



## Press Release

20<sup>th</sup> March 2013

### **Retail Factor Finalists Offer Products and Advice for Personal Safety and Independent Living**

Gadget Hub is a brand new retail experience involving products that can enhance everyone's lives by making daily tasks easier and fun. It has been selected for the finals of The Retail Factor competition, organised nationally by The Mall each year. As a result, Gadget Hub will be hosted by The Mall in Sutton Coldfield from Monday 25<sup>th</sup> March to Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> April.

Products will be on show throughout the week, together with workshops demonstrating how adopting and using simple devices and gadgets can have a profound effect upon improving lives. In particular, people concerned about living alone or people requiring increasing support when gaining more independence will benefit. Gadget Hub will also offer advice and provide individuals with links to services that improve health and wellbeing, including improving safety and security.

Local Authorities and Businesses will be on hand to demonstrate how gadgets can make individuals feel safer and better able to cope with tasks. The Sutton Trinity Neighbourhood Police team will also join Gadget Hub to register personal belongings, discuss personal safety and how to reduce the risk of becoming a victim of crime.

Gadget Hub has been inspired by Richard Haynes of The Community Gateway and is being delivered in partnership with Our Place Community Hub. Volunteers are being recruited to oversee the project and funding is being sought to support the progression of this project into a successful retail business; it is hoped that Gadget Hub will become a regular presence within The Mall in the future. It is anticipated that any profits will be directed towards Our Place Community Hub, increasing the capacity of the services offered there.

Richard from The Community Gateway said:

"Our service is for everyone. Many of our devices can be life enhancing for anyone. It's no coincidence though that we can also particularly help those with caring responsibilities, like parents and children but also for people with disability or impairment preparing or supporting them for independent living. We are here for a week to provide as much advice as possible and to get feedback on whether people would like a permanent presence of this sort"

"Winning the competition means a great deal to me – many services that provide valuable support are being cut, and our offer is proven to minimise the impact of this, but not enough people realise how making these changes can help"

"Gadget Hub is exciting in so many ways – it potentially creates a new market, new jobs, supports underfunded services that affect us all in some way, and because of the unique ownership – in effect the community owns the business not someone off shoring their income in a tax avoidance scheme – it means local community services are better resourced"

#### Photo Opportunities:

- Monday 25<sup>th</sup> & Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> 11am, 2pm, 4pm: advice on care for elderly, specific issues or conditions such as falls, stroke, dementia or chronic heart, or emphysema
- Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> 2pm - 4pm & Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> 2pm - 4pm: Professional and Expert Marie Spittle from Dudley Council Telecare Service on hand for advice on new technologies
- Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> 9am-12pm: Nathan Downing, Director from Community Gateway, former national advisor for the Department of Health on Telecare/ Telehealth, now providing specialist regional advice and support to local services across the West Midlands in partnership with Improvement and Efficiency West Midlands and West Midlands and Association of Directors of Adult Social Services
- Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2pm - 5pm: Master chef John Ruddock from Tinshack, providing tasty nibbles, talking about his Saturday workshops and how people can manage to cook in style, despite any impairment, whether financial, physical, mental, or learning
- Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> March, 11:30, 1:30pm and 3:30pm, (location - Our Place Community Hub): Tinshack Masterclasses about anything food related. Bespoke depending on bookings and needs of clients. E.g. how to cook in style on a budget; using appliances that sense cook (switch off when cooked); using steamers rather than pans which are less likely to burn and lighter to move

**Ends**

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#### **Notes to Editors:**

- The Community Gateway and Our Place Community are 'not for profit' Community Interest Companies.
- Our Place Community Hub aims to support a variety of needs within the local community and already a huge number of people access the services offered by Our Place.