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> **Earlsdon Park Village - Marie McCamley**

Newsroom

## Earlsdon Park Village - Marie McCamley

Marie McCamley knows what it is like to feel lonely. In the living room of her immaculate bungalow in Coventry she talked about the loneliness of watching television on her own with no-one to talk to; the fear of waking up in the middle of the night alone, terrified that someone had broken into her home, wondering if she had locked the back door.



Now she has a new life at Earlsdon Park Retirement Village, and she is confident she will never feel lonely again.

'I don't know what I would do if I wasn't here,' she says. 'I couldn't live in my bungalow any longer. I love meeting people and I want companionship.'

Marie, who suffers from a spinal injury, has fallen four times since she moved into the two bedroom bungalow on her own in 2007. The last time she couldn't get up.

She says: 'The loneliness is frightening sometimes at night. I've had times when I've sat up in bed absolutely terrified.' She was too frightened to go to the bathroom because she was sure there was someone in the hall. There were times when she felt desperate.

'Sunday afternoons and evenings were really hard,' she says. 'I go to church on a Sunday morning and I've chatted to people. I'm on a welcome rota, I organise tea and coffee, I'm a steward there and I sing. I'm always busy and I know a lot of people. I came home and that was it, it was horrible. I found the winter really difficult.'

During the week Marie walks down the local shop, whatever the weather, if she is spending the day at home on her own. She also organises a weekly friendship group for Age UK in Earlsdon library and organises a monthly women's group which meets at her home.

'It's essential to have friends,' she says. 'By becoming isolated I think you do actually start to die. I think you start to give up, you start to feel ill because you are unhappy.'

Her new home is on the seventh floor of the ten storey retirement village in Coventry, and her window overlooks the park where she played as a child and where she climbed the blossom trees and waved at the drivers of the steam trains.

She sold her bungalow and is moved into the one bedroomed shared ownership apartment with her cat Coco.

'It's given me a new lease of life, it's going to roll back the years,' she says. 'There's so much to do or you can come in and close your door. You have the best of both worlds.'

The £44m retirement village has a range of facilities including a bar, bistro, games room, fitness suite and greenhouse.

'I can enjoy myself and I feel my health is going to improve, she says. 'I want to go to the gym and to start dancing, I love dancing. I'm young in my heart.

'If I'm lonely I can go down to the coffee shop and I can go to the library. There are be people around all the time.'

### **For further information, please contact**

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