



Better lives for older people

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Newsroom

Stoke Gifford Village - Pam Fortune

Pam Fortune, in her seventies, tells how living in Stoke Gifford Retirement Village would give her hope and purpose.

I haven't felt excitement about the future until now. I have been a wheelchair user for 27 years and live alone in a three bedroom semi, with the help of personal assistants who come in and out on different shifts. I have a team of people and it is getting harder to manage it all.

My life is complicated and it's tiring. It's a massive exercise in management and it is very stressful and scary at times.



The house is too big for me. I can't leap up a ladder and decorate, the chap who does the garden can't come as frequently as he used to. I look around and none of it gets any easier.

It doesn't leave a lot of energy for me to give and that's why I am so excited about Stoke Gifford Retirement Village.

I'm hoping to volunteer at the village. I just want to be involved and belong, and to be able to use the gifts and skills I have. I loved reading to my mum who was registered blind and when I'm able to I'd like to read to other people who might have problems with their vision. I love arts and crafts and creative writing and these are skills I would like to share.

I love the idea of being somewhere where I could be more independent. I could get out of my own front door; go to whatever I chose to do and go back home again. I wouldn't need someone to get me to the library or get me to the art room or whatever. This saves precious time, precious energy and care hours. It enables me to live more fully and give what I have to give, using my time and energy for the benefit of others as well as myself.

I had cancer a couple of years ago and it has made life all the more precious. I just want to do more with my life. I'd rather be involved with something beyond me and my needs.

My hope is to move to a two bedroom shared ownership apartment.

I have christened my new apartment 'Pam's Pad' and that's where I would go to recharge my batteries so that I can then go and mix with other people.

I have already made friends with people who are planning to move to the village. I will feel braver to try new things. I can just see freedom, the chance to spread my wings and touch other people's lives.

I want to be the best I can be and I am really excited about possible improvement and maybe even needing less care in the future. I can see life expanding and I think I will feel stronger mentally, physically and emotionally.

I feel emotional about it all as this is the first opportunity I have had to feel real hope at the prospect of being part of something beyond just me, to have a sense of belonging and the satisfaction of knowing I can make a difference.

Photo: L-R Councillor Helen Holland, Prospective Resident Pam Fortune, ExtraCare CEO Mick Laverty and Councillor Ben Stokes at the Stoke Gifford Retirement Village Show Home Opening

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