

Briefing for the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee on petition PE2177: Support and fund mobility services, lodged by Jordon Anderson

Brief overview of issues raised by the petition

The petitioner is calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to provide sustainable funding to organisations providing mobility equipment.

Reference is made to [Shopmobility Aberdeen](#) which has provided a range of services since 1992. The petitioner states that Aberdeen City Council provides funding but says that this funding alone is “insufficient to guarantee the service’s future”.

What is ShopMobility?

[ShopMobility UK](#) provides a nationwide network of centres which hire out mobility equipment such as:

- manual wheelchairs
- powered wheelchairs
- mobility scooters.

People can hire out the equipment to go shopping or visit local leisure facilities.

These services are available to anyone of any age (there may be restrictions for children using some equipment), whether their mobility issue is temporary or permanent.

Hire costs vary at each local Shopmobility Centre but they are typically very low or sometimes free.

There are ShopMobility outlets at locations throughout Scotland, often in shopping centres.

On the ShopMobility website it is possible to [search](#) for a centre, and Disability Information Scotland [lists other centres](#) in Scotland not available on that website.

How is ShopMobility funded?

ShopMobility UK is part of [Driving Mobility](#), which provides information, assessment and advice to people with mobility needs. Driving Mobility is supported by the Department for Transport in England, by the Welsh Government in Wales, by Disability Action in Northern Ireland, and funded by the [Motability Foundation](#) in Scotland.

The funding of ShopMobility in Scotland varies by location. It may come via local authorities, health boards, charitable donations and grants.

A grant is currently available for organisations to fund access to wheelchairs and mobility equipment - [Motability Foundation - Better Access to Wheelchairs and Mobility Aids](#) – the deadline is 15 December 2025.

Problems with funding

Over the years, there have been reports about ShopMobility centres having their funding cut or reduced by local authorities or health boards. Some examples are:

- [Shopmobility Highland - Mobile scooter service under threat after NHS board rejects funding](#) (STV News, 22 December 2024).
- [Shopmobility Moray - 'We might not exist by 2025': Shopmobility Moray's final plea to save charity](#) (Press and Journal, 19 October 2024). Now closed.
- Lothian Shopmobility - [Lothian Shopmobility charity to close after council scrap funding](#) (Edinburgh Evening News, 15 April 2019).

Scottish Parliament

'Shopmobility' schemes have been raised a limited number of times in the 26 years of the Scottish Parliament:

- One written question - [S2W-04518](#) refers to the funding of Highland Shopmobility in 2003.
- The [Official Report returned 16 references](#) to 'shopmobility' since the beginning of the Scottish Parliament. These have been in connection with the positive work of shopmobility schemes in local areas, or concerns about local funding.
- There have been [28 Motions](#) on ShopMobility, some of which congratulate a local 'shopmobility' service in their work as well as efforts to secure funding. There are some which express disappointment that funding has been removed.

What alternatives are there for individuals?

[Disability Information Scotland](#) provides a guide on how to access [Aids and Equipment](#) across Scotland.

The options available depend on an individual's needs and circumstances, and the type of aids and equipment that are required.

Some people may be able to obtain wheelchairs from their local NHS or council services, following an assessment. Each local area will have its own procedures.

Another option is to buy new or second-hand equipment.

Disability Information Scotland also list a range of [grants](#) that individuals can apply to assist with equipment.

Scottish Government

The Scottish Government does not directly fund ShopMobility schemes.

It has issued [guidance](#) on the responsibilities of NHS Scotland and Local Authorities, Integration Authorities, and their Housing and Education partners for the provision of equipment and adaptations (2023). It has also issued [Wheelchair provision - short-term loans: guidance](#) (23 March 2021). This is focused on people who need a wheelchair for a short period, following an assessment.

It previously had a policy in support of disabled people – [A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People: delivery plan](#). This ran from 2016 to 2021 and aimed to make equality of opportunity, access to services and independent living a reality for all disabled people in Scotland. A new [Disability Equality Plan](#) was published in June 2025. It has three priority areas:

- providing financial support for disabled households
- supporting disabled people's full inclusion and participation in their lives, communities, and Scotland
- improving mental health.

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8 August 2025

The purpose of this briefing is to provide a brief overview of issues raised by the petition. SPICe research specialists are not able to discuss the content of petition briefings with petitioners or other members of the public. However, if you have any comments on any petition briefing you can email us at spice@parliament.scot

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