

Invisible barriers to inclusion



Today March 16th 2019 is Disabled Access Day.

Our government has promised to get one million disabled people into work over the next decade. This will certainly be a challenge as many disabled workers will not be able to get to work using transport. Recently, BBC journalist Alex Taylor described finding himself stuck on a train in his wheelchair and apparently Govia, parent company of Southern Rail Thameslink Railway recently is putting profits before people by telling staff not to help passengers who are disabled on and of trains if it is going to cause delays.

If these newly appointed workers are using a website or any form of technology they may find the systems inaccessible. Hilary Stephenson, managing director of digital user experience agency, Sigma, has found that many websites still have barriers to access which make it difficult – or even impossible – for people with disabilities to use.

Her company found that a third of council websites in the UK

are not accessible for disabled people. From booking travel to accessing vital health services, poor digital design is leaving millions of vulnerable users confused, alienated and often severely isolated.

‘Living with an impairment, disability or health issue of any kind should never exclude people from accessing the same online and digital services as everyone else,’ she says. ‘It is scandalous that there are still so many companies not willing to invest the time and money into making their sites inclusive to all.’

[Accessible Spaces – Exploring access to public, leisure and event spaces](#) By Simon Wissink | 24/09/2018

nasen Awards 2011 – Celebrating Inclusive Practice

I am heading north this week to cover the nasen awards for Special Children magazine. Four products have been shortlisted for the ICT Resource to support Teaching and Learning Award. 2011 is the National Year of Communication so fittingly 3 entries support speaking and listening skills:



Short listed entry
Recordable Bar

Recordable Bar/Story Sequencer from TTS Group can be used to create talking stories, class timetables or question and answer games

Sound Shuffle from TTS Group was created by Carol Allen, advisory teacher for ICT and special needs in North Tyneside. It is a brand new device for creating stories, sequencing and sound effects.

Logan Proxtalker was created by Glen Dobbs for Logan Technologies. It is a moveable picture communication device originally devised for children with autism

MyZone from Inclusive Technology Limited provides a simple desktop and a wealth of activities for people with disabilities who need to access a computer via speech and pictures rather than text

The winners will be announced at a special ceremony at the Reebok Stadium in Bolton as part of Special Needs North.