

Freedom Pass - Written Submissions – Personal Experiences

Submission Twelve

Here a brief account of events prior to receiving my Freedom Pass would be helpful. They are as follows:-

14th March 2008 - Posted completed Freedom Pass reassessment form to Disability Services. When I rang in late March I was told the Passes would be valid until 31st May 2008.

30th May 2008 - (Week ending) I rang Disability telephone number, was told to go to One Stop Shop in Wansey Street, early on Monday

2nd June - I was given the impression that my Pass would be issued on that occasion.

2nd June 2008 - Joined queue at Wansey Street office. A representative from the council came out, he told us of the limitations in the office, seating etc. and that contrary to the impression given on the telephone the previous week, Freedom Passes would probably not be issued on that occasion. When my turn came, I took my place in the booth, I wrote down my details as requested. My GP had not been contacted, this would be done that afternoon, I was told. I commented on the confusion, and was told that staff had worked until 11.30pm the night before to sort things out. I was told to expect a call the following morning, and that the validity of my Freedom Pass could no longer be guaranteed.

3rd June 2008 - I rang the office number given to me the day before, eventually I spoke to my contact, she told me that they would be in touch my GP that day. I had to start to pay full fare from this time.

7th June 2008 - My letter of authorisation for a Freedom Pass arrived by Recorded Delivery; it had been posted on the 6th June 2008.

After 31st May, I became very anxious and concerned about the consequences of a refusal, should, I not be awarded a Freedom Pass.

I thought I might have to walk everywhere, except for the unavoidable longest journeys. I considered restricting the already limited activities I undertake.

I made a special effort and walked to Wansey Street on 2nd June, and waited even longer as the situation was unresolved.

I was exhausted after my best efforts, and was appalled to see so many people waiting and coping with their disability, only to find no progress had been made. My GP had not been contacted; it was as if applications were being dealt with for the first time.