

Arts and Crafts Centre



Henshaws Arts and Crafts Centre in Knaresborough offers high quality training and development opportunities to visually impaired people in the Centre's workshops, garden, café, gallery and gardens. We currently support 90 individuals, and provide access to a range of other organisations, groups, schools and individuals.

The Centre provides a vibrant arts environment for Henshaws clients as well as the wider community, and is a well-established tourist attraction. It is also recognised by The Arts Council of England as a flagship for accessibility and has earned accolades for its distinctive architecture and commissioned sculpture and artwork.

The Sensory Gardens have continued to evolve thanks to the energy and dedication of the Centre staff and clients of the Horticulture Workshop. Our Sensory Trail pamphlet has proved a great hit with school groups looking to stimulate their senses as they experience our Touch, Sound, Scent and Intuition gardens, culminating in our testing children's quiz.

The Café Gallery offers an impressive programme of exhibitions, and has a growing reputation for showing highly innovative work. The exhibitions are a respected showcase for new artistic talent, featuring artwork selected from local and national artists alongside work created by the Centre's own resident disabled and visually impaired artists.

Our selection policy focuses on work that offers accessibility and inclusion for everyone, especially art that has multi-sensory and interactive elements. Our 'Famous 5' exhibition in September 2003 celebrated our 5th anniversary and featured five of our Resident Artists who have developed their artistic skills to new and exciting levels.

Our Craft Shop has a reputation for unusual and quality gifts including ceramics, jewellery, textiles, and contemporary furniture and sculptures for the home and garden. At Christmas the work was showcased in a supplement produced by Ackrill Newspapers and we enjoyed great sales to complement our series of Christmas Craft Fairs.

Galleries throughout the UK are sourcing the work we produce through high profile national events such as the annual British Craft Trade Fair, which takes place at the Yorkshire Showground. Henshaws enjoys a prime position there with a popular and colourful stand.

It has been a busy year for group bookings and tours for local Schools, Community Groups and visitors to the Centre. Our workshop clients work alongside staff to provide tours of the Workshops, Gallery and Gardens.

The facilities we provide to outside organisations for conferences, seminars, workshops or parties have developed successfully throughout the year. The Centre is now a well-established venue for local companies and organisations such as Yorkshire Arts and North Yorkshire Social Services, and we also cater for weddings and party celebrations at weekends.

Our Arts Education Programme for the local Community consists of day, evening and weekend courses for adults and children. The Saturday Children's Arts Club offers exciting craft workshops for children aged 6 to 11, and our seasonal programme of adult workshops is very popular.

We have had a fantastic reaction from local Community Groups and Day Care Centres that book one-off Workshops for their Service Users, and we maintain a strong relationship with Social Services and Care Organisations in Yorkshire and Teeside. Our high profile enables us to attract independent Service Users as we reach out into the community.

The Centre maintains its links with the Harrogate International and Knaresborough Festivals, offering a variety of events including a poetry reading by Simon Armitage and a Family Fun Day. An exciting new addition to the FEVA programme is an end-of-festival Music Night, which is organised by our Music Instructor and open to local bands from Knaresborough.

Greater Manchester Region



Progress, achievement, and a variety of new activities made 2003/2004 an exciting and memorable year. Our main challenges were laid down by the mapping exercise for the Greater Manchester Region, which identified the need to :

- Extend the geographical reach of our Centre activities and community-based services into the North of the Region, particularly in Wigan, Bolton, Bury and Rochdale, where access to services is limited.
- Develop our Children and Family Services in line with 'Spreading the Word', the Home Office-funded research project into the information needs of families with visually impaired children.
- Establish our first transitional house in the Region.

All these activities were successfully developed during the year. The transitional house project will be realized when a community home for 6 former College students opens in late summer 2004.

Greater Manchester Centre



The Centre provides a wide range of leisure and social activities, professional advice and support, and caters for the varied needs of visually impaired people. In 2003/2004, it attracted 139 new service users.

An extensive refurbishment programme was undertaken during the year, in consultation with service users, to ensure that their needs were met.

Children and Family Services



The service went from strength to strength during 2003/2004, thanks to the appointment of an additional team leader and work undertaken through the 'Spreading the Word' research project.

This 3-year project was set up to consider the needs of visually impaired children who have previously been at the margins of our service provision. It has been highly successful, and was nominated for an award at the NCVO Annual Conference, where the initial research findings were presented.

The research focused on four specific groups :

- Those with additional disabilities.
- Minority ethnic communities.
- Teenagers.
- Sighted children with visually impaired parents.

New activities identified from the initial research findings and subsequently implemented include:

- A Buddies Scheme for 11 to 18 year olds, where teenagers socialise with children of a similar age from William Hulme School. This pilot project has been hugely popular and successful.
- Visually Impaired Parents Group (VIPAR). This Group has really flourished, attracting visually impaired parents from across the Region.
- A Youth Group, promoting self-advocacy and organised activities.
- Home Support Project, involving volunteers working with sighted children of visually impaired parents.
- Professional Seminar Days, to make staff in maternity and paediatric wards aware of the needs of visually impaired parents.



Effective fundraising is crucial to our long-term strategy, which is to expand our services and help more blind and visually impaired people. We rely every year on our existing donors and supporters, and aim constantly to recruit new ones. We know the difference that donations make to people's lives, we just need to keep convincing our donors!

During the year our very generous supporters helped us raise £826,462. Donations ranged from £16.50 from 7-year-old Charlotte Ryan, with a sponsored read for her family, to £50,000 from our generous Patron Sir John Zochonis, through his Charitable Foundation.

Our Corporate & Events Team had a busy year with a varied calendar of activities and a number of highlights:

A special event for the ladies entitled "Unwind" provided an evening of well-being for the working woman. Bodies and spirits were relieved of stresses and strains with a variety of therapies, raising much-needed funds.

Our "Connect" networking event was attended by a variety of business people from across Greater Manchester, helping to raise money while enabling our fundraisers to develop opportunities for further support.

Running events remain very popular, and this year we had three with the New York, Venice and London Marathons. In November, Simon Kirk, Trevor Jones, Nick Jacobs and Peter Griffiths, making up 'Team Henshaws' successfully completed the 33rd New York Marathon and raised a fantastic £10,000. In Venice, Richard Thomas and Darryl Cook (Addleshaw Goddard) Andrew Schofield (Abraxas Corporate Finance) and David Coombes (Ford Campbell) donned their Henshaws vests and raised a superb £3,000.

Our two Charity Balls were the most successful yet. Our Winter Ball at the Mere Golf & Country Club, sponsored by Allied Irish Bank, was a glitzy affair and raised a staggering £42,000, while our Tiara and White Tie Ball at Formby Hall Golf Club raised £25,560, helped by the generous sponsorship of Halliwell Jones. The grand auction prize included a VIP trip to the Geneva Motor Show and a five star Mediterranean cruise, and raised £10,580. Both these events received great support from our volunteer committees, to whom we are extremely grateful.

Physical challenges continued to provide exciting fund-raising opportunities, including abseiling, parachuting, and whitewater rafting activities. Wyn Rowlands, one of our visually impaired service users, will tackle a "jungle-trek" challenge in Thailand in November 2004, supported by Henshaws very own Joanne Aungier.

World Sight Day in October 2003 provided a great opportunity to bang the drum about Henshaws, raise awareness about visual impairment and get out there rattling our cans and buckets. With support from fundraisers and local students, over £3,000 was raised in Manchester and Liverpool.

An element of "Changing Rooms" come to our Manchester Centre, when a special DIY team from Barclays Bank transformed the first floor community area into a space that Laurence Llewellyn Bowen would be proud of!

Corporate participation is vitally important to us, and we continually encourage companies across the North of England to support our work. One constant aim is to develop these partnerships through initiatives like payroll giving, charity of the year adoptions, staff participation and donations. Income from Corporate & Events totalled £154,863

Legacies continue to play a vital role in income generation, with a total of £439,916 received from the many generous people who choose to support our cause in this way. The success of our future efforts in helping more people with sight loss or impairment depends more than ever on people remembering Henshaws in their wills.