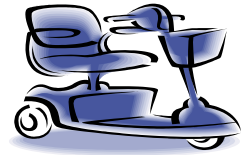




Shopmobility South Gloucestershire Chairman's A.G.M Report 2018



I would like to thank those of you who responded to South Gloucestershire Council consultation earlier in the year regarding our funding from the council. I understand over 70 people responded.

Unfortunately the funding stream from the council was discontinued and our attempts to obtain additional funding from the Council through an equalities service level agreement was unsuccessful. This funding would have covered a three year period and provided a level of financial security.

This represents a loss of over £8000 that was primarily used towards core funding of the project equating to over 50% of our local authority funding. This funding is crucial to pay our only worker to manage the project and oversee safeguarding and health & safety issues.

We highlighted our concerns about our ability to maintain our service in a variety of local press releases during this period.

We applied to a variety of grant providers within a short timescale given the financial uncertainty created by loss of funding from South Gloucestershire Council. We were relieved we were able to secure £5,000.00 from the Sobell Foundation over a three year period which can be used for core funding.

We are also most grateful to the local town and parish councils having received £1,000.00 from Dodington Parish, £1000.00 from Yate Town Council.

We gratefully received £4,700.00 from several councillors through the Members Award Funding scheme (MAF) of which we are extremely grateful.

We were able to secure £2000.00 from Tesco's 'bags of help' having come second. May I thank those who supported us in putting in the blue chips at the local Tesco store and a further £1000.00 from the Co-op foundation

However financial uncertainty will continue for next year unless we can seek a more secure and constant funding stream over many years. With more secure funding, more time could be spent on extending our hours of opening rather than time being spent continually applying for grants which are often unsuccessful. To this end we are in discussions with the shopping centre to establish whether this long-term funding can be agreed which would enable us to open until 4pm on a Thursday.

We do not have a trading arm unlike some larger charities and it would not be cost effective to do so as any revenue would be lost through renting elsewhere.

This year our guest speaker will be Andy Lowery (Shopping Centre Manager) and owners of the shopping centre. I would encourage people to try and attend this AGM to express the importance of the service to the shopping centre manager and owners and to comment on the facilities the centre has to offer.

I would like to share some additional comments made overleaf in response to our survey last year that capture some of the reasons why the service is so important to people.

These comments were very useful in helping in swaying grant providers to fund our service.

'An excellent Service in particular when there is a family event as it means I can join them in a trip out or even a short walk to the park'. Mr L

'The service is a lifeline to my wife and me. It is a great help and we would not be able to get out and about without it. Thank you.' Mrs J

'We would be lost without you. Please do not close down – We would not be able to shop, visit library, have a coffee out or go out to lunch. We would do nothing' – Mr C

'As a renal patient it helps me have a life and helps the family – but would like to thank all concerned with Shopmobility for being there for us all' - Mr S

'For some people it is a lifeline to communicate with others to become more independent, shopping, speak to people who understand the problem of getting around. It was a weight off my mind and body to know a facility is in Yate. For some people this may be the only contact they have for engaging with another person – this is very important but not generally recognised' – Ms S

'I feel I am able to use the service when I need it - I am grateful that the service is there when I go on holiday so that I can enjoy life with my family' – Mrs M

'I would have to stay in Stroud which has no scooter hire and it would affect my wife. I would be practically housebound. I look forward to my Saturdays in Yate – It is a God send to us disabled people. I can go around by myself allowing the family to go shopping, plus I have got to know quite a lot of people in Yate' - Mr P

'I have used this service now for quite a few years, I am over the moon with the friendly service found in your Yate office. Amazing people and very affordable' – Mr H

'I get the scooter to use when I visit my Daughter in Yate' – Mrs R

'I broke my leg and required a wheelchair whilst recovering. I would have gone crazy sitting at home' – Mr W

We would be grateful to receive further anecdotes in this year's survey as a means of providing evidence to influence future requests for funding and would ensure peoples' names were anonymous.

We look forward to seeing those able to attend our AGM on Thursday 4th October commencing at 3.00pm at Yate Library. Please sign and post the AGM invite in the self addressed envelope even if you are unable to attend.

Janet Biggin

**Councillor J. Biggin
Chairman
Shopmobility
South Gos. Council**