

Spring 2008

# Newsletter



## ***Hello Members and Friends***

Welcome to Shopmobility Manchester's spring newsletter, I hope that you will find it both interesting and informative.

Nearly 700 new members have joined Shopmobility Manchester in the last twelve months and our membership now exceeds 4,700 members who have made nearly 4,000 visits to the city centre and received around 1,500 meet and greets across the city. A further 200 people have taken advantage of the new Internet computer stations installed in January, we have launched an incredible new website and we now even have a profile on the social network site Facebook. Combined with the purchase of over 12 new scooters and wheelchairs and a major overhaul of all our other equipment, we continue to invest in the service and our customers at a time when many others are cutting back.

As demand for specific pieces of equipment and expectations of the service continue to grow we need to ensure that we are able to deliver the highest levels of service to all who need it. May 16th - 18th will see Shopmobility Manchester holding a series of Shopmobility Manchester and Scooter Awareness Days in Halle Square at the Arndale Centre Manchester. In support of the event we have worked with ROSPA and Conway Council to produce a Highway Code for mobility scooter users, it's a fun booklet that I hope you will find both useful and enjoyable.

I'm pleased to announce that we have been asked to support this years Labour Party Conference in September at Manchester Central (GMex) following which we will be holding our Annual General Meeting in October. You can find out more inside, enjoy the read.

**Connie Ashworth - Chair**

**Shopmobility Manchester. Telephone 0161 839 4060**

## ***Inside your Newsletter....***

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## Shopmobility Awareness Days

Shopmobility Manchester is holding Scooter Awareness Days with a display on Halle Mall, on **Friday 16<sup>th</sup>, Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May 9.30am – 6.30 pm and Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May 08, 11am – 5pm**. The National Federation of Shopmobility has recently launched a new **Scooter User Proficiency Award** training scheme called "**SUPA**" so come along and test your scooter or powered wheelchair skills on the above dates, when you pass the test you will receive a certificate, and small goody bag. So book your test with Noreen on 0161 839 4060. If you cannot manage those dates we can still arrange for a test at our premises after this event. We look forward to your participation!

## Amendments to Terms and Conditions of Hire

Shopmobility Manchester provides services to a large number of people day-on-day. Fortunately we have been able to raise funds that enable Shopmobility Manchester to continue to provide a free service and to purchase an extensive range of new equipment that has proved very popular with our members. Over recent months we have become aware of some potentially quite serious incidents and damage to equipment. I would like to take this opportunity to refresh your understanding of Shopmobility Manchester's Terms and Conditions of Hire. They are:

***I will accept responsibility for any wheelchair or scooter that is in my sole care on any occasion I use Shopmobility Manchester. In particular, I will ensure the following:***

- ✓ I confirm that, as far as I am aware, **I do not have any condition that would impair my ability to operate the equipment**, which is lent to me by Shopmobility Manchester
- ✓ I have been **trained** on how to use the equipment by Shopmobility Manchester
- ✓ That the equipment will be **returned to the shop 15 minutes before we close** at the end of the day.
- ✓ If you require a meet and greet escort **you must return or book your escort 30 minutes before we close.**
- ✓ The equipment will not be taken out of the **city centre, see map enclosed.**
- ✓ The equipment will be used with due **care and attention** at all times.
- ✓ I will not travel at excessive and dangerous speeds: **I will travel at walking pace only**
- ✓ I will not use the equipment to **trade, sell or collect money**, particularly on the street
- ✓ I will not commit any **crime** while using the equipment
- ✓ I will not use equipment while under the influence of **alcohol, prescribed or non-prescribed drugs that may impair my safe use of the equipment.**
- ✓ I will not carry **passengers** or let anyone else use the equipment.
- ✓ I will **report any accident**, no matter how small, to staff at Shopmobility Manchester.
- ✓ I understand that I may be asked to **contribute to the cost/fees** incurred for any repairs/damages caused by me, whilst the equipment is in my care.

I understand that my **membership will be withdrawn** if I do not adhere to the above *Terms and Conditions*

## The Big Splash

Manchester will lead the way this summer with free swimming for the over-60s in the city's pool from June 1st

Manchester Valuing Older People, Manchester PCT and Manchester Leisure have secured an agreement giving older people free access to pools across Manchester including the flagship Aquatics Centre and Wythenshawe Forum.

Manchester will be the first city in England to offer such a package that forms part of the city's Healthy Ageing Strategy. Dr Sally Bradley, Director of Public Health for Manchester PCT says: "Free swimming will give all older people in the city the opportunity to take up this important form of exercise. Swimming helps to reduce high blood pressure, reduce the risk of heart disease - still the regions biggest killer - tone the body and improve muscle strength, posture and flexibility. It's very important when trying to retain and improve mobility as we get older"

### Also:

In addition a recent survey of 200 English GP's carried out by the Mental Health Foundation found 22% of GP's suggested exercise for mild depression. The foundation says it is important that Doctors do not just prescribe antidepressants and instead look for such options as the city's Healthy Ageing Strategy.

## Small Grants Fund

Following the success of last year's joint fund between Help the Aged and Valuing Older People, small grants of up to £300 will be available for groups and organisations that benefit older people. Last year over 89 groups successfully applied for funding for a wide range of purposes, including day tips, special lunches and other activities that often don't meet application requirements for other pots of money. For more information and an application pack, contact **Rachel York** on **0161 234 3547** Closing date for this round of funding is Friday 23rd May 2008.

## Road safety for older people

£80,000 has been allocated to improve road safety after a successful bid for funds by Manchester City Council's engineering services.

Road traffic accidents involving pedestrians over 65 years old made up 5% of the total collisions on Manchester's roads between the summers of 2004 and 2007, but they were about a quarter of all fatalities and 30% of fatalities involving a pedestrian.

This information was important in making the case for funds to improve the road infrastructure on accident 'hot spots' involving older people. The work to be proposed will also help improve footways and other pedestrian routes that are important for access to key facilities and opportunities for older people and should also reduce the number of falls.

## Funding Opportunities

### £40,000 Cash Grants

April 2008 saw the launch of Manchester's annual Cash Grants programme. Residents are again being offered the chance to help improve their local neighbourhoods by using imaginative ideas to improve the local environment, build a stronger sense of community or help reduce crime or antisocial behaviour.

Grants of up to £40,000 will be available for voluntary, community and neighbourhood groups, or even just small groups of neighbours who get together for a single project.

For more information visit;

[www.manchester.gov.uk/voluntary/grants/index.htm](http://www.manchester.gov.uk/voluntary/grants/index.htm)

**Or** for an application pack please contact **David Hilton on 0161 234 3016**

**Or** email:  
voluntary.sector.grants@manchester.gov.uk



### **New Bus Passes**

Some of you may have been concerned by a recent article in the local press about the new National Travel Pass Scheme.

Over 70% of eligible over-60s and disabled people have applied, a large number of whom have received their new passes without incident and there are not hundreds of thousands of older people unable to travel as the article implied. And thanks to the Valuing Older People Team we'd like to clarify the facts.

If you have applied for and received your new smartcard-style National Travel Pass, it is valid to use on all off-peak local bus services across England.

If you have not received your new National Travel Pass or have not yet applied for it, you can still use your current pass on all Greater Manchester off-peak train, tram and bus services until the end of September 2008. It will not, however, be valid outside Greater Manchester.

If you feel that you may qualify for the new National Travel Pass and have not yet applied, you can fill in an application form at GMPTE Travelshops. You will need a recent colour passport-style photograph and proof of date of birth and address. Or, to have an application form sent by post call **GMPTE** on **0161 244 1050** or email: [passes2008@gmppte.gov.uk](mailto:passes2008@gmppte.gov.uk)

### **Promoting Independence throughout Life & Work**

For the past 16 years Warrington has become a focal point for disabled people, their carers and families from across the UK. The reason is Disability Awareness Day, which this year takes place 10am till 5pm on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> July at Walton Hall Gardens.

For more details about visiting, exhibiting or sponsoring events held in DAD Week, or if you require information about the Park & Ride scheme, wheelchair loans, enabler services and BSL support on the day please visit [www.disabilityawarenessday.org.uk](http://www.disabilityawarenessday.org.uk) or call the DAD team on **01925 240064**.

### **SUPPORT SESSIONS**

The Novas Scarman Group Manchester team provide regular support sessions based in communities and neighbourhoods across the city of Manchester - in local, easily accessible venues.

Link: <http://www.thescarmantrustmanchester.org/index.php/Section31.html>

### **Manchester City Council Jobs Fair**

Manchester City Council is hosting their annual jobs fair for Disabled People.

This event will be an excellent opportunity to raise awareness of the work that has been undertaken to reduce the barriers to employment faced by the disabled community and for organisations to encourage applications from disabled people.

The event will be held Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 11:00am – 4:00pm in the Great Hall, Town Hall, Manchester.

### **A New Ageing Strategy for Manchester - Public Meeting**

#### **20 May 2008, Wythenshawe Forum**

The Valuing Older People (VOP) team is currently consulting on a new 3-year plan for older people in the City. Since the first plan was launched in 2004, we have made important and significant progress in many areas, but we know that there is much more still to do.

Link: <http://www.thescarmantrustmanchester.org/events/index.php/Event510.html>