

Report of:	To:	Date of Meeting	Item No.
Cllr. Lynne Bowen, Leisure and Culture Portfolio Holder	Council	29 November 2012	9(f)

EXECUTIVE REPORT: LEISURE AND CULTURE PORTFOLIO HOLDER

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform Council of the current position on a number of issues within the Leisure and Culture Portfolio as set out in paragraph 2 below.

2. Current and Future Issues

(a) Sports Development

2.1 Sports Awards

The largest celebration of amateur sport in the county recently took place at Preston's Guild Hall. More than 400 people attended the annual award ceremony including regional sporting personalities and business leaders, along with the families and friends of the finalists. Representing Wyre at the awards evening this year were:

- Club of the year: Gym Mania
- Coach of the year: Mark Gillingham (Fylde Coast Ice Hockey Club)
- Rising Star: Isaac Towers
- Young Volunteer: Kelly Stuchfield
- Adult Volunteer: Andrea Kay
- School of the year: Garstang St Thomas
- Lifetime achievement: Patrick Sweeney (Thornton Judo Club)

2.2 Wyre Wheels – Adapted Cycling Programme

The programme has been a great success so far receiving interest from a large volume of disabled people within Wyre. A large factor to the success has been the contribution made by a team of volunteers at sessions, which totals 9 individuals to date, of which 4 have a disability themselves.

In the first 7 weeks of the programme 53 participants have accessed sessions, which includes a total of 146 visits.

2.3 Try Volunteering

The TryVolunteering programme continues to recruit, place, support and develop its volunteers who support local sport and physical activity within Wyre. From the beginning of October to present, a total of 23 new volunteers aged 16-25yrs have been recruited. Two volunteers from this age range have been placed at the Wyre Wheels programme. Eight volunteers have been recruited who are either under 16 yrs or over 25yrs. One volunteer under 16yrs has been placed at the Wyre Wheels programme and 1 volunteer over 25yrs has been placed at the Wyre Wheels programme and at the Fleetwood Multistars Sports Club on a Thursday evening.

A 'Disability Awareness' Training Course was delivered on 19th October at the Civic Centre for volunteers who work with disabled people. The course was designed to highlight the variety of disabilities, the way they affect people in different ways, effective methods for working and communicating with disabled people, and understanding the various considerations to make when volunteering with disabled people. A range of volunteers attended the course from Wyre Council community sports programmes, the council's countryside service, local disability sports clubs, and members of sports development staff.

(b) Tourism Development

2.4 Marsh Mill-in-Wyre

Marsh Mill is open at the weekend for visits and during the week for group visitors by special arrangement, tours are given by a dedicated team of volunteers who support the smooth running of the facility during the weekends. A Lancashire Night was held on 27th November at the site, with live music and a hot pot dinner. The event is predominantly run by the volunteers with support from Wyre Council. The event which is by ticket only will be a fundraiser for Marsh Mill and future events.

A Friends of Marsh Mill Group is at the early stages of being set up and a committee agreed. The group are currently developing their Constitution. The Council is involved in an advisory capacity.

2.5 www.visitwyre.co.uk

www.visitwyre.co.uk is constantly being developed and is evidenced in its viewed figures. In September 2012 there were:

- 6,614 unique visitors to the site who viewed an average of 3 pages.
- 88% of visitors arrived to the site from a search engine the most popular being Google, Bing and Yahoo.
- The most popular keyword searches include Fleetwood, Fleetwood Market, Marine Hall, Beacon Fell Country Park, Claylands Caravan Park and The Blackpool Illuminations
- The most popular pages were Areas to Visit Fleetwood, Events, Areas to Visit Cleveleys, Forest of Bowland, Things to Do.
- The most viewed time of day is noon.
- The most used browsers are Internet Explorer, Safari, Chrome, Firefox and Android Phones.
- The most used mobile devices are Apple iPhones, Apple iPads, and Sony Erickson Phones.
- The most popular link referrals to visitwyre.co.uk are google.co.uk, wyre.gov.uk, search.bt.com and visitlancashire.com

2.6 Tourism Forum

Wyre is part of the Tourism Forum which has been set up by County Councillor Jim Lawrenson. As part of the actions of the group we are promoting the Cruise Liner Groups Market as they dock into Liverpool. Wyre has produced a suggested Cruise Liner Groups Itinerary to showcase the Borough. It is anticipated that there will be a familiarisation visit taking place within the next few months which will include Wyre. Work is also ongoing to promote, to visiting Football fans to Fleetwood Town Football Club.

2.7 Publications

In partnership with Corporate Communications, tourism publications are currently being developed and produced. 30,000 Wyre Holiday Guides 2013/14 (which contains listings for Wyre Tourism Association members) will be produced and available for distribution by December 2012. Work is currently ongoing for the What's On in Wyre 2013 which will be available early 2013.

2.8 Tourist Information Centres

High Season for Wyre's Tourist Information Centre's ended on 4th November

The opening hours for the TIC's are indicated below:-

- Visit Cleveleys TIC has closed for winter
- Visit Fleetwood TIC is open at weekends only during the winter
- Award winning Visit Garstang TIC is open 7 days a week throughout the year except over Christmas and New Year.
- Visit Garstang Centre TIC is currently in the planning stages of an Open evening that will take place on 29th November to showcase the TIC, local arts and crafts and food and drink.

(c) **Arts and Events**

2.9 **Creative People and Places Update**

Four Away Days took part during October, 2 which dealt with the Blackpool/Wyre partnership looking at business planning, and 2 that brought peer projects from across the country to share and raise awareness of planning and good practice.

A mapping exercise has been concluded which at its first stage identifies across Wyre who is out there. Wyre Together, Wyred Up, the Community Engagement Network, just some of the lists forwarded.

There will now be a stage of creative consultation across Wyre, using community venues such as libraries and village halls to gather what communities would like to see achieved through this programme. This will continue until February of 2013.

A number of initial ideas have been put forward to the consortium to focus some of the investment across Wyre. This will be the basis of the creative consultation.

2.10 **Sea Change Legacy**

A solicited bid will be submitted to the Arts Council focusing on the coast from Cleveleys to Fleetwood. Using the theme of nature's forces, a number of meetings have taken place with community groups to help shape ideas for the bid.

(d) **Parks and Open Spaces**

2.11 **Memorial Park Heritage Restoration Update**

Work is progressing at a rapid rate behind the scenes to develop the stage 2 application for Heritage Lottery funding to restore Memorial Park.

The consultants are busy uncovering historic research, drafting a conservation management plan and preparing outline restoration proposals. We are also formulating a draft activity programme

and are consulting with internal and external organisations regarding activities to ensure a sustainable programme that will continue the intergenerational ethos of the Park.

A “shared stories event” was held on the 10 November, at the North Euston Hotel which was well attended by the public who wished to share old memories and photos of the park.

A public consultation showing proposals and the research found to date was undertaken at Fleetwood library in November.

A formal review meeting with the funders is being held on the 6 December, to enable feedback to be provided on our progress.

2.12 Tower Wood and Pheasants Wood

Tree thinning work is to start on Tower Wood and Pheasants wood inline with the Woodland Improvement Grant (WIG) from the Forestry Commission. Tree work started on Monday 19th November and the 3rd December respectively. Both sites have temporary access restrictions in place while the works are carried out for public safety.

2.13 Bilsborrow playground;

The designs for the above have been evaluated and the contract awarded to Wicksteed Playscapes from Northamptonshire. Work on site to refurbish the playground at Bilsborrow are programmed to start at the end of this month.

(e) Coast and Countryside

2.14 Employee volunteering – Veolia

Volunteers from Veolia will be joining in with the Wyre Volunteer Rangers at the Wyre Estuary Country Park, Rossall Point and our Urban woodlands to undertake access improvements and conservation work. They will be helping to improve footpaths and also to plant trees and carry out vegetation management. Some of the Veolia team have already volunteered on the coast this year by undertaking a beach clean at Fleetwood.

2.15 Teen Rangers

The councils Teen Rangers helped look after 50 of the trees planted at the Wyre Estuary Country Park by carrying out some weeding by hand and also by learning about how to identify trees in winter time. The Teen Rangers are young people who give their time freely one Sunday a month to help look after Wyre`s Coast and Countryside.

2.16 Family Sculpture Day

The Wyre Estuary Country Park enjoyed one of its most successful Family Sculpture Days in October, with Radio Lancashire playing host to the event and helping to bring in customers to the day from all over Lancashire. The sun shone over the Family Natural Play area at Stanah, where the event took place, with the help of Lancashire green wood crafts people. Customers were able to help create a special willow woven deer sculpture, make their own willow sculptures to take home as well as mini-wooden wildlife figures. They had a go at making bird and bat boxes and mini-beast homes, making their own badges with the help of the teen rangers and also finding out about future events, such as the autumn green wood activities and bird watches in the Wyre What's-on.

3. Comments and Questions

- 3.1** 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.