



Case Study: bath donation to DIY SOS

Gainsborough Specialist Bathing donates and installs assistive Windsor 2 bath to flagship BBC TV programme so injured war veteran can bathe in comfort

Project: DIY SOS 'Homes for Veterans' Canada Street, Manchester
Client: BBC / Walking with the Wounded
Product donated: Windsor 2 bath with transfer seat, Chromotherapy and AirSpa
Installation: Accessible domestic bathroom



To date, the DIY SOS Big Build 'Homes for Veterans' Special was the most ambitious construction challenge to be undertaken by this building renovation TV programme. It involved the redevelopment of a whole dilapidated terraced street in Manchester so homes could be provided for injured servicemen and women. Lamin Mennah, disabled ex-Guardsman and his family were grateful recipients of one of these new accessible homes which included an assistive Windsor 2 bath donated by Gainsborough Specialist Bathing.

This two-part special DIY SOS received significant press coverage as the extensive two-week build was visited by HRH The Duke of Cambridge and HRH Prince Henry of Wales. BBC production, in association with the charity Walking with the Wounded, aimed to provide 62 new homes for injured military veterans and their families. The majority of the structural renovations for the

whole street were completed during September 2015 and several residents, including Lamin, were presented with their new homes at the end of the filming. The Mennah family was a major focus throughout the show and when Lamin met the two Princes, he was also able to explain the huge difference his new accessible home would make to him, his wife and five children.

Lamin was originally from Gambia however he decided to move to Britain in 2005 so he could join the British Army. As Gambia is a Commonwealth country, residents are allowed to join the British Armed Forces hence Lamin served in the Irish Guards for five years. He was severely injured by an exploding IED in Afghanistan on New Year's Eve 2010 which resulted in the loss of both his legs and one arm. Lamin was able to survive this horrific ordeal and now continues to rebuild his life – made easier with a new home that is fully accessible.

A key feature of Lamin's new home is the installation of a Windsor 2 assistive bath with powered bather transfer seat. This specialist bath allows him to bathe independently and reduce lower back discomfort which can be common when regularly using prosthetic legs.

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Now superseded by the new Gainsborough range, the Windsor 2 is a proven and popular power-assisted bath that delivers safe and comfortable accessible bathing to semi-ambulant users. It encompasses a powered traverse seat that effortlessly transfers a bather in and out the bath so manual lifting and lowering by a carer is not required.

In Lamin's case, his Windsor 2 allows him to bathe independently and at his own pace without the need to ask for assistance. This ability to remain self-reliant in the bathroom is so important as Lamin explains: "Before I owned my Windsor, getting in and out of the bath was a major struggle. As a retired soldier, I am used to being independent so having to continually ask for assistance from others is terrible. Even since I lay in a hospital bed for six weeks unable to do anything for myself during my initial recovery, I have been determined to look after myself as much as possible. This is why my Windsor is so important."

Via a simple two-button roaming controller, Lamin can electrically operate the bath's seat to a position whereby he can transfer out of his powered wheelchair unaided. He then lifts, rotates and lowers himself into TMV3 temperature controlled water. Being able to submerge in warm water as opposed to showering in a wet room, Lamin is able to soothe his lower back pain and stretch out his body to reduce stiffness.

Lamin continues: "I use my advanced prosthetic legs and arm everyday which are fantastic however they can result in some discomfort after long period of time. When I bathe, especially with the Air Spa feature activated, the bubbles and warm water relax my muscles and reduce my levels of fatigue. The lighting system is also very calming which helps to increase my positivity and energy levels during the day. Having this Gainsborough bath is not just about being able to bathe, it delivers so many more benefits to my life."

Other features that benefit Lamin include the extra deep bathing space, easy cleaning/maintenance and



Lamin operates the Windsor's seat so he can transfer easily out of his powerchair

the 150kg (24 stone) safe lifting weight. Lamin is able to feel safe when bathing alone and does not need assistance from his wife – again helping with family life beyond the bathroom.

The donation of this Windsor 2 bath by Gainsborough included all technical support, pre-installation plumbing and electrical guidance, fitting and commissioning. The Gainsborough technicians and fitters worked closely with the programme project managers and designers to ensure the installation was efficient. Through use of Gainsborough's Aspect Design Service, accurate layout plans were provided to contractors so the final conversion could be completed as per the recommended specification. The bath was specifically positioned in the new accessible bathroom so Lamin had ample room to manoeuvre his powerchair without obstruction. Fitting of the bath was successfully completed in a single day to meet the tight build schedule.

As Lamin continues with his rehabilitation, his Windsor 2 will continue to play a vital role in everyday life. Lamin will be shortly beginning his training to compete in the Invictus Games which is an international sports event for disabled military

personnel. Lamin concludes: "As I begin my Invictus training I know the therapeutic benefits of my Gainsborough bath will be even more important. When you experience a life changing injury, the therapists at Headley Court say it is so important to reset life back to how it was before as best you can. This approach assists with keeping you positive and in a good state of mind. My Windsor is helping me achieve this."

“ Having this Gainsborough bath is not just about being able to bathe, it delivers so many more benefits to my life. ”



The transfer seat has fold-up arms for added safety



Lamin with his wife Binta and youngest daughter

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