



WinVisible

Women with Visible and Invisible Disabilities

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20 February 2023

To the Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and to whom it may concern:

WinVisible (women with visible and invisible disabilities) is a multi-racial grassroots organisation with a London-wide and UK-wide network.

We support the National Federation of the Blind UK petition calling for staffing at train stations and on trains, and the petition supported by the Association of British Commuters to #KeepTheGuardOnTheTrain for women's safety:

- **We need staff at ticket offices**, as our main contact when we arrive and to ensure that we are getting assistance from other staff, that we have the correct travel information and travel concessions which we are entitled to, and we are not overpaying, given the extra costs and disability expenses we already have. For example, Freedom Pass + Railcard concession is not available online.
- **We need staff in the station**, including women staff, to help us travel safely, for women's safety and against other harassment and hate crime which we are subjected to. We need assistance getting to the right platform and getting safely on the train, especially when the carriage is quite full, with others trying to get on. Blind people and wheelchair users need assistance to deal with the gap between the platform and the train, even on "humped" platforms as the front wheels of our wheelchairs get stuck under the metal plate of the train step and we need to reverse on. We are in danger if we are too close to the platform edge and don't know it. Also if there are platform changes we need help to get from one place to another. Several disabled people may need help at the same time so more staff are needed for disability assistance, often workers have to rush between platforms to assist disabled passengers. Some of us are mothers so helping us ensures our children can travel safely too. It is essential for safety to have enough staff. Also they can intervene to help stop desperate people in mental distress considering committing suicide on the tracks.
- **We need guards on the train** for disabled / women's safety, to look out for disabled and older people who may need help. Against sexual, racist and other discriminatory harassment, in case someone is taken ill, and in case of emergency, such as a train crash where the driver is killed or injured. Disabled people, including blind passengers, should not have to be reliant on the goodwill of other passengers in a difficult situation, as we have experienced when the train broke down and all passengers had to transfer to coaches.
- WinVisible supports the RMT and other workers demanding higher pay, better working conditions and no loss of jobs.

This is a very urgent matter.

Sincerely,

WinVisible (women with visible and invisible disabilities)

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