

Press Release
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DIY SOS and Stiltz give family an almighty lift

Flagship BBC TV programme, DIY SOS, has ensured wheelchair-user Karis Lane can avoid going into care by fitting a pioneering Stiltz Home Lift in her big sister's home.

Karis is a criminology student who lives with her mum Karen in Stourbridge in the West Midlands. The 28-year-old needs constant care due to cerebral palsy and other conditions. In recent years Karen has developed her own health problems including severe rheumatoid arthritis. Lifting and carrying her daughter had put a huge strain on them both physically and mentally. Exacerbated by Karen's partner recently being diagnosed with cancer, their situation was unsustainable.

Older sister Jo and partner Wil stepped up to provide a home for Karis, but with an inaccessible house it was equally as difficult to offer Karis comfort and independence in Bromsgrove.

Busy hairdresser Jo invested in building a home salon so she could be more flexible, nevertheless daily routines such as carrying her sister up and down the stairs were not resolved. This was unsafe for everyone with risk of falls and back injury.



If either Jo or Wil, a professional stunt rider at Warwick Castle, damaged their backs, their income could be compromised and Karis would lose her carers. Jo continued to save and fundraise so their home could be made more wheelchair-friendly, however the task was insurmountable. The only alternative was moving Karis into care which filled the family with dread. Hence, unbeknown to Jo, Karen contacted DIY SOS with a desperate plea for help.

The application sparked interest from the programme researchers and resulted in Jo and Wil being given the opportunity for a home conversion and two-storey extension by DIY SOS The Big Build. In addition to donation requests for construction companies and tradesmen, messages were sent out to suppliers of specialist assistive equipment so that the Lanes' home could be fitted with appropriate products for easier care of Karis.

[Home lifts specialist Stiltz](#) responded immediately to donate a domestic lift which would open up access for Karis and increase safety for the whole family. Following assessment of their needs, Stiltz determined its next-generation [Trio+ wheelchair-accessible home lift](#) should be fitted to allow direct access from the ground floor to Karis' apartment. This multi-award-winning manufacturer worked closely with DIY SOS to install and commission the stunning, free-standing, through-the-floor home lift within an extremely challenging time frame.

Witnessing the home lift for the first time during the 'Reveal Day', the whole Lane family were 'overwhelmed'. TV host Nick Knowles encouraged Karis to enter the through-floor lift car which she



described as 'magical'. Karis said: "At the touch of a button and with a little bit of pixie dust, I'm elevated from the ground floor into my apartment without needing to be carried up the stairs. I feel like a princess riding in my own home lift, it is so heavenly."

Karis' big sister Jo was equally as impressed: "It's a lovely looking home lift that takes up little space in my property and has taken away the fear of falling when carrying my sister up and down the stairs. Karis now has free movement around the whole of my house so she can fully participate with the family. The domestic lift has given Karis complete independence and is so much better than a stairlift which would have meant we still needed to help Karis. I also think people tend to relate stair lifts with elderly people which is just not right for Karis or our home. We are so grateful to [Stiltz Home Lifts UK](#)."

The DIY SOS donation means the Lane family can now progress with their lives in a more positive way. Karis benefits from increased independence and the well-being of the whole family is greatly improved.

Karen can enjoy respite and Jo is already spending more quality time with her younger sister. Jo concludes: "Karis is so happy and we feel a massive weight has been lifted from my mum's shoulders. If it hadn't been for DIY SOS, I'm not sure what we would have done! Thank you so much to everyone involved in the build, it just looks incredible. I always wanted Karis to live with us as she's an absolute joy, my dream is now a reality."

Ends

Stiltz Home Lifts

Tel: 0808 291 2111

Email: stiltzlifts@gmail.com

Web: <https://www.stiltz.co.uk/>