



YORKSHIRE YOGA & THERAPY CENTRE

Yorkshire Yoga's Appeal for Funds to Extend the Building and Make Alterations 9-10 Halfpenny Close, Knaresborough HG5 0TG

Harrogate District Council's **Recreation Policy 7.1** states

The Council is keen to ensure that there is a wide range of recreation facilities to cater for all residents' needs and that these facilities are accessible to everyone, both in terms of design and location. This includes the provision of facilities to meet the needs of the smaller rural communities, such as village halls, recreation grounds and play areas. In addition to provision made by the Council, many other facilities are provided by the voluntary and commercial sectors.¹

The building at 9-10 Halfpenny Close, Knaresborough was purpose-built as a gym/leisure facility in the late 1990's. It has always fit in with the Council's Recreation policy in that its location is near a great many homes including the adjacent Stockwell Housing Estate. There is a public footpath from the building to the Knaresborough town centre and railway station. The no. 1C bus stops around the corner near Meadowside School, Halfpenny Lane & Meadow Road.



The original layout was comprised of a ground floor studio with NO ground floor toilet facilities. Up a flight of narrow stairs, were two first floor changing rooms with WCs and showers, but these have only been accessible via a multi-purpose room at the top of the stairs. This first floor was built over one-third of the ground floor studio. A 2-storey high vaulted ceiling was built over the remaining two-thirds of the studio. A single storey annex was built to the side of the entry corridor and this served as the reception area/office.

The premises meet the Council's Recreational Objectives "to protect existing public and private open space and other facilities of recreation and amenity value, and to make provision for the sport and recreational needs of the community"²

Yorkshire Yoga
Registered Charity No. 1124347
9-10 Halfpenny Close * Knaresborough * Harrogate * HG5 0TG

¹ HARROGATE DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN February 2001, Saved Policy Version 2007, p. 73

² Ibid., p. 75

Inclusive Communities – Core Strategy Policy C1

The full benefits of the building as a community centre were not realised until July 2004 when a British Wheel of Yoga teacher took on the lease of the premises. As the tenant's training was also as a remedial yoga therapist working in the specialist field of yoga for disabilities, ground floor disabled toilet and changing facilities were immediately installed as were new access doors and ramps in compliance with DDA regulations.

The tenant established a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee in February 2005 called Yorkshire Yoga. Yorkshire Yoga became a registered charity in 2008. The main mission of the charity is to bring the benefits of yoga and related therapies or sport to the whole community with classes for *all ages* – from babies to the gentle years – and for *all abilities*, including people with physical or learning disabilities.

Yorkshire Yoga has gained an excellent reputation for its work, especially with young people and disadvantaged adults who suffer social exclusion because of disability or age. It was largely because of this work with targeted priority groups that Yorkshire Yoga recently won two major awards.

On 9 December 2009 Yorkshire Yoga's wheelchair class was televised on BBC's Look North and Harry Gration presented the Charity with the BBC Power of Sport Award for Yorkshire and Humber.

The other award last year was a financial one. Through its work with the Community Sport Network team at Harrogate Borough Council and the County Sport Partnership North Yorkshire Sport, the Charity secured a Community Investment Fund grant from Sport England with which the Charity purchased its premises at 9-10 Halfpenny Close.

As owner of the premises, the Charity is now seeking new grant funding which would allow it to make alterations to the first floor. With a first floor extension over the existing single-storey annex, a Platform Lift can be installed in the premises so that the elderly and those with disabilities will have easier access to the new services that will be available on the First Floor. The Charity will thus be able to better meet the **Council's Policy C1 for Inclusive Communities** and will be able:-

- 20 To reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime.**
- 21 To increase work, housing, cultural and leisure opportunities for young people.**
- 22 To reduce social isolation for the elderly and those with long term health disadvantage**
- 23 To improve accessibility to services and improvements in the quality of life in areas of the District and to those groups and individuals with greatest social disadvantage or need.³**

The premises are adjacent to the Stockwell Housing Estate. The neighbourhood has a reputation for teen vandalism and crime. Yorkshire Yoga is committed to reducing the crime and anti-social behaviour of the youth in the neighbourhood. It started this process back in 2004 with an UnLtd award which allowed free classes to take place for parents and babies/ toddlers so that children could bond with parents and neighbours during the developmental period of the early years. With funding from the Local Network Fund and, more recently, from Sport Unlimited, free after-school classes have been available for children and teens. The teen vandalism has decreased since 2004.

Yorkshire Yoga is a member of the North Yorkshire Learning Consortium. Through the Consortium, Yorkshire Yoga has recently won grants which have allowed the Charity to increase the work and leisure opportunities of young people. We have a Future Jobs-funded young person in full-time employment at the centre. We also have a very active volunteer programme which gives free employee skills training and free yoga classes in exchange for volunteer work. The work experience is a valuable aid to job-seekers as it gives them material for their CVs and teaches them how to operate in a work environment.

Yorkshire Yoga's teachers are all fully-qualified to National Occupational Standards via the national governing body recognised by Sport England (the British Wheel of Yoga). In fact we are the only British Wheel of Yoga Approved Centre in the north of England. Our teachers recently gained the Wright Foundation's GP Exercise Referral qualification. They have also recently completed extra training in yoga for older adults which was sponsored by the North Yorkshire Physical Activity Change4Life programme. We have a new Gentle Years Yoga class for the over-65's.

³ **Local Development Framework, Core Strategy DPD:** adopted 11 February 2009, p. 51

The first floor extension will be used as an assessment and therapy room for elderly patients who have been referred to us. With the grant fund, we are hoping to purchase specialist equipment which will aid Falls Prevention/Rehabilitation. The first floor alterations and extension will give accessibility to further services and improve the quality of life to those groups and individuals with greatest social disadvantage or need. The extension will also house specialist equipment for people with disabilities so that we can assess and monitor their progress more accurately. The soundproofing and extra width of the multi-purpose room upstairs will allow us to create a second teaching area on the first floor while classes are taking place in the ground floor studio.

The multi-sport premises are also hired out by the hour to other sports groups such as karate, pencak silat (Indonesian martial art) and pilates and to other community groups involving mums and babies, children and teens, and people with disabilities.

We hope that you will support our new fundraising drive to make these important alterations to our building as we believe they will improve the services we offer for the benefit of the public.

Please feel free to contact the Chairman of the Board of Trustees or Administrative Assistant Andrew Bain if you have any questions or would like to visit the Yorkshire Yoga & Therapy Centre.

Yours sincerely,



Laura Bissell
Chairman
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