Learning to drive
with Sean and Bill
Why we wanted to learn to drive

Bill

• I had wanted to learn for a while, but my family had mixed feelings about it.
• I wanted more freedom.
• I wanted to help out on long journeys.
Why we wanted to learn to drive

Sean

• I always wanted to learn
• My Family and friends encouraged me
• I also wanted more freedom
• It would help me be a bit more independent and I won’t need to rely on lifts, can go out and do what I want and I don’t have to rely on public transport.
How we made it happen

Bill – My mum got in touch with a specialist who is autistic and a driving instructor.

Sean – We found my first instructor through word of mouth. She then retired. I then found another instructor. He was driving around locally and I decided to contacted him.
How we made it happen

Bill – It took me well over a year to get my provisional license which was frustrating

Sean – I had a provisional license already which I got as a present from my 21st birthday
Reasonable Adjustments

Sean – I told my first instructor I had a disability but not my second.

Bill – We met up and I explained my needs to her.

Sean – Both of us needed any information given to us to be broken down as it helped us to process it better.
When I got behind the wheel

Sean - We were both scared.
Bill - We both started on quiet roads in industrial sites etc. this was fine.
Sean – We then went on to main roads. Made a few mistakes like staling the car. Having someone beep horns at me really didn’t help.
Bill – I spent ages getting from a junction to the road in front. I waited until I was ready. Rarely did people beep at me. If they did my instructor stared them down.

Sean - I had to be encouraged to slow down when going too fast.

Bill - I was encouraged to narrate what I was doing and I was often told to speed up.
Theory test

• I wanted to focus on lessons but my instructor told me I needed to do my theory, she gave me access to a website I could use to practice.

• You can book your test yourself or someone can help book this.

• When I was practicing my mum and instructor would always be around to help.
Theory test

- I failed my first attempt by a couple of questions although my hazard perception was at the pass mark.
- The second time I passed and then moved on to prep for my driving test.
Practical test

• Like the theory I had to book this. In doing so I was able to declare my disability and that I prefer to be called Bill rather than William.
• Me and my instructor went through ‘Show me, tell me’ questions.
• We spent a few lessons practicing manoeuvres.
• The week of my test everyone wished me luck. They gave me some good advice. Taking water with me was the best advice. This kept me hydrated and calm.
On my test

• I had an eye test where I had to read the number plate from a distance.
• Then we got into the car and did the ‘tell me’ question and it was a question about something we didn’t cover and I had a brain fart.
• Then we did a reverse bay park which initially I messed up but managed to correct.
On my test

• We then went for a drive using the sat nav and I was occasionally asked to pull up and stop. After the sat nav finished the examiner guided me from there.

• The examiner was nice and supportive, he was fine with me asking him to repeat instructions.

• He wanted me to show him how to clean the rear window. This was the ‘Show me’ part of the test.
After the Test

• Arrived back at the test centre and he told me I had PASSED!!!!!!
• This was my first attempt and therefore my only one too.
• I was relieved and me and the family went for a pub meal to celebrate.
Where we are now

Sean – I drive an automatic car as I find manual to be difficult. I am still learning to drive and will be working on my theory test soon.

Bill – I drive a manual car as I felt I should at least try and see if I can do it and I can. I had more lessons after the test until my instructor had to stop them due to health issues. My mum bought a new car and had me down as a named driver for insurance purposes. I am working on being able to drive on my own but will continue to drive with support until then.