

gadgets update

The latest news about Assistive Technology and Telecare in Solihull

ISSUE 3

Welcome to the third Assistive Technology and Telecare (ATT) update. Every quarter, we aim to bring you the latest news about **gadgets** in Solihull and highlight some of the products we have available.

In this issue: - Latest news

- **Case study:** *Amplified phone with photo contacts*
- **Hot product:** *Mem-x voice recorder*



Latest news

Solihull's Gadgets Group

met for the first time on 28 November. The meeting saw users of assistive technology and their carers meet in the Civic Suite to find out more and to talk about the best ways to raise public awareness. One idea was to take simple, low-cost gadgets around to groups of people via a 'box of tricks' roadshow. This will showcase a selection of helpful gadgets to older and disabled people, and their carers, so that people can find out more about them and try them out. This should help people understand which items they might want to use. The roadshow will be co-delivered by the council's Gadget's team and members of the Gadgets Group – some of who are part of the council's Experts by Experience initiative. Gadgets Group members will be receiving training about the gadgets being showcased and will be bringing the benefit of their personal experiences to share with others.

SCH

launched their new Telecare service at the beginning of November. Referrals are being made via the SCH Contact service on 0121 717 1515. SCH's Safe & Sound service continues to operate and provides the pendant (community alarm) service. The new service covers any additional assistive technology and telecare - for example wrist worn falls detector or bed sensor. The new service is for anyone who requires assistive technology and telecare – both people that use Safe & Sound and those who don't. The ATT service is also available for private clients who don't meet the Council's eligibility criteria for adult social care.



Just Checking

The council's trial of the electronic assessment tool, Just Checking is well under way. Early results are encouraging. The system has mainly been used with vulnerable older people with dementia. The evidence generated has helped assessors to understand the person's patterns of daily living, and learn whether, for example, a person has been leaving their home late at night or not, and how regularly. This has helped assessors to understand where to target support – based on the evidence collected by Just Checking alongside other assessment information available. In several cases the evidence gathered has helped everyone involved to be confident that the person can continue to live at home – and avoid the need for residential care. Council assessors can arrange to use Just Checking, or find out more by contacting the Gadgets Team.

Product reviews

How can people make good decisions about which gadgets they will benefit from? There are thousands of products available and searching for these gadgets can be a confusing experience. One way to help is by encouraging people to review the gadgets they use, to explain both good and bad things about the product. By posting these reviews on-line others will be able to benefit from these experiences when they are deciding what to buy/use. This is one of the aims of the [Gadget Gateway website](#). It is independent of any supplier and provides information about what products are available and helps people decide which equipment may be useful to them or their relatives. Anyone registered to the website can post reviews which other readers can then see. Alternatively, if people do not want to, or are unable to post their review on line we have a lower-tech way of providing a review – a good old-fashioned form. These forms are available from the Gadgets Team or [via the intranet](#).

Latest news

Gadgets Team

Telecare Officer Amanda Morris has been joined by two Assistant Technology & Telecare Assistants to form the Council's new 'Gadgets team'. Many of you will know Laura Summers who joins us from the Council's One Front Door service. Salma Rafiq has joined the team from Leicester City Council where she was working in a similar role. Both Laura and Salma are qualified OTs and will be supporting Council staff to learn more about ATT by offering 1:1 advice to OTs, Social Workers and Review Officers.

You can contact the team by telephoning 0121 709 7077 or emailing gadgets@solihull.gov.uk

Gadgets in Action

Each issue, we will pick a case study to highlight exactly how *gadgets* are making a real difference to the lives of Solihull residents.

Mrs Graham's story *(name changed by us)*

Background

Mrs Graham was a frail, older person receiving support at home from a care agency when her husband died. Mrs Graham has a hearing impairment, making it a real struggle for her to use the phone – this left her feeling increasingly isolated as her family doesn't live locally. On top of this, her social worker felt she was at a high risk of falling.

What gadgets were used?

Amplified phone with pre-programmed photo contacts

Wrist-worn falls detector via a Reach+ system

The result

A two-week trial of the photo contacts phone proved very successful and Mrs Graham's family decided to purchase the phone once the trial was over. The phone let them communicate easily with Mrs Graham, something that wasn't possible on a standard telephone. The wrist-worn falls detector raises an alert with the Safe and Sound service (on a 24-hours-a-day basis), who are responsible for any physical response.

The ATT has given Mrs Graham and her family peace of mind and has meant that no increase in Mrs Graham's domiciliary care is required. In addition, the effective of the amplified telephone has reduced Mrs Graham's isolation and allowed her to continue to live independently.

Hot product!

Mem-x voice recorder

Mem-x is a voice memory aid designed for those with some memory loss. It plays the user a pre-recorded message at a given time. This can include reminders about appointments or regular reminders for medication. Can be pre-recorded by a friend or relative or care-worker.

Useful for people who need to be prompted to perform regular and occasional tasks by a familiar voice. The device is compact and easy to carry around.

At the precise time required the alarm sounds. On the press of the large blue button the pre-recorded message is heard.

Up to 90 messages can be stored, each up to 10 seconds in length.

Examples of use

Can be used for a large number of daily, weekly or one-off reminders. These typically include prompts to take medication to have meals and drinks and to attend appointments.



Mem-x voice recorder

Training Sessions

The following training sessions are available for council staff in the Support Planning & Review Teams. Please book via Oracle.

17/1/14	1300-1630	Civic Suite
23/1/14	1300-1630	Civic Suite
28/1/14	1300-1630	Sans Souci
31/1/14	1300-1630	Sans Souci
6/2/14	1300-1630	Sans Souci
12/2/14	1300-1630	Sans Souci
13/2/14	0900-1230	Sans Souci
26/2/14	1330-1700	Sans Souci
4/3/14	1300-1630	Sans Souci
7/3/14	0900-1230	Sans Souci
11/3/14	1300-1630	Sans Souci
13/3/14	0900-1230	Sans Souci

The Gadgets team will be available at the Telecare Show Flat in Castle Lane, B92 8SE, for the following regular weekly slots.

Monday	10-11am
Tuesday	2pm-3pm
Wednesday	11am-12pm
Thursday	3pm-4pm
Friday	1pm-2pm

Please contact them in advance if you intend to visit.

Contact details

Updates about development of gadgets (ATT), along with information, resources and useful links for Solihull Council staff can be found on the [Gadgets Intranet page](#).

Information about gadgets (ATT) for the public can be found on the [Council's website](#).

For more information about ATT, contact:

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Magiplug



Pull cord



Reach-plus



Sounder beacon