

# BREAKING BARRIERS

Simple ways to  
be more  
accessible to  
customers



Thank you for  
coming to our  
training session.

These are the slides from the training and  
we've added in more information based on  
requests received during the session.



**If you haven't filled out the feedback survey post training yet please can you take two minutes to do that now...**

[Click here or use the QR code to fill out our post training survey.](https://forms.gle/oAqVgtfzruqdLd9D9)

<https://forms.gle/oAqVgtfzruqdLd9D9>



**VIKI CARPENTER  
DIRECTOR**

**[hello@accesscornwall.org.uk](mailto:hello@accesscornwall.org.uk)**



A short video:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p7Gp6\\_LPmXc&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p7Gp6_LPmXc&feature=youtu.be)





# Tell us 3 words that sum up your reaction to the video you just watched

difficult to watch  
 predictable not surprised  
 boxing people up reality  
 inappropriate sad frustrating stereotype  
 rehearsed public image familiar tick box  
 hurtful ridiculous common frustrated  
 stereotyping true  
 taking advantage  
 unsurprising needs to change



# Introduction

Thanks for coming, let's introduce you to the Access Cornwall team.

How we'll work today

- Don't worry about getting the words and language right, it's OK to get it wrong, we're all here to learn
- Please message Emma or 'everyone' in the chat with any questions, or, make a note of any questions and we will have time to answer them towards the end.





# Why we're here

- Increase understanding of accessibility and why and how we can make our businesses more accessible.
- Increase knowledge and confidence around appropriate language
- Share experience and knowledge
- Talk to our knowledgeable accessibility ambassadors
- Identify 2-3 key actions to put into practice straight away







# Agenda

- Introduction
- Legal requirements
- Potential benefits
- Mobility impairment
- Vision impairment
- Hearing impairment
- Autism and spectrum conditions
- Learning disabilities and issues with reading
- Customer service
- Helpful resources



# Accessible

## Adjective

Able to be reached or entered,  
got or used



Places are easy for most people  
to enter



Information you produce is easy  
to get and understand

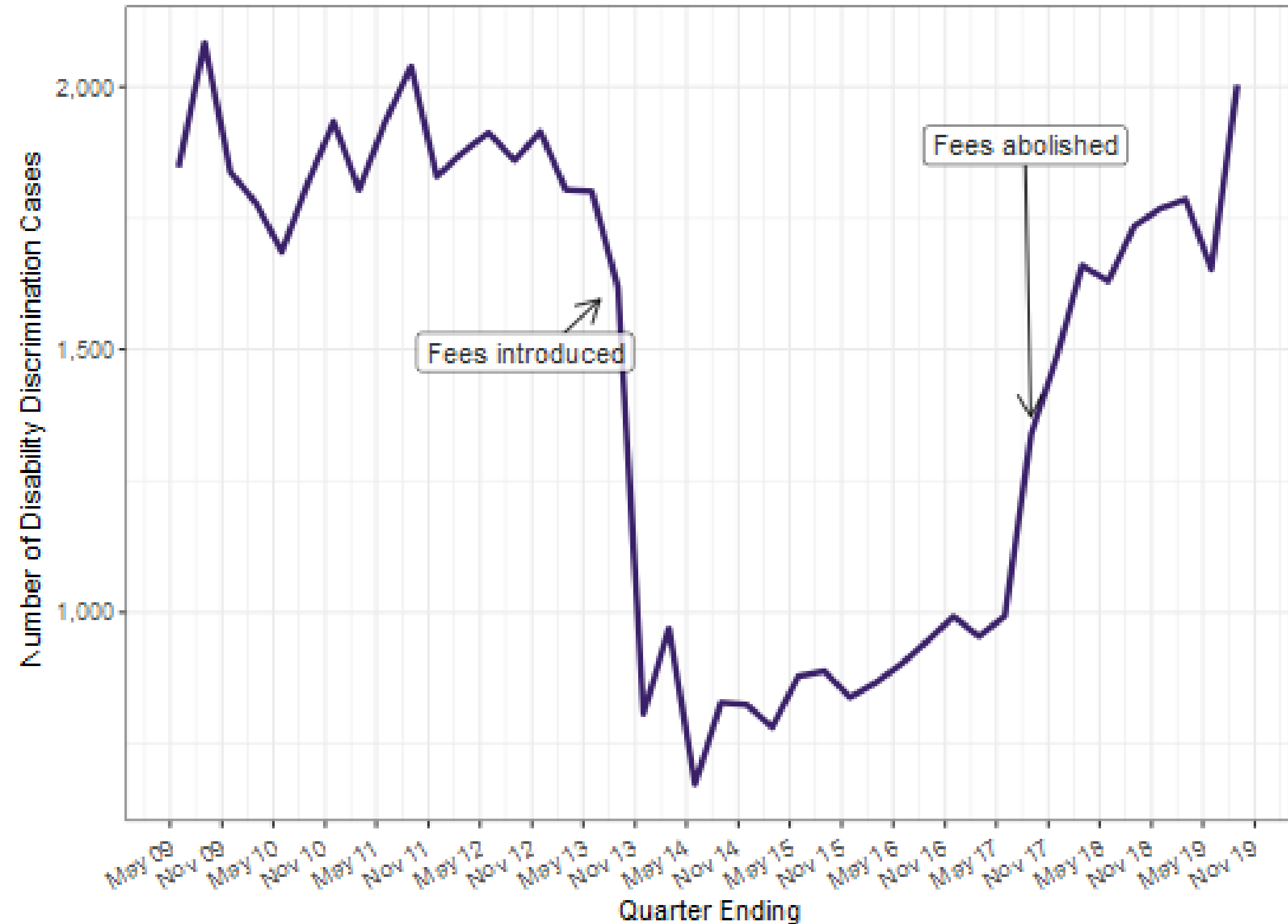


Barriers are removed so that  
people with disabilities can work  
for you or use your services





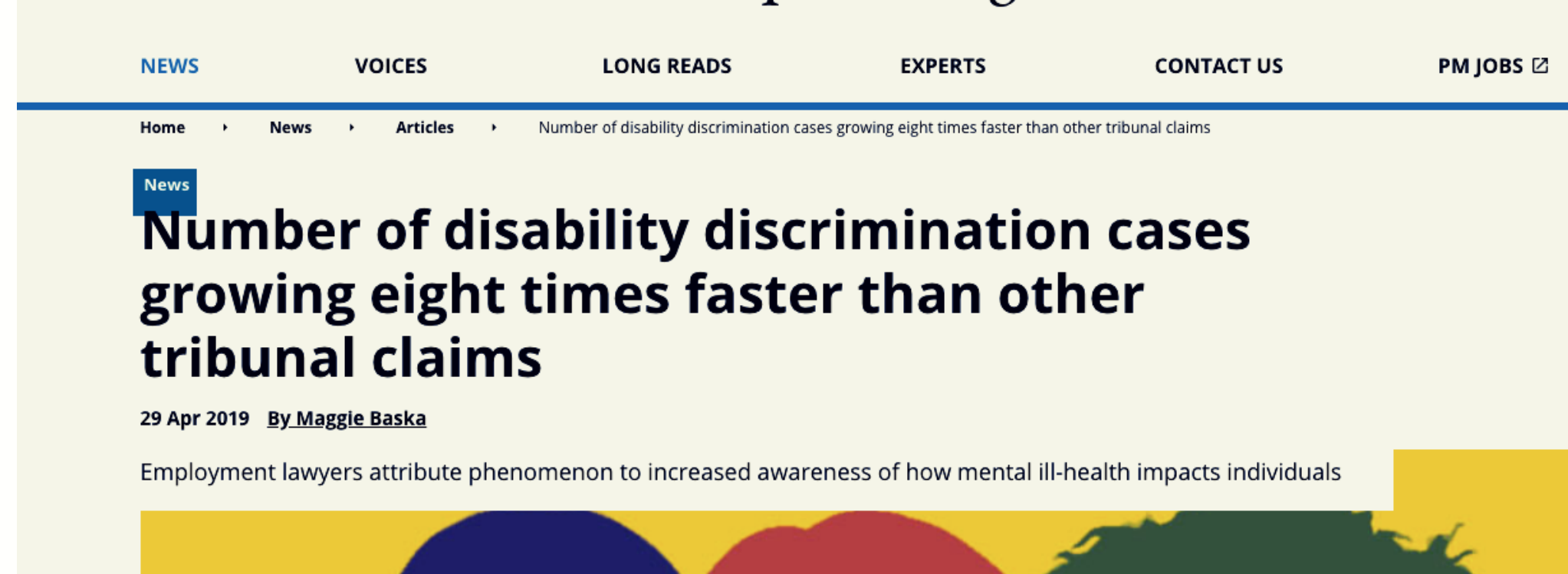
# Legal requirements



© Disability Rights UK | 2020 | CC-BY-SA  
Data from: Tribunal Statistics Quarterly: July to September 2019



# some facts about discrimination claims



99% INCREASE IN CLAIMS  
OVER 5 YEARS

Greater awareness and abolished  
tribunal fees

HIGHEST AWARD £265,719  
AVERAGE AWARD £27,043



# WHAT YOU NEED TO DO...

Under the Equality Act 2010, every business offering products or services to the public has a legal duty to make '**reasonable adjustments**' to ensure that what they offer is accessible to everyone.

Importantly - these adjustments must be **anticipatory** - you must not wait for someone to ask.

Obviously, it is not always possible to overcome all barriers, but if you fail to make efforts considered reasonable, you are breaking the law and could be sued. For example, if you refuse access to assistance dogs without good reason, you are breaking the law.

New laws are also being introduced around digital accessibility. Currently many public sector organisations must already ensure that their websites or apps are accessible to people who live with disabilities, wider measures may well be introduced in the future.



**£274 MILLION** The spending  
power of disabled people and  
their household

HOSPITALITY BUSINESSES LOSE  
APPROXIMATELY £167 MILLION  
PER MONTH BY NOT BEING  
ACCESSIBLE

Percentage of  
disabled  
people & their  
families who  
have walked  
away from  
businesses  
because of  
accessibility  
barriers

**75%**





# Mobility impairment

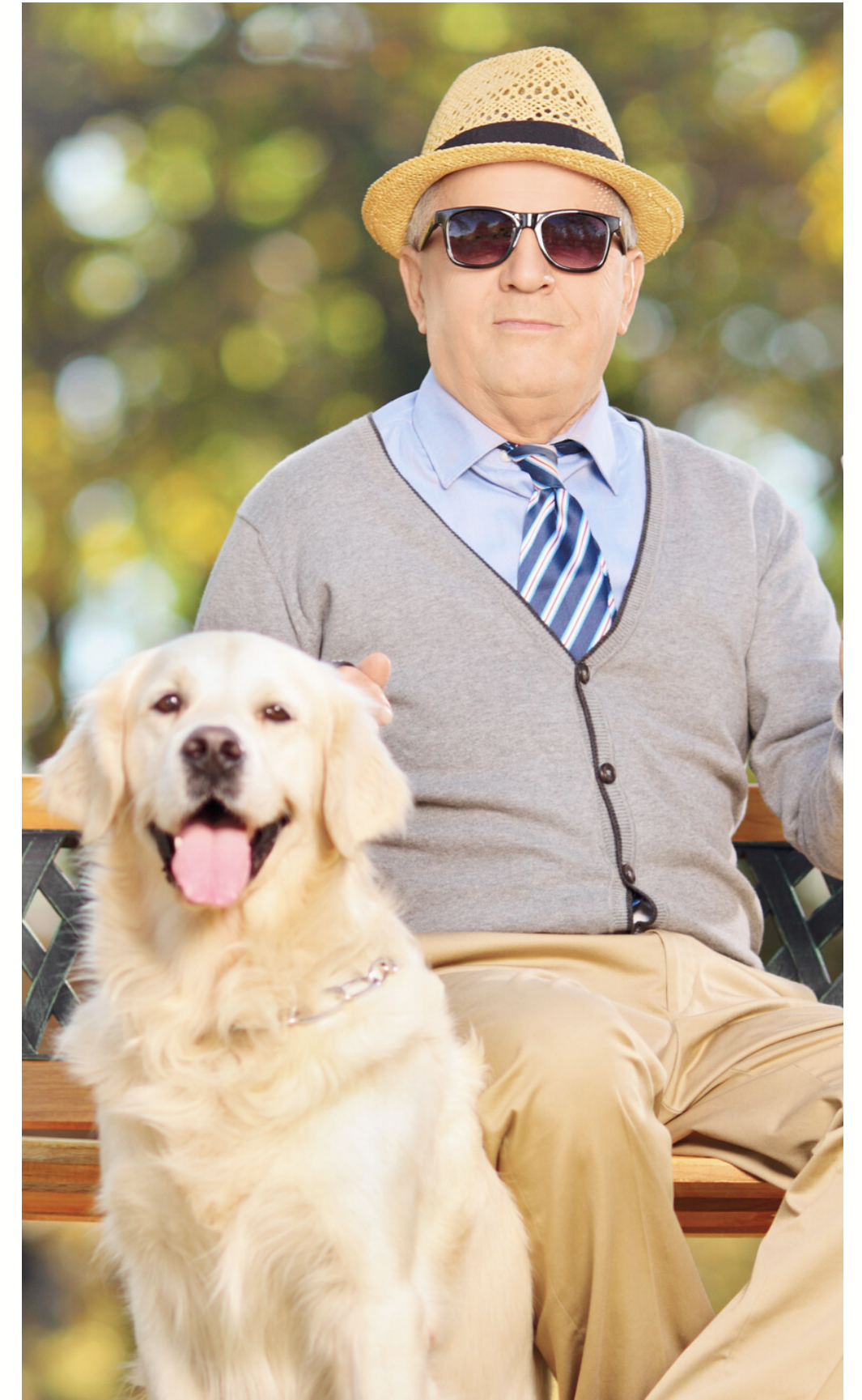
- Only 8% of people who are disabled are in a wheelchair, so you are not expected to convert your premises.
- If you do want to accommodate wheelchairs, you can buy portable ramps, good ones can cost as little as £75.
- The average width of a wheelchair is 75cm. Usually, you need at least a metre in width for a wheelchair to get through a space.
- When it comes to disabled toilets, you need enough room for the wheelchair to be placed next to the toilet. Also turning space.
- Wider, level pathways are helpful. Sometimes you can achieve this just by tidying up or moving furniture.
- Add seats, benches or handrails.
- No auto-opening door? Just put a notice on your door telling anyone who has trouble opening it to call on your mobile, or put in a doorbell.
- If your premises are up steep stairs, or inaccessible, can you offer service or help over the phone, via a video meeting or in a cafe or hired meeting room?





# Vision impairment

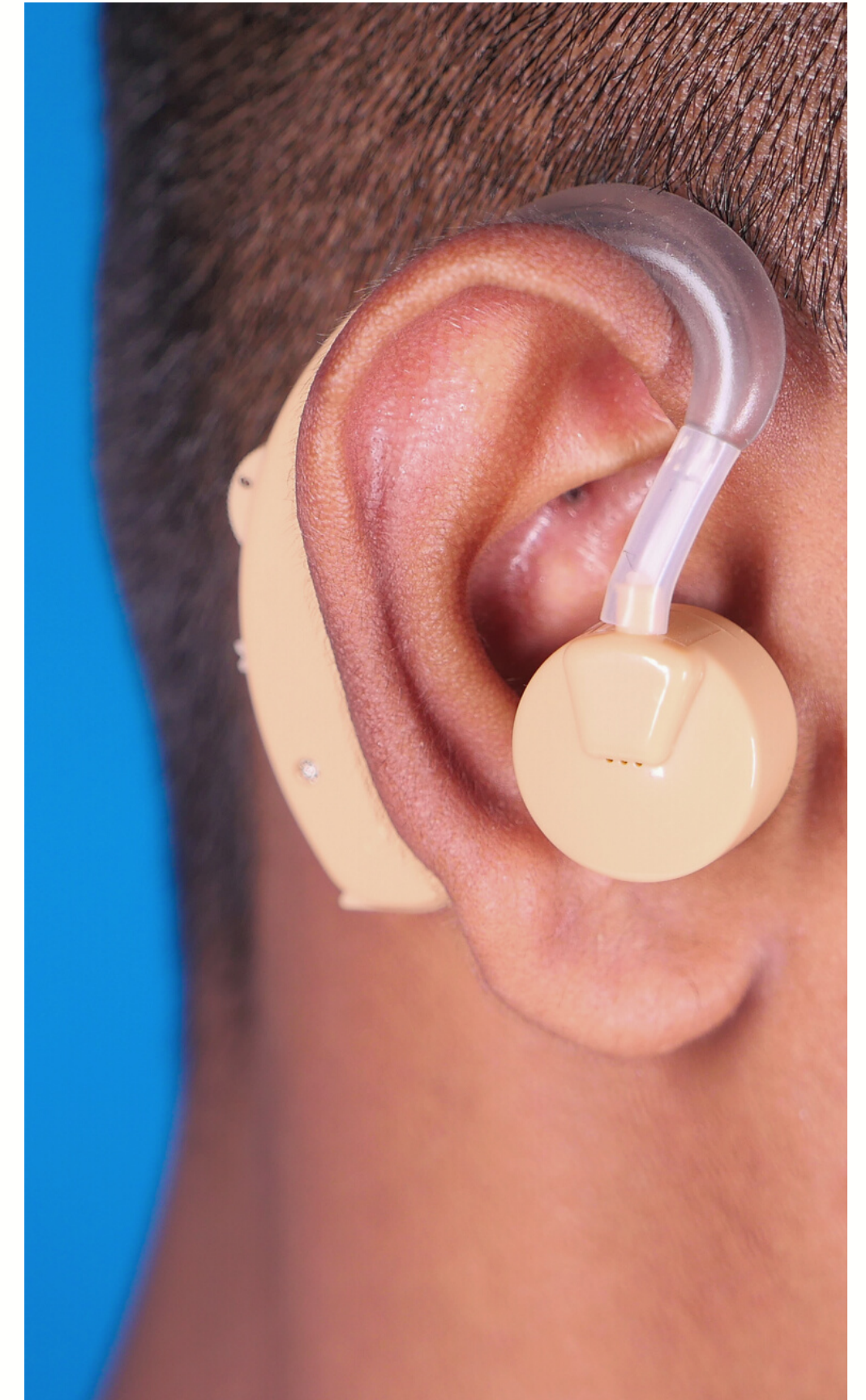
- Very few people with vision impairment are 'black blind' most have some vision so signage for steps, for example, can be helpful
- Having useful information on your website or available as an email will mean that individuals who are vision impaired can use text to speech software, they will often have this installed on their own phone.
- Remember to always write a description in the Alt Text box for an image on a website. This is a description of what an images shows for people who cannot see it. It's very helpful to enable individuals to understand what is on a website. It also helps with your SEO.
- Tidying up and making sure people have enough space to walk through places without tripping is a very simple way to make your premises more accessible to vision-impaired individuals.
- You don't need to have braille descriptions, but using free software such as Userway of the Microsoft Office accessibility software means that people can make text bigger on their screens aif they are looking at your website or emails
- Allowing assistance dogs isn't really optional, you should always do this unless there is a very good reason not to do so





# Hearing impairment

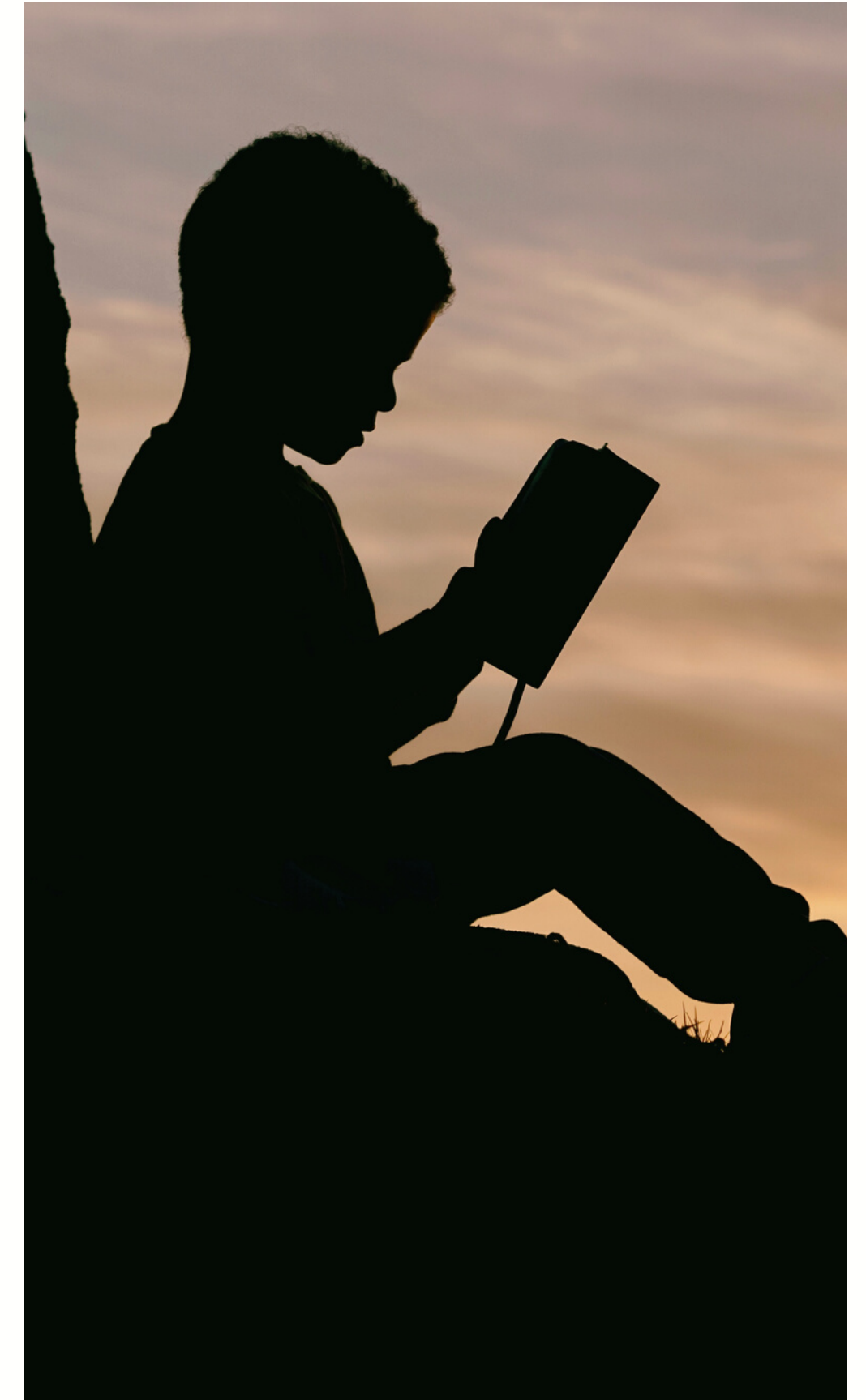
- Many people with hearing impairment are not even diagnosed and some are perhaps unaware of their hearing challenges. Many may not wish to tell you. A helpful thing you can do is always to ask: how would you prefer that I get in touch. Some people prefer emails for this reason.
- If you are talking to someone with hearing impairment do the following things:
  - stand so that the light is on your face, and you do not have your back to a light source, such as a window, for example
  - speak and enunciate as clearly as possible. Even if someone is not trained in lip-reading, they will get clues from your expression and the way your mouth is moving, so try not to mumble.
- Even with a hearing aid, background noise makes it very hard for people, even if they do not have a hearing impairment. Always reduce this as much as possible and think about the acoustics of a room when arranging to meet or talk with someone.
- Having information in different formats makes you more accessible. So, for example, if you have a video or audio description about your services, it is always a good idea to have written information as well.
- Always add closed captions / subtitles to any videos you use. HappyScribe and Otter AI are very good and you can add subtitles for free on Facebook and YouTube videos.
- Be aware some people who have been born profoundly deaf may not understand English, only British Sign Language.





# Learning disabilities

- We don't say individuals who are autistic have learning disabilities because in some respects neurodiverse individuals are faster at learning some things than neurotypical people.
- Learning differences and difficulties often mean people struggle to read things. Using straight forward language, avoiding jargon and anacronysms where possible helps -- in fact it helps most people.
- Using images, symbols and videos can be really helpful in communicating your product, service or information about your premises to individuals. Visual stories can also be helpful for some children with learning disabilities or some children who are autistic.
- Individuals who are dyslexic may (but not always) find it helpful if you use sans fonts and strong contrast in text. Dark font on a light background is generally easier to read.
- If you meet someone with a learning disability and they are with a carer, always address that individual, don't talk about them or assume they cannot understand. The individual may simply not be able to speak but may understand very well. Same applies to children.
- Ask the individual or carer what they need and what is helpful.

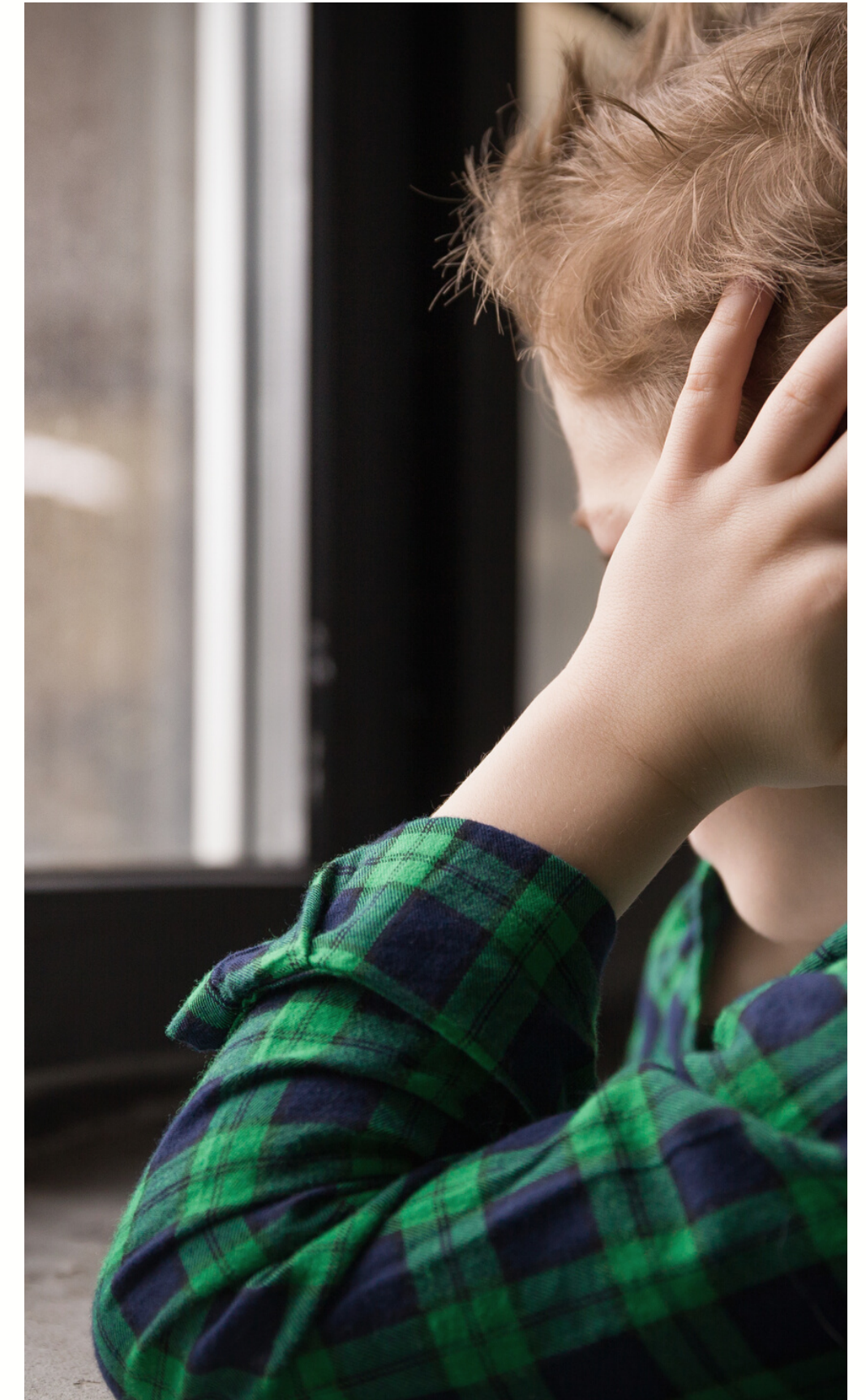


# Neurodiversity

- People who are neurodiverse quite literally have a different brain structure. The term includes a wide range of different 'diagnosis including autism, dyslexia, ADHD, Tourette's Syndrome, OCD and dyspraxia.
- There is a huge range of difference in the challenges faced by people who are neurodiverse, even within the same category. When it comes to autism, for example, some individuals cannot speak and need symbols or picture boards to communicate. Other individuals can manage better with communication and social interactions and need no support in day-to-day life.

**Did you know? the smartphone to AC electricity to Pokemon were invented by individuals who are autistic**

- Videos showing your premises or a guide to what happens when someone uses your service or product help individuals who are autistic to prepare and plan to buy from you or visit you.
- Having a quiet space with no busy patterns or stimulating colours on the walls for people to go or wait -- or just being able to serve customers via video call in their own home helps with sensory processing challenges which affect many neurodiverse individuals.
- Not having to queue. It sounds like an excuse, but many individuals who are neurodiverse find the social interactions, noise and frustrations of being in a queue overwhelming. Offer pre-booking or a way to avoid queues as a reasonable adjustment.
- Ask the individual or carer what they need.





ALL YOU REALLY  
NEED IS

# **Good Customer Service**

ASK...

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO  
COMMUNICATE? PHONE / EMAIL /  
VIDEO OR FACE TO FACE?

IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO TO  
MAKE OUR MEETING / YOUR VISIT  
WORK WELL FOR YOU?

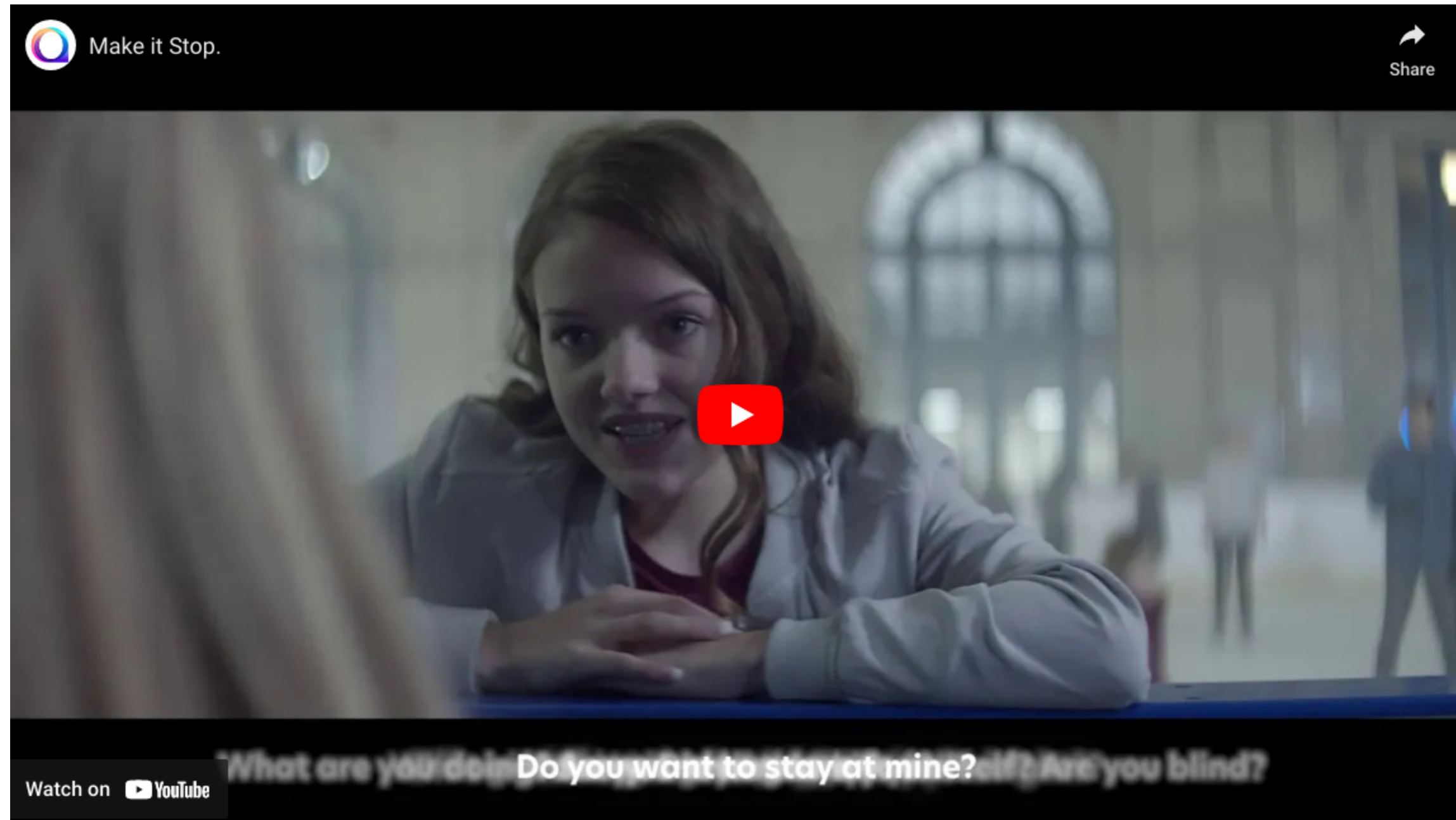
HOW CAN I HELP?

HOW DID WE DO?

EMBED THIS QUESTION AND  
SUPPORT THROUGHOUT YOUR  
CUSTOMER JOURNEY

VIDEO Make it stop

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMn2o9EYa08&feature=youtu.be>





# Breakout rooms



## Discussion included:

The power of the video in helping to understand how it feels and the emotions a young autistic person might experience.

How watching this and understanding more can help people to find ways to make their businesses or services better.

Appreciating that some people have hidden disabilities, and whether asking the question 'Are you alright?' is the best way to support someone who is struggling.

Why visual or social stories that would allow an autistic person to prepare for a conversation with the bus driver or a friend at the ice rink might be helpful.

WHERE TO GET

# **Helpful resources & training**



30-minute free consultation with  
Access Cornwall for all participants

Accessibility reviews and reports  
are available from Access Cornwall

Equipment hire from Enable  
Accessibility  
[info@enableaccessibility.co.uk](mailto:info@enableaccessibility.co.uk)

## **FOR STAFF:**

**Access to Work funding is available  
for staff who have accessibility  
needs.**



WHERE TO GET

# More helpful resources



Some useful resource that were discussed in today's session.

## **Dyslexia**

Click here for a free download the style guide from the British Dyslexia Association offer:

<https://cdn.bdadyslexia.org.uk/uploads/documents/BDA-Style-Guide-2022.pdf?v=1666017053>

## **Guidance and templates for social (or visual) stories**

<https://www.andnextcomesl.com/2018/03/free-social-story-template.html>

# Thank you

IF YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR  
BUSINESS TO BE LISTED ON OUR  
WEBSITE OR IF YOU WOULD LIKE  
YOUR FREE 30 MINUTE  
CONSULTATION PLEASE EMAIL US  
AT:

**[hello@accesscornwall.org.uk](mailto:hello@accesscornwall.org.uk)**

