



Solihull Leisure Opportunities Newsletter Summer 2008



Issue 27



The last 4 months have flown by since we sent our last newsletter out. Not surprising really, we have been really busy at SoLO, as can be evidenced from the many reports in this newsletter. This edition we are trying to make the newsletter more accessible for our non text readers, so the yellow boxes show an easy read précis of each article. Hope it helps!



**Jimmy Spices
Restaurant in Solihull
raised £1,000 for
SoLO!**



Corey Hope, one of our members proudly poses with the staff at Jimmy Spices

1,000 Thanks to Jimmy Spices

for a marvellous evening of fine food, fun and an amazing donation of £1,000! On 16th March, Jimmy Spices, a restaurant in Solihull, opened their doors to support Solihull Leisure Opportunities. An army of volunteers from SoLO spent the evening running a raffle and Jimmy Spices donated £10.00 for every diner who ate on that evening. It was a brilliant evening – THANKS!



**Dorridge Methodist
Church held a concert
and raised £1,000 for
SoLO!**



1,000 Thanks to Dorridge Methodist Church

for hosting a Leap Year Concert involving: Knowle Male Voice Choir, Dorridge Methodist Choir and Reynolds Cross Choir. It was a brilliant evening and raised £1,000 for Solihull Leisure Opportunities THANKS!

**SoLO
promotes
itself
with
giant
bike ride**



Staff, volunteers and service users took to the streets of Solihull on a giant 16 seat bicycle to publicise our services and try and raise some money at the same time. The bike was first ridden in the Solihull Carnival and then headed to Shirley High Street for more publicity, fun and fundraising. Thousands of people saw the bike and £150 was raised on the day. Sponsorship is estimated at about £700. THANKS to everyone who took part

If you would like to run a fundraising event on behalf of SoLO, please contact Janet Down on 0121 788 3469



S.U.R.G Reporters

Our reporters from the SURG Newsletter Group have been out and about. Here is their report from the Arts Groups:

Anthony Hileen and Richard Hughes, are members of The South Arts Group and they have been working towards a very exciting Art Exhibition (details shown below)

Richard and Anthony told us that the show is all about Emotions, they have made masks and are very excited to know that their art work is going to be shown at the Solihull Arts Complex.

Meanwhile, North Arts puts on a show at the Dovehouse Theatre on July 16. The show is called "I Dream of Shakespeare and promises to be to the usual high standard and will be packed with dancing, drama, song and mime.



North Arts present "I Dream of Shakespeare"
A Show of dancing, drama, song and mime Wednesday 16th July 8.00 - 9.30 pm at Dovehouse Theatre, Langley School. Tickets £5 from SoLO offices.



South Arts presents "Emotions"
An exhibition of Multi-media art showcasing emotions at the Solihull Arts Complex 21 to 28 July

Holiday Activities in 2008.

In the last newsletter, we gave you the dates. Here now is the programme:

8 - 13 years with moderate learning disability

- 31 Jul – Cadbury World
- 1 Aug – Cooking & Drumming at Hobs Moat YC
- 8 Aug – Ackers
- 14 Aug – Conkers
- 15 Aug – Bowling at Hobs Moat pm
- 18 Aug – Animal Man and Crafts at Hatchford
- 20 Aug – Sports at Hatchford
- 27 Aug – Den building and pond dipping at Parkridge,
- 28 Aug – Party Day at Hatchford Brook

Golf Half Days for 8 - 13 years

29 Jul, 12 Aug, 19 Aug & 26 Aug

14+ years with moderate/severe learning disability

- 31 Jul – Activities at Hobs Moat YC
- 1 Aug – Cadbury World
- 5 Aug – Golf am, Hobs Moat YC pm
- 7 Aug – Drayton Manor
- 8 Aug – Hobs and Olton Tavern
- 11 Aug – Ackers
- 12 Aug – Ice skating and Chill Out at Hobs Moat YC
- 13 Aug – Black Country Museum
- 19 Aug – Sports Day
- 21 Aug – Bowling and Laserquest at Hobs Moat YC
- 22 Aug – Drayton Manor
- 26 Aug – Fitness and Fashion
- 28 Aug – Football Trip (TBC)
- 29 Aug – Hatchford Brook YC and Disco



We are running activity days for children in the summer

Those who have already attended will receiving a booking letter. If you haven't and would like to, please contact the office.

Some Facts

Did you know...

SoLO currently has 98 volunteers who are actively working to support our work.

Our volunteers bring to the organisation a huge range of skills and support our members on projects, provide transport for our members, help us with designing this newsletter, help us with our website, fundraise for us, help out in the office, and sit on our Trustee Board.

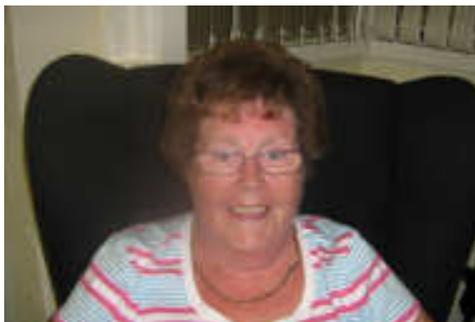
It is estimated that the level of support that is given to our organisation from our volunteers (if costed out on a support worker rate) would amount to £75,000! **What can we say? THANK YOU!**



SoLO says a big THANK YOU to all its volunteers for their help!

Interviews with ...

Mavis Evans



Mavis is a volunteer with Icebreakers

We asked Mavis about volunteering for SoLO

Mavis, what do you do to support SoLO's work?

I work as a volunteer on Icebreakers which means I collect two or three members with a learning disability from their homes and take them to wherever the group has chosen to spend the evening together. Last week we went to the Solihull Library Theatre and saw Oklahoma – we all had a great time, The month before we all went to the Black Boy for a meal, and the month before we went ten pin bowling. The nice thing about Icebreakers is that the members are able to chose where they want to go. I also help out in the office.

How long have you been involved?

I got involved about three years ago.

What do you like most about your volunteering experience?

I just love meeting people and I love the fact that I can make a difference to their lives – and they have certainly made a difference to mine!"

Phil Upton

We also talked to Phil about his voluntary work with SoLO.



How long have you been volunteering with SoLO?

I've been volunteering at Teen Open Door for 6 months and at Open Door for 3 months.

What does your voluntary work involve?

It involves supporting the members to have lots of fun in a safe environment. I ensure members are active and stimulated whilst they are there. As both Open Door and Teen Open Door provide dinner, I also support members to eat their meals and have a drink.

What do you get out of volunteering?

It's fun working with the members and I get to do many different things I wouldn't usually get the chance to do whilst supporting them.

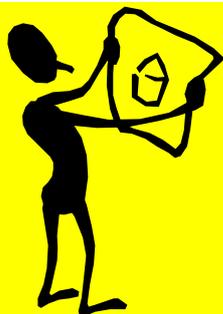
What have been the highlights of your voluntary work?

Bowling with Open Door and seeing everyone thoroughly enjoy themselves and at Teen Open Door, the first time a particular member said 'yes' to me who rarely responds verbally.

What would you say to potential volunteers out there?

Give it a go – its great fun!

We talked to Phil Upton about this voluntary work with SoLO

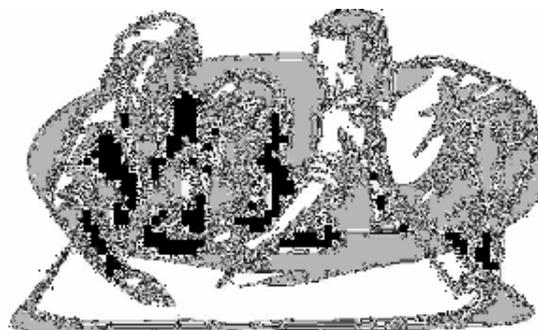


- We are planning what we will do in SoLO in the future.**
- We want to continue our services**
- We want to provide new opportunities**
- We might change our name to Solihull Life Opportunities**
- We would like to know what you think.**

SoLO has been involved over the past six months in a process of business planning to review what we have done and to plan for the future.

We have consulted with:

- Parents and carers (through continuous feedback)
- Our members (through the SURG Group)
- Core staff (through a series of consultation meetings)
- Sessional staff (at a team meeting in November)
- Our board of trustees (through strategy days)



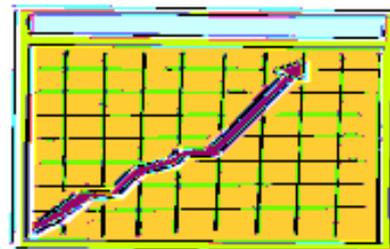
This is a really exciting time for us. Our stakeholders are telling us they want us to:

- Continue doing what we are good at (leisure and training and service user involvement)
- Move the organisation on and provide new opportunities for our members (such as - supported volunteering opportunities, meaningful day time activities and opportunities for employment)

We believe that we can, with our staff, volunteers and members help, take SoLO forward to provide new and exciting opportunities for children and adults with learning disabilities.

We will:

- Publish our full business plan at the end of the summer, and there will be an accessible version for our members.
- Ensure that there is an action plan to ensure that we do everything we say we will do.
- Consider grouping our services into:
 - ~ Adult Services
 - ~ Childrens Services
 - ~ Training
 - ~ Membership
- Consider changing our name to **Solihull Life Opportunities**



What are your thoughts? Email us on info@solihullsolo.co.uk

Autumn Ball 2008

Following the amazing success of our 2007 Summer Ball, we will be running another one on **4th October 2008.**

This will be an even more lavish affair than last year and tickets are already being snapped up. So, to avoid disappointment, contact our office today and book your table.

Ticket prices held at 2007 prices.

Single ticket £50. Table for 12 £540. Table for 10 £450

