



Living Well North Tyneside

Supporting Health and Wellbeing

Disability History Month is an annual event running from **14th November to 20th December**, dedicated to raising awareness of the experiences, achievements, and challenges of people with disabilities. This month provides an opportunity to celebrate the history of the disability rights movement, amplify the voices of individuals with disabilities, and advocate for greater equality and inclusion across all areas of life.

What is Disability History Month?

Disability History Month focuses on recognising the long history of discrimination faced by people with disabilities while also celebrating the progress made in the fight for equality and inclusion. It encourages communities, organisations, and individuals to reflect on how societal attitudes and policies have shaped the lives of disabled people and how we can continue to build a more inclusive world.

This year's month of activity is more than just a celebration; it's a reminder of the ongoing work required to create a society where every person, regardless of ability, has equal opportunities to thrive.

Why Disability History Month Matters

The month-long observance highlights several key areas:

- **Raising Awareness:** Many people are unaware of the barriers faced by disabled individuals, from physical access to societal stigma. Disability History Month educates people about these issues and the importance of removing them.
- **Honouring Achievements:** The month recognises the contributions of disabled individuals to society, whether in arts, sports, activism, or innovation.
- **Driving Change:** By reflecting on history, Disability History Month inspires continued advocacy for disability rights, accessibility, and inclusion.

A Brief Look at Disability History

The disability rights movement has a rich history of activism and resilience. From the campaigns for accessible public spaces to the fight for equal employment opportunities, the movement has worked tirelessly to challenge ableism and discrimination. Key milestones include:

1. **The Disability Discrimination Act (1995):** A landmark piece of UK legislation that prohibited discrimination against disabled people in employment, education, and public services.
2. **The Equality Act (2010):** Strengthening previous laws, this act provided greater protection for individuals with disabilities and reinforced the obligation to make reasonable adjustments to ensure inclusion.
3. **The Paralympic Movement:** Highlighting the talents and achievements of disabled athletes, the Paralympics have played a pivotal role in changing perceptions of disability.

How to Support Disability History Month

There are many ways to get involved in Disability History Month, whether through personal reflection, community activities, or organisational initiatives:

1. **Educate Yourself and Others**
Learn about the history of disability rights, listen to the stories of disabled individuals, and share this knowledge with others. Films, books, podcasts, and documentaries can be great starting points.
2. **Promote Accessibility**
Advocate for accessibility in your workplace, school, or community. This could include making physical spaces

more accessible, ensuring digital content is inclusive, or using inclusive language in everyday interactions.

3. **Attend Events and Workshops**

Many organisations host events, panel discussions, or workshops during Disability History Month. Participating in these activities is a great way to show support and deepen your understanding of the issues.

4. **Amplify Disabled Voices**

Use your platform—whether social media, community groups, or professional networks—to highlight the stories and achievements of disabled individuals. Share resources and content created by disabled people.

5. **Support Disability Organisations**

Donate to or volunteer with organisations that work to support and empower disabled individuals. Many charities and advocacy groups rely on community support to continue their vital work.

A Shared Responsibility for Inclusion

Disability History Month reminds us that creating an inclusive society isn't just the responsibility of disabled individuals—it's a shared effort. By understanding the barriers people face and actively working to remove them, we can all contribute to a more equitable world.

Let's use this month to celebrate the contributions of disabled individuals, reflect on our progress, and recommit to a future of inclusion, accessibility, and respect. Together, we can build a society that values and supports everyone.

Related Links

- [Disability History Month](#)

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