

TAPPI Personal Stories

From our testbed partner:

Wiltshire Council

Vicki's Story

In 2021, Vicki who is 55 moved to Dairy View, an extra care living scheme managed by Housing21. Vicki is a huge theatre fan and used to help out at an amateur dramatics club in Royal Wootton Bassett. She now volunteers at the Great Western Hospital, having retired from her job in childcare a few years ago. Vicki regularly sees her niece and her two boys who live just over the road.

How do you feel about technology?

I have my phone and a tablet but I'm a real technophobe! I'm useless at knowing what I'm supposed to be doing. I can do simple things like sending emails and WhatsApp messages to keep in touch with the family. I try to do internet food shopping, but it takes me hours and then I lose everything in my basket and can't work out where it's gone!

What are the barriers?

As I've got older, I've found it more and more difficult to retain information. I know what I'm doing one day with an app or device and then two or three days later I click on it again and haven't a clue.

I'm one of the people in the cautious, frightened category when it comes to technology. When I'm on my own I can go into something and press the wrong button and it tells me I've done something wrong, and I don't know why and get all panicky.

So, confidence and knowing what I'm doing are big barriers for me. I have full admiration for all the people who've learnt to use technology. It's so important for the older age bracket to get involved.

How can these barriers be overcome?

It's much easier if you have someone with you – not necessarily to keep asking them but just someone in the room that you can turn to if anything goes wrong. It would give me confidence and be like a comfort blanket to have someone there.



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Why did you get involved in TAPPI?

I wanted the wider picture on everything. I’m going to try an Alexa – so it can switch the lights on and remember my shopping list. That would be great as I do tend to forget if my carer or I haven’t made a list. With an Alexa, you can tell her the food you need straight away. Things like that are going to be good.

I love books and spend a lot of time in the afternoon reading and I’m intrigued about podcasts, too. You hear so many people mention them, and I have no idea how they work or what they entail. It’s stuff like that that I want to try so I can join in conversations with other people.

When Covid hit I took a turn for the worse. I have depression and OCD [obsessive-compulsive disorder] and I didn’t go out at all and became very anxious. I have a power wheelchair because I’m paralysed - a bit higher than waist up - and have been since

the 1980s. With lockdown I just didn’t get out and about. I tried signing up to Zoom to keep in touch with my dad and family but couldn’t get it off the ground – I just got cross and upset.

I used to enjoy going to the theatre, too. I’m into all the musicals but since Covid, I haven’t been able to face going into a theatre. It feels too daunting. So, I’d love to use technology to see live theatre performances and to build up my confidence. My aim is to get back into going to shows soon.

We have a core system at Dairy View where we wear a bracelet and if there’s a problem, you can press it, and someone will come. But there is also a new app that you can press in an emergency, and I’d like to learn how to use it through TAPPI. That type of thing gives you extra reassurance – it’s handy to have different ways of communicating.

Acknowledgements

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Find out more about this project at:

www.housinglin.org.uk/TAPPI2



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