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Was the day Ian regained his independence as he was able to open the front door of his home without the help of a carer or his wife. After medical negligence left Ian paralysed from the chest down, his life changed drastically. Fortunately, his case manager recommended he get in touch with Jason and the Accessible Technology team at Steeper. From there his journey back to independence began.



Case Study

Ian Lamb



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The Story

It’s often the little things in life that we take for granted – pulling the blinds in the morning to be greeted by the bright sunshine, opening a window to enjoy fresh air and the sounds of the world outside, or even something as simple as opening the front door to invite loved ones into your home.

It was these seemingly mundane tasks that became impossible for Ian after a routine surgery went wrong more than 10 years ago. Now reliant on an electric wheelchair, Ian found accessing everyday environments and carrying out everyday activities to be challenging, but perhaps the most frustrating struggle was accessing his own home. The family had no choice but to start again and rebuild their bungalow home to accommodate Ian’s new way of life. Now, they have a smart home that provides Ian with independence, confidence and peace of mind.

Accessible and automated technology is becoming more and more common, with over 57% of homes in the UK having some sort of smart device, such as a smart speaker. But heavy-duty accessible technology can be bulky and unsightly – something Ian and his family weren’t keen on in their new home. Ian is an avid Chelsea Football Club fan, evident through his collection of memorabilia that covers the walls of his “man cave” and his bedroom. He didn’t want the addition of the technology to make their family home feel like the opposite of one, so Jason worked closely with Ian and his family, as well as their builder to provide an end-to-end solution that would give Ian optimal independence while being discrete and unintrusive on the aesthetic of their home.

The Solution

Automatic door openers were fitted to all external doors which Ian controls using a small fob conveniently clipped to his wheelchair, a button on the internal wall or the security keypad outside. This means that he can now access his home any time, any day, without having to call for assistance. It also allows Ian to be able to look after their dog and let her in and out of the house as needed. The external keypad also allows

easy access for carers and means the family can still visit unannounced as they can have their own entry fobs and key codes.

The internal doors were also automated and protected with sleek finger guards to keep the fingers of curious grandchildren safe. Ian and his wife are very family orientated, with their home being the hub of all family activity, so this was an essential feature for their peace of mind. He says, “The doors are fitted with sensors so they won’t close as you’re passing through, but it was important to us to have the edges protected with the finger guards for when they do close. You can imagine how much energy and curiosity young kids have, they’re always running around the place, so it was one of the first things Jason recommended. The finger guards were a no-brainer for us.”

The Turning Point

Automatic blinds and windows were fitted throughout the home so Ian can ventilate any room without having to ask for help. He said, “I’m in total control.” The best part is all this technology can be controlled through one central app – evo+. Ian said, “I can control most of my home from my iPad – the doors, windows, blinds, lights, the list goes on. It makes it really easy for me, especially because it’s all in one place. But I also have the option to use the remote fobs if I need to as well.” This means Ian doesn’t have to sit in the dark in the mornings waiting for someone to help him pull the blinds and he can open the windows when it gets too hot in his bedroom rather than bearing with the uncomfortable heat.

Here at Steeper, accessible technology isn’t a one and done process. Three and half years on, the team still visit Ian annually to service his equipment and make sure it’s operating at it’s best. Ian said, “Where I think Steeper come into their own is their attendance if something is wrong. They can’t be down here at the drop of a hat, nobody can do that, but all it takes is a simple call to Steeper and they send Jason out as soon as possible. He knows the system inside out and he’s never gone away without fixing the issue. They really do care, so thank you.”