

SHOPMOBILITY ST HELIER ANNUAL REPORT FOR YEAR ENDING 30TH SEPTEMBER 2019

The year 2018/9 proved to be yet another highly successful one for Shopmobility St Helier with usage topping 5000 days by our users, both locals and tourists alike, with an additional 600 plus hires at Jersey Zoo. This is a significant quantity and speaks volumes of the importance of our charitable activities to all our users and to the island economy when one considers a large percentage of this activity was focused on visitors to the island.

Our mission is to assist anyone with a physical disability in whatever way we can and our wide range of equipment allows those who can drive themselves utilising either an electric scooter or power chair to secure their independence whilst there are manual wheelchairs where assistance by pushing can be provided as necessary. Additionally over the years we have repeatedly been asked for numerous other aids and assistive equipment which we endeavour to provide. This includes quad and tri-walkers, Zimmer frames, and small steps to assist with shower entry. The list goes on and we are constantly increasing the range of what we can offer without entering the scope of equipment that needs to be professionally supplied such as hoists which we leave to the Health Service.

Over time we have been recognised as a centre of knowledge on disability matters and advice, which is freely offered to islanders, tourists, hotels and guest houses and indeed other organisations and proves invaluable. Fifteen years plus of experience has now placed us perfectly to fulfil this additional role which benefitted some 800 plus new users in 2018/9 but also served numerous returning tourists and regular and occasional local users also.

We have continued over the year to upgrade our technology and as well as being able to accept on-line payments we can now electronically capture bookings via our tablets / phones utilising something called G-Suite having overcome some initial teething problems with this new introduction.

2018/9 was a year of considerable investment in new equipment for the Charity. Our delivery vehicle needed replacing as expensive potential

repairs to the existing one were not viable. In addition ever rising demand and popularity of self-folding scooters encouraged us to buy 11 of these pieces of equipment complete with their lithium batteries which can be removed and carried on board aircraft if the scooters are taken off island. As our insurance covers usage in both the UK and Europe this offers people an opportunity to make more use of these although they are obliged to cover breakdowns whilst away themselves. In total nearly £37k was spent on these items although two anonymous donations of £5k, one on each purchase, was a tremendous help to us in covering the costs.

During the year we succeeded in securing charitable status for the organisation from the newly set-up Jersey Charities Commission (No 70) thus fulfilling our obligations under the long overdue law to be fully registered and to meet the developing regulations in terms of an appropriate constitution and annual accounts. Meeting the necessary criteria is something all organisations wishing to call themselves charities need to do but we easily jumped this hurdle with our good level of governance,

We, like many other organisations, still suffer a profile and recognition problem even after 15 years it seems some people from within the island who might need mobility assistance still don't know where we are located and what we can supply or even that we exist!! We try as far as we can to reach out to visitors to the island and handle annually numerous enquiries from potential tourists who seek to establish what they can hire before booking a visit. To assist with this we continue to use both TV and printed advertising to get the message to as many people as possible from both within and without the island.

Our equipment list is ever growing and currently we hold the following:-

117 electric scooters, 79 manual wheelchairs, 11 power chairs, 22 walkers, and 30 + other pieces of equipment including grab rails, toilet seats on legs, Zimmer and other frames etc.

The retail value of these assets is well in excess of £250,000 though much has been bought at wholesale prices ex UK manufacturers and we have rapidly depreciated it through our accounts. We are also extremely fortunate in that the Profreight arm of Ferryspeed bring all our

requirements including batteries and chairs / scooters to the island free of charge as their contribution to our expenses for which we are sincerely grateful.

Turning to our staffing we are delighted with the input of our manager Jimmy who has now been with us for three years. His flexibility and adaptability combined with his dedication is amazing and he is well supported by Gabby who works for us on Saturdays. We have been less successful with other part-time staff this year losing one after a difficult separation to illness and his temporary replacement to the finance industry. The regular input from our volunteers including Sue, David and other members of the Chairman's family not to say he himself is invaluable. We have decided not to recruit further part-time support until the 2020 "season" when perhaps an employee on a six month contract might be appropriate.

So as can be seen from our accounts chair hire for 2018/9 was up some 7% on the previous year this being driven by visitor hires and occasional local longer term hire. We also continue with our support scheme aimed at people of limited means who just fail to meet the criteria for a States provided piece of equipment but benefit enormously from the mobility such an offering gives them. We currently supply six people with a heavily discounted package and would happily supply more if the Health Service's Occupational Therapy department would refer same to us but as with many other initiatives they seem unable to do simple things at this time. We as trustees of the Charity do when opportunity presents engage with Health on various consultations concerning disability issues and raise numerous concerns with government as needs arise.

Our main problem is that we have now grown out of our stores and need more space if we are to continue to acquire equipment that is needed by our users. Both stores are completely full in the winter whereas in the summer much of the equipment is at hotels.

In conclusion it is necessary to thank in addition to our staff and volunteers the cooperation we receive from the car park staff who now work for the Infrastructure part of the newish GHE Department who ensure our car parking spaces are monitored and used for the requirement they have been set aside. We also are grateful to all

individuals who give us donations large and small and to those organisations that often discount our purchases. We through this support and assisted by the fact that none of our trustees or volunteers draw monies from the Charity, operate successfully normally with a surplus (not in 2018/9 due to heavy capital expenditure) which we can invest in expanding our range of available equipment as well as building sensible reserves as a hedge against future headwinds.

The trustees,
October, 2019