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSiocetlJtiJvtZkCOxrJ6g?utm\\_campaign=1392004\\_Newsletter+-+Coronavirus+Mencap+TV+%28advice+and+info%29+290420&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=dotmailer](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSiocetlJtiJvtZkCOxrJ6g?utm_campaign=1392004_Newsletter+-+Coronavirus+Mencap+TV+%28advice+and+info%29+290420&utm_medium=email&utm_source=dotmailer) has been co-created with

people with a learning disability in response to the current coronavirus outbreak. It is a collection of fun and instructional short videos released daily.



### **Sight For Surrey's Deaf Services - Accessible Coronavirus Information**

Sight for Surrey's Deaf Services Team has been very busy since lockdown, translating many coronavirus announcements into British Sign Language (BSL) and making them available via Facebook.

If you or the person you support is a BSL user, then please follow Sight for Surrey on social media: Facebook: [@SightforSurrey](#) and [@deafserviceteam](#) Twitter: [@SightforSurrey](#) Instagram: [@sightforsurrey](#)



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## Headway Surrey Brain Injury Charity - Open For Business

Headway Surrey <https://www.headwaysurrey.org/> is still providing a lifeline for vulnerable adults with a brain injury during the COVID-19 pandemic through new, remote support services.

Virtual classrooms, teaching memory and fatigue skills, education on brain injury, art classes and online quizzes to welfare calls and a helpline (01483 454433) are all available.

New clients can self-refer to be assessed via video calls and then can select from a range of virtual support sessions. Professionals can seek advice and information for potential clients.



## Do You Know Anyone Worried About Their Energy Supply Or Who Needs Advice To Keep Their Bills Down?

Surrey Community Action's [Warmth Matters project](#) can provide advice on:

- Topping up a pre-pay meter
- Switching energy suppliers during disruption caused by coronavirus
- The Priority Service Register
- The Warm Home Discount Scheme
- Financial support from energy and water companies.

For email and telephone advice, or more information, please contact Surrey Community Action: <https://www.surreyca.org.uk/>  
**Telephone:** 07521 503 696 **Email:** [davidcarter@surreyca.org.uk](mailto:davidcarter@surreyca.org.uk)



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