



Shopmobility Melton Mowbray
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Shopmobility Melton Mowbray Case Studies 2010

These 3 case studies intend to look at the situations that have arisen that have put these 3 individuals in the position whereby they have called upon the services provided by Shopmobility Melton Mowbray.

Case 1, Asfordby, Age 75. This lady has used the service since its set up in 2006. She hires a scooter every market day and also arranges a scooter on a long term loan every summer. She has also attended some of the Scooter Club outings.

She suffers from calcification of the arteries and has had heart surgery. This profoundly affects her as it brings about extreme muscle cramps and causes breathlessness. This is a continuing illness and there is no probability that it will become better in time.

She struggles with daily tasks of any great length without needing rest. The Bus stop is 100yds from her home but even this is "too far away". Walking any great distance is where she struggles most.

She hires a scooter to complete her tasks. This ensures that she visits the surgery at Latham House, draws out her money for the week and gets her weekly shop. Despite the scooter, she still requires the help of her partner and carer. He is registered deaf but is her lifeline to be able to continue with these tasks.

Shopping at the local supermarket is a further challenge. The scooter enables her to actively participate in choosing her weekly food, allowing her to get up and down the aisles. She tells me she is keen to still be seen to be providing for her partner despite her struggles.

When asked about her experience of her illness she stated that "you have got to push yourself to go out - even if you don't want to otherwise you give up and you never want to go". She already feels strongly that she is missing out on participating in everyday life. She is no longer able to dance which was one of her great enjoyments. Her partner continues to take her along purely for the

social company that keeps her stimulated. The Scooter Club has also provided a social outlet for her, enabling visits to country parks, local events and attractions that would not be otherwise accessible to her. Both her and her partner are able to come along to these events which gives them time together as a couple. Having the scooter means that he is less concerned by her mobility difficulties and more of a partner than a carer.

The benefit of the hire of a scooter for 2 weeks over the summer is similar. She said she "wouldn't bother going" without it. Taking the scooter enables her to visit places with her partner. On previous occasions she would spend her time in the hotel while her partner went out. He felt guilty in leaving her and thus the quality of the holiday experience was limited by her mobility. The scooter brings independence for them both to experience new situations. This keeps them motivated and active.

This lady was asked about the effect on her if she no longer had access to Shopmobility Melton Mowbray. Neither her or her partner are in the financial position to be able to afford their own scooter. She explained that even if she could, neither of them had the strength or agility to be able to manoeuvre the scooter in and out of the car.

She was concerned that she would lose what drive and independence she had left. Weekly grocery shopping would be the hardest hit, with her having to rely on her daughter-in-law to do her shopping. Her partner is mobile but faces his own difficulties being deaf. The couple work as a team to get through daily routines. She worried about the impact on her daughter-in-law who worked full time and had a family of her own and feared losing her self esteem by being seen as no longer able to provide for her partner.

Although they have a car most of Melton is pedestrianised which means access to some of the town facilities would be difficult on foot. She would consider purchasing a wheelchair but this would rely on her partner to continue being able bodied in order to push the chair. She felt she would like to maintain her degree of ability to get about by herself and the wheelchair would be restrictive.

Case 2, Melton Mowbray, Age 63.

In this instance it is the wife and chief care provider whose quality of life is enhanced by the use of Shopmobility equipment.

This couple are new members this year to Shopmobility Melton Mowbray. The wife is able bodied and hires out a wheelchair every couple of weeks for her husband who has mobility difficulties. They have sold their house in Surrey and moved to Melton Mowbray to be able to use the support of their daughter.

Her husband has suffered a series of mini strokes and lost the use of various muscles in his body. He has had an operation on his neck which he blames for his paralysis. He has not come to terms with his current illness. He is depressed by his situation and shows little interest in participating in society. At the moment he would choose not to leave the house. He has deteriorated quickly within the last year. His paralysis means he has difficulty getting out of bed or dressing himself.

His illness has meant that his wife runs the home and cares full time for him. She is drained by the effort of caring. She feels as though she gets no response from him. She juggles daily routine with caring for her husband.

When she first came to Shopmobility to hire a wheelchair she did so without his knowledge. On this occasion he refused to use it. It has taken many occasions for him to accept the fact that he needs it. There is some breakthrough as her hiring of equipment is more regular now. The wheelchair enables her to be able to do regular activities, shopping, banking, family occasions with him. She gains strength from having him with her and pleasure from his participation. Prior to this, she did everything by her self. She has faith that these odd trips will enable him to accept his disabilities and that he can overcome the stigma that he feels by being in the chair.

The scheme has been able a source of information for her. We have provided contact details of events within the borough which she hopes will provide her husband with a social support network. From this she has attended the Seniors Forum organised by MBC, and found there information about benefits that are applicable. Due to the nature of the Scheme some of our volunteers are familiar with what help is available (Disability Living Allowance, Blue Badge Scheme) and she hopes to follow these ideas through. She has also taken details of seniors clubs that they may enjoy. This, in turn, she hopes will help restore his confidence and independence and enable her to enjoy life more fully.

When asked about the effects of withdrawing the service, the ease of which she could access equipment was her main concern. She would continue to pursue access to equipment, whether by purchasing, approaching NHS or Red Cross. She is determined to change her and her husband's life around. She is centrally located in Melton so Shopmobility is easy to fit in to her busy routine. There is no worry about leaving her husband by himself at home for any great length of time while she collects the chair. Due to his varying emotional state there is no need to plan for the wheelchair in advance. She can decide in a morning whether it is a good day to approach his use of the chair.

Case 3, Old Dalby 75

This lady is a regular member. She catches the bus from outside her door into Melton every Tuesday. She does one visit a week and that has to cater for all her weekly needs as Old Dalby is a small village with no significant amenities.

She owns her own scooter which gets her around Old Dalby but has no method of transporting it. She has no family in the local or Melton area.

She suffers from severe arthritis in the back and knees. She experiences pain when walking but also finds little tasks like dressing and cleaning difficult. In the last few years she has had to give up the role of care taker for Old Dalby Village Hall. She uses a walking trolley to support her when she doesn't have the scooter. On Scooter Club outings she uses the tail lift to gain access to the minibus as she is unable to bend her knees to climb the few steps into the bus. Her illness is a continuing problem.

She has relied on the service for almost 5 years and is happy with routine. The pain is what makes her vulnerable yet despite this, she has a great deal of self confidence and independence. It is in her nature to be strong and highly organised despite her mobility difficulties. Having access to a scooter in Melton ensures she has everything she needs and retains her independence. Banking is at 9:30am, toiletries are purchased next, then via the butchers and fruit and veg stalls. Her surgery is at Long Clawson and they no longer provide a free delivery service for her prescriptions so she collects these from a pharmacy in Melton. She purchases small gifts for the local care home in Old Dalby which she regularly visits for social reasons. The bus back is 11:30am. She says she enjoys this routine it gives her a sense of security and keeps her focused for the week. She knows what she is capable of and how long her strength will last. She does not leave Old Dalby until the following Tuesday.

She had not considered the possibility of life without Shopmobility. She "would probably not come in to Melton". Friends would be able to provide basics, food, milk, tea but she felt she couldn't ask them to weekly shop for her. Family would have to carry out food shopping and prescription collection but they live some distance away. She wouldn't be able to participate in this as she would have no way of getting around. A wheelchair is not appropriate for her weight. She would not consider sheltered accommodation or warden aided accommodation but accepted that she would have to look at where she currently lived.

Summary:

1. The impact of illness has caused all these cases to look to Shopmobility for support.
2. Mobility difficulties, namely ability to walk any great distance means scooter is invaluable.
3. The use of the scooter/wheelchair has encouraged independent living for both user and carer alike.
4. Ability to continue social interaction and feel a part of society important to remaining strong.
5. All 3 would have to rely on others, possibly family, if Shopmobility was unable to provide the equipment.