



Portland
Charity

IMPACT REPORT 2020-21



CHAIRMAN/CEO INTRODUCTION

Portland Charity operates one of the UK's leading and most popular specialist colleges for disabled people. Every year we support over 450 learners and residents on their journey to lead more independent, fulfilling adult lives. We also operate a range of high performing adult social care services and an Alternative Provision school.

We really don't want to dwell on the Covid-19 pandemic except to say we are deeply impressed and profoundly thankful for the continuous and exceptional effort of our staff to maintain all core services over the whole year, strongly supported every step of the way by the volunteer trustee Board of Governors.

We have moved significantly and developed as a charity during 2020-21: completing work on a new construction trades learning centre and the fabulous Newstart Theatre-sports hall complex with coffee shop and exhibition room. We also welcomed Pollyteach School Ltd into the Portland Charity group and we have already exploited the opportunity for joint development, opening much-needed Key Stage 2 provision in a redundant care block on our main campus.

The pandemic left us with no safe opportunity to pause and celebrate our 70th Anniversary in July 2020, though we will be opening a permanent exhibition in January 2022 to record and celebrate that story. Looking back we can immediately see that there is now much wider recognition in society that disabled people should have equality of opportunity. We have come a long way in 70 years, but there is still a lot more to do.

Our focus is firmly on the present and future of Portland Charity group. We recently published an ambitious new 5 year plan LIFETIME OF OPPORTUNITY that focuses very strongly on promoting the health and well-being of all the people who benefit from our services. This includes a ground-breaking curriculum developed in partnership with the private sector called Be Healthy, Active and Courageous; considerable expansion of our adult education partnerships in the region; some striking innovations in housing with built-in assistive technologies; and the development of new housing and support services for adults with disabilities.

The exceptional work of our colleagues is also being recognised by external industry and in our own sector. We were delighted to attain Association of Colleges Beacon status for our work in learner support, the Natspec Award for multi-disciplinary team working, the East Midlands Chamber of Commerce Award as Equality Trailblazer and long-time employee Dave Winter was honoured at the National SEND Awards for Outstanding Individual Contribution. Closer to home, Mansfield-Ashfield 2020 Business Network named us Charity of the Year.

Whilst it is heart-warming and encouraging to get this external recognition, the real opportunity for Portland is to showcase programmes and approaches which really work in generating those lifetime opportunities which so many disabled people still miss out on.

Our impact depends, of course, on individual and collective action. To our staff, all our volunteers, including governors, to learners, residents, other beneficiaries and their families we offer a massive "thank you and very well done." Thank you also to commissioners, funders and many other partners and suppliers, who often go the extra mile to facilitate our work – you know we couldn't do this without you.

To everyone reading this, we thank you for your continuing interest in the Charity and we hope we can count on your support as we strive to take disability inclusion to the next level.



Tim Richmond
Chairman



Mark Dale
Principal & CEO

THANKS TO OUR GOVERNORS

Our Governors are actively involved in key projects and spend time getting to know our learners and citizens. Last academic year we had two new Governors join Portland.



Joe Butler

Joe joined the Board in 2021. She is an autism consultant working in education, workplaces, and other youth and adult organisations through her company SEND Support. Joe is the co-author of *Is That Clear? Effective Communication in a neuro-diverse world*. She was previously the Headteacher of an autism specialist school, and now offers specialist teaching advice for Nottinghamshire County Council.



Samantha Deakin

Samantha joined the Board in 2021 as Nottinghamshire County Council's representative.

VOLUNTEER & CSR UPDATE

This academic year, a new member of staff has been recruited to manage the college volunteers and the college's Corporate Social Responsibility contribution.

The first focus was to bring back the volunteers that were unable to spend their time on campus during the height of the pandemic. The college currently has 21 volunteers, spending their time across a number of departments and providing a vital resource to the college.

The college has also partnered with DNLR Probation Service to offer a 1-day weekend placement to a group to support their community payback scheme. The group spend their time maintaining the college campus.

We have also developed some fantastic relationships with local businesses, including a local mortgage advisor who gives the college a donation for each 5 star review he receives. A partnership with our local Curry's store has been vital in setting up the college's recently renovated Maples bungalow as a 'Smart Home'. We have been able to purchase tech equipment at a highly discounted rate and their team have offered us a huge amount of support in the set up.



LEARNER INTERVIEW DAY

Restrictions didn't stop Demonstrate learners taking part in Mock Interviews back in March, following preparation activities in a previous Application Day.

One employer who supported the day gave the following comment: "learners were positive and polite, I'm very proud of them attending an interview and using teams - Very Well Done" whilst another employer said they would have "considered a learner for a role if they had one!"

Since the interviews took place over Teams all learners now have a recording of their interview to watch and review, along with feedback from the employer to help them improve their interview skills for the future.

Learners reflected on their interviews, commenting that they enjoyed meeting the employers and that they benefitted from the experience because it was good practice. One learner said the interview showed them they just "need to be confident" in their abilities.



BUMPER AWARDS SUCCESS!

2020/21 has been a very successful year for the college winning a number of awards and accolades!



OCTOBER 2020

Woodland Adventure Zone was crowned winner of the Excellence In Innovation and Design Award at the Mansfield and Ashfield 2020 Business Awards.

Edward Johnstone, Assistant Principal for Development comments; "We are thrilled with this, yet another award to recognise our innovative Woodland Adventure Zone! To be honoured by the Mansfield and Ashfield 2020 Business Awards means such a lot. The online awards ceremony was a great event, with energy filled hosts supported by an excellent technical delivery. We can't wait for next year!"

NOVEMBER 2020

The college's Positive Behaviour strategies were acknowledged in November when Portland was made a finalist in the Association of College's Beacon Awards Support for Students category. The Association of Colleges' national Beacon Awards celebrate the best and most innovative practice among UK colleges each year and highlight the breadth and quality of education in the college sector.

Portland Pathways were crowned winners of the East Midlands Chamber Community Impact Award at a prestigious online awards ceremony on 26 November. This wonderful recognition celebrates the crucial impact that Portland Pathways continues to have on our local communities.

Mark Dale commented, "Our vision of providing all people with disabilities with a lifetime of opportunity is not only achieved through our Further Education and care provision for young people, but in our community hubs for adults too."



MARCH 2021

As a very much community focussed organisation, we're pleased to be awarded as a runner up for the Discover Ashfield COVID-19 Community Organisation Award.

MAY 2021

Portland College were named as winners of the Natspec Inter-disciplinary working award!

The Natspec Awards' aim is to recognise and celebrate excellent practice in the specialist further education sector, and this category focuses on the joint working between different disciplines within an organisation.

Our entry detailed our Positive Behaviour Support initiative that is linked to Zones of Regulation and the new Be Healthy, Active and Courageous project, all of which have the learner at the centre with a focus on health and well-being. A programme of workshops was been created and is one of the biggest professional development timetables the college has ever delivered.



JULY 2021

Portland College Curriculum Manager David Winter was announced as the winner of the Outstanding Individual Contribution Award at the National Special Educational Needs and Disability Awards Ceremony that took place last week.

The National Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Awards celebrates the most inclusive practice for young people in schools, colleges, educational settings and employment across the UK.

Mark Dale comments on Dave's award: "Dave was one of the first people I got to know when I came to Portland nearly 15 years ago. Then he was just completing his teacher training qualification and I observed his teaching practice and watched him develop from a beginning teacher to an outstanding one. He has continued to innovate and put his heart and soul into developing young people with disabilities. It is wonderful to see Dave get this recognition and the outpouring of appreciation for a brilliant teacher."

PORTLAND FREEDOM



SHORT BREAKS

78 citizens have accessed 1,782 overnight stays on the Short Breaks service.

In February, citizens on the Short Breaks programme celebrated Purim, a Jewish holiday that commemorates the time when the Jewish people living in Persia were saved from extermination by the courage of a young Jewish woman. Our citizens enjoyed celebrating with a buffet feast made by the dining hall, and made party masks! The group also enjoyed learning about Purim and listened to some Jewish music which lifted the spirits of all.

INDEPENDENT LIVING

27 citizens have been supported on Independent Living.

Our new 'Step Down' project enables residents to transition from the Independent Living provision in Rowan Place, which provides access to 24-hour care, into their own accommodation in Willows, where they will receive care support at pre-arranged times to help with medication and general domestic duties. Willows is a 3-bedroom house on campus with its own garden and is the perfect first independent home for citizens Rachael and Shantina who moved in in June 2021. Both citizens have made the space feel extremely welcoming and homely.



DAY SERVICE

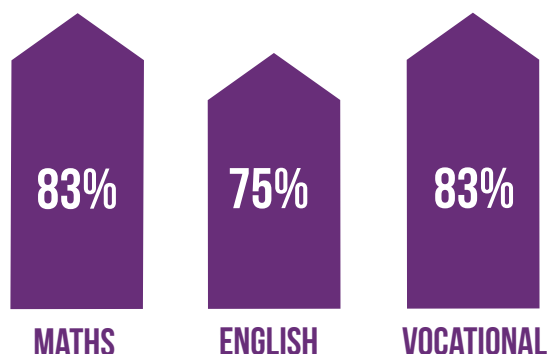
90 citizens have accessed the Day Service across both locations on campus; Limes and Elms, as well as the beginnings of the Day Service hubs in the community.

In August Portland Day Service opened a new community group just a mile down the road from Portland's main campus in the St Peters Centre in Ravenshead.

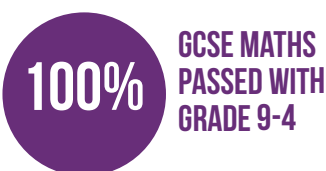
The 'Enterprise Crafts' group will focus on the development of citizens' craft skills, making items that can be sold at future events. All group members have a real interest in crafts and this is a new opportunity to put that interest into something new. The crafts that will be made are all about 'quality over quantity' to help fundraise monies for the Day Service.

COLLEGE STATISTICS FURTHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

ACHIEVEMENT RATES FOR ACCREDITED QUALIFICATIONS



OTHER STATISTICS



LEARNER PARTICIPATION IN WORK EXPERIENCE



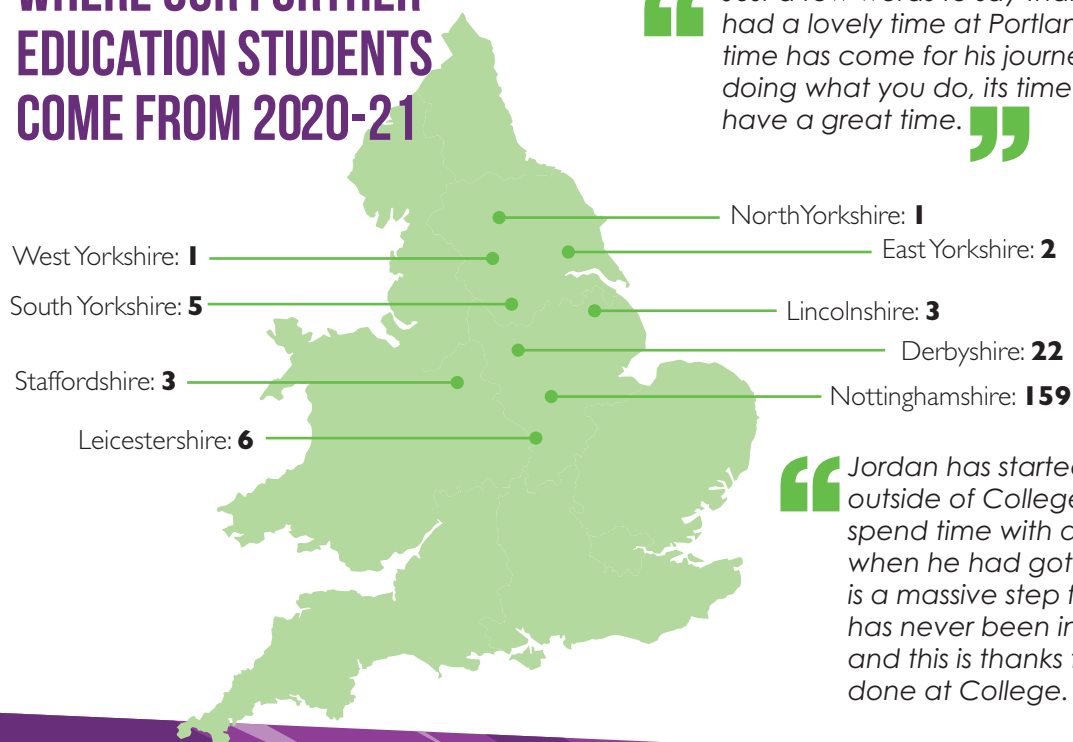
100% OF LEARNERS WHO PLANNED TO TAKE PART IN EXTERNAL WORK EXPERIENCE ENGAGED IN A PLACEMENT.

“Thank goodness for the members of staff who have provided stability for Tyler and genuinely care about him and his well being! You have been an immense support as always and I'd like to thank you all for your support and care, your respective relationships with Tyler are a credit to the rapport you have built with him through your attentive care.”



LEARNER NUMBERS 200
5 MORE THAN THE PREVIOUS YEAR

WHERE OUR FURTHER EDUCATION STUDENTS COME FROM 2020-21

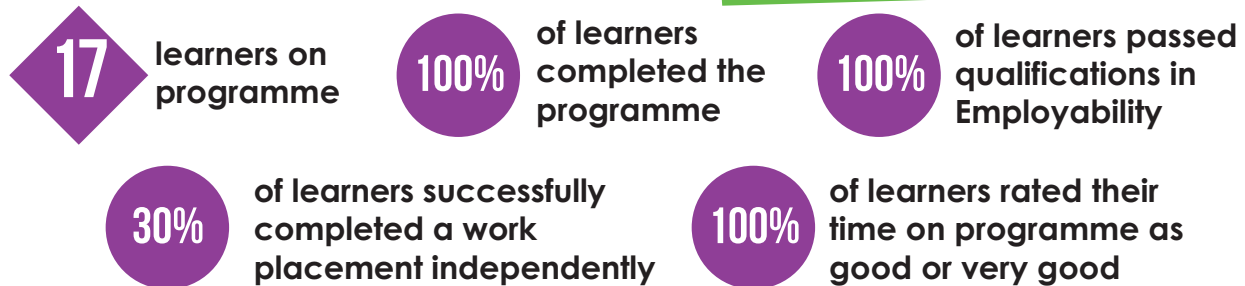


“Just a few words to say thank you, Aaron has had a lovely time at Portland College, but the time has come for his journey to end. Continue doing what you do, its time for new students to have a great time.”

“Jordan has started developing friendships outside of College time and was able to spend time with another learner last night when he had got home from College. This is a massive step forward for Jordan as he has never been interested in having friends and this is thanks to the work that has been done at College.”

COLLEGE STATISTICS PORTLAND PROGRESS

The Progress learner journey is a one-year study programme which developed learner's skills and experience further to improve confidence, helping learners to transition smoothly into the workplace.



COLLEGE STATISTICS PORTLAND PATHWAYS



80 referrals to the service



PORTLAND PATHWAYS SUCCESS

Alex Brown was referred to Portland Pathways for help with his anxiety and confidence. Alex has Autism and finds social situations difficult at times. Alex completed both levels of the Recovery College and found this helped him to cope, and especially improved his social interaction as he was within a group of people of differing ages and backgrounds.

Alex has progressed exceptionally well and has joined a local gym to keep fit and with Pathways' help, has secured a place at University studying the Classics.

Pathways helped him with Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) and through a local organisation was able to supply him with a new laptop computer to help him with his studies.



WOODLAND ADVENTURE ZONE



Our Woodland Adventure Zone is an accessible forest adventure which supports the health and well-being of our learners and citizens.

It includes a zipline, climbing and abseiling tower, gravity drop, bushcraft area, wheelchair swing, cycle trails, woodland walks and sensory play equipment. All activities are fully accessible to people in wheelchairs, so everyone can experience a fun forest adventure.

The facility opened its doors in Autumn 2019, and despite the pandemic has been able to host a huge amount of families, community groups and corporate teams



TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE THROUGH THE WOODS 1,504

NUMBER OF PORTLAND LEARNERS/ CITIZENS WHO TOOK PART IN SESSIONS:

- Portland Further Education learners - 240
- Portland Day Service citizens - 203
- Portland Short Breaks citizens - 12
- National Citizen Service young people (both mainstream and inclusive programmes) accessed – 575

Throughout the year we partnered with 'Spectrum Wasp' who support parents with children and young people on the autistic spectrum. A number of groups attended several sessions over the year providing the young people and their families a fantastic day out.

59 learners from Pollyteach, Portland's specialist alternative education provision, were able to visit the woods over the year.

PARENT FEEDBACK

“ AWESOME ACTIVITY, THE KIDS LOVED IT. ONE THING THAT STANDS OUT IS THE STAFF ARE GREAT. OUR TWO GREW IN CONFIDENCE WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE STAFF, NEVER PUSHED BUT GIVEN THE CONFIDENCE TO PUSH THEMSELVES OUTSIDE THEIR COMFORT ZONE. REALLY PLEASED WE CAME AND WILL BE BACK. ”

NEWSTART HALL & THEATRE

Following a £1.6million fundraising campaign, our 1950's Newstart Hall has been transformed into a state-of-the-art theatre and sports hall with its very own coffee shop which will open for public access in Winter 2021.

With a focus on disability sports and art, Newstart will offer an exciting calendar of performances, events, fixtures and education programmes for our learners, local groups and wider communities. The hall will also be available for hire to community groups, conferences and parties.

The Hall & Theatre is due to open at the beginning of 2022.



OCT 20

NOV 20



OUR COVID RESPONSE

STAFF JUMP INTO ACTION TO CREATE COVID-19 TEST CENTRE

Following an update to guidance from the government before the 2020 Christmas holidays, a team of staff at Portland jumped into action to create an asymptomatic Covid-19 test centre which opened when learners returned after the break.

A short but rigorous trial period took place in the first week back after the Christmas break before learners returned to ensure that the implemented processes were correct and supported all involved to remain safe.

Testing was then provided for all staff and learners as they returned in January. After this, staff were tested weekly on an ongoing basis with daily contact testing available to all who came into close contact with a positive case, for 7 days allowing them to remain at college.

Mark Dale, Portland College Principal and CEO enthuses; "I'm incredibly proud of how hard the team have worked to transform our Eastwood Suite into a robust COVID testing centre. This testing procedure is vital to us being able to provide the essential education and support to our learners, whilst doing everything possible to keep people safe and well."

The test centre and it's staff were operational on and off for the rest of the academic term as Covid restrictions changed throughout the year.



VACCINATION SUCCESS!

In February 2021, Portland College welcomed Abbey Medical Group onto campus to provide a COVID-19 vaccination clinic to help protect its vulnerable young people.

Nearly 300 people, consisting of learners, citizens and staff, attended the clinic to receive their first dose of the Oxford University - AstraZeneca vaccine, joining over 12 million other UK residents who have already been vaccinated. The highly efficient clinic was delivered by GP's and a team of medical practitioners and supported by Portland College staff, who managed the logistics and coordinated appointments.

Abbey Medical Group supported a second dose clinic in April, and then a booster clinic in October 2021.

The success of the vaccination clinic, combined with following Government guidelines around hygiene and social distancing meant that Portland continued to be a Covid-safe environment for some of society's most vulnerable people.



JAN 21



MAR 21



APR 21



MAY 21



STAR AWARDS 2021

This year saw the fourth annual Portland College STAR Awards which recognises our wonderful staff from across the college.

Each of the eight awards were presented by college Principal Mark Dale in an outdoor ceremony to the nominated members of staff, accompanied by heart-warming sentiments provided by colleagues, managers and learners that reflected the hard work and dedication of staff.

The ceremonies in the last three years have proved to be a wonderful way for all staff to come together to celebrate the past year and look forward to the next. A fabulous lunch was provided by the college catering team and a visit from an ice cream van really finished it off nicely!!

We also celebrated the staff members who achieved their 10 and 20 year service recognition this year and each received a fabulous hamper.



AWARDS DAY 2021

In July, we held our Annual Awards Day, a celebration of the last academic year and the achievements that learners and citizens have made.

This year, the ceremony was of course different to previous years, and thanks to the glorious weather, we were able to honour our winners in a ceremony held outside in the Willows Garden.

We also broke from tradition and debuted a whole range of new categories, and shortlisted nominees were honoured with a framed certificate along with the winners.

Thank you to our Guest of Honour, Vice Chairman of Ashfield District Council, Councillor John Smallridge who presented the trophies to the winners.



SUPPORTERS

1 SEPTEMBER 2020 - 31 AUGUST 2021

The following individuals, companies and trusts have generously supported the College over the last year.

NEWSTART HALL & THEATRE

- Arts Council England
- Betty Williamson (legacy)
- BHC
- Caunton Engineering
- Charles Littlewood Hill Charitable Trust
- Foyle Foundation
- Freemasons
- Garfield Weston
- Government Towns Fund
- GT Littlefair Charitable Trust
- Jessie Spencer Charitable Trust
- Kirby Laing Foundation
- Lady Hind Charitable Trust
- North Midland Construction
- Peter Harrison Foundation
- Provincial Grand Lodge of Nottingham -Newstart
- Ralph King Legacy
- Sackler Foundation
- Sport England
- The Fifty Fund
- The Hamer Foundation
- The Jones 1986 Charitable Trust
- The Lynn Foundation
- The Privy Purse
- Thomas Farr Charitable Trust

The following people have donated to 'Sponsor a Seat' in the Newstart Theatre. They will receive a plaque with a dedication of their choice which will be placed on the back of a seat in the theatre.

- Amanda Farr
- Armsons
- Awsworth Primary School
- Betty Williamson (legacy)
- Capita
- Caunton Engineering
- David Sneath
- Davlyn Construction
- Dean Fathers
- DEG Consultancy
- Holly Martin
- Jack Barker (legacy)
- Leanne Jones
- Lewis Shaw Financial Services
- Lindhurst Engineering
- Lymn Rose
- Maber
- Mansfield & Ashfield 2020
- Mansfield Building Society
- Mansfield Choral Society
- Mansfield Rotary Club
- Mark Dale
- Michael Weston
- North Midland Construction
- Peter & Ross Barrett
- Peter Emerson
- Phil & Alison Constantine
- Provincial Grand Lodge of Nottingham
- Soroptomist International - Mansfield
- Tim Richmond
- Thalej Vasishta

PORTLAND PATHWAYS

- Ashfield District Council
- Atmospheric Interiors
- Betty Williamson - Legacy Donation
- Charles Littlewood Hill Trust
- Discover Ashfield
- Foyle Foundation
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- GT Littlefair Charitable Trust
- Kirby Laing Foundation
- Peter Harrison Foundation
- Ralph King - Legacy Donation
- Sport England
- The Arts Council
- The Foreman Hardy Trust
- The Grey Trust
- The Jessie Spencer Trust
- The Jones 1986 Charitable Trust
- The Lady Hind Charitable Trust
- The Sackler Trust
- The Thomas Farr Foundation

WOODLAND ADVENTURE ZONE

- BBC Children In Need
- The Ella Kirk Foundation
- The Cooperative Fund
- Mansfield Building Society

MINIBUS APPEAL

- The Lord Taveners

HOW YOU CAN HELP SUPPORT PORTLAND CHARITY

Portland College is a registered charity for people with disabilities and we want to shout about the work that we do here with our partners, both for learners, citizens and outreach in the community. We look for support to help all people with disabilities have a lifetime of opportunity.

Support from the business community, organisations, societies and individuals are all key to the existence and growth of the College.



FUNDRAISING

- After a successful first two years of operation at the Woodland Adventure Zone which was supported by a number of vital funders, the next phase of planning is underway to develop the site further. Enabling the facility to reach as much of the community as possible.
- Portland Pathways has been supported by a number of local businesses providing work experience and work placements for many Pathways customers. The support of local businesses and funders is key to the programme's growth, development and scale of impact on the local community.
- Since the Trades Hub opened in September 2021, the next step is to develop this area with a Manufacturing Centre. Support is needed from our community, both businesses and funders, to enable us to allow learners to be ready for external employment in this area.

PARTNERSHIPS

• Corporate Social Responsibility

There are many ways in which your work place can get involved with supporting Portland, and our local community projects. Employee fundraising is a great way to motivate your staff and can provide the opportunity for team building whilst raising much needed funds at the same time.

• Employment

Placements/Work Experience/Volunteers. Volunteering man power is a great way to experience the college and the learners for yourself. Perhaps your staff could donate a day of their time to help with a particular project. As a registered charity with so much room for development, we are always grateful for donations of skilled labour too.

The focus of many of our learners is getting prepared for employment when they leave Portland. The best way to do this is to have experience within a real business. If you feel your business could offer a day a week, or maybe more, our job coaches can provide a range of support and training.

• Community fundraising

There are many ways that you can help to fundraise within the local community, whether it is a sponsored activity such as a swimathon, organising an annual book sale, or hosting a seasonal party with a fancy-dress competition. Portland can offer ideas, and promotional material to assist you in raising funds, whilst having fun at the same time!



Portland Charity
Nottingham Road, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire NG18 4TJ
T: Main College Reception 01623 499111
T: Student Recruitment 01623 499186
F: 01623 499134
E: marketing@portland.ac.uk
www.portland.ac.uk



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