New wheelchair securement system for the bus

Having been a wheelchair user for 20 years hands I'm always interested to see developments in technology which make life easier for disabled people. I was therefore thrilled to find a new piece of technology called "Quantum" on the tour buses in Edinburgh which ensured my wheelchair was held securely in place.

My ride on the Edinburgh tour bus was completely different to other buses I've ridden on in the UK where there is absolutely nothing to secure my wheelchair. I just have to rely on my wheelchair brakes which were really only designed to hold me still at the dining table. The only safety provision on buses is an anti-tipping pole which is supposed to stop the wheelchair from falling over. I usually travel hanging on to the pole and hoping that the route doesn't have too many bends. If it's really bumpy or the floor is wet from rain, I either get the person I'm travelling with, or a fellow passenger, to put their foot on my footrest to hold me in place. Using my mobile phone or reading a book is completely out of the question.

As Edinburgh sits on the site of an extinct volcano, many of its streets are very steep and they are also covered with cobbles. This can make visiting the city in a wheelchair a little bit tricky and is why I opted to go on the Edinburgh tour bus to take me to the different tourist attractions. However, I was prepared for the fact the bus journey may be a little challenging with the bends and bumps and so I was both amazed and delighted when I was shown on board and told that the bus had Quantum which was designed by the company Q'Straint. Quantum is described as the world's first fully automatic rear facing wheelchair securement station.

To activate Quantum all I had to do was position myself in the wheelchair bay and press a button to my right. By pressing the button, I set off the automatic locking sequence. Two side arms descended, gripping my chair's wheels and locking me into position. The process took less than 25 seconds and other passengers were able to board whilst the locking process was taking place. When you arrive at your stop you simply press the button again to release the arms. There is absolutely no need for the driver to do anything. However, if the wheelchair user cannot press the button the driver can activate it from his driving seat.

As well as wheelchairs Quantum also secures most mobility scooters. These are becoming increasingly popular in the Europe and many bus companies will accept mobility scooters of a certain size. Due to the nature of design these are more unbalanced than wheelchairs and so it is even more important that they are secured properly. To find out more visit www.qstraint.com/en-gb/quantum/ or watch https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7RSvCu6D6e8&t=101s .

Contact Helen Dolphin helen@peoplesparking.org @mrsflipper1001