

## How can AI Help us to maintain our independence?

**SUMMARY** of online talk

by Sarah Jones (Chiltern u3a) Hilary McColl (Bury) Jean Jackson (Lichfield).

**During the talk, we mentioned several apps and technologies.**

**This gives you links to more information.**

Best single links to start with, are to [RNIB](#) , [RNID](#) , and [Guide Dogs UK](#), and [Somerset Sight](#), who each list apps and technologies to explore.

### Do more with what you have already:

Many helpful things are built into your smartphone, PC and tablet, e.g. you can increase the size of your text, turn on a magnifier, or make keys easier to see.

Go to **SETTINGS** and look at your **Accessibility** menu.:

You can talk to your PC or MAC or Ipad and it will send an email for you, e.g. on PC, Open Outlook, New email. Go to **Message** tab: select **Dictate**

If you have an Apple device, your on-screen keyboard gives you the option to dictate or “**talk to text**” with one tap – provided that you have a recent model.

[Audio description](#) (**AD**) is commentary describing what’s happening on a TV screen. Look for an **AD** button on your remote control.

### What else could I have?

If you want to do more with your smartphone, you can use apps. A list is on the next page. Many are FREE

Guide Dogs has a [Tech Selector](#) to help you choose tech that’s right for you. [GARI](#) is a more comprehensive, European guide. Neither mentions household appliances. So far we’ve only found [Cobolt Systems](#) selling these – e.g. they offer a talking microwave.

Most major TV brands offer voice-activated remote controls.

[Meta Ray Ban glasses](#) are the leading “Smart glasses” – they have a camera & microphone built-in: you can make & answer calls, access apps, record video, all hands free. They’re popular with sighted and poorly-sighted people!

If you had a [Smart Home](#), you could control all your appliances - your lights, heating, washing, etc from one place, via a voice assistant such as Alexa, because all your appliances would be connected to the internet, and networked together. As we get older, a Smart Home could be very handy.

## Useful apps for your smartphone–

Many apps are free, and most work for both Android and Apple phones. In future, developers will need to make their apps available for both technologies.

**The apps are grouped into:** *(click the highlighted links to see more):*

### 👁 Reading & object recognition

- [Seeing AI](#) – reads printed text, photos; identifies money, people, items
- [TapTapSee](#) – uses your device’s camera to takes a photo & identify things

### 🗺 Getting around

- [Clew](#) - Apple only; records a route and helps you do it again
- [Voice Navi](#) Android, guides you all the way to your destination

### 🤝 Real-time assistance

- [Be My Eyes](#) - connects to sighted volunteers via video - Apple/Android
- [BeSpecular](#) - assistance from sighted volunteers –Apple-only

### 🏠 Daily living

- [LookTel Money Reader](#) - identifies cash
- [Ava](#) -gives real-time captions for 121 & group conversations

## How can I get practical help with all this?

[AbilityNet](#) operates a free 9-5, 5 day a week helpline: **0300 180 0028** or email [enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk). They help disabled people 121 in their own homes.

You can also visit your **IT Advisor** at your local library. Ask them for information.

## What will help us in future?

The [European Accessibility Act](#) (EAA) set accessibility standards for people with disabilities and older people. In brief, everything should get easier!

**Autonomous Vehicles** (AVs) may become a great help to people in towns.

The [UK Dementia Research Institute \(DRI\)](#). is researching how AI can combat Alzheimers’, e.g. via devices that can analyse & predict a person’s behaviour.

## To find out more about AI!

Either Google “[AI for everyone](#)” or click [HERE](#). Contact the Ai team for more info: fill in the [contact form](#) or email the [AI Subject Advisor](#).