

Bob Bennett

My Story



1961 - Born in Merseyside

I have cerebral palsy and I use a wheelchair to get around

1962-1969 - I lived in Glasgow with my family from 2-8 years old

1969 – 1977 - Coresford School for the Care of Spastics

I attended Coresford School which was a boarding school from 8-16 years old as this was the only place that could take me. The school was only for children with Cerebral Palsy and I have a great time here.

I did not see much of my family while in the boarding school as they lived to far away to visit, I would only see them at holidays



1977-1985 - When I left School at 16 there was no residential care in Scotland that would be able to look after me so I had no option but to move to Drummonds Residential Centre near Colchester. I was here from 16-24 years old. Whilst living here Upper Springlands was built and I had a “screening” interview but I was told that I was too disabled to move there so I had to stay at Drummonds.



For around 10 years when I was growing up my legs were too long for my wheelchair and they would drag along the ground.

1984 - Aged 23 I got my first electric wheelchair. This gave me the independence to go anywhere I wanted without someone pushing me.



1985-1989 - I did however move to Princess Marina Centre in Buckinghamshire to be closer to family that I had in London. I lived here from 24-28 years old

1989-1999 - When I was 28 years old I finally got my move to Upper Springlands and stayed there for 10 years. I had been in residential care all my life, moving to Upper Springlands was my first step to independence.



1999-present

When I was 38 years old I moved to my very own flat in the centre of Perth where I still currently live. This flat has meant that I am almost fully independent with my own handpicked personal assistants to assist me with any help that I need.

Holidays, Interests and my Life



I have a very busy social life which includes going to concerts, enjoying the countryside, sailing, bird watching, going to the pub, eating out and socialising, going to the theatre, dancing and listening to music. I have a fully accessible car which I like going for drives in and I have my own pet rabbit called butterfly.



I also like to go on holiday where I have done activities such as going up Loch Nagar, sailing on a tall ship, abseiling and going on a zip wire.



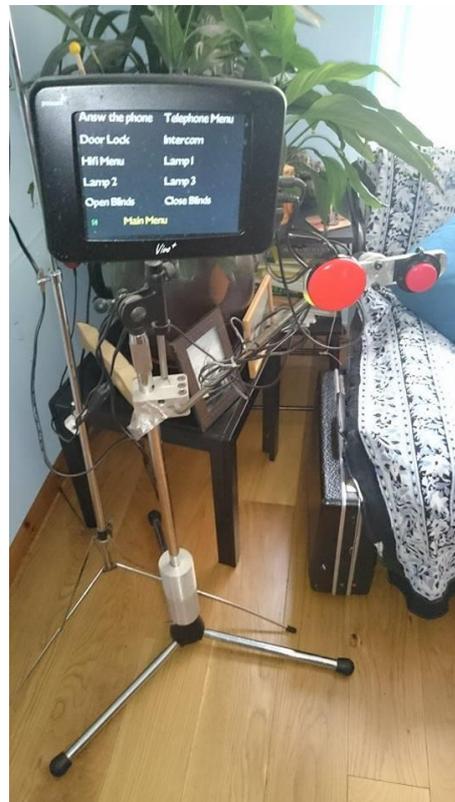
In 2012 I carried the Olympic Torch through Burrelton.

I am also the Chairman of the Centre for Inclusive Living Perth and Kinross.

I have adaptations in my house such as a hoist to transfer me from my bedroom to my bathroom, an automatic door and a machine that helps me turn lights on and answer the phone.



Hoist



Switch machine

I like living in Perth as it is reasonably accessible and people are becoming more aware of disabilities but I would like to see more integration on public transport and children being taught from a young age that disabled people are not scary.

I have some challenges that I encounter every day. It takes me around an hour to get up and dressed every morning, I need a carer to help me do this so I have to wait until they come to help me, I cannot just get up when I want. Some people find it difficult to understand my speech, this can be frustrating especially when people say they have understood me when I know that they have not.

It's not about the wheelchair, this does not define the person, it's about the person in the wheelchair.