

## FREE ABLE AND ENABLED YOGA CLASSES

A new pilot programme called “Able and Enabled Yoga” is being launched at the Yorkshire Yoga & Therapy Centre, 9-10 Halfpenny Close, Knaresborough which will ‘enable’ wheelchair users to practise yoga with the help of ‘able’ yoga practitioners and a new Oxford mobile hoist affectionately called “the Ox”.

The Thursday afternoon sessions which begin on 13 October will be free of charge, thanks to a grant from Sport Relief and proceeds from the not-for-profit centre’s Yoga Summer School which raised £852 during the summer holidays for the new disabilities programme.

“We are honoured to have received so much support for our new disabilities programme,” says British Wheel of Yoga teacher Laura Bissell. “Research shows that yoga is the perfect exercise for people suffering from chronic disabilities. My training in Remedial Yoga at the Yoga for Health Foundation was all about getting people out of their wheelchairs and onto their yoga mats so that they can fully stretch and work muscles that have become weakened through lack of use.”

As part of Laura’s advanced training, she conducted case studies with volunteers from the Harrogate/York area and assistant teacher Sheena Rayner. Julia Ellison, Secretary of the Harrogate MS Society, travels to the yoga centre on her own via the Little Red Bus (Tel: 01423 526655). Julia was a bit wary of “the Ox” when she first arrived at the yoga centre, but then declared, “The hoist is a wonderful piece of equipment, and now I’m not dubious of it any more! To be able to get on the floor and stretch, with help, was a great sensation. The building is fully accessible, and has a disabled toilet. Laura and Sheena were very helpful, positive and full of encouragement.”

Margarita Shoebridge-Rust of Little Ouseburn says, “The yoga has really improved the muscles in my legs. My physio commented on how much more relaxed my legs are when I’ve been to yoga. To be able to stretch and breathe to full capacity is absolutely fantastic. The guided relaxation at the end is my favourite part -- I leave the yoga centre feeling very peaceful, very calm.”

The free Able and Enabled Yoga classes are also open to carers and other able-bodied people who are not in full-time employment. If you would like to enrol in the classes, please contact Laura Bissell, Yorkshire Yoga & Therapy Centre, 9-10 Halfpenny Close, Knaresborough, HG5 0TG, Tel: 01423 864343, Email: [laura@yorkshireyoga.co.uk](mailto:laura@yorkshireyoga.co.uk), Website: [www.yorkshireyoga.co.uk](http://www.yorkshireyoga.co.uk).

### **About Sport Relief:**

Sport Relief Grants aim to fund work, which uses sport and exercise to strengthen communities and provide opportunities for people who are excluded or disadvantaged. This may be through low income, rural or social isolation, age, disability, race, sexuality or gender.

Sport relief is looking to support community groups that are using sport to:

- Increase access to sport and exercise for people who face social exclusion and isolation

- Help people experiencing difficulties in their lives to regain their confidence and self esteem  
Encourage people to take part in sporting activities that bring communities together.