

If anyone can ~ Highfields can!

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Children presented with Certificates on 26th August 2004 at **Celebration of Diversity & Unity in the Community**



Annual Certificate Presentation Evening 19th August 2004

Campaign Edition

September 2004

H-CAN Campaign Edition brings you news about the fight to keep services and staff of Highfields Youth & Community Centre and more....

- Massive support for Campaign confirmed by **HUC** research carried out in August 2004.
- HYCC and Priya are models of good practice says **New Philanthropy Capital** research.
- Centre of Excellence goes from strength to strength, celebrated **10th Annual Certificate Presentation Evening**, **7th Annual Celebration of Diversity & Unity in the Community**, **Play-Group achieves GOOD care standard from Ofsted for 2nd time running**, **Information & Advice Services accredited by CLS and OISC**, **Overseas Qualification Development Programme accredited by Matrix**

We are proud to use HYCC say three generations of a family . One of many families !!

389 questionnaires returned for HUC research. Thank you very much.

Over 90% want Highfields Community Association to manage the centre's services

Over 95% want HYCC to be managed by those who developed it

Don't listen to rumours, crooked and twisted lies lets all build on researched facts!!

Independent researcher shocked!!!

Friday, 20 August 2004

Dear Priya,

I wanted to express my shock at hearing recently that your position and the position of other in Highfields Youth and Community Centre (HYCC) was under threat.

Our almost complete six-month independent research project into organisations such as HYCC (*Side by side: Young people in divided communities*) is about to conclude that they are essential to supporting communities and **is about to use you and HYCC as examples of good practice.**

David Boyle.

Senior Research Analyst



HCA held a public meeting on 2nd July 2004 to discuss the future of Highfields Community Centre.

Councillors Karim, Panchbhaya, and Kitterick also attended.

Meeting agreed unanimously to implement Timiti Report

recommendations and remove HYCC from City Council's

Divisional Organisational Review.

[The facts & key developments read on..](#)

Highfields Community Association News

c/o Highfields Youth & Community Centre, 96 Melbourne Road, Leicester LE2 0DS
Editor-in-Chief Matt Follett 0774 345 10898

Sign the petition. Let Councillors know what you think. Write to the Leicester Mercury. Join us Fight for what's right!!

Over 20 years of
Excellent Staff &
Quality Services



Friday, 20 August 2004

Dear Priya,

I wanted to express my shock at hearing recently that your position and the position of other in Highfields Youth and Community Centre (HYCC) was under threat. Our almost complete six-month **independent research project into organisations** such as HYCC (*Side by side: Young people in divided communities*) is about to conclude that they are essential to supporting communities and is about to use **you and HYCC as examples of good practice.**

The time we spent with you during the research was incredibly valuable. **Not only did we see a strong, respected and immensely useful organisation and its workings.** You were also able to teach us much about the nature of multi-ethnic communities and much about how organisations should and can go about supporting and encouraging communities such as Highfields. Additional research with practitioners, academics and policy makers has lead us to conclude that the following are essential aspects of supporting communities such as Highfields (and **we conclude from our analysis of HYCC that you are doing so to a very high quality!**):

Education and training is clearly important in giving people life chances, but is additionally important in Highfields in preventing

inequality, which could otherwise fuel community divisions in areas such as Leicester. Interventions with an economic / educational component, such as HYCC can therefore have a significant impact on social cohesion.

Shared spaces and experiences for young people are vital for encouraging understanding of each other and of others. In areas such as Highfields, it is essential that the community has strong organisations able to allow the community to access shared spaces. Again, we feel that **the impact of a lack of This interaction will be felt across the whole of Leicester, not just in Highfields.**

Strong, trusted community organisations are the final thing we identified that is of interest. Again we concluded from our research that these were essential if communities were to strive and if inequalities were to be overcome or prevented. **Again, HYCC is a great example and in particular your strong leadership and your position of trust within the communities of Highfields is an essential part of HYCC's strength.**

In summary, **we believe a strong HYCC with you in place as its manager is essential to Highfields and – in respect of supporting Highfields' communities, overcoming inequality and offering shared spaces and experiences – essential to Leicester.**

We were hoping that one outcome of our research project would be that we were able to encourage donors and grant-makers to invest in Leicester to grow and expand organizations such as HYCC. It is sad that we might well instead see those organisations lose ground. If there is any way I can help to communicate these and other findings from our research to Leicester Council or other people in a position to fund HYCC, please don't hesitate to let me know.

Thanks,

David Boyle
Senior Research Analyst



Student of the Year Award.
Congratulations!
10th Annual Certificate
Presentation Evening

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Grandmother Elba with Connie and David parents of Rachel.
"We're proud to use Highfields Youth and Community Centre because its services have helped to educate two generations and is working with the third! Rachel is a member of the Youth Council. HYCC was fund-raised for and built by local residents long before County and now City Council got involved. It is a multi-cultural centre where we can mix with all cultures, nationalities and religions.
As users and local residents we support HUC!!"

H-CAN
Sept 2004

When spider webs unite, they can tie up a lion
Proverb

Page
2

Over 20 years of
Excellent Staff &
Quality Services



HIGHFIELDS USERS CAMPAIGN (HUC) - OPINION POLL - August 2004

Users and local residents from all parts of Highfields returned **389** questionnaires. Thank you very much. As you will note 12 out of 389 had prior consultation with Leicester City Council. Their views and answers have also been analysed to provide a full overview.

12 respondents had prior consultation with LCC

	% Y	% N	% Void		% Y	% N	% Void
In 2001 Leicester City Council agreed that the Centre's services could be managed by Highfields Community Association. 1. Do you believe that the City Council should honour this agreement?	94.1	3.6	2.3		83.3	8.3	8.3
The City Council have decided, independently, to change the Management, staff and function of Highfields Youth & Community Centre. 2i. Do you believe that the Highfields community should have been given a say about this decision?	97.9	0.5	1.5				
2ii. Were you consulted about this decision	3.1	90.7	6.2				
3. Do you believe that Highfields Youth & Community Centre should: a. Continue to provide services for all people in Highfields? or b. Prioritise services for a particular community in Highfields	96.9 1.3	A B			83.3 8.3	A B	
4. Do you believe that HYCC should: a. Provide local services that local people said they want? or Provide services that the City Council's Education Department have prioritised?	96.1 1.5	A B			83.3 16.7	A B	
5. Do you believe that HYCC should: a. Concentrate on providing education services? or b. Provide a broad range of educational, care and advice services	3.3 94.3	A B			16.7 83.3	A B	
6. Do you believe that HYCC should: Continue to be managed by the staff and volunteers who have developed it so far? or b. Be given to a new team of City Council officers to run?	96.9 1.0	A B			91.7 0	A B	
7. Do you believe that the activities at HYCC should: a. Be run by a team that works specifically at this centre? or b. Be run by a team of area workers, with wide geographic responsibilities?	94.1 3.6	A B			66.7 25.0	A B	



LCC / LLCDS	HCA / HYCC
<p>1. LCC has built a new £5million centre in Highfields</p>	<p>1. Following the success of HCA/HYCC's initial funding application in December 1996, LCC put up a series of silly and unnecessary obstacles. Overcoming this resulted in:- The project completion date being put back from Sept 1999 to July 2004. An increase in the project's construction costs from £2.3m to £4.3million The loss of £134,000 grant from Community Fund for 2 sports development workers Successfully increasing the project's capital funding to £4.3million from: - Sport England Lottery Fund = £2million - Leicestershire LSC = £1million - EMDA/SRB 2 = £500,000 - GOEM/EU02 = £500,000 (+ £311,000 revenue) - LCC = £300,000 LCC initially stated that they would charge 15% professional fees (as opposed to County Council's 7%) and eventually compromising on 11.8% fees (approx £405,000)</p>
<p>2. LCC responsible for the project's construction</p>	<p>2. Yes, but- May 2001 Cabinet decision to set up a joint management approach between HCA and LCC to the implementation of the project Since 9/3/04, no meetings held of the HYCC Project Team (LCC officers and HYCC staffreps) Since 25/6/04, no meetings held of the HYCC Project Board (LCC officers, HYCC staff and HCA reps) – minutes of that meeting not yet provided. Additional £180,000 capital funding put at risk due to incomplete and delayed grant monitoring returns from LCC</p>
<p>3. DOR implementation at HYCC has a higher priority / precedence than the HYCC Review.</p>	<p>3. No evidence has been presented and no rationale provided for LCC / LLCDS ignoring the May 2001 Cabinet mandate.</p>
<p>4. DOR staffing changes are of a consultative/ voluntaristic nature and no HYCC staff required / forced to move out.</p>	<p>4a. HYCC Adult Community Learning Tutor informed by LLCDS that her new post is at New Parks Community Centre and that AN Other had been appointed to HYCC. 4b. HYCC Youth Tutor applied for Senior Youth Worker post based at HYCC (in line with previous discussions and agreement) but post-interview, Youth Tutor informed by LLCDS that post will now no longer be based at HYCC!</p>
<p>5. Community management at HYCC (cf Premises Review) with LCC/ LLCDS retaining ownership of HYCC and direct management responsibility and functions for 'core' LLCDS services (viz. early years, youth work and adult learning).</p>	<p>5. This is wholly different from LLCDS' acceptance and support at 20/4/04 HYCC Project Board meeting for Timiti's recommendation of Phase 4 community governance model, viz. 'inter-dependence'.</p>

Continued page 5



6. Exempting HYCC staff from DOR not possible due to LLCDS' over-riding duty of treating all LLCDS staff equitably.

6. Precedent for exemption has been already set in relation to Leicester Adult Education College staff, with LLCDS's justification that this is due to the LAEC having a delegated scheme of management. Similar exemption for HYCC staff possible on the basis of the May 2001 Cabinet mandate.

7. Exempting HYCC staff from DOR will preclude their 'benefiting' from the DOR posts.

7. All HYCC staff have repeatedly stated their support for the Timiti's recommendation of community governance and those DOR banded HYCC staff have written to their respective unions (viz. Natfhe and Unison) to request their formal support for being exempted from the DOR.

8. HYCC Project Board's terms of reference were restricted to over-seeing the physical construction of the new centre.

8. Based on Clause 12 of the May 2001 Cabinet mandate, the HYCC Project Board was set up to oversee the construction and development of the new centre, its future services and the review of its future lay and professional management (as evidenced by the Project Board minutes).

9. No implications arising from DOR staffing decisions on the future viability of the new HYCC

9. The break up of a winning, experienced, knowledgeable and supportive staff team can, at best, hinder and delay the realisation of the full potential of the new centre and at worst, result in loss/ clawback of funding, conflict and the creation of an under-used and mismanaged 'white elephant'.

10. The deletion of the Advice Work post is linked to the Leicestershire Learning Skills Council's grant to the LCC not containing any element of guidance for adult learners.

10. Funding of this post has never ever been linked to LSC monies nor to provision of guidance for adult learners. Rather, the post has been mainstreamed since late 80's for the provision of a range of generalist advice (e.g. welfare rights, housing, employment, immigration and nationality, etc) for a range of clients.

N O T G N I N N O D H C F M E
 S S O R C Y O T F L O O A E N
 E G G I N T W N G R W Z I A O
 K I B H I D L Z Y P E J R R T
 K R B A P M K N E A T N F L S
 X E O X T Y Y H Y U I O I B D
 C F E C N J W D C K C T E M I
 S D L E I F H G I H H X L G A
 D D Y B M C N M D E B A D C M
 N O T G N I T R A H O L O U Y
 E U K E N M N D C X U H P K P
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 D Z S F A N B S A K R A P M P
 L I Z M L O P S A T N E K M F
 D S X N T K H C X M Q X L J U

Word Search
 by **Abubakr Mohammed (12)**
[Highfields Street and Roads](#)

Ashbourne
 Buxton
 Cork
 Diseworth
 Donnington
 Duffield
 Earl
 East
 Egginton
 Fairfield
 Guthlaxton
 Hartington
 Highfields
 Howe
 Kent
 Maidstone
 Matlock
 Maynard
 Oxendon
 Park
 Peters
 Saviours
 Saxby
 Tichbourne
 Twycross
 Vulcan



Over 130 people attended this second public meeting despite heavy rain! Priya Thamoheram "stitched up". Other members of staff facing uncertainty. Services cut and to be radically re-defined narrowly. That was the background to the start of the meeting. Some speeches which increased our understanding included...

Mr Haji (representing Somali users) We are committed and in full agreement with



(HUC) Campaign today. Our experience, in the relatively short time we've been in Leicester, shows that this centre is one of the few places my community can access services. Closing these services is not an option, it's a disaster!

Having worked across the road, I've known this centre for some time, the people who are running this centre are doing an excellent job.

The council must have some other motive. These policies are bad - what they do is create conflict, create tension and they're going against every objective and aim that the council claims they are doing and when you dismantle or reconfigure (as they like to say it) something that's taken 20 years to put together, I don't see the sense of that. When you're at a time of reaping the fruits of your labour, to come and throw it all about in the name of modernisation or efficiency, it doesn't make sense. You build on what you have, you don't destroy it. We're of the same objective, same aims and with you in the struggle right up to the end.

Russ Escritt (NATFHE)

I work for NATFHE, one of the unions that represent a lot of the staff working in lifelong learning. Our members in Leicester have been extremely proud to have worked in a service that was a model around the country, a service that was progressive: this Council is destroying all of that, its wrecking the service - many of our members are taking voluntary redundancy because

they can't stomach the thought of working in the service afterwards, people who've given their whole working lives being reduced to that.

From the start, we said the council was breaking the Race Relations Amendment Act and the Council did not do an assessment of the impact on users and staff of this policy change - they did it half heartedly half way through - we've referred them to the Commission for Racial Equality asking them to take action against the council: we said it would lead to a differential and discriminatory effect on black staff, we've been proved right - of the 4 people at Priya's level of service who have not got a new job in the service, 3 are of black and minority ethnic origins, that's appalling - what the authority are doing to the staff is absolutely disgraceful, people being forced to move from places where they've given great chunks of their working lives to and being told that they have to move for no other reason than that 'would help refresh the service' - that's a load of nonsense, no evidence given to back up or support it, no clear transparent criteria as to who gets moved and why - its just at the whim of senior council officers.



All communities come together

In the case of Priya, I know there is another argument that you are all quite well aware of and that's there is an apparent commitment from the authority that there should be a new Head of Centre post to manage this centre. By issuing a redundancy notice before that has happened, I think its part of a campaign to stitch him up and make sure he's not able to work here anymore. I've heard Lib Dem councillors in this city saying 'its dreadful what's going on, we don't like it but we can't do anything about it because we've given all these powers to the senior officers but I've got one question for them -

WHO'S RUNNING THIS COUNCIL?



We all want answers to key questions

Paul Henderson (Defend Our Community Services) DOCS; Secretary, HCA; L& DTUC. HYCC has to be taken out of the DOR -its a special case but so does every other centre in Leicester should be taken out of DOR. What we're facing are totally bankrupt policies from the city council - many of the council officials have been working to destroy centres like this for a long time before the Liberal Democrats were on the scene, city officials have been working behind the scene to attack this centre for years. We've been under attack for the last 20 years in one form or another.

Chris Williams (Leicester Social Forum) - organisation representing political parties, political campaigning groups and community groups from across the whole of Leicester. We've met this week, discussed this issue and agreed we're going to give it our 100% support to the struggle of everyone who's used this centre, everyone in this room, everyone who's ever going to use this centre is to keep its independence, stop the city council doing a smash and grab raid on these facilities, that other people have paid for; so, victory to Highfields Users Campaign!



Zeba Saudagar's (13) poem hit home, final line:

This centre, is for fun and education its also for life...

HUC Public Meeting 3rd Sept 6pm Councillors & Senior Officers invited.



New Highfields Centre * (formerly HYCC) – Chronology of Key Developments

(*The name of the new centre was agreed by the HYCC Project Board on 1.3.04 but not yet confirmed by Leicester City Council's Director of Education)

Dec 1996 Leicestershire County Council's bid (on behalf of HCA) submitted to Sport England.

Oct 1997 In principle award from Sport England.

6.4.00 Leicester City Council's Education Committee supported project in principle.

21.5.02 Leicester City Council's Cabinet approved full/reduced scheme (subject to confirmation of additional external funding) and that:

Approval be given for the establishment of a joint management review by HCA and officers of the Council to prepare recommendations for the lay and professional management of the Centre
The Director of Education submit a report following the management review setting out proposals for the strategic plan for the centre, the professional leadership of the expanded centre and the arrangements for engagement of the local community in the management of the centre.

8.4.02 LCC Cabinet agreed to confirm acceptance of Sports Lottery funding – agreeing that such acceptance meant that the Council would meet the revenue consequences of the Lottery funded project including any deficits.
change of signatory from HCA to LCC be approved

18.4.02 first meeting of HYCC Project Board (PB)

August 2002 demolition of part - HYCC commenced

15.10.02 4 way meeting with John Crookes, Shelagh Rumbelow, Adam Edwards and Priya Thamoheram to consider effecting management review

13.11.02 Launch of commencement of HYCC Project

13.6.03 Timiti Consultancy (TC) appointed by LLCDS to conduct management review

Sept 03 TC commenced consultancy

Dec 03 TC presented draft report to

HYCC PB

Jan 04 TC presented final report to LCC & HCA

1.3.04 TC report accepted by HYCC PB and passed on to LLCDS Division, with a view to report to Cabinet and Scrutiny from Director of Education

20.4.04 LLCDS Division's agreement to TC's recommendations but effected in a shorter period (eg. 6 months) and that the DOR and its relationship to HYCC Review would need to be managed carefully (including temporary Head of Centre post) with a view to ring-fencing HYCC staff and that this may be possible under the May 2001 Cabinet mandate.

30.4.04 at re-convened PB meeting, LLCDS view that all substantial HYCC staff would have to secure their permanent positions in the DOR and then temporary opportunities would be advertised internally for the Centre. HCA response to be communicated to next PB meeting.

17.5.04 in view of late postponement of PB meeting, HCA views communicated in letter to Keith Murdoch (KM – Head of Community Services).

30.5.04 KM's reply letter, reiterated position 30.04 04 above.

7.6.04 at PB meeting, LLCDS position remained same, in spite of HCA's serious concerns about viability and legality of proposed arrangements.

21.6.04 HCA's letter to John Crookes (JC-Service Director, LLCDS).

24.6.04 JC's reply letter.

25.6.04 at PB meeting, KM unable to provide definitive information about DOR posts at HYCC or time-scale, criteria and process for recruiting temporary HYCC Head of Centre post; Also, KM unable to confirm LLCDS budget for new centre or the centre's new name

30.6.04 HCA letter to Cllr. Suleman (Cabinet Lead, Education and Lifelong Learning) suggesting a 4 point action plan.

2.7.04 HCA Open Meeting (with

approximately 100 people – users, staff, Management Committee and four local councillors) unanimously endorsed 4 point Action Plan.

3.7.04 Joint Staff and Management Committee Training Day meeting with Cllr. Suleman; HCA reiterated urgency for implementing 4 point Action Plan.

20.7.04 HCA representatives meeting with Cllrs Suleman & Panchbhaya & John Crookes where LLCDS distortions and myths are identified but councillors & JC did not agree to impose a moratorium on all DOR related HYCC staffing issues until a re-constituted Project Board could agree the future staffing arrangements.

4.8.04 By this date, not only have some key HYCC staff been informed by LLCDS that their new posts will be in New Parks (Adult Tutor) & Northfields (Youth Tutor) but others informed that their posts were being deleted (Information and Advice Tutors) and culminating in a 3 month redundancy notice for the Community Learning Manager.

13.8.04 Highfields Users Campaign (HUC) hold first public meeting with over 80 people in attendance.

17.8.04 Leicester Mercury article in which Cllr Suleman states that "a delay on the Review has been agreed for HYCC until further discussions have taken place".

20.8.04 HUC hold second public meeting with over 130 people in attendance who are astonished to hear that HYCC staff are still being required to comply with DOR related interviews and return of early retirement form.



Hopefully LCC will stop moving the goal-posts!!!



Independent research, HUC research and what local residents say matters. The council should be proud and celebrate such an excellent centre and staff team.



7th Annual Diversity & Unity in the Community celebration. Where else do all sections of the community join to celebrate each other and their neighbourhoods?

In just 2 weeks, 389 questionnaires were completed by HYCC users and local residents. Amongst the striking findings, were the following:

Nearly 91% of respondents had not been consulted by the City Council about their decision regarding the future management, staffing, and function of HYCC.

98% of respondents said that Highfields residents should have been given a say about the council's decisions about HYCC.

97% of respondents said that HYCC should continue to provide services for all people in Highfields, with only 1% saying that it should prioritise services for a particular community.

96% agreed that HYCC should provide local services that local people said that they want, less than 2% agreeing that HYCC should provide services that the city council's Education Department has prioritised.

Over 94% agreed that HYCC should provide a broad range of educational, care and advice services, with only 3% agreeing that it should concentrate on educational services.

97% agreed that HYCC should continue to be managed by the staff and volunteers who have developed it so far, with just 1% agreeing that it should be run by a new team of city council officers.

94% agreed that HYCC should be run by a team that works specifically at HYCC with under 4% agreeing that it should be run by a team of area workers.

246 people registered at the event. The breakdown is as follows. Ethnic monitoring is according to peoples own classifications.

Males-121 Females-125

AGES

0-10 yrs- 46 11-25yrs- 82

26-40 yrs- 56 40+ 15

NOT STATED- 47

Own Classification

Black - 13 British - 2 White- 8

European- 1 Dual heritage/Multi- 9

2 Caribbean/white/Indian

1Ghaanian/Indian

1 Indian/middle eastern

1 Caribbean/Indian

4 Caribbean/white Pakistani- 4

Somali-9 Bengali- 4 Moroccan-1

Maltese-1 African-3 Black British-2

West Indian /Afro Caribbean-30

Asian-11 East African Asian-1

Afro American-1 White Irish-1

Black African-1 Indian-121

Not stated-13

61 of these people registered are non-Highfields residents. These figures do not include staff and volunteers.

Thanks to HYCC for giving young people a chance to show their talent and abilities, giving them self-confidence, respect and widening their understanding about community cohesion.

Interview with Samira Admani

(following the public meeting held on 20th August 2004)

How long have you been using the centre?

I have used the centre for over 20 years; I attended as a youth in the 80's. In the 90's my own children have

attended and my youngest child will be attending playgroup. I have used the advice sessions, attended social events, exhibitions, meetings, worked as cover staff, play-schemes, fun days, attended weddings, keep fit, sports sessions, made friends and contacts, used the crèche facility and I gained my teaching and first aid certificate at HYCC.

There was a public meeting today and a gentleman stood up and made a statement, he said he was excluded from the centre and that he was not getting any information about what the centre has to offer, what are your thoughts about that?

Considering the gentleman and I are from the same community and share the same culture, religion, colour and age group, it is obvious that the issue is not exclusion but access. If he chooses not to find out what's going on or what is available or what the centre can do for him then I believe that's a matter of choice. I am angry that opinions of people like him can be used as ammunition by councillors and city council to highlight a community in dispute as opposed to unity.

It seems you feel very strongly about the gentleman's comments, after hearing what he had to say what would you as a member of the community say to him and people like him?

I've since pointed out to the gentleman what was available and that the existing or past programmes of activities would have offered something for every section/member of his community. I also pointed out that if something was not available, that they would like to see or take part in then the centre staff would certainly see what they could do to accommodate these requests. I don't want to see divide-and-rule tactics used here again. Anyway it was good to see such a turn out, I am 100% behind the campaign and pledge my full support to Priya and our centre staff.



Young People at Diversity & Unity in the Community celebration.

**HUC Public Meeting
3rd Sept 6pm**

