



Remap – Doncaster

Background

The Doncaster panel is one of 85 Remap panels across the country. Originally standing for **'Rehabilitation Engineering Movement Advisory Panels'** (but now just known as Remap,) their volunteers design and produce specialised equipment for people with disabilities that is not commercially available. The Doncaster panel has 14 members and covers the Doncaster and Bassetlaw health areas as well as doing some work in Sheffield.

Remap Doncaster's volunteers come from a variety of backgrounds. For example, one is a retired mechanical engineer who, before joining the team, ran his own business making lifts for disabled people. Like the rest of the volunteers, he has transferred his skills to a variety of projects, and has helped many people with a range of disabilities since joining Remap.

Responding to a need

A number of people with disabilities are held back from doing things they'd love to do, because of a lack of specialised equipment. Many unique and ingenious devices have been produced by Remap volunteers and have improved the lives of disabled adults and children at no cost to the recipient.

In 2007 - 2008 Remap Doncaster took on 52 projects. Here are a couple of them:

- **A man with Multiple Sclerosis had a problem pressing the buttons on his adjustable armchair as he could not use his fingers. Four large switches were modified to allow him to operate the chair using the heel of his hand.**
- **An older child required heavy duty stabilisers for his bicycle. Those supplied for small bikes would not be strong enough so larger wheels were mounted on stiffly supported frames.**



PROFILE IN BRIEF

Remap – Doncaster

Services offered:

- Design and production of unique, tailor made equipment, delivered free of charge to disabled adults and children

Who do you work with?

- Disabled people in Doncaster and Bassetlaw health area
- Occupational Therapists
- Special needs schools

Contact details:

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The projects are carried out by engineers and craftspeople in their own homes. A wide range of projects are undertaken- from personal hygiene equipment to wheelchair and zimmer-frame modifications, and many things in between. A local special school has been given several great devices to stimulate severely disabled children through light, sound and vibration.

Through the products that Remap volunteers produce, those who receive them gain more independence and freedom in life. Some beneficiaries have even been able to return to work.

Here are some responses from people whom Remap volunteers have helped:

'The quality of work was excellent. I am amazed at the standard. Thank you.'

'The Remap members were very considerate to our needs and very efficient. Lots of care and thought has obviously gone into this and will provide years of fun for him. Thank you very much.'

Engaging with the community

Remap Doncaster relies heavily on support from local businesses. In most cases these offers are made by suppliers of required materials after a project engineer has told them about the fantastic projects they are working on. Recently, one national firm provided a set of braked castors for a specially adapted chair free of charge and a disability shop has provided Remap with wheels and seats from scrap electric scooters.

One local business has in the past done free upholstery for the group, whilst a small engineering firm has offered Remap volunteers use of some of their facilities for their projects. A few local community groups even raise funds for Remap Doncaster.

Looking Ahead

Remap would like to help even more people in the South Yorkshire area. There are currently plans in place to restart Sheffield and Barnsley panels in order to better serve the people in these areas. However, volunteers (both on the technical and administrative sides of the group) as well as funding is needed to get these panels back up and running.

The Doncaster advisory panel also welcomes additional volunteers who could exercise their design and practical skills to help overcome the problems of less able people and run the group.

Here are some comments from Remap's valuable volunteers. Could you play a part in the amazing work they do?

'It is so satisfying to help a disabled person gain more independence'

'It is wonderful to see the look of delight on a child's face upon receiving a device to enable them to do something they could not do before.'

