



DISABILITY NORTH 40TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

**24TH OCTOBER
2025**





Welcome to Disability North's

40th Anniversary Celebrations

There's a lot going on today and we don't want you to miss a moment of it! Thank you for being here to celebrate with us.

Your Event Guide

Start your visit by heading upstairs to receive a warm welcome from Vici and Lucy – or a thank you and farewell, if you're attending Session 3 later in the day.

What You'll Find Upstairs

 Live Entertainment

 Birthday Cake, Food & Refreshments


 Zone 31 with Zoe – Discover inclusive art and craft

 Inclusive Sport – Meet the team from Active Futures

Quick Talks – Don't Miss Your Slot!

When booking, you may have selected one of our 15-minute quick talks. Check the map and schedule to find your room and grab your seat. Talks will start promptly!

Meet Our Partners & Projects

 Pam and the PRS Inclusion Services Team – Courses and employability support for disabled people.

 A Time 2 Talk – Counselling and Well-being

 Age UK – Promoting wellbeing and independence in later life.

 Liveasy Shop – Daily living aids and specialist equipment.

Extra Fun!

 Try your luck at our Tombola!

 Explore our Disability History Walls – a powerful visual journey through 40 years of Disability North progress and empowerment.



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Need Help?

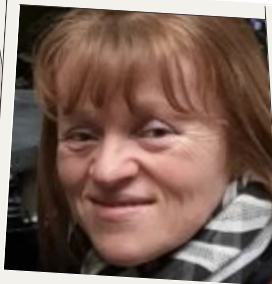
Our friendly Disability North staff team is here to help. If you have questions or need assistance, just grab a member of the team.



Vici



Amy



Angie



Dawn



Kath



Keith



Gordon



Natalie



Hannah



Pauline



Daniel



Cheryl



Ross



Paul



Jessica



Lisa



Lynne



Andrea



Adrian





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Vici Richardson
CEO

As we mark 40 years at the Dene Centre I am delighted to welcome you to a day of celebration, reflection, and renewed purpose. Over the last 40 years we have stood alongside disabled people in the North of England—amplifying voices, challenging barriers, and driving change.

Over the last 40 years the world has shifted in profound ways. One of the most defining moments was the passing of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) in 1995. A powerful response to decades of activism and injustice, which laid the groundwork for many of the protections we know today.

But while legal rights have progressed, the lived experience of disabled people still reveals deep inequalities. Access, opportunity, representation, and inclusion remain contested ground and the challenges we face are as urgent now as ever. Whether navigating the effects of austerity, the challenges in our health and social care system, or persistent social stigma, disabled people continue to demand and deserve not just rights on paper, but real, lived equity.

At the same time, we've seen powerful change: growing visibility, stronger self-advocacy movements, and a new generation of disabled leaders shaping policy, culture, and practice. Disability North is proud to have played a part in that journey, rooted in community, driven by lived experience, and sustained by an unshakeable belief in independence, choice, and control. This 40th anniversary is a time to celebrate the people, partnerships, and progress that have brought us this far and to reaffirm our commitment to the road ahead.

Thank you for being part of our story whether you've been with us from the beginning or are joining us for the first time today. Here's to the next 40 years working together for a fairer, more inclusive society.



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Dr Lucy Reynolds
Chair-Person

As Chair of Disability North, I am proud to champion an organisation rooted in the social model of disability, promoting empowerment, choice and independence for disabled people. Our work is shaped by the lived experiences of those we serve, and we ensure that disabled voices are not only heard but lead the conversation around policy, practice, and social change.

Disability North is more than a service provider — it is a vital hub of support, advice, and community. From providing direct payments guidance to benefits advice our team works to support disabled people. As Chair, I see first-hand the resilience and dedication of our staff, volunteers and the people who we support

We continue to advocate at local and national levels, recognising that while progress has been made, systemic inequality persists. We are committed to building a more inclusive society — one where disabled people are valued and empowered.

Disability North is a beacon of possibility and I am privileged to help steer its mission forward.



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Disability North: 50 Years of Progress and Inclusion

Founded in 1972 as the Newcastle Council for the Disabled and based at Mea House, our organisation began with a bold vision to improve the lives of disabled people across the region. In the early 1980s, Newcastle City Council offered land for a purpose-built centre, what is now the Dene Centre. Rising to the challenge, the Council for the Disabled raised vital funds, and the Dene Centre was officially opened, eventually adopting a new name: **Disability North**.

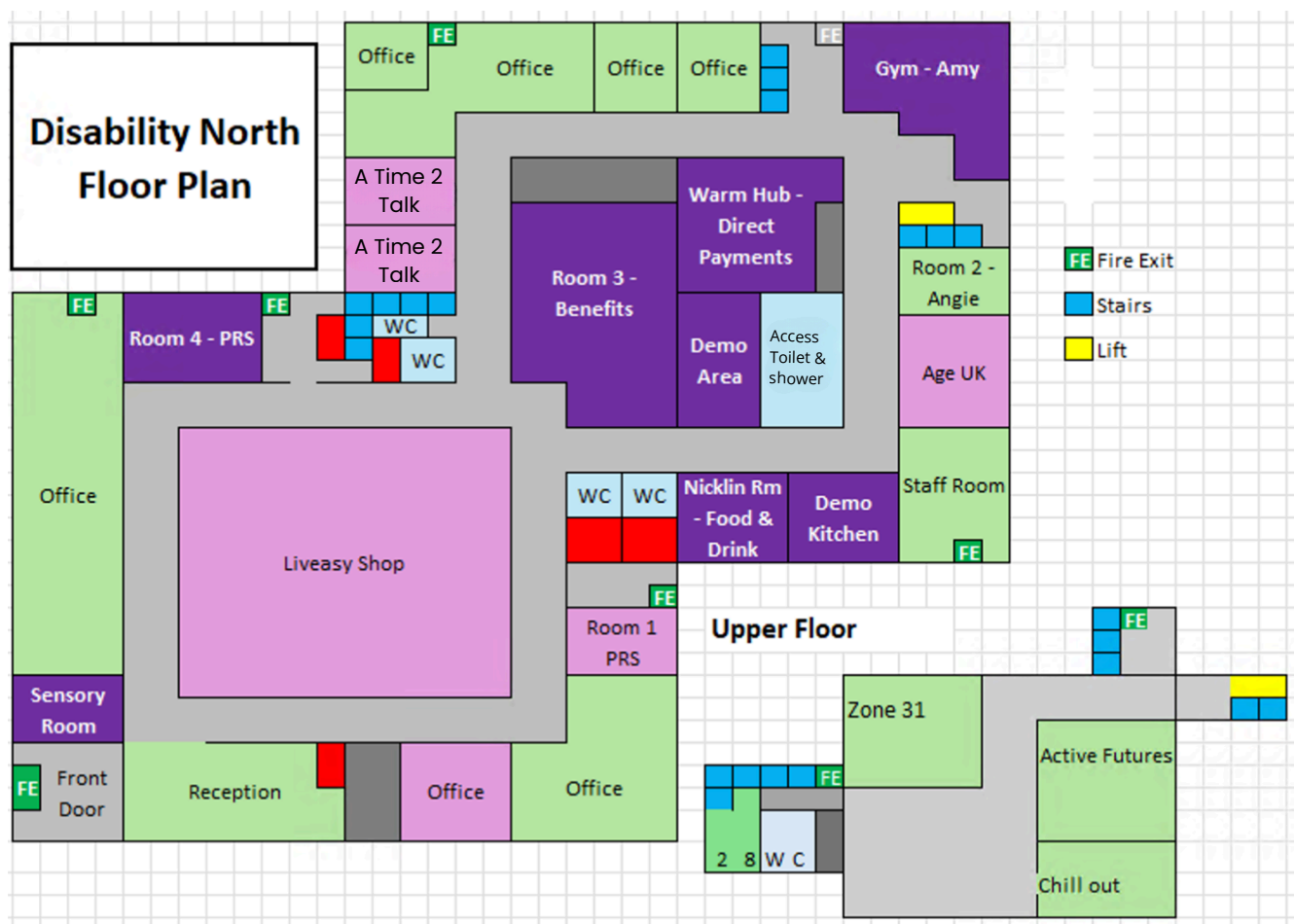
This progress was made possible thanks to the determination and pioneering spirit of our founding members, including Donald Dempsey OBE and Dr Graham Grant MBE, who laid the foundations for a centre of excellence in disability support and advocacy.

For over 40 years, Disability North has been shaped by the dedication of Trustees, staff, and disabled people who have steered its mission and impact. In 2025, we remain true to our roots, with a majority of disabled people leading our executive board and a passionate team, many with lived experience of disability.

Together, we continue our mission to promote choice, control, and independence, ensuring disabled people remain at the heart of everything we do.



Map of Disability North



Scan the QR Code on your phone for an Audio guide to help you find your way around Disability North



Session One

11.30 – 11.45am	Vici and Lucy – Welcome and cake!	Upstairs
11.45 – 12.15pm	Entertainment! – TBC	Upstairs
12.30 – 12.45pm	Project Development – Amy Carr	Gym

Or



	Everything you need to know – DN Benefits Team	Room 3
13.10 – 13.25pm	Inclusion, Training & Access Audits – Angie Stewart	Room 2

Or



	Everything you need to know – DN Direct Payments & Payroll Teams	Warm Hub
1.45 pm	Thank you and see you soon!	

**Post about our celebration on social media
#DisabilityNorths40th**



<https://www.facebook.com/disabilitynorthDN>



https://www.instagram.com/disability_north/





Session Two

14.30 - 14.45pm

Vici and Lucy - Welcome and cake!

Upstairs

14.45 - 15.15pm

Entertainment! - TBC

Upstairs

15.30 - 15.45pm

Project Development - Amy Carr

Gym

Or



Everything you need to know - DN
Benefits Team

Room 3

16.10 - 16.25pm

Inclusion, Training & Access Audits -
Angie Stewart

Room 2

Or



Everything you need to know - DN
Direct Payments & Payroll Teams

Warm Hub

16.45 pm

Thank you and see you soon!

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https://www.instagram.com/disability_north/





Session Three

17.00 – 17.15pm

Project Development – Amy Carr

Gym

Or



Everything you need to know – DN
Benefits Team

Room 3

17.25 – 17.40pm

Everything you need to know – DN
Direct Payments & Payroll Teams

Warm Hub

Or



Inclusion, Training & Access Audits –
Angie Stewart

Room 2

17.55 – 18.10pm

Vici and Lucy – Thank you and cake!

Upstairs

18.10 – 19:00pm

Entertainment! – TBC

Upstairs

19.00pm

Thank you and see you soon!

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