

Background Information

Go North Devon Limited is an **Industrial and Provident Society** registered with the Financial Services Authority (FSA) as a society run for the benefit of the community. The company has registered charitable status.

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide accessible and affordable services and social opportunities that will enhance mobility and wellbeing for the local community.

First registered: 11th December 1992 **Registration number:** 27719R
Registered address: The Shopmobility Centre, Albert Lane, Barnstaple, EX32 8RL

Go North Devon Limited is affiliated to national and local organisations including:
The National Federation of Shopmobility and the Community Transport Association, Just Ask(transport for your community) and the Council for Voluntary Service.

GO North Devon is an established, credible organisation with demonstrable expertise that is well positioned to supply a variety of **mobility services** in the rapidly changing world of personal wellbeing and healthcare provision. In 2011 GO North Devon had **26,201** service / client interactions for its main services. GO North Devon is therefore having a significant impact within the region.

It is imperative to realise that the majority of our service users are among the lowest income groups in the county. This is evidenced by the low take up of Gift Aid by our clients. They would like to help but less than 20% are eligible to pay income tax. We are also now seeing regular Shopmobility clients having to restrict their visits as their income dwindles. It is this lessening of social contact and quality of life that can have such a damaging effect for our most vulnerable clients. Supporting this service to these isolated, vulnerable people will continue to require revenue funding by a combination of grants, donations, sponsorship and contracts with social agencies.

BACKGROUND

GO North Devon Ltd was established as a charitable non-profit making organisation in 1992. The organisation is based in Barnstaple and currently operates:

- a Ring and Ride mini-bus scheme
- a Shopmobility service, (which celebrated its Fourteenth anniversary in June 2011)
- a school transport contract for Devon County Council
- a Single Point of Contact Transport to Health contract for NHS Devon and the North Devon Healthcare Trust
- the management and operation of the North Devon Cancer Care Car Service
- the creation and publication of the Transport and Travel Guide for North Devon

Go North Devon aims to provide exceptional value for money in providing front-line services to a wide range of North Devon's most vulnerable people who have transport, mobility and isolation problems.

GO North Devon's high profile is supported by its purpose-built premises, which are situated within the Barnstaple bus station campus and opposite the Citizen's Advice Bureau. This location provides maximum functionality for the customers while being a short, level distance to Barnstaple town centre and its shops and facilities.

GO North Devon's regional profile has been further enhanced by the collaboration with leading advertising agency Bray Leino, who sponsored the complete re-branding of our operation and a redesign of our logo and visual graphics. This has dramatically enhanced the regional perception of our service making it more acceptable to a greater range of clients by reflecting their spirit of independence and life enhancing opportunity while demonstrating GO North Devon's professionalism to the wider business and statutory community.

The aptitude, ability and determination of the Manager, Sharon Lynch, is a key factor in the continuing success of GO North Devon and her commitment has been instrumental to the professional development of the organisation. Sharon's knowledge and insights, gained through her 17 years with the organisation, have informed all aspects of the planning process to deliver this next generation of services built on the solid foundation of GO North Devon's current success.

Clients' needs and expectations

In 2011 GO North Devon had **26,201** service / client interactions for its main services. This demonstrates the high level of support provided to vulnerable people within the region. Contact with healthcare and other professionals has made us aware that there are many people who would benefit from using these services who currently do not use them. Part of the problem was identified with the image of the services being perceived as "charitable" and for "poor people" with many older people thinking that they are not eligible. Re-branding the organisation has made it possible to reduce these negative associations by presenting a modern, mainstream image. The challenge will be to meet the changing needs and expectations of both its current client group but also of the newly developing market of people with personal healthcare budgets who are suffering with isolation, loneliness and mobility problems.

SERVICE AIMS

Over the last two years GO North Devon has systematically reviewed its service provision and internal operating procedures while undertaking a comprehensive consultation with service users, commissioning bodies, welfare agencies, volunteers and other stakeholders in order to deliver a range of services best suited to the client's needs and thereby develop a robust plan for the future. The following eight strategic objectives will set the direction of our future development and sustainability. This will be only achieved through strengthening our staffing and volunteer levels and eventually by the provision of new facilities to provide enhanced services and increase our opportunities for revenue generation.

Objectives

- To provide a safe, high quality transport and mobility service across North Devon.
- To raise awareness of our unique services and the benefits they provide
- To develop and implement a targeted high quality marketing campaign that raises the profile of the organisation
- To build independence and promote self respect of the beneficiaries by enabling increased access to social, health and leisure activities
- To provide structured, good quality induction, training and on-going support for volunteers and staff
- To generate increased revenue to support a sustainable increased level of staffing
- To maintain good relationships with all stakeholders
- To research and develop new services and associated funding opportunities

Ring & Ride Service Development 2012-2015

During 2010 the Ring and Ride service was thoroughly reviewed through a user-questionnaire and in consultation with our stakeholders. The ideas and insights received in these responses have been central to these proposed enhancements of this service to make it better fit our customers' changing requirements. Implementing the full range of these improvements is not dependent on the extension to the Shopmobility Centre but is dependent on funding for a new or second-hand minibus with tail lift and having suitably qualified volunteer drivers. Unlike our current Ring & Ride vehicle this minibus will not operate a regular school contract, as the contractual time constraints would limit our ability to provide a full range of social activities and outings.

Social activities enable people who are often housebound or isolated to get out and about, making the most of their local environment. The activities we are proposing will ensure people are able to engage in activities that prevent or reduce low-level mental health problems such as depression and anxiety. Outdoor activities will make the most of the natural environment as well as opportunities to try new things and visit places they have never been before.

An additional advantage of befriending services is that we will be able to identify those who may be in need of support from statutory and other voluntary services but who are at risk of "falling through the net".

- **GO Out & About Club**
Trips will be open to all. Our aim will be to make it possible for our less mobile and more socially isolated clients to attend social gatherings (daytime & evening) and events and to encourage them to get out and about more to enhance their physical and mental health and well being.
- **GO Shopping & Prescription service**
Volunteers will provide a new shopping service for clients who become too frail or ill to travel.
- **GO Link**
This will provide a transport link between Housing Associations for combined social activities.
- **GO Help-at-Hand Home Visits.**
This development will cover a range of services from just calling in to check a client is all right in the morning, to regular house cleaning and other similar support activities as a charged service. These Help-at-Hand Home Visits will be available on a regular basis or for periods of recuperation, during which time normally easy tasks become difficult to carry out.

Shopmobility Service Development

- **Delivery & collection service**
To provide and promote a delivery service of wheelchairs & scooters
- **Extend the Shopmobility Centre opening hours**
Secure funding to open the Shopmobility Centre on Saturdays
- **Develop training packages for users who have their own scooters & wheelchairs**
Wheelchairs and mobility scooters are often sold without basic safety training being offered. Increasingly product manuals and safety instructions are only available on the Internet and are out of the reach of elderly or ill people who generally buy this equipment. This training could be offered to individuals and care organisations across the region. These training packages could constitute an additional income stream.