



CASE STUDY

Providing Safety and Reassurance to Carers

Background

Brian* lives at home with his wife, Sandra* in the countryside, where they have lived for many years. Sandra is Brian's main carer and she is able to manage most of his needs herself. One thing that is very challenging for them is that Brian has a history of walking with purpose, but sometimes gets lost. Although he normally only goes out with his wife, on occasions he tries to leave the house on his own via the front door and garden gate. This puts Brian at risk, and is a great cause of anxiety for Sandra.

Before considering any Assistive Technology, Sandra would lock the front door and hide the keys for his own safety. Soon enough, Brian would also attempt to leave his home via the back garden gate, and his wife had resorted to placing objects and barriers in front of it to deter him from trying to open the gate. This was not always a successful measure, and one that wasn't guaranteed to keep him from leaving the safety of his home. The physical barriers to stop access to the gate were also a trip hazard, and not the least restrictive solution.

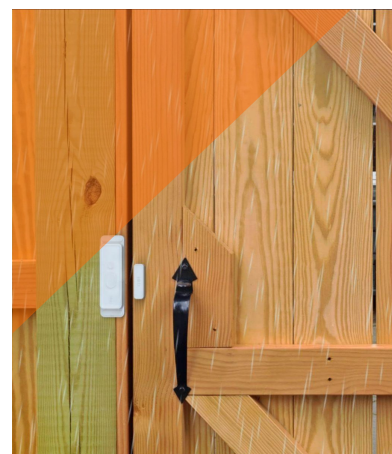
Solution

The Assistive Technology team considered the least restrictive assistive technology options that would also ensure his safety. They wanted to promote his independence and enable him to use the back door for access to the garden, so the best solution was identified as a sensor that would alert Sandra if the back gate was opened. They had previously been stuck when looking for an external sensor that would be suitable in all weather conditions. The team worked with Cair to consider solutions, and our waterproof Contact door sensor was trialled along with our Notifier pager. If the gate was opened, Sandra would receive an audible and visual alert on the pager, indicating exactly which sensor had been activated.

There are two versions of the Contact available, a screw mount and an adhesive mount version. It was quickly identified that the screw mount would be the most suitable, as this would be most secure for an external fitting.

Outcome

The solution worked well, and it meant that Sandra no longer needed to use physical barriers to stop Brian from accessing the garden gate, which reduced the risk of trips and falls. Instead, Sandra being alerted via the Notifier when the gate was opened, meant that she was able to step in and provide reassurance. They are also looking to replace the existing system on the front door with an adhesive Contact that will also alert the Notifier when it has been opened.



*Not their real names