

Getting mobile . . .

SHOPMOBILITY Dundee is a scheme for those with mobility problems, be they disabled, aged or infirm, writes Stuart Johnstone. The charity helps customers to access the city centre, providing them with increased independence.

There are free loans of manual and powered wheelchairs and powered scooters, plus volunteers to accompany people if requested.

Currently, however, all the wheelchairs and scooters have been for adults and Shopmobility is keen to purchase a wheelchair for children.

When Shopmobility Dundee first opened in temporary premises in a city centre car park in 1994, the service was available for six-hours-a-day, three-days-a-week. By 1998 this had been extended by two hours each day and one day a week. At the end of March 2000 Shopmobility Dundee moved to purpose-built premises provided by Land Lease at the Overgate Centre. Beginning in September 2003 the opening hours were extended further to include Saturdays for the first time.

Since the move to the Overgate there has been an increase in the number of people who use the services from 341 in March 2000 to more than 1650.

The majority of customers come from Dundee but there is

also a substantial number who live in Angus, Fife and Perth & Kinross.

With the increase in opening hours and the rise in customer numbers, the need for a children's wheelchair has also intensified.

Smaller

Dave Christie, who runs Shopmobility, said. "We get many parents asking if we have a smaller wheelchair for their children and it is a shame that we have been unable to provide them with this.

"We receive funding from a number of places. However, we also try to raise money ourselves and we are determined to get the necessary cash to allow the purchase of a children's wheelchair.

"I think this would be beneficial to Shopmobility because it will allow us to offer a more complete service.

"It is obviously a good thing for parents as it would make things easier for them when they want to go out shopping if there is a wheelchair available for the children who require it."



From left, Dave Christie, John Bellingham, Heather Flood and Alison Bellingham.



MANY groups, schools, organisations and individuals have made bids for their share of the £10,000 we have up for grabs to benefit communities in Dundee, Angus, Perthshire and Fife. But it's still not too late to get your application to us.

For example, it might be £40 to take children on an outing; or £2000 to decorate a pensioners' club. The money might cover the whole project or just part of it.

We want to know about your plans and projects to see if we can help **Make It Happen**. To enter, tell us how much you would need and on what you would spend it.

All entries must include a name, address and a daytime telephone number. The closing date is September 30 and a panel of judges will choose the deserving causes. The organisers will then be invited to a special award ceremony later this year. All entrants must agree to take part in any publicity.

Suggestions should be submitted by post to: Make It Happen, Evening Telegraph, 80 Kingsway East, Dundee DD4 8SL; or by email to:

makeithappen@eveningtelegraph.co.uk

You can also visit our website at: www.eveningtelegraph.co.uk

and click on the Make It Happen logo. If you have any queries, or want to know if you could qualify for a share of the cash, you should phone 01382 575231 between 10am and 4pm, Monday to Friday; or email makeithappen@eveningtelegraph.co.uk.

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