

Report of:	To:	Date of Publication	Item No.
Cllr Lynne Bowen Leisure & Culture Portfolio Holder	Council	20 October 2012	9(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.

2. Current and Future Issues

2.1 Summary information is included in Appendix 1 on the following key outcomes.

- Reduction in health inequalities
- Healthier lifestyles and participation in physical effort.
- Protection of biodiversity and the natural environment.
- A vibrant visitor economy.
- Increased community involvement.
- Young people involved in positive activities.

3. 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.

LEISURE AND CULTURE PORTFOLIO HOLDER UPDATE –

1. Reduction in health inequalities

- 1.1 The YMCA Leisure Management budgets are monitored on a monthly basis. As of August, income is £65,000 up against budget to date. In addition, expenditure is £30,000 down against budget to date.
- 1.2 The annual Summer Membership offer for 2 months aimed at students proved successful. During June and July compared to the same period last year the centres increased income by £37,000. Overall most centres hit target and all exceeded actual income compared to last year.

2. Healthier lifestyles and participation in physical effort.

- 2.1 The first of two six week programmes of Social Prescribing through a course on gardening at the Wyre Estuary Country Park has started in partnership with Ncompass. The exit strategy is to enable customers to be referred to the Wyre Green Activity Programme and continue undertaking healthy physical activity in the outdoors.

3. Protection of biodiversity and the natural environment.

- 3.1 Fleetwood Promenade and Coastal Grassland Biological Heritage Site (BHS) has been surveyed by an ecologist as a part of the National Indicator 197 (Biodiversity) project. The Council requested the survey to assist with the development of the flood defence and sea-change project . The recommendations from the ecologist will be used by the project teams to develop the area and also by the operational staff to manage the area to achieve favourable status for the BHS.
- 3.2 Volunteer Rangers undertook 0.25 ha of “scrub bashing“ to conserve the grassland mosaic which supports orchids, part of the management of the Wyre Estuary Biological Heritage Site alongside the Wyre Way at the Wyre Estuary Country Park.

4. A vibrant visitor economy.

(a) Lancashire and Blackpool Tourism Awards

- 4.1 Six of Wyre’s tourism and hospitality businesses and Wyre Tourism Association Members were short listed as part of the Lancashire and Blackpool Tourism Awards. The award ceremony was held at The Pleasure Beach, Blackpool. It was a highly successful evening with The Visit Garstang Tourist Information Centre (TIC) winning the ‘Visitor Information Provider’ Category. Other successes were Carr Royd Park Ltd/Sunset Park, Hambleton winning the ‘Caravan Holiday Park/Holiday Village’ Award. Clayland Park, Garstang was highly commended in the

same category. Old Holly Farm, Garstang won the 'small visitor attraction' award.

(b) Radio Lancashire Live Programme from Garstang

4.2 John Gilmore presented a live programme from Garstang in the Visit Garstang TIC and in the outdoor performance space outside Booths on Wednesday 13 September. The Councils Tourism Development Officer and Natural Environment Officer were interviewed during the show, which was very positive piece of promotion about tourism and the natural environment in Wyre and things to see and do in the area.

(c) Business Advisory Visits and WTA Membership

4.3 The Briardene Hotel, Cleveleys and The Gardeners Cottage Growing with Nature have now joined the WTA:

(d) www.visitwyre.co.uk developments

4.4 During August, there were approximately 7,000 website visits with approximately 23,000 pages viewed. The most popular pages are 'places to visit' – Fleetwood, Garstang and The Forest of Bowland.

(e) Publications and Promotions

4.5 The **Great Ecclestone Tractor Pull** took place on August Bank Holiday with the VIP marquee open on the Saturday evening and then to the public on Sunday. The marquee/literature and displays were well received. We are currently awaiting an update from the NW Tractor Puller Committee on how the event went and comparisons against last year's event.

4.6 To promote and raise awareness of tourism in Wyre, a number of publications are distributed at many **shows and events**, some in partnership with WTA Members and Fylde Coast Partners. This includes the Cheshire Show, Tram Sunday, Great Ecclestone Agricultural Show, Garstang Show Goosnargh and Longridge Show, the Westmorland Show Scorton Agricultural Show, Bleasdale Tower Garden Open Day and the Group Travel Trade Fair in Birmingham. We have also just booked The Great Days Out Fair in Bolton for February 2012 in Partnership with Lancashire and Blackpool Tourist Board.

4.7 The **Wyre Holiday Guide** will be refreshed for 2012. Wyre Tourism Association members listings will be updated. The events page will also be refreshed. It is anticipated that the guide will be ready for distribution by January 2012.

(f) The International Challenge

4.8 Judging by 2 Canadian Judges took place for 'International Challenge' (Garstang in Bloom) on 8th August. The judges visited WTA members, had a canal boat tour and presentation and enjoyed the Visit Garstang Centre.

5. Increased community involvement.

5.1 TryVolunteering placed 8 volunteers on this years community sports summer programme. The volunteers assisted the 6 community sports coaches in a variety of sports and activities and also helped with registering participants and ensuring health and safety of the sessions. Two more volunteers have been placed onto the YMCA MEND programme, helping families become more active and live healthier lifestyles. Several Sports Awards nominations from Wyre have also been put forward to the Lancashire Sport Awards. These included sports club of the year, adult volunteer and young volunteer of the year. This recognises the hard work, dedication and achievement shown by volunteers across Wyre in the sport sector. New volunteering leaflets have also been produced with the new council logo and have been distributed around the Borough.

5.2 Wyre Volunteers were amongst many volunteers from the Fleetwood Civic Society, Fleetwood Museum and the Jacinta who supported the 4 day national Heritage Open Days in Fleetwood and the Fylde Coast. Throughout the area buildings of heritage interest were open and guided tours undertaken by volunteers. Wyre Volunteers opened the Marsh Mill for the weekend, whilst for the first time at Marine Hall volunteers helped the council to put on a Seachange display which included pottery artwork from Louise Wood called Ten Faces, Ten Journeys , Ten Stories; displays about the planned Seachange works at the Marine Gardens, Rossall Observatory and the Mythic Coast. The new Sea Swallow book was on sale, plus information about the history of Marine Hall and visitors were also able to enjoy a peak at the famous dome of Marine Hall, as well as reading all about Decimus Burton(Fleetwood`s famous architect.)

5.3 The tendering package for works to improve the existing parks and open space in Poulton is being finalised. Works within Vicarage park and St Chads church yard are to receive the approved S106 monies. The work will include lighting improvements, improved footpath networks, drainage works, removing the unsightly disused toilet block on the park and replacing with a new central recreational area. Tenders are expected to be returned at the start of December for evaluation. Works are anticipated to start in March 2012.

5.4 A launch event is being planned for November to officially open the recently refurbished rose garden in memorial Park Fleetwood following refurbishment. The £74,520 scheme was funded by a partnership with Groundwork Lancashire and west, the Friends Group of Memorial Park

and United Futures. The friends group also secured a sustainability grant from The Big Lottery funding to help support the project which will enable 5 activity based events to be held over the next 12 months for the local community.

6. Young people involved in positive activities.

- 6.1 The summer scheme project based at Fleetwood High School took place throughout July and August and attracted 260 young people and over 1500 visits. The scheme ran from Monday to Friday for 5 weeks. The project was all inclusive which allowed any young person to join in, regardless of any physical/mental/learning difficulties they may have. This was made possible through the organisation PIP (Play Inclusion Project) who supported the Wyre sports coaches and volunteers. The feedback from the young people and parents was very positive and the scheme was very well received.
- 6.2 In addition, a series of art based workshops in drumming, pottery and jewellery making were held at the Marine Hall during the summer holidays. Over 200 young people attended.

A new project took place for the first time across the months of July and August. A 7-a-side football summer league was held at Fleetwood High School once a week for 16-25 year olds. A total of 63 people took part in the league, which had fully qualified F.A affiliated referees officiate the matches.

- 6.3 The new community sport timetable has been put in place at the start of September. Sessions take place throughout the week in various locations across the borough, such as Fleetwood (3 sites), Thornton, Preesall and Garstang. These sessions aim to have an influence on reducing juvenile nuisance and anti social behaviour.
- 6.4 The installation of the playground on Church Road Playing fields in Thornton has now commenced on site. The works to refurbish the play ground at Hambleton (Bob Williamson Playing fields) is currently at the tendering stage, with all consultation and feedback from the local community received. Tenders are scheduled to be returned within the next 4 weeks.