

# Equality Act 2010 (disability) and the Labour Party.

A handbook by  
Disability Equality ACT Labour.

"Wow, it's a fantastic piece of work... Thanks for this great and much needed initiative."

John McDonnell.

"It's about including people - as simple as that. Let's be a shining example of equality in action - it's what we're all about isn't it?!"

Anon.

Revised 21 March 2019.

DEAL was formerly the Party Participation & Disabled People Group.



The Equality Act 2010 places statutory duties on political parties. It covers:

- Branches, CLPs, regional and national structures,
- Staff, officers, candidates, representatives and volunteers,
- Services to members including meetings, events and campaigns,
- Political activities, and
- Positive action.

The duties under the Act are continuing. They are not about doing something once.

The duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people is anticipatory. It is not about waiting for a disabled person to ask for changes to be made.

It's very important that officers, representatives, volunteers and staff fully understand how they need to function under the Equality Act.

When this document mentions the Party, it means all Party structures, officers, staff, candidates, representatives and volunteers.

All information in the first section of this handbook is taken from guidance provided by the Human Rights and Equalities Commission: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance>.

We are indebted to barrister Catherine Casserley of Cloisters Chambers ([cloisters.com](http://cloisters.com)) for her pro bono work on this document.

Disability Equality ACT Labour (DEAL), formerly the Party Participation and Disabled People Group, is the campaign for Labour Party compliance with the disability elements of the Equality Act 2010.

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## Contents

1. The Equality Act 2010 and the Labour Party. Page 4.
  2. Discrimination. Page 5.
  3. Harassment. Page 6.
  4. Reasonable adjustments. Page 6.
  5. Are disabled people at a substantial disadvantage? Page 8.
  6. What is meant by 'reasonable'? Page 8.
  7. Who pays for an adjustment? Page 9.
  8. Political activities. Page 9.
  9. Membership. Page 10.
  10. Positive action. Page 10.
  11. Standards of behaviour. Page 11.
  12. Monitoring. Page 11.
  13. Authors. Page 12.
- Campaigning document: It's our Party - let us in! Page 13.

## 1. The Equality Act 2010 and the Labour Party.

The Equality Act makes it unlawful for anyone acting on behalf of the Labour Party (or any political party) to discriminate against people with protected characteristics. Being a disabled person is a protected characteristic. The other characteristics are age, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

1.1. The purposes of the Equality Act can be summarised using the acronym FEAT:

- Fostering good relations between those with protected characteristics and others.
- Eliminating discrimination.
- Advancing equality of opportunities.
- Tackling prejudice.

1.2. The Act preserved the principle of “more favourable treatment” even when it means treating others less favourably. This is unique to disabled people and does not apply to other protected characteristics.

1.3. The Party has an obligation to provide reasonable adjustments. If it fails to do so, it is guilty of unlawful discrimination.

1.4. It also means the Party must create a comfortable, dignified environment for disabled people. If it fails to do so, it is guilty of harassment. If it fails to do so even when a disabled person isn't present, it could be guilty of harassment by association.

1.5. In addition to the main body of the Act (<http://bit.ly/EqualityAct2010Contents>), the following sections apply:

- Because the Labour Party is an association under the Act, Section 101 Membership applies: <http://bit.ly/Section101Membership>,
- Section 104 Special Provision for Political Parties also applies: <http://bit.ly/Section104>.

1.6. Actions or inactions that result in discrimination against physically disabled people may sometimes be obvious, but that is far from always the case. That is why it's important to ask people what adjustments they need rather than making assumptions.

1.7. Actions or inactions that result in discrimination against people with mental health related impairments or neurological disorders is often about assumed norms within the Party or in wider society. For example, if a branch said that someone

could not join, or be a prospective candidate, because they were always late to meetings; and the reason they were late was because their medication made them sluggish in the evenings; and their medication was for a mental health issue, this would be discrimination because of something arising in consequence of disability. This would be discrimination unless the treatment could be justified on other grounds, or the branch did not know that they were disabled.

1.8. The Equality Act applies even when Party services, events, campaigns, membership or associate membership are free.

1.9. Everyone who is carrying out a function for the Party, including staff, officers, candidates, representatives and volunteer activists, are subject to the Equality Act.

1.10. Members of branches, CLPs, regions or national structures cannot override their duties under the Equality Act by voting to act in a way that would put the Party in breach of the Act, or by omitting to do something that would put them in breach of the Act. Chairs of Party structures must rule any such vote results null and void.

## 2. Discrimination.

There are four different types of unlawful discrimination that apply to disability:

- Direct (section 13),
- Indirect (section 19) ,
- Unfavourable treatment because of something arising as a consequence of disability (section 15), and
- Failure to make reasonable adjustments (section 20 and 21).

2.1. Unlawful discrimination can take a number of different forms:

- The Labour Party must ensure all activities open to members, officers, candidates, councillors or MPs are accessible to disabled members, officers, candidates, councillors or MPs. If they do not, it is direct discrimination.
- It must not do something to a disabled member in a way that has a worse impact on them and other disabled people than it has on other people. Unless the Party can show that what they have done is objectively justified, this is indirect discrimination. Doing something can include making a decision, or applying a rule or way of doing things.
- The Labour Party must not treat disabled members in an inferior way because they incorrectly think they are a disabled person.
- It must not treat disabled members badly or victimise them because they

have complained about discrimination or helped someone else complain or done anything to uphold their own or someone else's equality law rights.

2.2. Unlawful discrimination is based on treatment that is meted out because of or related to disability. It is not limited to behaviour, rules or ways of doing things that only impact only on a disabled person. For example, if a non-disabled person, perhaps a personal assistant, carer, family member or supporter, is treated badly because of their association with a disabled person, or because it had been assumed they were a disabled person, they will have been unlawfully discriminated against.

### 3. Harassment.

Harassment is not only about bullying. Harassment is any conduct that violates a disabled person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for any disabled person.

3.1. Harassment is focussed on the environment the Party creates in branches, CLPs or any Party structure, activity, campaign or meeting. It doesn't just cover verbal abuse, but it could be, for example, the atmosphere created at a meeting when someone is asking for adjustments.

3.2. Harassment is based on treatment that is meted out because of or related to disability. It is not limited to behaviour or conduct directed to any disabled person. For example, if a non-disabled person is in a room and hears such conduct they will have witnessed harassment and ideally, will put in a formal complaint about the incident.

### 4. Reasonable adjustments.

The duty to make reasonable adjustments is an anticipatory duty. The Labour Party must not wait until a disabled person wants to join or participate in meetings, activities, events or campaigns or stand as a branch or CLP officer or as a candidate. The Party is required to think in advance about what people with a range of impairments might reasonably need, such as people who have a reading impairment, a mental health impairment, a sensory impairment, a neurological impairment, a mobility impairment or a learning disability.

4.2. The Party must think about reasonable adjustments for disabled members, associate members, guests, and disabled people who are:

- seeking or might seek to become members, or
- likely to become guests.

The duty to make reasonable adjustments is a continuing duty. It is not something to be considered once and then forgotten.

4.4. If a disabled person wants to participate in Party activities, events, campaigns or meetings or stand for office but finds barriers not previously identified, then the Party needs to think about reasonable adjustments. This applies whether or not it has already made any adjustments.

4.5. If the Party changes what it does, the way that it does it or where, then it needs to review the adjustments it has made. What was originally a reasonable step to take might no longer be enough.

4.6. The Equality Act duty contains three requirements that apply in situations where disabled people would otherwise be placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with people who are not disabled. These are called reasonable adjustments.

The Party has rules and ways of doing things, both written and unwritten, that present barriers to disabled people.

4.8. These barriers put disabled people at substantial disadvantage and even stop some people participating in events, activities, campaigns or meetings altogether.

Where a physical feature puts disabled people at substantial disadvantage, the Party must take reasonable steps to:

- remove the feature;
- alter it so that it no longer has that effect;
- provide a reasonable means of avoiding the feature; or
- provide a reasonable alternative way of making the service available to disabled people.

4.10. It is better for the Party to look at removing or altering the physical feature or finding a way of avoiding it (such as replacing steps with a ramp or, if it is reasonable for it to do this, a lift) before it looks at providing an alternative service. An alternative service may not give disabled people a similar level of service.

## 4.11. Providing aids and services.

These might include:

- providing equipment like hearing loops,
- allowing personal assistants or other support staff or volunteers to attend meetings, events and activities with individual disabled people,
- online meetings,
- online voting,
- giving people additional time to think about decisions at meetings,
- delaying decisions for later online votes,
- papers in different formats,
- papers sent out further in advance than usual, or
- job sharing by elected branch or CLP officers.

4.12. The Party must take reasonable steps to provide aids or services if they would enable or make it easier for disabled people to participate in events, activities campaigns or meetings or to stand for election.

## 5. Are disabled people at a substantial disadvantage?

5.1. The Equality Act defines disabled people as having a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

5.2. The Act covers conditions like dyslexia, sensory impairments, neurological conditions, personality disorders, severe disfigurements, HIV, cancer, multiple sclerosis, depression and anxiety and many more.

## 6. What is meant by 'reasonable'?

When deciding whether an adjustment is reasonable the Labour Party can consider:

- how effective the change will be in assisting disabled people in general or a particular member;
- whether it can actually be done;
- the cost; and
- the Party's resources and size.

6.1. The Party can consider whether an adjustment is practical. The easier an adjustment is, the more likely it is to be reasonable. However, just because something is difficult doesn't mean it can't also be reasonable.

6.2. If an adjustment costs little or nothing and is not disruptive, it would be reasonable.

6.3. In deciding if cost is a factor, the Party's resources must be looked at across the whole organisation. This means, if a branch, CLP or other individual structure can't afford an adjustment, that cannot be used as a reason not to provide it. It is only if the Party as a whole could not afford an adjustment that cost would come into it.

## 7. Who pays for an adjustment?

If an adjustment is reasonable, the Party must pay for it. Disabled people must not be asked to pay for it.

7.1. Where councillors, MPs and other elected individuals or staff receive remuneration from the Party to cover administrative and campaigning expenses, the cost of any reasonable adjustments must not form part of that remuneration. This would place disabled representatives or staff at a disadvantage when compared to other representatives or staff and would therefore be discriminatory.

## 8. Political activities.

The law applies to parties at a national, regional, constituency and local level and to people working for them or making decisions about the party's membership and activities, whether paid or unpaid.

8.1. The Labour Party must not:

- refuse membership to disabled prospective members or grant membership on less favourable terms because of impairments; or
- offer membership terms, benefits or services that are discriminatory, whether that is direct or indirect discrimination.



8.2. This includes activities that are directly related to political activity, such as meetings, events, activities and campaigns. Conditions put on membership or participation, such as door knocking as a requirement for becoming a candidate, are likely to be discriminatory.

8.3. Reasonable adjustments for political activities may include provision of an online option at meetings or allowing extra time for decisions to be taken rather than taking decisions solely at meetings.

## 9. Membership.

The Labour Party must make reasonable adjustments for disabled people in selection processes, elections to branch and CLP office and in how members, associate members and guests (and prospective members and guests) access services and enjoy membership benefits and facilities.

9.1. The aim of reasonable adjustments is to make sure that disabled people are able to join the Party and participate as far as is reasonably possible to the same standard offered to non-disabled people.

## 10. Positive action.

Equality law enables the Labour Party to take positive action for any of the protected characteristics. This means the Party could, for example, have physical or online meetings or ongoing forums specifically for disabled members, specify that Disability Officers become voting members on Executive Committees, employ disabled staff to provide support for disabled members at regional and national level, and require all information and publicity materials be approved by disabled members.

10.1. Changes to selection arrangements could include steps the Party takes to:

- encourage prospective disabled candidates to come forward, for example, by holding an event just for them or writing just to disabled members;
- increase disabled candidates' prospects of being selected, for example, by giving public speaking training only to disabled members;
- identify suitable disabled candidates, for example, by reducing the time disabled people have to have been Party members to be allowed to stand for election; or
- Reserving places on electoral candidate shortlists for disabled members.

## 11. Standards of behaviour.

Sometimes, how someone behaves is linked to the impairment they have. For example, the behaviour of people with Tourette's Syndrome or those with Asperger's, Autism, Borderline Personality Disorder or other mental health or neurological disorders can seem unacceptable or disturbing to those who do not understand these impairments.

11.1. Standards of behaviour that have a worse impact on people with a particular impairment than on people who do not have that impairment, must be objectively justified. Otherwise, it is indirect discrimination.

11.2. The Party must make reasonable adjustments for standards of behaviour to avoid discrimination arising from a specific impairment.

## 12. Monitoring.

The Party can decide to monitor the number of disabled members it has, but if the Party asks you about your disability, you do not have to answer if you prefer not to.

12.1. When monitoring the number of disabled members the Party has, and the reasonable adjustments that may be required, the Party should include people with physical or learning impairments, chronic illnesses and mental health conditions.

12.2. Impairments can be acquired at any stage of a person's life. The continuing duty means that cyclical disability and reasonable adjustment requirements monitoring is appropriate.

## 13. Authors.

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For Disability Equality ACT Labour.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/disabilityequalityactlabour>.

<http://disabilityequalityactlabour>.

## Campaigning document: It's our Party - Let us in!

By Disability Equality ACT Labour, formerly the Party Participation and Disabled People Group.

This is our campaigning document proposing ways the Party can improve its disability equality performance.

This document is regularly updated. This version was updated in February 2018.

### 1. Introduction.

1.1. Political parties must comply with the Equality Act 2010. In addition to the main body of the Act (<http://bit.ly/EqualityAct2010Contents>) the following sections apply:

- Section 101 Membership (<http://bit.ly/Section101Membership>),
- Section 104 Special Provision for Political Parties (<http://bit.ly/Section104>).

The Equality Act covers each Labour Party branch and CLP as well as every other Party structure. Party structures must not directly or indirectly discriminate; they must ensure all disabled members are able to participate in decision-making, meetings, events, campaigns, standing for office and other activities.

1.2. To comply with the Act, Party structures need to identify their disabled members, ask what reasonable adjustments they require and make those adjustments.

1.3. Many disabled members are excluded from Party activities, events and decision-making processes. Some have experienced branches refusing direct requests to make reasonable adjustments. Further, elected officers of Party structures have argued against making reasonable adjustments such as online participation at meetings, or being accompanied to meetings by a carer or personal assistant who may or may not be a Party member, because they require changes to internal custom and practice.

1.4. Party structures are not routinely asking what reasonable adjustments disabled members require. When discussing what comprises a reasonable adjustment, many elected officers of Party structures do not understand the issue beyond basic physical changes like ramps for wheelchair users. Little, if any, attempt is being made to use technology and the internet to enable people to access their right to participate.

1.5. Many CLPs do not have a Disability Co-ordinator/Officer and there is no

equivalent of Party Women's and BAME Forums or Youth Labour.

1.6. Previous Party guidance has attempted to address the Equality Act duties, but this guidance is not being followed. Previous attempts to correct this situation have not succeeded.

1.7. Disability equality training for elected officers in Party structures is not currently a requirement.

1.8. To comply with the Act elected officers of all Party structures need to be aware of the legal requirements placed on them, and have a good enough working understanding of the ramifications of those requirements.

1.9. In order to tackle stigma, The Labour Party should hold itself to more inclusive standards than current practice in wider society, rather than lagging behind. The authors of this document aim to ensure Labour Party compliance with Equality Act duties, informed by current good practice and past Party guidance, is firmly built into Party rules, guidance, systems and structures. We recognise that the Labour Party, as the party of equality, must take the lead in enabling full participation by disabled members.

## 2. Proposals.

### 2.1. Monitoring.

The only way to identify what reasonable adjustments we need to make is to ask disabled members what they require. Existing disabled members need to be asked in a one off survey, whilst new disabled members need to be asked as they join. Elected officers of Party structures can find contact details of their disabled members from the Party membership database.

2.2. If a request is made to make an adjustment to custom or practice that elected officers do not understand, they will need to go back to the individual making the request to discuss their exact requirements and how they can best be provided. Debating whether these adjustments should be made is inappropriate. Consultation is vital, and no elected officer should act on an assumption that they know what is best for anyone.

2.3. Party structures should use the following questionnaire which will be made available in print and online in a format suitable for screen reading software, in plain English and Easy English with images suitable for people with dyslexia or learning difficulties, and as an audio described file:

2.4. Your response to this questionnaire will enable us to meet our duties under in the Equality Act 2010. Please complete and return to ...

Name:

Membership number:

1. Do you identify as disabled? Yes/No.

2. Do you have an impairment &/or a long term (physical or mental health) concern which impacts on your day-to-day life? Yes/No.

3. Do you have a disabled family member or friend who you live with or provide some assistance to? Yes/No.

4. Are you satisfied with the way we notify you about meetings, events and other activities?

If no, how should we change this?

5. Are you satisfied with the way we provide print and online materials?

If no, how would you prefer us to do this?

6. Are you able to understand and participate in meetings, events and other activities?

If no, what should we do to change this?

7. Are there any other ways we can enable to you participate?

8. If you would like to make any other comments, please add them here:

Any personal information gathered on an individual will be covered by the General Data Protection Regulations which come into effect in May 2018 or before then, the Data Protection Act, and should be treated as confidential unless otherwise agreed with the individual.

2.5. CLP development plans should set specific goals towards achieving equality for disabled people. For example monitoring the number of disabled candidates, venues where access audits have been undertaken or meetings where full online participation has been made available. These goals are quantifiable and can be used to monitor progress periodically.



## 2.5. Disability equality training for elected officers of Party structures.

On being put forward for election all potential elected officers of Party structures should be supplied with Party guidance on compliance with the Equality Act, including these proposals.

2.6. After election, all disability officers, chairs, secretaries and delegates to conference should be required to attend disability equality training provided by appropriately experienced disabled members so that they can avoid discriminatory actions, omissions or statements.

2.7. An inclusion day, open to all members, should be held each year to provide training and opportunities for debate.

## 2.8 Funding.

A National Inclusion Fund to which all CLPs can apply for funding equipment which will enable all members with a disability to be able to access all CLP activities. This may include items such as; hearing loops, paying for a BSL signer to be present at meetings, equipment to privately video-cast meetings. (This list is not exhaustive and is to be used to provide guidance only.)

The Fund to be overseen in each Region by Disability Officers and/or disabled people acting as Disability Ambassadors who will be able to advise constituencies on their duties under the Equality Act 2010.

## 2.9. Disability officers.

All CLPs should elect a Disability Officer.

2.10. CLP Disability Officers should automatically become CLP Executive members.

2.11. Disability Officers should be respresented regionally, at the National Policy Forum, the NEC and all regional and national party structures.

## 2.12. Service Audits.

Elected officers of Party structures to be required to carry out an annual audit of the events, meetings and activities to see how disabled people have been enabled to participate.

2.13. Elected officers to use the results of the audits to make legally required reasonable adjustments.

2.14. Each Party structure to produce an annual report detailing results of

Accessibility Questionnaires, audits and reasonable adjustments that have been, or are planned to be, made. These reports to be made available to all members in print and online in a format suitable for screen reading software, in plain English and Easy English with images suitable for people with dyslexia or learning difficulties, and as an audio described file.

## 2.15. Accountability and transparency.

CLPs to produce annual reports compiled from their branches. These reports to be made available to all members in print and online in a format suitable for screen reading software, in plain English and Easy English with images suitable for people with dyslexia or learning difficulties, and as an audio described file.

2.16 The NEC to produce an annual report compiled from CLP reports and reports of all other structures. This report to be made available to all members in print and online in a format suitable for screen reading software, in plain English and Easy English with images suitable for people with dyslexia or learning difficulties, and as an audio described file.

## 2.17. Campaigning.

Disability Equality ACT Labour is campaigning internally – within the Labour Party – for change. It is vital that all Party structures comply with their legal obligations at the very least, and quickly.

2.18. Campaigning is a key activity of CLPs and the Party as a whole. All campaigning activities must be made inclusive and accessible. A model of inclusive and accessible campaigning needs to be produced and used by all Party structures, Volume Two of this document will include a model. There is the resource, talent and skill set within our movement to be innovative in our approach.

## 2.19. Electoral slates.

Electoral slates are potentially discriminatory because of the danger of not including openly disabled candidates. Slates be barriers to disabled members standing, substantially weakening the possibility of disabled members being elected to key positions. Careful thought needs to be given to the equality ramifications of slates.

## 2.20. Complaints.

Members' health and impairments should be taken into account when a member has a complaint about the behaviour of other members. Disabled members are often vulnerable and their health can be severely affected by the complaints process to a greater extent than for other members. Complaints from disabled members should be vigorously investigated and pastoral support be given throughout.

## 2.21. Unacceptable language.

Comments like “playing the disabled card” made by members against disabled members should be as unacceptable as “playing the female, racist or LGBTQ+ cards” are.

## 2.22. Loss of income.

Disabled members in receipt of benefits put themselves at risk of losing income should they stand for office or as a candidate. The Party needs to address this as a matter of urgency.

## 2.23. A Disabled Members Section.

The Party should actively encourage disabled members to set up a section in the same format as the Women and BAME members.

## 2.24. A firm footing.

When these proposals are bedded into the Party, we will be in a position to use our experience of implementing good practice to strengthen our position on equalities and campaign on a firmer footing.

## 3. About the authors.

3.1. The Party Participation and Disabled People group includes Disability Officers from the following CLPs:

Chipping Barnet CLP: Reema Patel.

Eltham CLP: Caroline Walsh.

Islington South & Finsbury CLP: David Hooke.

Vauxhall CLP: Alex Bigham & Fran Diamond

Warrington South CLP: Sarah-Jane Dean.

Wokingham CLP: Rona Lisa Topaz (Women’s Officer - the CLP has no disabilities officer).

3.2. Sarah-Jane Brownlie is a disabled disability anti-poverty businesswoman. On the way to having the first unionized care & employment service in SW London paying the real living wage in support of London waiting & introducing a universal basic income to disabled families in Africa. She is a disability confident trainer for businesses. For the past 20 years she has been a voluntary independent advocate for disabled people with

particular focus on social security benefits, personal budgets, mental health & autism.

3.3. Alison Dunning is a university research scientist who became disabled 4 years ago. Her employer made the necessary adjustments for her to continue working and she frequently gives seminars and chairs international meetings from home, via the internet. She is increasingly active as an equality and diversity rep in her workplace. Although she continues as a Labour Party Branch Sec, she cannot access CLP meetings and so has little or no voice at that level.

3.4. Lesley Farrington is Disability Officer for Makerfield CLP. Although she is now retired on health grounds due to chronic illness, she worked for nearly 20 years in Children’s Social Care, most recently as a manager of a Children with Disabilities Team.

3.5. David Hooke is Disability Officer for Islington South & Finsbury CLP and a professionally qualified IT Systems Administrator.

3.6. Sophie Talbot left her career as a community and organisation development specialist in 2004 because of her disability. Prior to that she was London Economic Development Strategy Manager and Mainstreaming Equalities Manager for European Structural Funds in London. She is now a part-time disability and dyslexia library assistant at Birkbeck University and runs a small business, [cookiewp.com](http://cookiewp.com).

3.7. Rona Topaz is a singer, actress, vocal coach for The Rock Academy Foundation and Primavolta and choir leader for the Dramatize and Sing and Mingle choirs. She is also a qualified Parliamentary Outreach trainer and Women’s Officer for Wokingham CLP.

3.8. Caroline Walsh has over 20 years experience of research and policy development at international, national and local levels. She has worked on projects at UNEP and World Bank and research projects influencing British Council, EU and UK-wide policy decision-making. She has extensive knowledge of the Labour Movement and policy formulation as well as experience of EU policy formation.

3.9 Fran Diamond is a disability trainer and has been a disability activist for over 20 years. An Registered General Nurse by background she has run her own Consultancy and has been a Medico-Legal Expert Witness in disability other and discrimination cases.

#### 4. Contact details.

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#### 5. Appendix one: the Social Model of Disability.

Thanks to Inclusion London for letting us reproduce sections from their [social model of disability factsheet](#) here.

"The Social Model frames disability as something that is socially constructed. Disability is created by physical, organisational and attitudinal barriers and these can be changed and eliminated.

This gives us a dynamic and positive model that tells us what the problem is and how to fix it. It takes us away from the position of "blaming" the individual for their shortcoming. It states that impairment is, and always will be, present in every known society, and therefore the only logical position to take, is to plan and organise society in a way that includes, rather than excludes, Disabled people."

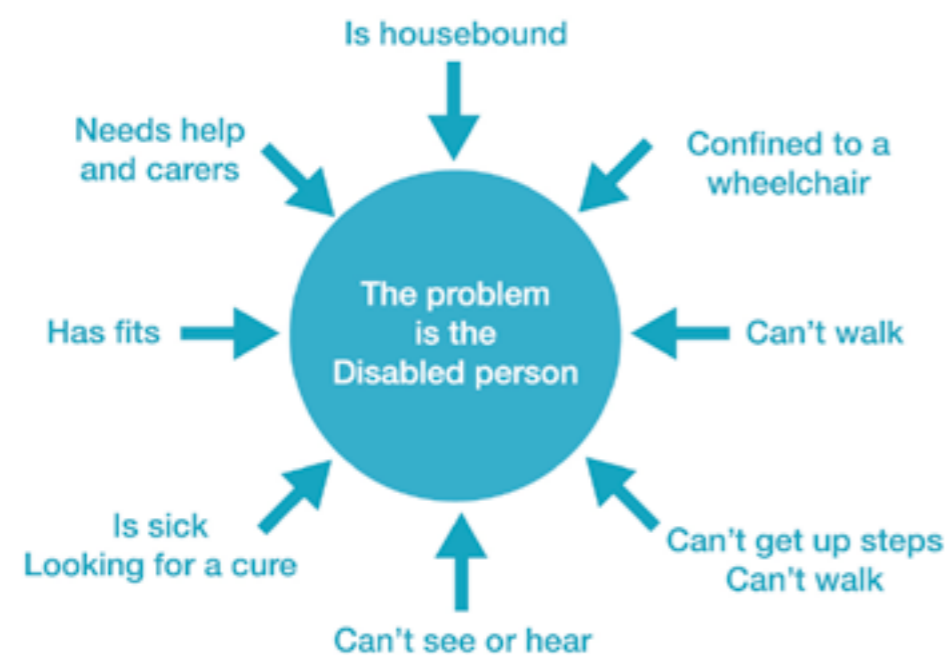
Barbara Lisicki, 2013

What is powerful and liberating about the Social Model is that it does reflect Disabled people's real life experience, and puts forward a radical and practical approach to ending Disabled people's exclusion and oppression that does not require Disabled people to change who they are in order to be deemed to be entitled to the same rights and opportunities as non-disabled people.

The Social Model of Disability was developed by Disabled people to identify and take action against Disabled people's oppression and exclusion. It was developed as a direct challenge to the prevailing models of disability that viewed disability as an individual, medical problem that needed to be prevented, cured or contained; and/or as a charitable issue that viewed Disabled people as unfortunates who needed to be pitied and catered for by segregated, charitable services.

Both the Medical and Charitable Models of Disability rest on assumptions of what a Disabled person 'can't do' because of their impairment; for example: "She cannot walk, therefore she will never be able to work". A Medical Model of Disability will then focus on trying to help the individual to walk again through operations or equipment, whilst a Charitable Model of Disability will conclude that the person who is unable to walk needs special charitable services (often segregated from society), such as day centres, as an alternative to work. Both of these Models locate the source of the 'problem' as the individual Disabled person and, in doing so, place responsibility for the situation onto the Disabled person and away from society and how it is run and organised.

### The Medical Model of Disability



This is a diagram of the traditional Medical Model of Disability, which the Social Model was developed to challenge.

Both the Medical and Charitable Models of Disability are still alive and kicking, and often still lurk in approaches and assumptions made by government and public bodies, despite these organisations purporting to adopt a Social Model approach.

The Social Model of Disability, developed over the last 40 years by Disabled people, is a radically different Model to the Medical and Charitable approach to disability described above. It states that people have impairments but that the oppression, exclusion and discrimination people with impairments face is not an inevitable consequence of having an impairment, but is caused instead by the way society is run and organised.

### The Social Model of Disability



The Social Model of Disability states that the oppression and exclusion people with impairments face is caused by the way society is run and organised.

The Social Model of Disability holds that people with impairments are 'disabled' by the barriers operating in society that exclude and discriminate against them.

From a Social Model perspective, there is a radical difference between impairment and disability:

Impairment is an individual's physical, sensory or cognitive difference (for example, being blind, experiencing bipolar, having M.S. or a learning difficulty).

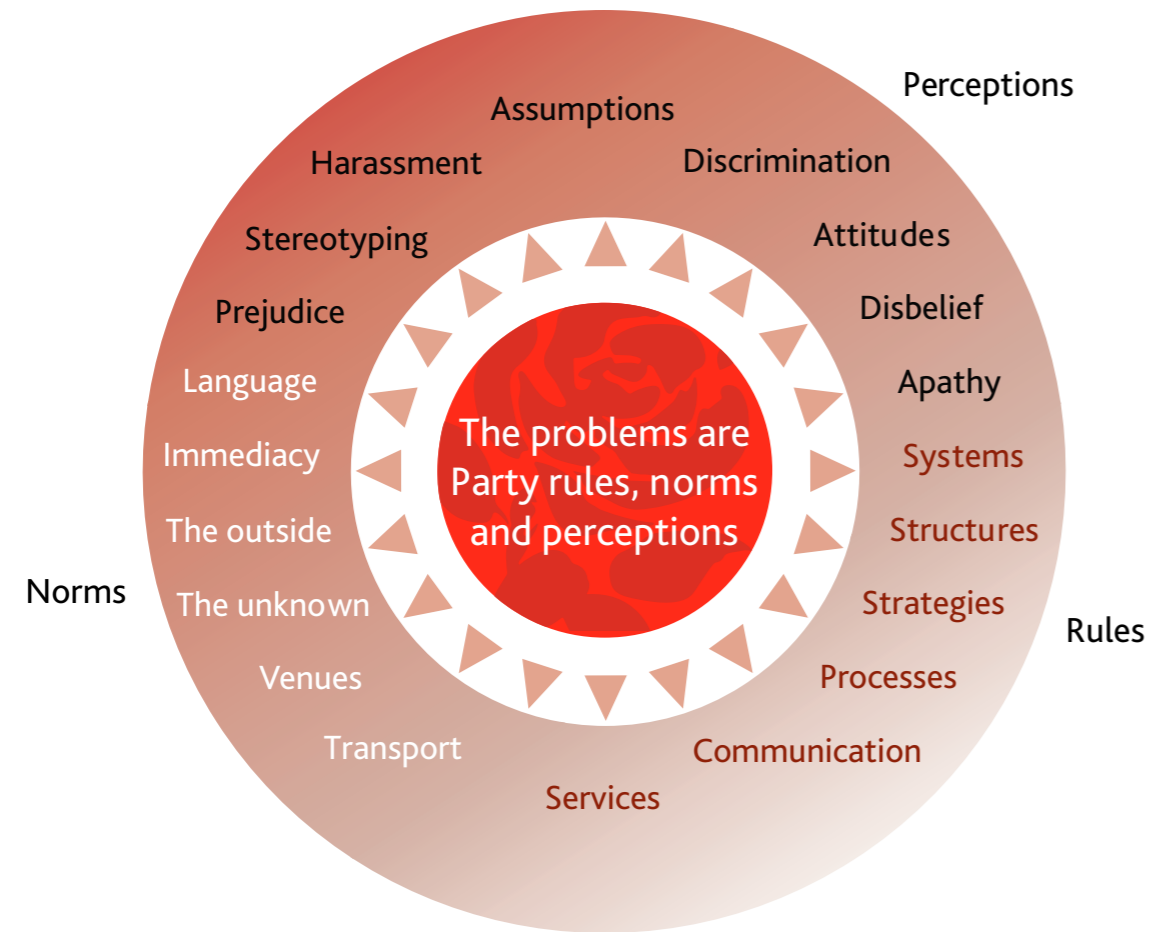
Disability is the name for the social consequences of having an impairment. People with impairments are disabled by society, so disability is therefore a social construct that can be changed and removed.



## 6. Appendix two: the Social Model and the Labour Party.

We've taken the Social Model of Disability and applied it to the Labour Party. We have started to identify what the Party has to change in order to become inclusive of people with impairments.

### The Social Model of Disability and the Labour Party



Using the Social Model of Disability we see the exclusion disabled members face is caused by the way the Party is run and organised.

## 7. Appendix three: further reading.

6.1. Disability Access and Provision of Services – Labour Party 2007.  
<http://bit.ly/disabilityaccess2007>.

6.2. Improving accessibility handbook – Labour Party 2007.  
<http://bit.ly/improvingaccessibility2007>.

Produced by the Labour Party Disabled Members Group whose website, Labourability, is now defunct.

6.3. The Equality Act 2010.  
<http://bit.ly/theequalityact2010>.

6.4. CLP Accessibility Guide – Labour Party.  
 Possibly published in 2014, possibly not published.  
<http://bit.ly/accessibilityguide2014>.

6.5. Disability Equality Roadshow consultation 2016 to 2017.  
<http://bit.ly/der2017>.



Using this guide is not a substitute for taking legal advice.

If you are considering legal action, it is extremely important to get appropriate advice and representation.

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