

TAPPI Personal Stories

From our testbed partner:



Marilyn's Story



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Marilyn, 81 is a retired cardiology nurse, who lives at an Extra Care service in Swansea, Wales. It is a complex of 43 flats, which the housing, care and support provider, Pobl Group, are very keen to enhance via TAPPI, in order to promote further independence for the individuals who live there. Marilyn's brother lives an hour's drive southeast, in Cardiff and her sister is 150 miles away in Dorset, England.

How do you feel about technology?

When I retired from nursing, I went on a computer course. But I need to be encouraged to get on with it. I lose momentum when it comes to the nitty gritty of technology. I can send emails but with things like Zoom, they're totally out of context for me. I'd never come across Zoom before and I still need help with it. I'm actually a great one for telephoning still.

“ I'm finding it frustrating not being able to do things. If I could just get up and on with it, I'd love that.

How could technology help you?

I have osteoarthritis and lumber spine and I can no longer support my weight when I'm standing, so I'm stuck in a wheelchair. But I'm very grateful for it. It means I can get myself around and annoy people! Although I wish the battery would last longer.

I could do with a lot of little buttons to help me do things in my flat. For example, my kitchen is small and there's a door which means I can't get in there in my wheel chair. It means my carers have to see to my meals with is a little frustrating. I'd like to be able to do more for myself and maybe technology could help with that.

It would also be nice to have a curtain switch, so I don't have to wait for my carers to come. Reaching things and dropping them on the floor is difficult. I have a grabber and it is useful, however I am unable to pick things up with a smooth surface such as a TV remote control, but I'd like technology that helps me to do more things independently.



I used to live in a two-bed house overlooking the Loughor Estuary - it was glorious. Unfortunately, I couldn't get upstairs, and I needed help to do basic things for myself, so I decided to sell my home and move here. I still like to get out and about though, but I need help with things like putting on coats and jackets. My mobility is zilch. I love gardening but I can't get out into the garden.

I'd like technology that could give me more control and independence. That's why I'm involved with TAPPI. Having been used to living alone I'm finding it frustrating not being able to do things. I have to rely on my carers - I need two at once and they come at set times. For instance, I have to wait until a certain time to have my lunch. If I could just get up and on with it, I'd love that.



What are the barriers?

This building is 30 years old and lots of the technology here is old. Say a visitor comes to the front door and presses the buzzer, it goes through to the flats. But that person has to get up and over to the phone to let them in. I have my wheelchair so I can do that, but not everyone is able to.

The front doors of our flats can be difficult to open. They're heavy fire doors. I have an electric door opener but lots of other people don't.

There's also a system that announces any activities taking place. It goes to every area of the whole building – the dining room and sitting rooms, the day centre, corridors, even people's flats. It might say 'bingo is at 2pm today'. And not everyone wants to hear that! It would be good to be able to opt out of those announcements.

Sometimes technology, and how well it works, depends on the mentality of individuals. Some people here have got dementia and they have less ability to use technology.

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How do you use digital gadgets?

I have an emergency call pendant – you press it if you need help. If I'm in my flat or even local, and I get into difficulty then it connects to the system. And they know where I am because it also has a locator.

Sometimes I go to church or to the park on my own – they're about two streets away - and it still connects. It gives me reassurance.



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Find out more about this project at:

www.housinglin.org.uk/TAPPI2



The voice of technology enabled care