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Edinburgh Tenants To Test Ground-Breaking New Wheelchair Design

Tenants at a housing development in the capital are to be among the first to try out and provide invaluable feedback on a pioneering new wheelchair.

Blackwood's Abbey Court development, which provides housing and support for people with physical disabilities, will host a focus group with inventor Alex Papanikolaou, in which tenants will have the opportunity to test his unique Freedom One Life® power wheelchair.

Award winning Scottish entrepreneur Alex, from Perth, has Cerebral Palsy and for the past year has been using one of the latest prototypes of his chair, covering over 2,000 kilometres to date.

Freedom One Life® has a seven day lithium battery life and a 10 year cycle life, compared with only the one day lead battery life and one year cycle life typical of most power chairs. It also has a sleek and smart design to counter the standard clinical look of many personal mobility vehicles.

Alex spoke of how his product was born out of the challenges and frustrations that he has encountered with other power chairs throughout his life.

He said: "I've used power chairs since I was at school, so have first-hand experience of the limitations that are imposed upon those with disabilities by chairs that are outdated and expensive.

"One major issue for many wheelchair users is travelling. Many people have horror stories about being stranded and some never go on holiday at all in case their chair breaks.

"It was this overwhelming evidence that the current chairs are not fit for purpose that pushed me to want to do it better.

"I recognise Blackwood as a leader and champion for independent living and technology that adds freedom to the lives of people with disabilities, so I'm very excited to have the tenants experience my chair design and to get their essential feedback."

Paul Richoux, Social Media Co-ordinator at Blackwood, said: "The tenants are all very keen to try out the Freedom One Life power chair.

"We're always on the lookout for innovative products which would help people to live more independently and many of our tenants could hugely benefit from Alex's design, so we're delighted he has chosen to work with us and eager to see the outcome of the trials."

More information on the Freedom One Life® power wheelchair can be found at the following link: <http://freedomonelife.com/>

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Notes to Editor

Edinburgh-based charity, Blackwood, has more than 1500 homes throughout the country making it a leader in helping those who are disabled, elderly or with sensory impairments to live more independently.

As it works in 29 of Scotland's 32 local authorities, it is more widely dispersed than most other care or housing providers and has embraced the challenges of taking housing and care into innovative areas at a time when funding is increasingly limited.

Blackwood is also renowned for constantly pushing the boundaries of technology to allow property adaptations which make a huge difference to people with disabilities.

Issued on behalf of Blackwood by www.holyroodpr.co.uk. Further information on info@holyroodpr.co.uk or 0131 561 2242