

June's independent living technology news

Here's what's new in the world of independent living technology this month.

Public policy, legislation and campaigns

Government minister advocates for inclusive transport technologies

The government's mobility minister Jesse Norman has called for [new transport technologies](#) to be accessible to disabled and older people to combat isolation and loneliness across the country. The Department for Transport's Inclusive Transport Strategy, published last March, pledged to promote independent travel.

Local authorities awarded funding for digital social care projects

The Local Government Association and NHS Digital have [announced the third wave](#) of the Social Care Digital Innovation Programme, which seeks to harness technology to improve services.

Blueprints for new Commons chamber to accommodate wheelchair users

Published plans for a [temporary House of Commons chamber](#) feature tip-up seating on the government and opposition front benches that will enable wheelchair users to speak from behind the dispatch box for the first time.

Report highlights exclusion from health care technology

The Social Market Foundation think-tank has [produced a report](#) that warns disabled people are at risk of being excluded from the advances in the use of technology in medical interventions. It suggests that the NHS should exploit social prescribing to support disabled people to make use of technologies such as fitness trackers, healthcare apps and smart scales.

Technological developments and innovations

Lego announces new Braille bricks

Lego have introduced [Braille bricks](#) designed to help blind and visually impaired children learn to read and write using the tactile writing system. The new bricks are expected to go on sale in 2020.

Memory Lane supports older people to record recollections

The global consultancy Accenture has led a project to develop artificial intelligence software that asks older people to recall memories from their lives. Currently in the testing phase, [Memory Lane](#) seeks to alleviate feelings of social isolation by allowing older people to talk freely as well as creating a record of their recollections for future generations.

Entrepreneur develops open source AAC app

A software developer and entrepreneur has created a new open source communication aid app that provides access to a range of free content and reporting features to help users and their families make the most of the software. [CoughDrop](#) is designed to be a cheaper and easier to use alternatives to established communication systems.

Brain interface helps paraplegics walk again

A project funded by the Brazilian government has helped two patients with paraplegia to regain their ability to walk with the help of [a non-invasive device](#) that allows brain signals to be used to stimulate the user's leg muscles. The researchers suggest that the technology could be a significant breakthrough in the search for a rehabilitation therapy for people with a complete spinal cord injury.

These stories were originally published in the dispATches newsletter – a free monthly e-mail about assistive technologies that empower disabled and older people to live more independently. [Click here to sign up for dispATches.](#)