

# Turning Points

Steeper Newsletter Issue 12 2019



## Julia Tipling

How our custom silicone clinic helped make her wedding dreams come true



## Elsie meets her idol Stuart

Keen cyclist Elsie receives her state-of-the-art custom cycling prosthesis and meets her idol



## Home Adaptations

How Steeper is changing perceptions of accessible homes throughout the UK





# CEO message

## Paul Steeper

Welcome to our latest issue of Turning Points and our first of 2019.

The end of 2018 saw a number of highlights including our assistive technology team exhibiting at the Occupational Therapy Show, our first lower limb biomechanics day held at Steeper HQ and our annual Employee of the Year Awards.

In this issue, we also feature the heart-warming story of Elsie, an upper limb amputee and cycling enthusiast whose progress has been documented by the BBC's Look North programme.

We hope you enjoy this next issue, and please do share any feedback to [marketingteam@steepergroup.com](mailto:marketingteam@steepergroup.com).

Best wishes,



## Highlights of 2018 and a look forward to 2019



Over the course of 2018, we have seen significant highlights including the launch of two new products, both of which have helped empower and enhance the lives of patients around the world. Alongside these developments, we also shared many exciting stories from around the Steeper business, including:

- New product developments and distribution partnerships within the fields of Prosthetics, Orthotics and Assistive Technology as we continue to expand our product offering.
- How our clinicians have created turning points in the lives of patients like Stuart Meikle, Richard Pollard, Isaac Crowther and Jon Clayton to name just a few.
- Our global coverage from exhibitions including OT World 2018, BAPO and the Care Forum.
- Insights from within our clinical services including Steeper Clinic, the Leeds Specialist Diabetic Clinic and our upper limb training days.

To take a look at our video highlights visit [www.steepergroup.com](http://www.steepergroup.com) and don't forget to like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter and LinkedIn to read all the latest news first!

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We would love to hear from you!  
Please send your feedback to:  
[marketingteam@steepergroup.com](mailto:marketingteam@steepergroup.com)

### Upcoming events

This year is full of interesting local and national events that we are attending. We look forward to meeting you on the Steeper stands!

- 28 - 31st January** - Arab Health, Dubai
- 19 - 21st February** - Hanger Education Fair and National Business Meeting, Las Vegas
- 6 - 9th March** - AAOP, Orlando, Florida
- 15 - 17th March** - BAPO, Harrogate
- 20 - 21st March** - Jacqueline Webb Annual Conference, Southampton
- 20 - 23rd March** - TIPS/ISPO/BACPAR, Salford
- 25 - 28th September** - AOPA, San Diego, California
- 5 - 9th October** - ISPO 2019, Japan

## Elsie meets her idol, paratriathlete Stuart Meikle



*"Personally, I would say it is always a great pleasure working with Elsie. She is so lovely and never gets bored no matter how many times I fit the arm especially as these bespoke devices require a lot more attention. The custom cycling device we have created is unique because it provides Elsie with the option of going from hood bar to drop bar in no time, all the while still being able to control her bike. The device also enables Elsie to pull through whenever she is cycling uphill and the lightweight nature provides Elsie with a very comfortable riding experience."* Asad Khan, Prosthetist at Leeds Teaching Hospitals

Cycling enthusiast Elsie is now conquering the mountain bike trails with her new cycling prosthesis. Her growing confidence and desire to use the drop handlebars on her new custom adapted bike set a new challenge for her prosthetist Asad and technician Roger. Designing the new prosthesis didn't come without its challenges but with both Roger and Asad working together, Elsie's new carbon fibre device provides her with an arm that reflects her needs perfectly and allows her to transition between handlebars smoothly.

The first fitting was an exciting day for everyone, with BBC Look North there to film the process, Elsie was also lucky enough to meet with her idol, paratriathlete Stuart Meikle, who answered some of her questions on competing, before showing her his competition medals! To read all about Elsie's ongoing adventures follow us on Facebook and Twitter.



*"It's always a pleasure to turn the dreams of patient and clinician into reality."* Roger Kay, Technician at Leeds Teaching Hospitals

## evo+ makes its debut at the OT Show

Our assistive technology team attended The Occupational Therapy Show at the NEC, Birmingham, where we exhibited our latest home control innovations! Occupational therapists from all over the country attended the event, with hundreds of exhibitors and a variety of lectures on relevant topics in the industry. The Steeper stand showcased our entire assistive technology range, with our new evo+ environmental control device making its debut at the show. Our team thoroughly enjoyed showing delegates the capabilities of the device, enabling them to control a lamp and video intercom with a touch of a button.



*"My first exhibition at the OT Show was a worthwhile experience, as it gave me great pleasure meeting new and existing customers. I can't wait to see what the outcome is in a couple of months for exciting new projects and tailored solutions!"* Laura Stockwell, Assistive Technology Business Development Manager.

The show's adaptation trail also meant we could provide insight into our adaptation solutions which can be implemented throughout the home, with our complete door opener range on display and also our wide variety of switch and fob options. It was great to discuss with so many passionate occupational therapists how making changes to an individual's home environment, such as automated door control, can provide them with greater independence and reduce their reliance on care.



## Click Medical prosthetics revo kits

Late last year, Click Medical released two new innovative products to the prosthetics market - the RevoFit2™ and the RevoLock™ Lanyard. Steeper are proud distributors of the products, which offer user adjustability anywhere on the socket, and targeted compression with every 'click' of the Boa® dials.

The two new products provide patients with complete ease of use as they are adjustable through clothing, and offer comfort and compression throughout the day with correct suspension. Designed to enable patients to easily draw their limb into the prosthetic socket, the RevoFit2™ and the RevoLock™ Lanyard are particularly helpful for users who have problems donning their prosthesis and can even be done when seated. Because of the mechanical advantage created by the Boa dial, it requires little effort for the user to achieve secure retention of their prosthesis. In addition, since the sealed lanyard connection prevents airflow, an even greater feeling of security is created.

For more information on the full range of Click Medical products we offer and to read the latest patient testimonials and case studies please visit [www.steepergroup.com](http://www.steepergroup.com).



RevoFit2™



RevoLock™ Lanyard



RevoLock™ Lanyard

## Amputee residual limb advice



After limb loss, many amputees may initially feel overwhelmed by the effect upon their daily lifestyle, but progressing through activities as you recover will help regain confidence and progress towards new goals.

At Steeper, we understand the processes involved when attending a specialist limb centre and that is why we have developed a fun and insightful video full of helpful hints and tips for our Harold Wood Centre. The video has been received very well by clinicians and patients alike.

To view our latest amputee advice video please visit [www.steepergroup.com/prosthetics/clinical-services/patient-information](http://www.steepergroup.com/prosthetics/clinical-services/patient-information)

## Custom coverings at the London Prosthetic Centre

At the London Prosthetic Centre, Abdo and the team work closely with a number of high profile legal firms helping to provide the much-needed prostheses and cosmeses patients require to rebuild their lives.



In 2018, Access Legal visited the centre to complete a short film featuring two of their clients and the pioneering work of the Steeper Silicone Clinic. The videos showcase how the new custom coverings have helped create a new and more confident chapter in their lives.

We hope you enjoy watching the stories behind our cosmeses, to view the video please visit [www.londonprosthetics.com](http://www.londonprosthetics.com) or follow us on social media.

## Lower limb biomechanics training

Taking place on the 14th November at Steeper Group Headquarters, we were pleased to welcome podiatrists from the Mid Yorkshire Hospitals Trust to our lower limb biomechanics training event. The day provided delegates with an in-depth insight into the manufacture of footwear and insoles at Steeper Group along with an educational lecture on the latest assessment and prescribing techniques.

Led by two experienced orthotists; Clinical Services Manager, Alex Callaghan and National Training Manager, Barry Campbell the day proved very popular with all attendees. *"It was a pleasure to welcome the Mid Yorkshire Hospitals podiatry team to our external lower limb biomechanics training. Our guests for the day thoroughly enjoyed looking around our manufacturing facility and learnt a great deal about techniques within footwear and insole production from our expert technicians themselves. Along with the tour, National Training Manager Barry Campbell and I delivered an educational afternoon on foot and ankle biomechanics. The audience was very enthusiastic, participating in practical group sessions and learning modern foot and ankle assessment techniques. All of the Mid Yorkshire podiatry team left with very positive comments about all of the Steeper staff they met on the tour and felt they had an enjoyable learning experience."* Alex Callaghan, Clinical Services Manager

Our strong policies on training provide not only our orthotists but also the wider clinical team with the best tools to further develop their knowledge and skills. We work closely with NHS trusts and our clinicians to organise and deliver appropriate training whilst raising awareness of the latest product and industry developments. Our aim is to create and maintain the excellent reputation that we have built over the years and continue to deliver the very best orthotic training, products and services to clinicians and trusts across the UK.

Overall, the lower limb biomechanics training day was a great success with plenty of satisfied delegates.



*"I enjoyed the day thoroughly, it was very informative and well organised."* Jenny

*"Very Informative - the sessions were well delivered without making us feel silly or stupid."* Sharon

*"I will take a lot away from the day specifically that I need to be more structured in assessing my foot patients and be confident in my own knowledge."* Fiona

For more information on training provided by Steeper please contact [marketingteam@steepergroup.com](mailto:marketingteam@steepergroup.com) where we will be happy to help with any requirements you may have.

## Steeper employee of the year awards

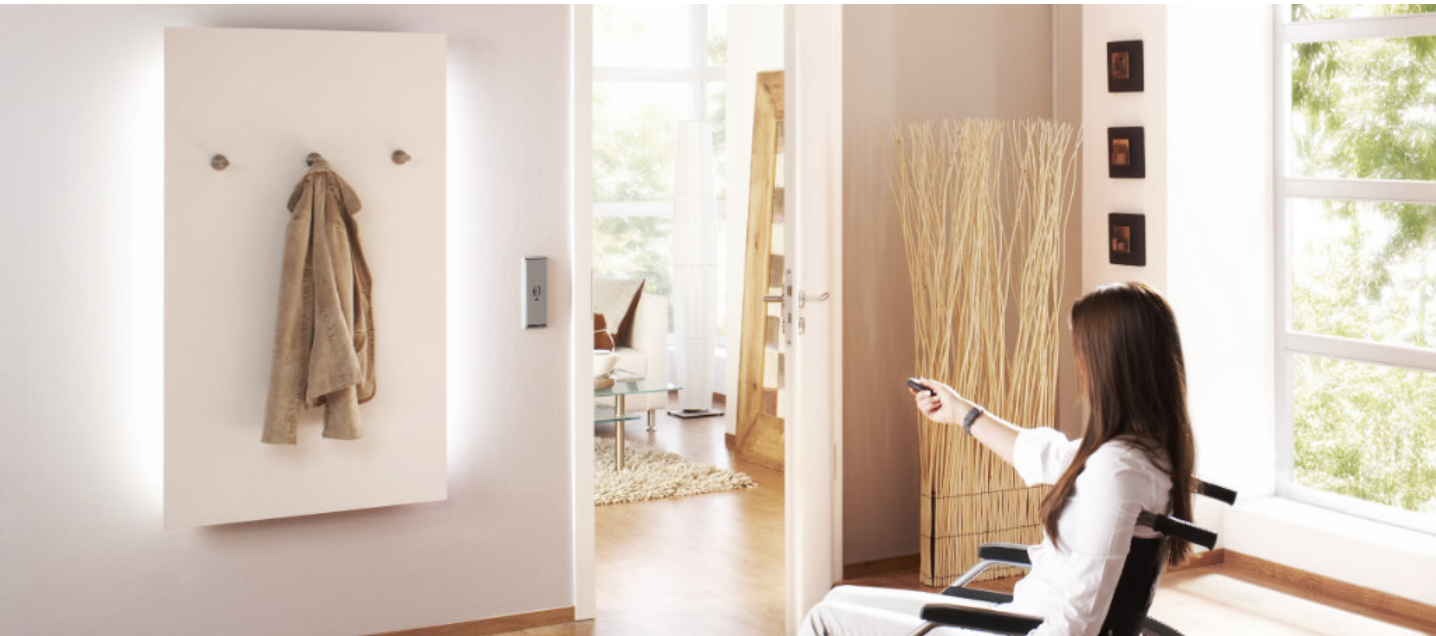
Our annual employee of the year awards were held at Ridding park last December. The event inspires, recognises and celebrates people who have demonstrated a truly remarkable level of dedication to the company at work and beyond.

Congratulations once again to our five winners: Cherlene Fung, Darren Moss, David Reid, Pamela Roper and Maria Nogueira who were all commended for their outstanding dedication and hard work throughout 2018.





# Changing perceptions of home adaptations



Alongside many other companies and charities, we work towards the common goal of transforming lives for the better. However it's been at the forefront of recent research that Britain's ageing and disabled population are not receiving enough information on how to improve their quality of life. Those of us who are familiar with the processes of home adaptation, environmental control and available funding, know that the services are there to provide vital technology and equipment. Yet for the majority it is unknown territory, often associated with care homes and hospitals. It's not that the resources aren't there; it's that those who would benefit most are unaware or have negative perceptions.

Home adaptations need to be invigorating and exciting, not a far-fetched solution, but an easy lifestyle choice which will enable people to continue a life in which they are fulfilled. Research has revealed that not only do these solutions need to offer practicality and efficiency, but also appeal to an individual's goals and lifestyle choices.\* By raising awareness emotively rather than solely as a clinical service, the assistive technology team at Steeper aim to ultimately allow individuals to understand what is available, and how these can be accessed within their circumstances. Our assistive technology Stores Manager here at Steeper emphasised how sometimes it's not always about the latest high-tech solutions that can be appealing, but that often "the most simple and basic products can provide a life-changing solution as they integrate seamlessly into everyday life." We can't assume that everyone who requires a home adaptation needs it for the same reason, but we can offer positive messages that feel bespoke and aimed directly to those who never knew – or previously rejected the notion.

Ageing Better has outlined ways in which language and visuals could be improved in the home improvement sector. Their main focus is on positive messaging and "inclusively designed" services, with suggestions such as the 'Disabled Facilities Grant' being changed to 'Facilitating Independence Grant.' They also suggest that there needs to be a concerted effort to change the perception of home adaptations. Move away from the clinical visuals and make it more about how can a product or solution assist you personally - helping you cook your favourite meal or tend to the garden with more ease.\* This research has emerged alongside the Government announcing that they will be investing an extra £76 million a year on building specialised, accessible housing for independent living – further evidence that the funding is there, but how awareness is raised may need evaluating.

At Steeper, we have found that client stories are often the most effective force of communication, and can offer reassurance particularly in cases where individuals may feel they are alone in their needs. By using client case studies, we have found it creates a personal voice to the solutions available, offering insights on not only the products, but also the actual process of installation and aftercare. Creating a community of voices who can offer guidance to those in the same scenario can shout louder than published research or private advertising, as they are able to assure that home adaptations are not signs of vulnerability, but a tool which can be personal, discreet, and fundamental in returning freedom.

Research referenced:  
\*Rachel Docking, *Homes that help: A personal and professional perspective on home adaptations*, Centre for Ageing Better. July 2018.





# Case Study

## Julia Tipling



### The story

As a congenital amputee, from a young age Julia rarely used any form of prostheses as their basic functions were of little advantage to her. However as upper limb prosthetic development has advanced, she began to see the benefits of various devices. As a keen horse rider she needed a prosthesis to help her ride and also carry out the day-to-day tasks at the stables. She sought the help of Seacroft Rehabilitation Centre at Leeds Teaching Hospital where her prosthetist Asad prescribed her a split hook. The success of the device encouraged her to consider what could be available for her upcoming wedding day.

After trying on her wedding dress, Julia knew she was after something with a hyper-realistic look and authentic finish to compliment the dress. Keen to find a replacement for her old cosmetic hand which lacked the bespoke touches she was looking for, she discussed her options with Asad and he prescribed her a custom silicone arm.

### The solution

The process of creating Julia's custom silicone arm began with the Spectromatch camera, which has 22,000 colours stored to offer a superior matching process as opposed to traditional swatches. Asad used this to electronically measure her arm's skin tone, and created a near-perfect colour match in a matter of minutes. By measuring the colour of different parts of her arm, this provided the silicone technicians an accurate representation of the tones and skin pigmentation found in areas such as the wrist and inner elbow.

This was followed by a cast being taken of Julia's arm to acquire accurate finger shape and dimensions to be replicated. Details such as freckles, veins and hairs were discussed as to whether she wanted to incorporate them,

and final measurements taken to provide technicians as much information as possible. After a final review of the arm shape, Julia was happy to proceed with the cosmesis.

The fabrication technique for custom silicone at the Steeper Silicone Clinic is unlike similar products, as the technique involves colouring the silicone material prior to sculpting, as opposed to surface painting. This process allows the layering of different shades of silicone to give a translucent finish, achieving an effect similar to skin which patients' such as Julia desire. Our skilled technicians were able to replicate the exact tone of Julia's skin, including the even tan she would have on her wedding day.



### The turning point

Upon delivery of her custom silicone arm Julia was thrilled by the realistic features and overall appearance, and was even more excited for her big day. The Silicone Clinic had sculpted a cosmesis matching her skin colour perfectly, and even finished it off with the perfect French manicure.

Julia's wedding day was a beautiful celebration of love and commitment, and with all eyes on her, Julia walked down the aisle with confidence with her custom silicone arm.

**To find out more about Julia visit [www.steepergroup.com](http://www.steepergroup.com)**