



Where There's a Wheel There's A Way

Summer 2013

Dear Members,

This is the first of our newsletters to keep you up to date with our progress so far.

Our early months as a new charity have been filled with largely administrative jobs: getting a committee together, writing a constitution, setting up a bank account, applying for membership to the Association of Jersey Charities all of which have successfully been completed. Publicity has also been an important function and we now have a presence on Facebook; a dedicated phone and the website is a work in progress. Early in April we were lucky to have some of our original fundraisers at St Ouen's for a beach photo to accompany the press release printed in the community news section of the JEP on 12 April.

We have been busy networking and have attended the Charities Forum at the Town Hall and had a very productive time talking to other charities such as Maison des Landes, Driving for the Disabled, Shopmobility, the Stroke Association, Cheshire Homes, Age Concern, and Hospice to name but a few. Aside of this we have met with Jersey Tourism and Jersey Pearl who have both been very interested in what we are trying to do and have offered advice and support. Also, a couple of the Committee have attended seminars sponsored by the Association of Jersey Charities on running fundraising events and the power and influence of social networking.

With the wonderful support of Joleyn and Annie Baker, our first base for the beachchair will be at the Le Braye Café in St Ouen's Bay. We are enormously grateful to the Bakers for their help in getting a storage shed built beside their premises using funds raised by the Charity.

Not everything has run smoothly and we had an unexpected delay building the storage facility. Coincidentally the weather to date has not been great for strolling the beaches, however we know there are people itching to try the chair out and we hope the sun will arrive soon just as we are ready to run.

Members

We are delighted to announce a membership base of 61 persons. Members have been extremely generous and donated a sum of £860. Thank you.

We would like to be able to call on members help to support our twin goals for the year. The following are ways we would really appreciate some help:

- We have leaflets printed that we would like to distribute and posters to be placed in prominent places.
- We would appreciate help with fundraising, both with ideas and help at events.
- We would like to recruit a group of volunteers who can help with meeting and greeting users of the beachchairs and checking the beachchair in and out.

Please call Margaret or Suzie if you can help in any of these ways.

Also if you have any friends or acquaintances who would like to use the beachchair whether they feel a walk on the beach challenging in terms of mobility, respiratory issues or age, please call 07797 935 088 to check for availability.

We are pleased to introduce to you the

Committee



Sharon Gray is our **Vice Chair** and Barry Gray is our **Treasurer**.

Most of you will know that Sharon is our Founder and is suffering from Motor Neuron Disease. At a fundraising event in July 2012 and with the generous financial contributions from friends and family, Sharon bought a beachchair. She and Barry decided they would like to share this with other people who for reasons of mobility were not able to access the beach.

Chair - Margaret Le Herissier Tel: 873790

Margaret is now happily retired and spends a lot of time on the golf course (when it is not raining) and this is where she met Sharon a number of years ago. In her working life she managed a computer training unit.

She recently came off the Les Mielles Ladies Golf Club Committee and Sharon felt that her committee and managerial experience would be useful in helping establish and develop the BeachAbility Charity.

Secretary - Suzie MacLagan Tel: 857817

Suzie returned to her childhood island of Jersey 6 six years ago and works as a physiotherapist. Suzie is a beach lover and she became acutely aware that Jersey lacked adapted facilities that would help many of her patients onto the beach. Being introduced to Sharon and discovering a shared passion of improving access to our beautiful beaches for people with mobility impairment, the seeds of BeachAbility were sown.

Suzie tries to keep fit through yoga, gardening and cliff walking. Favourite past times are sunbathing at St Ouen's and swimming at Anne Port- if only it could be summer all year!

Publicity - Michelle Jeanne Tel: 736991

Michelle Jeanne works full time for local law firm Appleby. She specialises in marketing, public relations and events. She got involved in the charity through Sharon who is a close family friend.

In her spare time she enjoys horse riding, travelling, keeping fit and spending time with family.

Facilities - John McCourt. Tel: 853290

John and family have been friends with the Gray's since they first arrived in Jersey over twenty years ago with the children attending the same primary school. When Sharon asked John to join the set-up group for BeachAbility, he was delighted to accept and joined Margaret, Michelle and Suzie to support Sharon's idea and get it off the ground.

John retired having worked as Projects and Facilities Manager for the States of Jersey Police; previously self-employed running his own business. He enjoys walking reading and cycling and is a present member of the States Health and Safety at Work (Appeal Tribunal).

The Way Forward

By the end of June the beachchair will be housed at le Braye and ready for use.

Having heard the enthusiasm expressed by other charities to trial our chair, we will be focusing our time introducing their members to the chair and gaining feedback from their experience. The chair will also be available to individual private users.

Our twin goals for the current year are to raise awareness of BeachAbility in the community and to plan fundraising events.

We are hopeful that there are avenues we can explore which will bring in funds for additional beachchairs and in addition we will need to run fund raising activities for 'domestic' expenses such as printing and publicity, insurance etc.