

# If Anyone Can, Highfields Can!

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*and lots more ...*

## Challenging but productive – our journey to economic independence is strengthened!

Since gaining community governance status in December 2010, our:

1. Turnover has increased by 385%
2. Expenditure has increased by 374%
3. Staff team has increased by 65%
4. Over 106,000 users in 2012 - exceeded Leicester City Council's (LCC) 3rd year target!
5. Open to the public 7 days (83 hours) per week over 343 days per year
6. Provided 5000 activity sessions in 2012, averaging 21 people per session
7. Member of 4 successful, externally funded service consortiums
8. Highfields Centre's pioneering community cohesion work resulted in it championing 'Celebrating Diversity and Unity in the Community' long before it became common parlance in both local and national discourse and reflected in both its staffing and usage figures, with HCA staff comprising last year of 60% Asian, 26% African/Caribbean, 8% White and 6% Other and reflected in its people usage pattern, with 76% Asian, 14% African/Caribbean, 3% White and 7% Other
9. 91% of our users said HCA's services were excellent to good
10. 98% of our users said they would continue to use HCA's services
11. 97% of our users said they'd recommend our services to their friends, family, etc
12. Gained national accreditation through the achievement of the Social Enterprise Mark, Investors in People, Matrix, Advice Quality Standard and other national kite marks
13. Helped to host the Locality Convention in Leicester, with 600 delegates in attendance

Just a fraction of the above statistics would suggest a remarkable set of achievements to be celebrated and utilised as a benchmark for equivalent developments to be effected elsewhere in this city but as we now know, it wasn't a view shared by the city mayor!

*continued on page 2*



*Adult Certificate Presentation Evening (August 2014)*



97,372

*Number of Users of the  
Highfields Centre*

*page 6*

2,184

*People attended the fun  
packed Highfields Festival*

*page 3*

# Highfields Centre Receives Investor in People Accreditation

Staff and members of the Governing Body are tremendously proud after receiving approval for the Investors in People accreditation this year.

The Investors in People report highlights a number of key strengths and notes the difficult funding issues facing the Centre. It states:

*'The funding issues have still to be resolved satisfactorily; this continues to be a source of insecurity for you all. However, people are positive and upbeat about the possible outcome and making the Centre a beacon of good practice in the local area and in the country.'*

## Good Practice

Good practice is mentioned in many areas of the Centre's work. The Strategic Review Day is one such example that provided an opportunity for members of the Management Team and Governing Body to be involved in the review of the business plan and to contribute towards future strategy and key performance measures.

- ◆ A particular strength identified covers support for staff through a system of appraisals, supervision and informal meetings and discussions. Staff stated that they felt treated fairly and received feedback and regular communication frequently.
- ◆ Leadership and management at the Centre were identified as strengths. Members of the Management Team spoke with confidence when describing their roles, talking about a more pro-active approach for support in the community, understanding the changing market place, working in partnership with other organisations for greater effectiveness and acting as role models by demonstrating the values of the Centre.
- ◆ The management approach from the top is described as 'inspirational' and 'visionary', providing the management team with 'a unique support' and a 'clear vision'.
- ◆ A Balanced Scorecard provides a concise focus for key performance measures.
- ◆ Annual training day for all employees.
- ◆ Excellent team working.

## Investment in Learning and Development

Many good examples were noted to show how investment in learning and development helped to increase performance. These include:

- ◆ Specific training for the staff team to help them have a better understanding of the needs of specific groups, e.g Special Educational Needs and Elderly.
- ◆ Hosting visits at the Centre for delegates attending the national Locality Convention, with organised activities, using the many skills developed at the Centre.
- ◆ Achievement of the 'Social Enterprise Mark' award.
- ◆ Adding more value for 'start-up' businesses locally, by attending a wide range of related training and working in partnership with other organisations.
- ◆ Continuous improvements are considered to be a natural part of the daily work of the Centre.

The Centre will use the report as a basis to develop and enhance the work to improve quality that will benefit both staff and the local community in the delivery of services.



*continued from page 1*

Subsequent conversations have resulted in a £145,000 reduction in the Centre's funding contract this year, with a further £122,000 reduction next April. We had anticipated a reduction in our funding contracts but the level of the reductions being effected has meant us having to restructure our operation to ensure not only a continued and meaningful level of service provision (see page 6) but also, the Centre's ongoing viability. The understanding and support of our staff, service users and Governing Body has made this possible and a big thanks to you for the same!

Your support over the past few months has been as invaluable as your support over our 13 year journey to raise £5 million pounds, redevelop the old Centre and bring it under community governance and we'll look forward to receiving that ongoing support over the next phase of our Centre and our communities' development.

*Highfields Festival (June 2014)*



# Highfields Summer School

After the huge success of last year's pilot project which involved us working in partnership with Shenton Primary School, it was suggested that the Highfields Summer School should be an annual project. Hence, we offered all the local primary schools this year the opportunity to fund their children to attend the Highfields Summer School.

Shenton and Highfields Primary schools took full advantage of the offer and booked their children onto the programme. The project ran for 13 mornings in August, with each session consisting of one hour of either maths or English work and the second part of the morning involved the children in a range of creative activities (sports, arts and crafts, digital arts, music and video filming), all of which was under-pinned by English and Maths work.

The Summer School concluded with an enjoyable event at which the children were able to demonstrate their new found skills and their increased confidence in English and Maths to their parents.

## Children's comments:

**Fatima aged 6** "I felt happy, excited and good when I come to the summer school.

**Akesha aged 10** "I really enjoyed making the character jump in the digital arts group and making the sticky name labels in arts and crafts".

**Pinak and Rohan aged 8** "We really enjoyed playing cricket and we love sports activities"

**Amaan aged 8** "I had so much fun acting in the film group"

## Highfields Summer School 2014 - Recipients of the 100% Attendance Certificates



# HIGHFIELDS FESTIVAL: Celebrating Diversity and Unity in the Community!

The fourth consecutive Highfields Festival took place this year on Saturday 21st June. Although numbers were slightly down on last year, those attending had a wonderful day. Highfields Centre had taken the lead in pulling together various local agencies to put on this major Festival.

It was formally opened by Cllr Abdul Osman (Chair, LCC's Heritage, Culture, Leisure and Sports Scrutiny Commission) and also attended by several local councillors (Hanif Aqbandy, Dr Shofiqul Chowdhury, Mohammed Dawood and Lucy Chaplin).

The community fair with over 40 stalls and the Children's, Arts and Sports zones all proved to be major attractions, with the highlight being the music entertainment from the main outdoor stage during the day and the Celebration of Diversity and Unity Concert in

the evening in Highfields Centre's main hall. Headlining the Outdoor Show was Shola Ama, with scintillating support performances from Tanni, Durgesh Parmar, Dreamettes, EAVA FM and Red Stripe. Artists such as Sly and Dibbz, Arbazz & Faizan Arzbegi enthralled the evening audience and it featured the cream of Leicester's local young artists and the evening event was put on and stage managed by young people from Big Fish Little Fish and Active Youth.

H-CAN



HIGHFIELDS FESTIVAL 2014



H-CAN



## Services for Young People

From 1st September 2014, we will be delivering three new sessions for young people aged 12 – 19 years.

The following sessions will promote the personal and social development of young people through creative & recreational activities, discussions & debates, sports, arts and trips:

Monday 7.00pm – 9.00pm	Mixed Session
Wednesday 6.00pm – 8.00pm	Girls Only Session
Friday 6.30pm – 8.30pm	Mixed Session

For further information in relation to the above programmes, please contact Jay Patel at the Highfields Centre on 0116 2531053 or email [jay.patel@highfieldscentre.ac.uk](mailto:jay.patel@highfieldscentre.ac.uk)

## Talent Match Highfields

Talent Match Highfields is a 4 year project that will provide long term unemployed young people aged 18 – 24 years with the opportunity to enrol on a 12 week work placement in our sports, arts, catering, children and youth work departments.

Young people recruited onto our project will be able to access volunteering opportunities and specific training, both accredited and non-accredited which relate to their chosen area.

Young people can take part in sports and recreational activities through the Late Lounge sessions running every Friday night and access information, support and guidance via the Talent Match youth workers.

They will also be able to access one to one business/enterprise development and mentoring support to set themselves up in their own business or deliver their own community project/ peer education workshop.

Additional support will be provided from Active Youth, a local youth led organisation enabling not only the young people to benefit but also the local community and the area.

Once young people approach us or are referred to us, we will arrange an appointment at a convenient time for the young person to come in and have an informal chat about interests and aspirations to help the youth worker to create an action plan and identify the support that is needed for the young person to achieve their goals.



Arts activities at Summer School



# Highfields Our Place - Securing Advice for all!

Highfields Our Place has been successful in securing national and local support to proceed. Our Place aims to give local people more power over local services and budgets in our neighbourhoods, aligning these with all the other resources that the community can bring.

Communities and public service organisations will be supported to develop a plan and take control in the area to make sure that things work in the best way

for local people. Using the Our Place approach, we can influence how local services are designed, planned and delivered.

This is a time when there are major changes to the welfare system and reductions in funding for advice services. This has made it difficult for people to obtain free, impartial advice. Yet over £19 billion of income related welfare entitlement and tax credits are not claimed, including one million senior members in

UK society not claiming. And over 30% of UK children live in poverty, with this number set to rise over the next five years. There is perhaps £9 million of essential income related welfare entitlement and tax credit not claimed in the Highfields area alone.

Through Highfields Our Place, there is a commitment to ensure everyone can secure the free social welfare law advice that they need.

**The five key themes agreed by the Highfields Our Place include the following:**

- ◆ Improved Services for young people (those aged 11-24)
- ◆ Activities for elderly people
- ◆ Adult Learning (for those aged 18 and above),
- ◆ Welfare Benefits and Advice (for the whole community),
- ◆ Social interaction projects specifically for women from Racial Minority Communities.



## Step Up - Work Experience Offered to Young Unemployed

**In addressing the high level of youth unemployment, the Leicester to Work initiative was launched in 2013 aiming to create 400 new six month job opportunities for young people.**

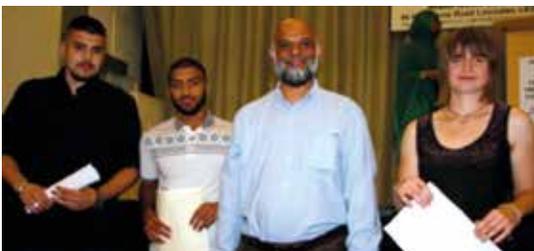
Highfields Community Association has been pro active in supporting the initiative and recruited 5 young people to gain work experience in a number of different roles. Two staff members were employed as Sports Workers, with a further two choosing to work as Catering Assistants and one staff was employed as a Community Development worker.

Team managers provided newly recruited staff with induction, support and training opportunities.

We were able to extend the contracts to eight months for each staff member following additional funds being secured.

Apart from the practical work experience and confidence these young people have developed, we have fully encouraged them to undertake the following skills development programmes: Emergency First Aid, Customer Service at Level 2, Arts Award, CV workshop and Developing Job Search Skills and Prince's Trust training around setting up in business.

In their 'exit' evaluation, the young people said they had developed their skills and particularly their own confidence. They will either be progressing on to new accredited learning or are taking steps towards setting up their own business or seeking employment.



## Success with Job Search

**Via her DWP Advisor, Client F signed up to the Highfields Multi Access Centre project when she was made redundant from Royal Mail.**

Through initial discussions and a one to one meeting with her H-MAC Personal Advisor, they discussed her education and work history as well as creating a plan of action to meet her goals and aspirations. Client F was keen to undertake training as she realised the importance of gaining the relevant qualifications in order to pursue her choice of career

Client F had worked for Royal Mail for a number of years but now wanted a career change. She wanted to work in a school environment during term-time. Client F had a good level of spoken and written English and was confident that given the opportunity, she would be able to work well within a new working environment.

Client F's Personal Adviser suggested she undertake a short Food Hygiene course as this would assist her to gain a recognised qualification and would provide her with the knowledge of working as a kitchen assistant. Client F enrolled onto the course offered locally by the Adult Learning service at Highfields Centre.

Client F took on that advice and completed her Food Hygiene course and upon completion, both client and her Personal Advisor started work on interview skills. When a vacancy was spotted, Client F with the help of her PA applied for the post.

Client F was successful in interview and will start work after the summer break at a local primary school.



## Highfields Food Bank - Helping to Ease Hardship

**The Highfields Food Bank operates from Highfields Centre and it provides basic emergency food items to anybody who:**

- ◆ Lives either in Spinney Hills Ward or in the Highfields area (bounded by London Road, Evington Road, East Park Road, St Saviours Road, Vulcan Road, Nedham Street and the Midland Mainline) and,
- ◆ Is experiencing immediate or urgent financial hardship due, for example, to a reduction in income caused by the impact of austerity measures or restructuring of welfare benefits (includes individuals placed on sanctions by Job Centre Plus).

**If you or someone that you know are experiencing financial hardship and live in the Highfields area, please contact Highfields Centre on tel: 0116 253 1053 to access help.**

Our staff will arrange a meeting with all clients and for those eligible, we will refer clients to the the next food bank session.

# Celebrating learners' successes at Adult Certificate Presentation Evening

We have been proudly celebrating our adult learners' successes for over twenty five years and this year's event was held on 1st August and attended by nearly 150 learners.

The chief guest at the event was Zahid Sheikh, Chief Executive of Clifton Packaging and a prominent member of the business community in Leicester.

Other guests included Dr Iris Lightfoote (Chief Executive Officer, The Race Equality Centre) and Furzana Khalifa (Chair, Highfields Community Association).

Zahid spoke of the challenges he and his family faced when they arrived in the UK in the 1970s. His family started a business in Highfields located on Hartington Road. The business grew and now he is in charge of a large business venture that has diversified into other areas. He spoke about the importance of education and how important it was for individuals to obtain qualifications in order that they can succeed at interviews in what has become an increasingly competitive labour market.

Iris Lightfoote commented on how HCA's motto of 'Enhancing lives, Empowering communities and Enterprise for one and all' was aptly reflected in the range of achievements being celebrated at the Presentation event.

Furzana Khalifa spoke of her own professional and personal development that started at Highfields Centre. She quoted Nelson Mandela who once said 'Education is the most powerful weapon which can be used to change the world.'

Furzana added: 'Highfields Centre has been providing Adult Learning for over 30 years. It is not just about providing learning opportunities, but also opening doors for people to embark on their developmental journey - journeys that not only change individuals' lives, but make a positive contribution to the lives of others.'

The 2014 Student of the Year Award was presented to Urooj Chughtai who has undertaken a number of courses successfully this year. She has shown tremendous commitment and dedication over the last year and on a range of criteria, she had scored high marks to warrant this year's award.

We also recognized the achievements of our young Step Up employees who worked at Highfields Centre over eight months to gain valuable work experiences. Laura Bateman, Yahya Waka and Rajeev Bhogal were in attendance to collect their certificates for Customer Service, Food Safety, First Aid and Arts Award.

For the second consecutive year, we presented the 2014 Business Awards, with the New Business of the Year Award being presented to Mahomed Tayob from J & J Carpets Ltd and Sandra Oliveira collecting the Creative Business Start Up of the Year Award on behalf of Sandora Digital Kreations Ltd.



## Another business success!

Mahomed Tayob was happily accepted by United Carpets to buy one of their franchises. He says 'this wouldn't be possible without Alfred Bawak's help from the Highfields Centre.'

Mr Tayob started off selling carpets, flooring and furniture and has had over five years' experience. He loved the industry and he loved what he did but he wanted to achieve something more and that he knew he was capable of. He always had a keen interest in managing his own business and while looking for a job, came across a franchise resale of United Carpets. Mr Tayob says "This came as an opportunity for me as I was already part of the company working as a sales advisor, so I knew everything about the company."

He wanted to approach United Carpets but needed some guidance. This is where the business support services of Highfields Centre proved very helpful.

Alfred helped Mr Tayob by advising and encouraging him what the best solution would be in order to purchase his business, such as checking business accounts and assessing whether or not it was a profitable business to go into. He further helped Mr Tayob prepare a business plan, cash flow forecasts and was a part of every decision that Mr Tayob made.

Mohamed says "I found Alfred very helpful, he went out of his way to help me and guided me every step of the way, despite times when he was very busy, he would always attend my calls and would always see me at short notice."

Mr Tayob got the funding required and was accepted by United Carpets to buy one of their franchises. He says 'this wouldn't have been possible without Alfred's help.'



## Highfields Business Association launched!

On the back of our delivery of business support in the Spinney Hills, Coleman and Charnwood wards, the Highfields Business Association (H-BA) was launched in January this year. Over a hundred businesses attended the launch and our local MP, Jon Ashworth was the chief guest speaker on that evening.

### The Association aims to:

- Promote the benefits of local businesses based in the Greater Highfields area of Leicester
- Provide a networking opportunity for businesses to share experiences, do business together and peer learning.
- Raise issues faced by local businesses and make representations at a local and national level.

Contact us on 0116 253 1053 to find out more and don't miss out on this great business development opportunity.



## Free Work Club for the Unemployed

Our weekly work club sessions have been designed to help individuals to identify employment opportunities, developing their CVs, making important contacts with employers, providing access to the internet to look for jobs and to help clients with job application forms.

Our staff can also offer you advice and information on relevant skills and training opportunities that will enhance your prospects of finding suitable employment.

Please come along to our Work Club session on Tuesday afternoons between 1:00 – 3:00pm at Highfields Centre. Call : 0116 253 1053 for further information.

## Elders' Group

The sports team development of the Elders' Group is going from strength to strength. Our clientele has doubled from 25 to 65 members. They enjoy their weekly gym sessions, sports activities and especially, their time on the pool machine and computers! Highfields Centre is putting on a sea-side trip in August for this Group and some places were also made available for other Centre users.



Elders' Group working out in the gym

## Sports news

- ◆ The sports team will be putting on their 5th Under 18's annual football tournament in October 2014.
- ◆ New gym times from 1st September (please contact Highfields Centre)
- ◆ Leicester City Football Club will be setting up a satellite football club at HC, starting in September 2014.
- ◆ Football for 5 to 8 year olds : Saturday 9.00am to 10.00am
- ◆ Football for 9 to 12 year olds : Saturday 10.00am to 11.30am



## Highfields Centre – 2013 User Profile

The Centre's ethos of serving all sections of the local community is brilliantly supported by the 2013 user statistics, with the key findings as follows:

Male = 47% Female = 53%

Asian = 76%; African/Caribbean = 14%; White = 3%; Other = 7%

Our total usage of 97372 was just under our LCC contractual target of 100,000 users, with HCA managed services achieving 112% usage and LCC managed services achieving only 50% usage!

		HCA Managed Services	LCC Managed Services	Total	%
Number of Sessions		3632	1551	5183	19 people / session
Participant Number		78518	18854	97372	100
Participant Gender	Male	39136	6644	45780	47
	Female	39382	12210	51592	53
Participant Ethnicity	Asian	60024	14021	74045	76
	Afr/AC	11563	2002	13565	14
	White	2293	807	3100	3
	Other	4638	2024	6662	7
Volunteer Number		91	11	102	100
Volunteer Gender	Male	41	5	46	45
	Female	50	6	56	55
Volunteer Ethnicity	Asian	64	6	70	68
	Afr/AC	12	1	13	13
	White	11	2	13	13
	Other	4	2	6	6
Staff Number	FT	7	2	9	13
	PT	28	34	62	87
Staff Gender	Male	22	4	26	37
	Female	13	32	45	63
Staff Ethnicity	Asian	21	19	40	56
	Afr/AC	9	1	10	14
	White	3	13	16	23
	Other	2	3	5	7

## Changes to the Centre's Opening/Closing Hours

As per the front page of this H-CAN, we have had to make some difficult decisions at the Centre, including changes to our opening/closing times from 1st September 2014.

We will be reducing our core opening hours and increasing the number of closure days throughout the year (from 1st January 2015). We have also revised our pricing schedule to reflect a minor price increase (the first in 4 years) and the scale of charges for core and non-core hours will come into effect from 1st September 2014.

The following table outlines the revised core opening times from 1st September 2014:

Monday & Wednesday - 8.45am to 10.00pm

Tuesday & Thursday - 8.45am to 6.00pm

Friday - 8.45am to 1.00pm & 6.00pm to 11.00pm

Saturday & Sunday - 9.00am to 2.00pm

For all venue hire enquiries, please contact the Centre directly on 0116 253 1053 or speak to Pat Gardner (Head of Community Services) and we will make every effort to accommodate your request.

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Highfields Community Association

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