



July 2011

If Anyone Can, Highfields Can!

Community Governance – Seven months on and still going strong!



The long awaited community governance for Highfields Centre was finally achieved last December and its independence was celebrated on 28th January 2011. Amongst the guest speakers were Cllr Abdul Osman and Adam Edwards (both of who had served as HCA Chair for 10 years each!), as well as Baljit Singh (current HCA Chair and now, a city councillor), Sir Peter Soulsby (MP, Leicester South and now, the City Mayor), Keith Vaz (MP, Leicester East) and Professor Gus John, ex-Director of Hackney Leisure and Educational Services and a long time friend of Highfields Centre.



All of their good wishes for the Centre's future success and their recognition of the immense dedication and work undertaken to achieve community governance were qualified by their recognition that the hard work to make community governance a real success was only just commencing. Indeed, as Priya Thamotheram said on that evening, "Political independence without economic independence was a sure fire recipe for disaster, as many third world countries had experienced since their achievement of political independence".

A particular highlight of the evening was the screening of a special DVD of the near 14 year journey to community governance, in the context of the over 25 year struggle to retain an independent approach to socially and economically regenerating the Highfields area through underpinning the Centre's work with an educational and progressive ethos. It reminded all present of the pain and agony, as well as the lost opportunities caused by the many unnecessary obstacles which had to be overcome. But equally, it chartered the magnificent response of the Centre's users, staff and Governing Body in overcoming those barriers and the ways in which they were helped to do so by friends and supporters from far and wide.

Whilst the current economic climate is not particularly conducive to publicly funded services, the Centre's role as a trusted community anchor, together with its successful experience and track record in initiating and providing valued lifelong learning and community development services places it in a very good position to work with local partners in ensuring the Centre's on-going success. A first step on that road is the first ever Highfields Festival scheduled for 23rd and 24th July 2011 and we would be delighted to see you over that weekend!



CENTRE HAS A NEW WEBSITE!

Welcome to the new Highfields Centre website! We have created a site that is fully linked to social networks and which will be updated on a regular basis and keep you informed about all the developments here. <http://www.highfieldscentre.ac.uk/HCA/Home.html>
Find us on Facebook & Twitter

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Highfields-Centre/108420119204590> **Twitter:** @H_fieldsCentre

The menu is easy to navigate and presents you all the information you require about the various departments together with images of the centre at work. Still work in progress in parts. All feedback will be greatly appreciated and will help us make further changes in the future.

A big thank you to all those who have worked behind the scenes to make this happen.

H CAFÉ...A YEAR ON!

It has now been just over a year since H Café opened its doors for business and throughout this time we have catered for a range of customers, meetings, agm's, training sessions and events.

Our highlight was the centre's independence celebratory event for which we provided a formal three course sit down meal for 150 guests.

All our customers have provided positive feedback for our services. Comments include:

"Thanks for everything, the food was fantastic" The Race Equality Centre.

"Excellent" friendly and very professional whilst serving good quality snacks at a very reasonable rate" Action for the Blind.

"Very good service, excellent range of food and staff were very friendly and helpful" Geraldine Conner – Integrated Services Neighbourhood Manager – LCC

For further details contact H-café, Highfields Centre, 96 Melbourne Road, Leicester, LE2 0DS. 0116 3531053

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DOUBLE AWARD WINNER: SHAHEEN PATHAN



Shaheen has worked hard to scoop two Learner of the Year awards for the Certificate in Advice Work course she has successfully completed at Highfields Centre. The course is accredited by Leicester University and she was awarded the University's Philip Collins Award at a ceremony held in February 2011. Highfields Centre also recognised her achievements at the last Adult Certificate presentation evening by awarding her the Student of the Year Award.

It has been a remarkable achievement for Shaheen as she has only been in the UK since 2004. Shaheen has two young children and she has been successful at managing her responsibilities at home and completing her assignments for the course. After receiving help from her Personal Adviser at Highfields Multi-Access Centre with job search and employment preparation, Shaheen has found temporary work in her chosen field as Welfare Rights Officer at Highfields Centre.

The Centre has been accepted as a pilot centre for the new Arts Award pilot scheme aimed at 7 to 11 year olds. We are only now beginning to use the Arts Award in a meaningful way now in the Centre with young people who attend and this pilot will enable us to work with local primary schools in the area as part of our arts and sports 'offer'.

More details here: <http://www.artsaward.org.uk/site/?id=2166>

We are the only centre chosen in Leicester for the pilot and we have just completed the training to deliver this work so watch this space.

We will continue to offer the original Arts Award for children/young people over the age of 11yrs but we will accept young people who are 10 yrs so we can do preparation work with them so they are ready for the course.

Key aspects:

- A great way for young people to explore creative skills
- A nationally recognised qualification @ Bronze, Silver & Gold levels
- A framework for learning new skills and sharing them
- A link between young people and creative professionals in arts and media
- A rapidly growing award that can be achieved throughout England
- Range of arts covered – drama, music, visual arts, dance, video, photography



Each child/young person doing the qualification at the Bronze level will attend a weekly arts session at the centre, attend an arts event externally and help run an arts activity as well as completing a portfolio of evidence. This is a level one qualification and if they wish to progress the Silver & Gold qualification these are equivalent to GCSE & A level standards.

More details here: <http://www.artsaward.org.uk/site/>

Currently these sessions run on Thurs and Saturdays term time only but we will be offering the award during the holidays.

EASTER PROJECT 2011 - A BIG SUCCESS



On April 28th towards the end of the Easter holidays trainee FJF Youth Support Workers and Reminiss – young people's social enterprise group that we are working with put on a showcase music and fashion show event in the main hall. The youth group and workers had been planning this event from February as part of developing a project for their YMCA Level 3 qualification and for further develop the profile of Reminiss locally. For two months there were a number of planning meetings, auditions and during the holidays a number of rehearsals. More than 200 young people attended the final event listening to local MC's and artists as well as fashion show.

NEW SPORTS CLASSES INTRODUCED

Since the last edition, the centre has introduced new sports classes for all to enjoy. The latest addition is the Zumba classes, which place Friday 5:15 - 6:15p.m for females only. Also, female badminton sessions run Sunday 4 - 6p.m. Also female only gym sessions run Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

The sports team are still running the usual sessions which include Community Badminton sessions, Gym sessions, Sauna Sessions, Football skills development (5 - 12 years old) and Karate.

Over the summer, the sports team at the centre will be hosting several football tournaments, so make your to enter your team as soon as you can.

From October there will be new sport sessions for both adults and children starting up, so watch this space!



HCA was successful in its bid to take part in the scheme to provide temporary work, support and training to forty young people. They later went on to successfully apply for Working Neighbourhood Funds which led to some of the participants' contracts being extended to 12 months.

The end of scheme evaluation conducted by Bob Clark Associates identified the following key findings

Those involved felt HCA had supported the participants to gain a variety of qualifications and experience for their future.

- All support planned for participants were achieved in Training, Education and Employment and participants stated the temporary job experience was very effective and that they had gained greatly from both the positive and negative experiences.
- Without exception, the Partner Agencies supported the principle and objectives of the scheme and felt that the programme should have been longer to achieve further benefits for the participants. All partner agencies were pleased to have taken part in HCA's arrangement.
- Whilst some participants felt that training did not always match the job description and felt the scheme was challenging, all acknowledged a sense of achievement in gaining good work experience from Partner Agencies, with the majority achieving their personal goals.
- All participants have left the scheme achieving an accredited qualification.
- The experience gained by all the stakeholders from the organisation of this scheme can easily be replicated for similar training and development programmes.
- 90% of participants successfully completed the scheme.
- There were 44 courses or training experiences made available to all participants.
- The destinations of the 41 participants were as follows:

Destination	Total Number	Percentage
Part-time Employment (Permanent)	8	20
Part-time Employment (Temporary)	7	17
Full Time Education	4	10
Part Time Education	3	7
Voluntary Work	11	27
Unemployed	2	5
Unknown	6*	14
Total	41	100

* 4 participants (10%) left the scheme before completion.

FUTURE EVENTS AT THE HIGHFIELDS CENTRE

Event	Day	Date	Time
3 - 7 years Playscheme	Mon - Fri	18th July - 5th August	9.00 am - 12.00 noon daily
8 - 12 years Playscheme	Mon - Fri	18th July - 5th August	9.00 am - 12.00 noon daily
Activities for 13 years and over	Mon - Fri	18th July - 5th August	2.00 - 5.00pm daily
Activities for 13 years and over	Wed & Fri	8th August to 19th August	6.30pm - 9.30pm
Football Tournament	Mon - Thur	July 18th , 19th , 20th & 21st	12 noon till 2.00pm
Girls Only Football Tournament	Mon	18th July	12.00 noon till 2.00pm
Highfields Centre Summer Festival 2011	Sat & Sun	23rd - 24th July	10.00am - 4.00pm & 6.00pm - 9.00pm
Jobs & Training Fair	Sat	23rd July	10.00am - 2.00pm
Celebration of Diversity & Unity in the Community Event	Sat	23rd July	6.00 - 9pm
Adult & Family Event	Sun	24th July	7.00 - 10pm
Over 18's Football Tournament	Sun	2nd October	10.00am - 6.00pm

