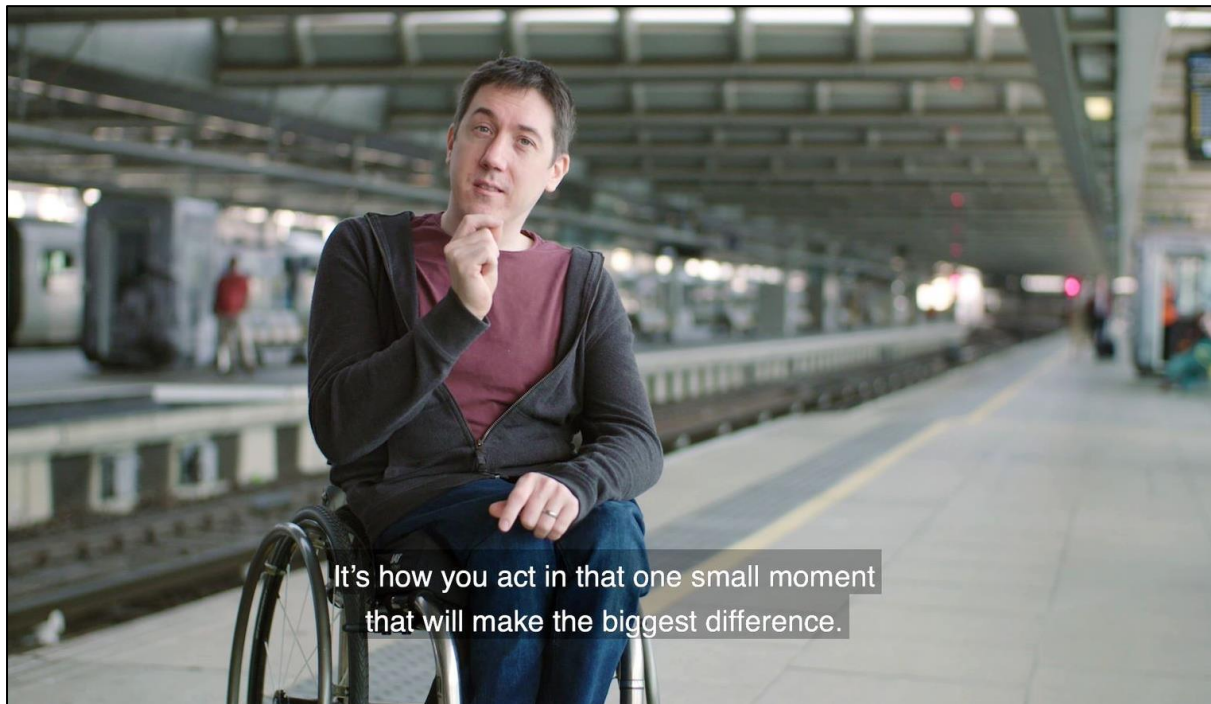


David Proud of Peterborough

EastEnders actor, screenwriter and member of the GTR Access Advisory Panel, he features in GTR's new staff accessibility training videos



It's how you act in that one small moment
that will make the biggest difference.

David Proud, of Peterborough, at Blackfriars where he often travels – [click here to download](#).

This staff training [video can also be viewed here](#).

Actor-screenwriter David Proud, 37, is probably best-known for playing Adam as a regular cast member in the BBC soap *EastEnders* (2010), and a 2018 role in the ITV detective drama series *Marcella*. He's also a screenwriter and has just finished an episode of BBC 1 daytime drama series *Doctors*.

David is married with a 11-year-old son and lives on the outskirts of Peterborough. He was born with Spina Bifida and has been using a wheelchair since primary school days.

Government Covid restrictions aside, David's normally a frequent traveller on the Thameslink network, commuting between Peterborough and London St Pancras to work freelance with the British Film Institute and British Academy of Film and Television Arts.

He said: "I think a lot of disabled people rule out train travel but might be quite surprised by how accessible it all is now. The changes have been incremental but they really add up.

"They might be surprised that a station which didn't use to be accessible now is. Suddenly the map looks a lot brighter.

"We've got to a point where enough things have changed to make a good standard of travel possible. That's not to say some things can't be better, but I would urge people to press 'refresh' on the page of train travel and take another look."

David used to take a Great Northern train to King's Cross but switched when Thameslink introduced its new service from Peterborough because platform humps at London St Pancras, Farringdon, City Thameslink, Blackfriars and London Bridge let him get on and off without a ramp.

"Those humps were a revelation. It's so much easier. It's literally made a world of difference. It's cut by half how much I have to ask people for help."

He's a member of GTR Access Advisory Panel.

"What I like about being on the panel is I can have a direct impact on change. I can help GTR fully understand people's needs so they can put the right resources in the right place and spend money on the right things."

He welcomes the pledges made in GTR's new Accessible Travel Policy that he helped with.

"The reduction in the notice we're asked to give when booking assistance in advance [from 10pm the night before to six hours in April 2021 and just two hours a year later] is great. Most of the time I just turn up and travel; this will make me book in advance more which just makes my journey through the station easier because the staff there are expecting me."

David was delighted to swap starring roles on TV's small screen for GTR's staff training videos because training has transformed the way he is supported.

"Back in the day I was constantly made to feel I was a burden on staff; that kind of mentality has died. We're getting there now through top-down training about the understanding of the needs of disabled travellers. Now, some of the guys call me 'boss' - I really really like that!"

ends