

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***The Mirrorbox Journey* continues across the UK: A growing national artwork connecting those absent and present**

This September, *The Mirrorbox Journey* begins a new UK-wide tour, carrying messages from people living with ME and Long Covid back to the places they love but can no longer reach.

Created by artist Alison Larkman, *The Mirrorbox Journey* is part of *I Would Be Here If I Could*, a nationwide collaborative social artwork shaped by people living with ME and Long Covid. Over the next year, *The Mirrorbox* will travel to seven locations chosen by people who would be there if they could.

The project began with a simple question: “Where would you be if you could?” People living with ME and Long Covid shared messages for places they love but can no longer physically reach — from major cultural landmarks and public spaces to coastlines and places bound up with everyday memories.

The Mirrorbox brings those messages back into the places from which their senders are absent.

Making absence visible

The Mirrorbox is an interactive sculpture made from two-way mirrored acrylic. When a visitor steps inside, they disappear from view. Inside, they hear an audio message from the person who chose that place — someone who would be there if they could.

Visitors are invited to write a postcard in response, creating an exchange between someone who is absent and the people who are present. As *The Mirrorbox* moves from place to place, these messages, postcards and encounters accumulate into a growing national artwork.

Shared places become bridges between absent and present, connecting people who may never meet.

The Journey is designed as both a physical and digital experience, with online audiences able to follow the route, explore the map, listen to messages and send digital postcards from wherever they are.

The Mirrorbox Journey

The UK-wide tour begins at the Royal Opera House in London on 12–13 September 2026, before travelling to:

- Royal Opera House, London — 12–13 September 2026
- Jubilee Square, Brighton — 17–18 October 2026
- Thornton Heath Leisure Centre, Croydon — 8–9 November 2026
- Tate Modern, London — 13–14 March 2027

- Whitby, North Yorkshire — 14–15 May 2027
- Robin Hood's Bay, North Yorkshire — 16 May 2027
- Bingley Five Rise Locks, West Yorkshire — 12–13 June 2027

Every location has been chosen by someone living with ME or Long Covid as somewhere they would be if they could.

A project shaped by lived experience

Over two million people in the UK are estimated to live with ME or Long Covid. For some, symptoms can make leaving home, travelling, or spending time in public places extremely difficult or impossible, resulting in people becoming physically absent from places, communities and cultural life that once formed part of everyday life.

I Would Be Here If I Could is developed from lived experience: 60% of the project team live with ME or Long Covid, and message contributors help shape where *The Mirrorbox* travels. They are collaborators and co-creators in a national artwork that carries their voices beyond physical boundaries.

The new Journey builds on an earlier pilot that took *The Mirrorbox* to locations across Bristol and to the summit of Glastonbury Tor, where hundreds of visitors listened to messages and responded with postcards.

"I love this idea, making us visible in the spaces where we are missing (and maybe these spaces are missing us too)" **Kate, a message sender (participant with ME)**

"The Mirrorbox project is a beautiful and moving piece of work. It creates a focal point for complex discussions about the disappearance of people with M.E. from society." **Dr Amble Ysgawen-Skuse, composer and a Mirrorbox visitor**

I Would Be Here If I Could is delivered by Invisible Visible CIC and has received project funding from Arts Council England. The project is endorsed by Action for ME, the ME Association, Long Covid Support and Long Covid SOS.

Follow the Journey: iwouldbehereifcould.com

#MirrorboxJourney

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ENDS

Notes to editors

About *I Would Be Here If I Could*

I Would Be Here If I Could is a nationwide collaborative social art project connecting absence and presence through a shared love, memory, and experience of place.

The project began with messages from people living with ME and Long Covid describing places they loved but could now no longer reach. It makes the absence of people living with ME and Long Covid visible in public and cultural spaces, while creating opportunities for people who are absent and present to connect through the shared experience of place.

About *The Mirrorbox*

The Mirrorbox is a 1.5 x 2m interactive sculpture made from two-way mirrored acrylic. Visitors enter the structure, disappear from view, and hear an audio message recorded by someone who would be at that location if they could. They are invited to respond with a postcard.

Messages are also available as audio and text outside *The Mirrorbox*, and through the project's digital map, enabling people to listen and respond without entering the structure or travelling to the location.

About the artist Alison Larkman

Alison Larkman is an artist living with life-altering ME. Her practice explores invisibility, fragility and absence. What began as a simple question to others living with ME and Long Covid — “Where would you be if you could?” — has grown into a nationwide project, with hundreds of people taking part.

The Mirrorbox Journey and wider project *I would be here if I could* are created and led by Alison Larkman. The project continues to develop from lived experience – 60% of the team involved with the project live with ME or Long Covid.

Press enquiries

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