

**THE KING'S SPEECH:
BSA HIGHLIGHTS LACK OF LOCAL SUPPORT FOR STAMMERERS
AS PLAY OPENS IN GUILDFORD**

The British Stammering Association welcomes the world premiere of the original play of *The King's Speech*, a play which inspired the hugely successful Oscar™ winning film. Opening on Thursday 2nd of February at the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre, the play runs in Guildford until the 11th before touring the UK.

Written by Oscar™ winner David Seidler, directed by former Artistic Director of the Royal Shakespeare Company, Adrian Noble, and boasting a superb cast including Charles Edwards as King George VI, Jonathan Hyde as Lionel Logue and Joss Ackland in the role of Bertie's father, the play deals with the intense relationship between Bertie and Lionel. It also highlights the frustration and the fear of speaking faced by the King at a time when his country needed him most.

The *King's Speech* film helped to bring the subject of stammering out of the shadows but now the play can help to shine a light on the condition which affects around 720,000 adults and children in the UK. The issue of stammering will be back, sadly only temporarily, in the spotlight and stammerers will have a golden opportunity to speak up and be heard on a subject which is still, all too often, ignored and treated as embarrassing and shameful.

The fact that Guildford has been chosen to host the world premiere of this wonderful play is certainly apt. It is a sad fact that, 60 years after the King's death, an adult with a stammer living in Guildford today would get no help at all on the NHS. As recent media coverage around the Children's Communication Champion Jean Gross has highlighted ([click here for news report](#)), many areas such as Surrey and surrounding counties have seen local NHS speech and language services severely decimated by recent NHS cuts, which makes it very difficult for adults in the area who stammer to find help.

However, with the opening of play, those most affected by the cuts have a chance, like the King himself, to find their voice and make sure that the world hears them.

Norbert Lieckfeldt, Chief Executive of BSA, said:

"We are grateful to the producers and the cast of *The King's Speech* who are supporting us in raising the issue of the poor services offered to adults in Guildford who stammer. Speech therapy transforms lives. It helped the King. It transformed my life. Adults in Surrey are no longer offered this chance to communicate freely and fulfil their potential."

If you would like to interview a member of the BSA, then please contact Norbert Lieckfeldt, the Chief Executive of BSA, at work on 020 8983 1003 mobile 07908 685 215 or via email at nl@stammering.org. BSA Chair Leys Geddes will also be available for short interviews before the premiere at the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre on February 2nd.

For all other Press requests – Ben Chamberlain at Cornershop Pr 0207 494 3665

www.kingsspeechonstage.com

Guildford dates: 2 – 11 February