



NPHT
NATIONAL PARALYMPIC
HERITAGE TRUST



Sensory Explorations Project with the National Paralympic Heritage Trust and Buckingham Old Gaol Museum

This year Furze Down School has been involved in an exciting new project working with the National Paralympic Heritage Trust (NPHT), based at Stoke Mandeville Stadium and Buckingham Old Gaol Trust, based in the centre of Buckingham. This multi-layered project, which has partnered 6 local museums with 6 SEND schools, has resulted in a co-created virtual gallery which celebrates disability across Buckinghamshire. In addition, partners have collaborated on the development of tailored visiting and learning experiences for diverse audiences, keen to engage in their local cultural environment.

The project was delivered in a variety of ways. Post-16 students were introduced to their local Paralympic history, through objects donated by Paralympians and local disabled people, all of which had a story to tell. Students were encouraged to participate in telling their own stories through objects which held significance in their lives. Sharing memories and learning together enhanced the process of understanding what museums were for and how they could support a variety of interests and ways of engaging with local history.

Students visited their partner museum site so they could experience the dynamic impact of learning outside of the classroom, gaining hands on fluid opportunities to explore their interests, engage with collections on their own terms, whilst benefiting from access to the expert knowledge of museum professionals and volunteers.

Acting as an advisory group, students have gone on to help their partner museum reassess physical and intellectual access to their sites, and a brand new access page is currently under construction on the museum website as a direct result of student input. This, it is hoped, will go some way to addressing the exclusion that some experience, because their access needs are not met.

In addition to this commitment to ensure that a minority voice is heard and listened to, this project has provided, and continues to offer, meaningful opportunities to further the employable skills of young people. This has been achieved through workshops designed to develop an interest in 3D photography, delivered alongside activities which support creative writing experience. These workshops have been led by neurodiverse museum trainees employed by the National Paralympic Heritage Trust, whose confidence to share the skills they have developed on the project has been

instrumental in the production of a co-created Global Virtual Museum, which displays objects from across local museum collections, curated in the voice of disabled young people.

To view the Buckinghamshire Gallery which Furze Down School students have contributed to and to see how it fits into the Global Virtual Museum please visit - <https://www.paralympicheritage.org.uk/global-virtual-museum>

Families are invited to visit Buckingham Old Gaol and Museum throughout the summer where they will be able to view the object chosen by students for the Virtual Museum, see the resources recommended by the students and talk to staff and volunteers about this exciting and progressive project.

Buckingham Old Gaol: <https://www.buckinghamoldgaol.org.uk>

National Paralympic Heritage Trust website:
<https://www.paralympicheritage.org.uk/Default.aspx>