

A personal request for your help from Baroness Grey-Thompson DBE and Doug Morris on behalf of the National Wheelchair Leadership Alliance



I'm passionate about everyone living an independent, positive life. I want you to help me champion this.

From the age of seven I first used a wheelchair, and as a determined and independent young girl the wheelchair was something that I knew could help me achieve my goals and aspirations. It wasn't long before I was already starting to enjoy and excel at sports.

Through determination and hours of hard work and effort I achieved my goals with 11 gold, four silver and one bronze Paralympic medals to my name.

Today I have just as much drive and passion, and I currently have a very specific goal, but it's one that I can't do by myself. It's something I need your help with.

I want to make sure that wheelchair services are not simply forgotten services. These pieces of equipment are life-givers to everyone who needs them.

I want to make sure that everyone in England who needs a wheelchair gets the best possible care and support in making their choice. I want equality of access and more than anything, I want the individual to be put at the heart of all and any decisions about their wheelchair needs.

But, as I say, I need your help to make sure what we do in the National Wheelchair Leadership Alliance is representative of users, services and commissioners. So please take the time to read through our Charter and please, as a commissioner of these services, sign up to it.

This is not just important to me, it is important to thousands of wheelchair users across England who need our help and support. Thank you.

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**Baroness Grey-Thompson DBE
Chair, Wheelchair Leadership Alliance**



Getting the right wheelchair can help children become more independent and develop their self-esteem.

Being the parent of a child who uses an electric wheelchair all of the time, I have encountered firsthand some of the challenges and barriers that need to be overcome to get the right wheelchair in a timely way.

I have also seen how hard things are when a wheelchair is not available because of breakdown and how life can be interrupted because of the lack of mobility.

Although I know how hard it can be to obtain a wheelchair, I have also been involved in effective assessments, resourcing and delivery of wheelchairs that included a holistic view across services and a collaborative approach to commissioning. This resulted in getting the right chair at the right time.

I know which method I preferred!

A child needs to access school and the curriculum and be included in other activities in the community. We must remember that for those needs to be met, a wheelchair needs to function in a range of environments.

So please take the time to read through the Alliance's Charter, pledge your support for its principles at www.rightwheelchair.org.uk and join me in taking action to help improve wheelchair services.

Your support is truly important to ensure children who need them get the right wheelchairs in helpful timescales that meet their developing needs. Thank you.

Doug

Doug Morris, National Network of Parent Carer Forums Steering Group Member, Wheelchair Leadership Alliance

