

## **Catalyst awards £44,500 to boost local health projects**

**Colchester Catalyst Charity has awarded a number of new grants for projects in North East Essex that will help to relieve the pain of the sick and suffering in the area.**

Throughout the year, Catalyst provides substantial grants on a regular basis to fund the 'extras' that will enhance support for people who have serious health needs. However, we only step in to offer assistance when no statutory funding is available.

Men's health charity CHAPS has been awarded £22,000 to purchase a new portable ultrasound scanner. This vital piece of equipment will be used to scan for abdominal aortic aneurysms and other major abdominal conditions. Over the next year, it will benefit 250 men below the age of 65 who are ineligible for NHS screenings.

The charity also agreed to provide £15,000 towards the cost of a Sensory Pod for Market Field School, which offers unique sensory experiences for children with learning disabilities and autism.

For example, the pod can be used to create an interactive experience of a shuttle launch, with the use of a large widescreen TV, combined with smoke effects, sensory lighting, floor vibrations and stimulating smells pumped inside the room.

The experience helps to engage the children with severe healthcare needs, enabling each child to learn new skills that will boost their feeling of independence and improve their ability to communicate effectively with their peers.

Additionally, Catalyst awarded £7,500 towards the cost of a new therapeutic bath at Treetops High Dependency unit in Highwoods, which assists people with severe disabilities. It will play a crucial role in helping to relieve the aches and pains experienced by the disabled residents.

Earlier this year, Catalyst awarded £41,498 to Citizens Advice Bureau Tendring, to develop a new Mobility Recycle Project in the area. Old equipment will be collected from people's home, recycled and loaned out to local residents who cannot purchase new items.

The Colchester Prosthetic User Group's Walking Gardens at Colchester Hospital were also opened up in June, which Catalyst supported with a £10,000 grant to get this project off the ground. These gardens will help amputees to strengthen their ability to walk on a variety of different walking surfaces.

Catalyst is always on the look out for new projects that could dramatically help to improve the health and well being of people within North East Essex. If you have a project in mind, please contact Rodney Appleyard, the charity's Development Officer, at: [rodney.appleyard@colchestercatalyst.co.uk](mailto:rodney.appleyard@colchestercatalyst.co.uk), or phone: 07784425268.

We also offer grants for people with special individual needs, who might need a specialist scooter or piece of equipment to help them move around more easily. If you need support with anything like this, please contact Stephanie Grant, the charity's Administrator, at: [stephanie.grant@colchestercatalyst.co.uk](mailto:stephanie.grant@colchestercatalyst.co.uk), or call: 01206 323420.