

Report of:	To:	Date	Item No.
Cllr. Lynne Bowen, Leisure and Culture Portfolio Holder	Council	23 January 2014	8(f)

EXECUTIVE REPORT: LEISURE AND CULTURE PORTFOLIO HOLDER

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1** To inform Council of progress on key objectives and the current position on issues within the Leisure and Culture Portfolio, as set out below.

2. Arts, Events and Volunteering

2.1 Volunteer Partnership Bus

The new volunteer partnership bus is in the final stages of its 'fit out' at Copse Road. This promises to be an exciting year for volunteering in Wyre, with the bus travelling out to the district's more remote sites to encourage local people to access voluntary services and also become part of what is now a growing pool of skills and experiences for our own Council volunteers.

There are currently 11 people going through the Volunteer Application Process.

2.2 Local Event Organisers Network (L.E.O.N.)

The second meeting of LEON was held at the Seven Stars in Stalmine in December. Over 30 organisers attended, discussing issues such as resource sharing, marshal training and traffic management. A number of formal and informal training sessions will be rolled out in February 2014 for local event volunteers. These will be financially supported through the Creative People and Places programme, as an important investment in up skilling local people so that gala, carnival and other traditional events remain sustainable.

LEON includes representation from the Police, L.C.C. and various Council sections.

2.3 Memorial Park Activity Plan

January 2014 sees the planning for activities and events at memorial park, step up a gear. This is the year of the centenary of the First World War, and commemorative events will take place throughout, including a volunteer enrolment day, a wellbeing event, a positive declarations

event and a community parade. Details in the What's On Guide from March 2014.

The Activity Plan has three core values: ***Reflecting on what was; celebrating what is, and Growing and developing what will be.***

2.4 Creative People and Places –LeftCoast

The Creative People and Places programme for Blackpool and Wyre is now called LeftCoast and heralds a number of initiatives and events for local people, artists and organisations and visitors in 2014 and beyond.

For 2014, work is underway to develop Fleetwood's Festival of Transport; to support apprenticeships at Wyre; to create training and 'go see' opportunities for event organisers and artists; and to create bespoke opportunities for arts and event staff to assist with their professional development.

2.5 What's On?

Already there are several page additions of the new What's On 2014 due out in March. It's official; there are even more events throughout the borough, providing more opportunities for engagement and participation, increased footfall and local spend, and a developed animation of our coastline and green spaces. This is due to the ongoing strategy to collaborate closely and work in partnership with local organisations and regional agencies.

3. Tourism And The Visitor Economy

3.1 Print

30,000 Visit Wyre Holiday Guide's have now been produced and 15,000 of those have been distributed Nationally to TIC's, VIC's and through Marketing Campaigns. The remaining stock will be used for Tourist Information Points and Centre's in Wyre, visitors enquiries and holiday shows.

Wyre is also working in partnership with Marketing Blackpool and Marketing Lancashire and taken a page in both destination guides to promote the district.

3.2 Visit Wyre and Marketing Lancashire business 'Drop In' Event

Working in partnership with Marketing Lancashire we held a business 'drop in' event at Farmer Parrs on 14th December. The purpose of the event was to share tourism news, literature, touch base with private sector businesses, offer support and advice and discuss digital media.

4. Sports Development

4.1 TrySport

The TrySport community programme continues to deliver a variety of sports/activities for young people within a community setting throughout different areas of the borough. The number of visits recorded between

September 2013 and December 2013 was 2071, surpassing last year's total for that period.

5. Parks and Open Spaces

5.1 Memorial Park Restoration update

The design team are developing 'RIBA F production information', detailed information required for tendering the restoration works, and expect to complete the documents for February 2014. Technical Questionnaires were returned from 6 contractors and these are being evaluated with a maximum of five contractors to be shortlisted to tender in February/March 2014.

5.2 Playground refurbishment/Shaping your Neighbourhood updates

The contract to install the play area for young children at Wyre Estuary Country Park was awarded to Wilkinson and Sons from Preston. The work will include the installation of a multi unit, toddler swings, a see saw, springy chicken and rotating items to give a variety of challenging but stimulating play experiences for younger aged children. It is anticipated that work will commence on site March 2014 for completion before Easter.

7. Coast and Countryside

7.1 Promoted route management

The riverside path from the popular picnic site at Brock has been undergoing some improvements with the help of the volunteer ranger team. The footpath follows the river downstream from the car park and approximately half a mile down the path riverbank erosion has taken the path away. Volunteer Rangers have made a new path a few meters back by cutting through a Blackthorn thicket and then creating a stone surfaced path. Each volunteer has been walking 5-6 miles each day, half of that with a barrow full of stone and have moved in total 8 tonnes of stone. This work will help to reduce the trampling of wild flowers in the spring and guide people away from sections of bank erosion. Previously the volunteer team have worked repairing the cross-drains and re-profiling the paths of Nicky Nook helping to reduce water damage to the paths during wet weather. A 1 hour survey of this path on the edge of Scorton counted 350 walkers and this route was also featured in the Lancashire Walks and Wildlife magazine.

7.2 Habitat management

The volunteer ranger team have been carrying out winter tree planting at the council's 10 hectare woodland creation sites in the Thornton and Fleetwood areas. Veolia employee volunteers have undertaken vegetation management and bulb planting at various sites in Poulton and Thornton, and DWP employee volunteers have undertaken footpath improvements and habitat management to help with the woodland improvement grant project at Pheasant Wood. Cleveleys Junior Football club have carried out a beach litter pick at Rossall and the regular monthly beach care sessions have taken place at Rossall Point

and Rossall Beach.

7.3 Access for all

The Wyre Estuary Country Park plays host to two special needs colleges – High Furlong and Beaumont College. Every Tuesday 2 students from High Furlong and 7 students from Beaumont College undertake coast and countryside management activity at Stanah with the support of the Wyre Coast and Countryside Ranger service. The students at High Furlong have undertaken regular patrols of the Country Park and Wyre Estuary Coastal path, carrying out litter picking, vegetation management, and recording visitor activity. The students from Beaumont College have started a conservation project in woodland of the family area, they have planted native bulbs, put together a habitat improvement management plan for the project area and cut back trees to open up the area to light to improve the ground flora. At Rossall Point every week 3 participants from Larkholme Lodge volunteer with the rangers.

8. Comments and Questions

- 8.1** In accordance with procedure rule 11.3 any member of Council will be able to ask me a question or make a comment on the contents of my report or on any issue, which falls within my area of responsibility. I will respond to any such questions or comments in accordance with Procedure Rule 11.5.