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Nearly three years on and our journey to economic independence is still going strong!

Our achievement of an independent Highfields Centre in December 2010 coincided with the general economic downturn in the British economy and the subsequent severe cutbacks in both national and local government expenditure.

Although this has proved very challenging, we are delighted that our first three years of trading have proved remarkably successful and we have not only managed to maintain our valued services but also, to identify new service needs and funding to provide the required service.

Whilst the implementation of the City Council's decision to seek external agencies to provide some of its current children and young people's services has been delayed, we've continued to develop our services to respond to the worsening economic climate and its detrimental impact on an already disadvantaged community.

A key to this service development has been our readiness to work with other city-based agencies to draw down external funding. This has already resulted in a new and much needed Business Advice service, as well as a soon to be established Talent Match service for young people aged 18 to 24 years who are furthest away from employment and the appointment of an Advice development worker to strengthen access to advice services across the eastern half of the city – an equivalent post for the western half will be based elsewhere.

However, there have also been some setbacks, with the Council's decision to end its funding for the long established and valued After School Care service being the major victim but the resounding success of our just completed 4 week Summer School will have hopefully laid the necessary foundations for a closer and more productive partnership with local schools.

continued on page 2



Highfields Summer School (July 2013)



Scan the QR Code

& join us online

106,458

Number of Users of the
Highfields Centre

page 4

2,756

People attended the fun
packed Highfields Festival

page 2

continued from page 1

As we move forward to the renewal negotiation of our existing city council contract, we are confident they will recognise both our outstanding successes over the previous three years and how we have laid the necessary foundations to not only meet the many challenges ahead but also, to continue providing the leadership for the area's regeneration, as exemplified by the Highfields Area Plan and the Highfields Festival.

We look forward to working with (and for) you, your families and our communities and we hope you will avail yourself of our Centre's varied developmental opportunities over the next year.



If Anyone Can, Highfields Can!

Third Annual HIGHFIELDS FESTIVAL: a Resounding Success!



For the third consecutive year, the Highfields Festival took place on Saturday 29th June between 10am and 8pm.

Over 2,700 people attended a fun packed Festival which was much bigger and better than last year. Highfields Centre had taken the lead in pulling together fifteen different partner agencies from across the area to put on this major festival. Local agencies involved with Highfields Centre in planning and putting on this year's event included St Peter's Community Centre, Active Youth, Uplands Junior School, Leicester Print Shop, Highfields Library, Leicester City

Council, Highfields Multi-Access Centre, TREC and many others.

The Festival was formally opened by the Leicester South MP

Jon Ashworth and other local dignitaries attending included the Lord Mayor (Cllr Mustafa Kamal) and several local councillors (Haniif Aqbyan, Dr Shofiqul Chowdhury, Mohammed Dawood, Lucy Chaplin, Patrick Kitterick, Baljit Singh and Ted Cassidy).

The community fair with over 60 stalls and the Children's, Arts, Sports and Elders' 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 Musical Youth, with scintillating support performances from Tanni, Counter Action, Durgesh Parmar, Goldie, Dreamettes, EAVA FM and Red Stripe. Artists such as Sly and Dibbz, Arbazz & Bossman enthralled the evening audience and it featured the cream of Leicester's local young artists and this event was put on and stage managed by young people from Big Fish Little Fish and Active Youth.

SOME COMMENTS FROM THIS YEAR'S FESTIVAL:

- 'It's been fantastic, just can't believe we've been able to get all the different communities together in one place!'
- 'It's really well organised and in comparison to last year, there's so many more people here!'
- 'Lots of fun activities for whole families to get stuck in to'
- 'It's really nice that activities for the Elderly was put on but we could also mix in with other age groups'
- 'Yes, what a fantastic day. Really enjoyed it & it takes a lot for me to enjoy something let me tell you.'
- 'Prices good and affordable, welcoming for all ages.'
- 'Wonderful atmosphere of togetherness.'
- 'Thank you to all the staff at the Highfields Centre for a wonderful festival.'
- 'What a great day had a lovely time. Can't wait for next year.'
- 'Highfields Festival was massive, the best festival ever, looking forward to next year.'

Highfields Summer School

The Highfields Summer School has been an innovative pilot project which involved partnership working between Shenton Primary School and the Highfields Centre.

The four week summer programme funded by Shenton Primary School was initially a scheme for Shenton Primary School children only. However, it was later opened up to children from other primary schools within the Highfields area. The project ran from 22nd July to 16th August, with two cohorts of children – the first from 9.00am to 11.30am and the second from 12.30pm to 3.00pm. The summer school culminated with a Presentation event that show-

cased and celebrated the children's achievement.

The programme consisted of numerous creative methods and interventions utilising arts and crafts, digital arts and music, video filming and editing and sports. All of these activities were underpinned by Maths and English. Each session also included an hour of maths and English work to enable the children to continue learning throughout the summer and preparing them for the new school term in September. Children from Shenton Primary, Uplands Junior, Highfields Primary, Charnwood Primary and Medway School took part in this Pilot project which proved a resounding success.



Student of the Year is Overjoyed!

As in previous years, the annual climax to this year's Adult Certificate Presentation Evening was the presentation of the Student of the Year award. This year's successful recipient was Yasmin Yousaf and her outstanding achievements in a number of English and Dressmaking courses was recognised by a panel of judges, as well as her support to other learners on those courses and her voluntary work in relation to the Centre/area's development.

Nearly 150 adult learners were presented with their certificates by a Panel comprising of Jon Ashworth (MP, Leicester South), Dr Iris Ligfoote (Chief Executive, TREC and Vice Chair, HCA) and Ivor Humphries (Founder Director, Enterprise Radio).



Sports and the Elders' Club

The sports team's latest initiative is working with the Elderly. This has proved to be an excellent development. They enjoy playing cricket, basketball and football as well as doing their gym exercises on a weekly basis.

Other highlights over the last few months have included a successful football competition in

February 2013 and the introduction of table tennis has been a big hit with our members. They can enjoy the use of our 7 table tennis tables and also be coached to enhance their table tennis skills. We will be hosting a football competition and badminton coaching before Christmas – please contact the Centre for further details.



Success with H-MAC Job Search

Hafiz Ur-Rehman contacted Highfields Multi-Access Centre (H-MAC) in June 2011 and he found out about the service through a local voluntary organisation.

Having arrived from Pakistan, Hafiz was unemployed and looking for work, ideally in Retail or Administration. However, he was finding this difficult due to a number of barriers.

Through initial 1:1 guidance session, we discussed his education and work history as well as creating a plan of action to meet his goals.

Hafiz had studied to degree level in Pakistan, had a good level of spoken and written

English and retail work experience but did not have relevant UK work experience.

Our Advisor suggested firstly, he undertook a short retail course as this would assist him to gain a UK recognised qualification and would guarantee him an interview and secondly, he gets his qualifications from Pakistan validated by UK NARIC, as well as updating his CV so that it was tailored for the UK market.

Hafiz acted on the advice and upon completing the Retail course, he gained temporary employment at Next. Hafiz continued to see his Advisor on a regular basis and also attended Highfields Centre's Work Club.

Hafiz's situation resulted in him seeking a career change and his Advisor arranged for him to attend a security course and supported his employment search once he had passed the course and received his SIA badge. Hafiz's Pakistani certificates have been validated by UK NARIC and he has subsequently updated his CV.

His self-confidence has increased and we're delighted that he has now been appointed to a full time Security Officer post.

Highfields Multi-Access Centre
Supporting people into work



New and Existing Businesses' First Port of Call

Highfields Centre's newly formed business department is still operating within its first year and is already gaining some fantastic results. We've helped 15 local people develop their business ideas and make a real start to beginning their journey in the business world. With a combination of coaching sessions and Starting in Business workshops, we've launched one new business in the area and are looking forward to another two joining them shortly.

This impressive start has been enabled with Alfred Bawak seeing everyone looking to become self-employed and for established businesses, Avnesh Pandya offers coaching sessions that develop their business aims and help them to make real progress. With business seminars and networking sessions as well to help you meet others in the same position as you, you'll build on your customer base and really get the word spread out there.

We deal with all types of businesses so why not get in touch to find out how we can help you – whether it's expanding, marketing, taking on new staff or just to be sure you're getting the most recent information in the business world- the business services department at the Highfields Centre (tel: 0116 253 1053) should be your first port of call.

Supporting People into Work

- Do you need help finding work?
- Are you having difficulty finding a job because you lack experience?
- Do you need help developing your skills and training?
- Do you want to know about the variety of jobs on offer?

If you are currently unemployed and are looking for work, our Adviser at the Highfields Multi-Access Centre can provide you with individual support to help you find a suitable job or training opportunity.

Our dedicated staff will help you to identify your learning and training needs as well as providing support to complete application forms and preparing for interview.

If you have either lost your job recently or facing redundancy and are looking for a new direction or have been out of work for some time, we can help you in the journey back into employment.

For more information, please contact Furzana Khalifa on 0116 253 1053

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Highfields Centre – 2012 User Profile & feedback

The Centre's ethos of serving all sections of the local community is brilliantly supported by our 2012 user statistics, with the key findings as follows:

Male = 48% Female = 52%

Asian = 72%; African/Caribbean = 16%; White = 4%; Other = 8%

Our total usage of 106,458 people well exceeded our LCC contractual target of 84,000 users, with HCA managed services achieving 155% usage and LCC managed services achieving 75% usage.

		HCA Managed Services	LCC Managed Services	Total	%
Number of Sessions		3145	1779	4924	21 people/ session
Participant Number		83967	22491	106458	100
Participant Gender	Male	41947	9523	51470	48
	Female	42020	12968	54988	52
Participant Ethnicity	Asian	61601	14981	76582	72
	Afr/AC	13870	3373	17243	16
	White	3710	991	4701	4
	Other	4786	3146	7932	8
Volunteer Number		46	26	72	100
Volunteer Gender	Male	15	5	20	28
	Female	31	21	52	72
Volunteer Ethnicity	Asian	40	18	58	81
	Afr/AC	5	3	8	11
	White	0	3	3	4
	Other	1	2	3	4
Staff Number	FT	6	2	8	11
	PT	21	44	65	89
Staff Gender	Male	16	6	22	30
	Female	11	40	51	70
Staff Ethnicity	Asian	14	24	38	52
	Afr/AC	9	2	11	15
	White	2	16	18	25
	Other	2	4	6	8

These usage figures have been complemented with a survey of our users with the key findings as follows:

Service used	28% Adult Learning	13% sports	11% gym	16% children/ young people	8% advice
Service information	26% via family and friends	22% by visiting the centre	29% from HC flyer or booklet	6% from HC Website	6% via H-CAN
Service satisfaction	91% rated the services as excellent or good, with only 2% dissatisfied				
Service improvement	52% more activities or sessions	16% more information	16% cheaper activities/ sessions	11% different session times	
Intention to continue using HC services = 98%			Recommend HC to friends & family = 97%		
The last two questions are regarded as the "acid test" for any service provider and these responses are outstandingly good.					

As in the previous survey in 2010, the most important conclusion to be drawn from this survey was that there was an enormously high level of satisfaction with the services provided by Highfields Centre among those who have used them. The main learning point from the survey was probably the need to improve the marketing of the Centre and its services.

Talent Match Leicestershire

We have a new 4 year project starting in January 2014 which will enable young people who are furthest away from being work-ready to secure employment or take up enterprising opportunities.

We will provide young people with 12 week placements in our sports, arts, catering, community, children and youth departments. Young people recruited onto our project will be able to access both accredited and non-accredited training which relate to their chosen area. 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 projects. The project will be supported by our in house services such as Highfields Multi-Access Centre (H-MAC) and the Leicester Adult Skills and Learning Service (LASALS) who will be responsible for providing the young people with functional skills sessions and work ready programmes which will include a customer service course. H-MAC will also assist the project's young people with securing a guaranteed interview linked to an apprenticeship or employment position.

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