

Training for people with learning needs



Inside:
Sights set on Machu Picchu
ICT 'Dress Funny for Money'
Bat Boxes for Cardiff Parks
Student Nurse Placements.

Welcome to the summer edition of our newsletter. Our projects have all been busy gearing up for the summer season. I have been visiting the Oaks Garden Centre recently and it has been wonderful watching the polytunnels turning greener and more full of colour with every visit.

What sets our projects apart from many other traditional training providers is their social enterprise aspect. The students all experience realistic training environments which means that they need to gear up for the busy times of year; and work with the demands that increased productivity and customer expectations bring.

It is a case of all hands on deck and

working as a team during the spring and summer months. Students are able to build and develop all kinds of transferable soft skills during the busy times of year in the Vision 21 projects such as patience and co-operation with fellow students, volunteers and staff. This gives the students valuable experience about what it is like to work hard and be busy. At the same time they also experience the satisfaction of doing a good job, providing a service to others and making a real and valued contribution, while developing their practical and personal skills at the same time.

Fiona Cullen

‘Please sponsor Isabella for Vision 21’

My name is Isabella Martin-Jones. I am 18 years old and am currently studying nursing at Cardiff University. Whilst on my nursing placement, I visited Fairwater Community Garden. I had such a lovely time there and I was really touched by the team and the students. The team that work there are really inspiring and I love the concept of the charity. I was wondering how I could help.

I'm running the Cardiff half marathon in October and I want to run for a charity organisation that means something to me. Fairwater community garden is the first time that I have ever worked and talked with adults with learning disabilities and I feel passionately about raising money for you.

“I can't promise that I will raise a massive amount of money, but I am hoping that when people realise how great this charity is as a whole, they will donate as much as possible”.

I've never done this before and I want to make it as easy as possible for people to donate money to Vision 21.

If you would like to support me to raise money for Vision 21 and make a donation for my fundraising marathon please visit:

[www.everyclick.com/
avision21cardiffmarathon](http://www.everyclick.com/avision21cardiffmarathon)

The page name is:

‘A half marathon for Vision 21’

The half marathon is 13.1 miles which works out about 21.1km I am hoping to do it in about 2 hours (give or take!)



Isabella in the Community Garden

The Vision 21 ICT department, which provides training in computer skills for people with learning needs in Fieldway in the Heath area of Cardiff, pulled out all the stops to raise money for much needed equipment for the project over a whole week at the end of April. They asked all the students, volunteers and support workers and staff attending the project to dress up in funny hats and costumes and asked parents, families and friends to sponsor them to look silly for a day. "Everyone made such a fantastic effort" said Diana O'Keefe the project co-ordinator. "They really got into the spirit of things and they managed to raise £400 over the week". The money raised will be used to buy adaptable computer mice and large type keyboards, headphones and digital cameras for the project".

The ICT department is going from strength to strength and they have managed to enable students to achieve 130 Agored Cymru OCN units over the past year. They have also provided placements for several genetic counselling and social work students as well as taking on several new volunteers. They are also working towards providing ICT training to the local community offering ECDL or WJEC essential skills in the near future.

Their next challenge is to try to raise the funds to take the whole department on a field trip outing to the Rhondda Heritage Park towards the end of June. The students are all in the middle of studying for their second OCN unit in Welsh Culture and the staff would love to bring the topic alive for them by taking them on a group field trip. But with 80 student places a week, it is going to be quite a costly exercise as the transport alone will be in the region of £400.

If you feel you have some time to spare and have an interest in ICT, the department are currently looking for some volunteers for Thursdays.



Some of the students, volunteers and staff in fundraising garb outside Fieldway

To express an interest please contact our volunteer co-ordinator, Jamie Harris on: 029 2062 1194 for more information.

Vision 21 introduces 'Digital Photography' course for students

Due to popular demand, Vision 21 is piloting an introduction to **Digital Photography** and **Photo Editing** course for students through the 'Creative Choices' programme. The first two courses will be run over two morning sessions at Sbectrwm. The aim of the course is to give students a basic understanding of how to take photographs, upload them onto a computer, save them into a folder and then do some basic editing using Photoshop editing software.

The next courses will be held on Friday the 4th, and 11th June and Friday the 18th and 25th June, from 9am to 12.30pm at a cost of £20.50 per session. Students will need to attend both sessions to benefit from the course.

We also hope to run a percussion course in the near future.

Spaces are limited so please contact our admin department to register your interest in either course on 029 2062 1194

Benefits all round from Student Nurse Placements

Student nurse, Julie Sklavounos, was recently on placement at the Oaks Garden Nursery in Allensbank Road in the Heath area of Cardiff. Julie was on her learning disability placement at the Oaks from the University of Glamorgan and was learning about the work and the approach of Vision 21. The Oaks, which operates as a social enterprise, specialises in making up filled containers of all kinds, as well as growing on perennials, shrubs and bedding plants for sale, and it is just entering its busiest time of year.

For the two members of staff each day at the Oaks, having an extra pair of hands to work alongside the students at this time of year is a fantastic asset. At the same time Julie, over her two week placement, had the opportunity to experience first hand what people with learning disabilities are capable of achieving, and to observe the positive impact that training projects such as the Oaks have on the lives of the students who attend the project. Their training in horticulture skills builds their self esteem and enables them to make a positive contribution to society.

Vision 21 provides practical work experience placements across its 16 projects to over 50 student nurses a year.

Rob Jenkins, one of the placement tutors at the University of Glamorgan said that “you cannot replace the practical hands-on experience that practical placements such as these offer”. The ‘Michael’s Report’ in 2008, recognised that ‘people with learning disabilities can be prone to experiencing worse health than the general population and that ‘there is still a need to raise awareness of learning disability issues with general healthcare staff across a range of health settings’. It recommended mandatory training in learning disabilities for all healthcare professionals.

Julie thought the placement was brilliant and she told me that “the students have been very welcoming towards me and patient at introducing me to the skills of planting up containers”. Julie took her mother along to buy plants at the Oaks, she also put a posting on facebook about the Oaks and she

spread the word among her friends that it is a great place to get instant colour for their gardens.



Ian Tabero, & Gareth Clarke showing Julie Sklavounos how to plant a hanging basket.

Roy Bailey the co-ordinator of the Oaks told me that, “the additional help from the student nurses working alongside our students at this very busy time of year is invaluable. It is a partnership that has worked with great success over the years and we all learn and benefit so much from each other.”

The Oaks is open to the public and the team are always delighted to meet and welcome new customers.

**The Oaks is located at Highfields,
26 Allensbank Road, Heath, Cardiff.
Tel: 029 2076 5105**

**Opening times are between 9am
and 5pm Mondays to Saturdays.**

Teresa sets her sights on Machu Picchu

Teresa Chard, the co-ordinator of the Vision 21 Gift Shop has made the decision to set herself a huge fundraising challenge in aid of Vision 21 that will stretch her resolve to the limits.



Teresa taking a break while hiking.

Nearly three years ago, Teresa injured her back and she found that the back pain got increasingly worse over a period of time, to such a point that most tasks were difficult and painful to complete. From being very active and full of energy she could not do any of the exercise classes she enjoyed and spent more and more time sitting in front of the TV becoming in her words 'a couch potato' and starting to put on weight.

Before her back injury, Teresa was actively involved in regular circuit training, cardio kick boxing, aerobics, running and swimming. Her back deteriorated to the point where it was holding *her back* from doing as much exercise as she was used to. She tried swimming but found the new slow pace difficult, coupled with the loss of her regular swimming friends it became rather boring.

“Not going to exercise classes was the worst thing for me. I was missing the exercise and my friends”.

Things became so bad that one and a half years ago an opportunity arose to be able to transfer her job role from working as an instructor in the Oaks Garden Nursery to taking on the co-ordinating role of the Vision 21 Gift Shop where there was less physical work. This change helped her back to recover to a manageable level.

Teresa then decided to try going back to circuit training classes as a test to see how much she could do and how much her back injury had healed. Unfortunately, it was not as good as she had hoped.

“I barely got through the warm ups and I was only able to do a limited amount of the exercises”.

Her instructor knew of her back injury and advised her on alternative exercises and excused her from running.

“The part that killed me most was seeing people run and not being able to participate”.

Nevertheless, she did the best that she could and decided that she would just have to accept the injury and get on with life.

Teresa has always wanted to go to PERU and trek the Inca trail but thought that with her back injury she would never do it. However, she recently decided that she would not let her back stop her. She has decided to go on a 10 day trip to Peru next year (2011) to walk along the Inca trail to Machu Picchu which will see her walking for 23 hours over 4 days. Teresa has decided to pay for all of the costs herself and raise money through sponsorship for Vision 21. Full of resolve, she is now going on regular mountain walks in the valleys to prepare herself for the challenge. Teresa has also started to do car boot sales to raise money and she will be contacting different groups asking them to pledge support.

If you would like to help Teresa to raise funds for Vision 21 you will shortly be able to pick up a gift aid sponsorship form from our Fieldway site.



One of Teresa's Welsh valleys walking views

Wedding card commission for Jade & Steven

The students in the Vision 21 card making project were asked several months ago to undertake a large wedding card commission for Jade Farleigh, the Training and Mentoring co-ordinator who recently married Steven Page in the beautiful setting of Clearwell Castle in the Forest of Dean on Tuesday 18th May.

The card project made all the invitations, the evening invites, the orders of service and the table place names and menus using their unique



Jade & Steven on their wedding day

method of paper collage, to frame simple white lilies. The cards were printed on quality white embossed card with stylish gold font printed paper inserts and finished off with oyster pearl envelopes with a gold wax seal. Jade received lots of lovely comments from her friends about the cards.



Above: A selection of pieces for the wedding commission and one of the finished cards

Spotlight on making the wedding cards

Making handmade cards can offer varied activities for everyone. The wedding commission was made in the Vision 21 card project using the technique of fabric collage demonstrated below by Matthew Thomas, seen here pasting the first layer of the coloured organza fabric onto the backing paper. In the middle photo you

can see Maia Langfelt-Flory learning to fold the card using a folding guide. In the third photo, the collage pieces are being cut out by Hibbo Nuuh, seen here using a Sizzix die cut machine which can be used to cut the completed collage into a wide variety of shapes. Students can also be involved in formatting the text on a PC.



Oaks Garden Nursery: is now full to bursting with plants and filled containers of all descriptions. If you are looking for instant colour for your garden, please visit the Oaks in Allensbank Road for a wide selection of spring bedding plants, shrubs, bulbs, herbaceous perennials, filled containers and hanging baskets. The Oaks is also selling plants in Roath Park conservatory on Wednesday mornings and some Saturdays.

Roots Open Day: will be on the 17th June 2010. This is an opportunity to visit Roots and see some of the fantastic work that has been achieved with the students. Recent achievements include a new outdoor classroom made of recycled materials and an innovative new rainwater harvesting device.

Vision 21 Festival Day at Sbectwm: Wednesday 7th July 2010. This is Vision 21's annual celebration at Sbectwm. Most of the Vision 21 training projects close for the day and everyone re-locates to Sbectwm for a day full of fun and festivities including cream teas, a bar-beque, stalls, and other events to be announced. **'Don't miss it'.**

We are seeking support from the many friends of Vision 21 to help us continue the success of the organisation in the future. We are asking you to support us, a local charity, in the same way as many national charities raise support, through regular monthly donations. All money raised will go directly towards student training and independent living.

Every penny raised this way goes directly to helping the students. We take no administration fee.

Our target is to have a thousand friends, each giving a small donation every month; this has the potential to raise thousands of pounds for Vision 21 over a year. For more information and to fill out a gift aid form visit the donations page of our website:

www.vision-twentyone.com

Download a form or contact us on
Tel: 02920 621194

Summer Scheme 2010

Vision 21's highly successful Summer Scheme will be run for 6 weeks again over the summer holiday period through July & August. We are able to offer funded places to 40 students. The scheme does get heavily over-subscribed so make sure you register your interest early.

The summer scheme is a very good opportunity for prospective students to try their hand at a new skill to help to identify possible training routes for the future, broaden experience and meet new friends. Students who attend are able to put together summer scheme diaries recording evidence of their achievements and offered the opportunity to undertake accredited entry level Agored Cymru Units. The scheme is part funded by Children In Need.

Sbectwm News

Support groups at Sbectwm

Breathe Easy

Meet 2nd Friday of every month 12.30-2.30
Further details from Lorna – 01792 455764

Speakability

Meet 1st Friday of every month 10.30-12.30
Further details from June – 01446

Festival Day Raffle Tickets
are now available at £1 each
Lots of fabulous prizes
Ask in any of the projects or
contact Admin Tel: 029 2062 1194



Contact us at:
Vision 21 (Cyfle Cymru)
Unit 12 Fieldway,
Maes-y-coed Road,
Heath,
Cardiff,
CF14 4HY
Tel: 029 2062 1194
Fax: 029 2069 2458



Community Garden makes bat boxes for Bute Park.

Vision 21's Community Garden has provided Cardiff Council with a number of bat boxes for the park giving the bats a safe place to take shelter from the weather and providing a secure home for them to live in.

Vision 21 is one of the partners in Cardiff's

£5.6 million Bute Park restoration project, and as part of their horticulture training in the Community Garden the students made the bat boxes for the park.



Looking at a giant redwood tree in Bute Park



From left to right: Pia Powell, Mark Falkingham, Tallat Ahmed & Stuart Mann with their bat boxes

A group of students and staff were asked to go down to visit the park in April for a photo call, and to see where the bat boxes were going to be sighted in trees overlooking the new bridge. They were also treated to a guided tour to look at some of the special trees in the park by the park's Outreach & Education Officer, Katie Tuite Dalton which they all really enjoyed.

TIPS TO REDUCE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

Our climate is changing with implications for our environment, economy and wellbeing here in Wales and across the globe. It is one of the biggest challenges facing the world but we each have a chance to make a difference.

Vision 21 has made a commitment across the organisation to take positive steps to reduce our impact on the environment, and to raise awareness among the people we work with about the need to adapt to the growing impacts of climate change.

If we each think about simple changes that we can make in our own lives, at home, at work, and when we go shopping, we can all make a contribution.

ECO TIPS: PRECYCLE

What is Precycling? Pre means **before** and Pre**cy**cling means that we can **prevent recycling** by taking a little action before we buy and by thinking about how things we buy are packaged.

- **Take your own bags to the shops with you.** You are not only preventing new bags from being used, you are also recycling old ones.
- **Buy fewer disposable items, or none at all.** You prevent more things going to landfill and you don't use extra packaging.
- **Buy long life products** (such as batteries and light bulbs) or **concentrated products** (such as juices or detergents). You not only prevent buying unnecessary packaging but you prevent more products from going to landfill.

Think before you buy.