



Report of:	To:	Date of Meeting	Item No.
Cllr. Lynne Bowen, Leisure and Culture Portfolio Holder	Council	18 October 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) Tourism Development and Delivery

- 2.1 The Visit Garstang Centre (TIC) has for the second year running won the title of Visitor Information Provider of the Year in the Lancashire Tourism Awards 2012/13 which took place on 13 September at Preston Guild Hall. The Centre will now be submitted for the National Awards which will take place in 2013

- 2.2 An 'Open House' evening took place on 11 July and a further meeting to form the 'Friends of Marsh Mill' took place on 24 September at Marsh Mill. The purpose of the two events was to raise awareness of the Mill and to try and create interest from local groups and individuals about potentially joining a 'Friends of the Mill Group'. There were approximately 40 attendees on 24 September. The volunteers, supported by Wyre Council are now in the planning stages of creating a 'Friends Group' Marsh Mill. Marsh Mill was open for the Heritage Open Days Weekend which took place on 8 and 9 September

(b) Arts and Events

#### 2.3 Creative People and Places Update

Following the news of the successful bid to the Arts Council for £3million pound of investments into both Blackpool and Wyre Districts, the Consortium, project leaders, have been scoping the work ahead. During October there will be two away days facilitated by Gerri Moriarty, which will focus on governance, staffing structures, and a communication plan.

At the end of October, the Blackpool Wyre Consortium will meet with other successful national projects in peer led sessions that will look at commonalities, good practice and consistency.

#### **2.4 Launch of Fleet: Over 50s Dance Company**

FLEET Dance Company for 50+ was launched this month led by North West based dance company Co3 Dance. Co3 Dance in partnership with Fylde Coast Dance Development, and working with Wyre Council's Arts and Events Officer, is offering the opportunity for adults across the Fylde coast to be part of a new dance and movement performance group exclusively for people aged 50 and above. FLEET Dance Company for 50+ will develop dance techniques, encourage creativity and build strength and stamina as well as offer the opportunity to meet new people. FLEET is about celebrating dancing and no prior dance experience is needed.

#### **2.5 An 'Eventful' Year.**

2012 has been an extraordinary year in terms of events. And in Wyre this was no exception. There were over 50 registered events that took place across the district attracting an estimated 150,000 plus people. This is despite the often challenging weather. These have included the hosting of the Torch Relay, the Diamond Jubilee party at Fleetwood, a host a galas, carnivals and funfairs, Tram Sunday, Cleveleys' Classic Car show and the Triathlon.

#### **2.6 Official Opening of the Marine Hall Gardens**

September saw the official opening of the Marine Hall Gardens, on what was, one of the sunniest days of the year. A host of street theatre acts, drummers and jugglers made way for Mrs Doreen Lofthouse to cut the ribbon and declare the gardens officially opened.

#### **2.7 Sea Change a legacy for arts and events**

The Arts Council has solicited a bid, which will help create important connections along the Mythical Coastline. Tied in with the story, The Sea Swallow, the application will focus on a number of public interactions from Cleveleys, to Rossall Point to the Marine Hall. These may well include live interpretations of the story, music commissions, coastal markers and digital applications.

#### **2.8 Big Sing comes to Garstang**

More Music based in Morecambe will be working with the residents of Garstang and the local Bowland villagers to create a 'Big Sing' choir. These community led sessions will produce new songs based on local themes.

Following a number of rehearsals, this will culminate in a Big Sing event in Garstang, invited other community choirs to join in with a unique performance just before Christmas.

(c) Sports Development

**2.9 'Wyre Wheels' Disability Cycling Programme**

A NEW cycling programme for people with disabilities commenced on Friday 21 September. Sessions take place at Fleetwood Leisure Centre every Friday. The programme offers participants the opportunity to cycle a variety of adapted bikes in the sports hall and along the sea front. This activity will be supported by Red Marsh Special School, The Ormerod Trust and Wyre Day Care Services, who have committed to attending sessions on a regular basis.

**2.10** To support the delivery of the programme 9 volunteers have been recruited to date. In order to ensure a high quality of delivery throughout the programme, the volunteers attended a 'Wheels for All Leaders Workshop' training course in September, which was delivered by Cycling Projects.

**2.11** This programme will provide a completely new service to Wyre and enhance the variety of sport and physical activities accessible throughout the borough.

**2.12 TryVolunteering**

The TryVolunteering programme continues to recruit, place, support and develop its volunteers who support local sport and physical activity within Wyre. From August – September 2012 the programme has recruited a total of 11 new volunteers. Five of the new volunteers have been placed to support the 'Wyre Wheels' programme.

**2.13** Two of our volunteers have successfully achieved a V50 award from VInspired for completing 50 hours of volunteering with Wyre Council. These hours were completed at our Summer Sports Programme and Fleetwood Multistars Sports Club respectively.

**2.14 Fleetwood Triathlon**

The event took place at Fleetwood Leisure Centre and along the Esplanade for a fourth successive year on Sunday 23 September. The event attracted more competitors than any previous year, an estimated 700 adults and juniors took part. The Mayor and Mayoress of Wyre were in attendance, who presented competitors with medals at the finish line. A successful triathlon was facilitated by the support of a large number of volunteers from local organisations such as the Air Cadets, Sea Cadets, Scouts and Wyre Council. Eight volunteers from the TryVolunteering programme assisted the event by performing a variety of marshalling roles.

**2.15 Leisure Centres**

The first 5 months of the financial year have generated a slight surplus against budget. The number of visits has increase compared to the same period last year from 246,380 to 262,697.

(d) Open Spaces and Countryside

**2.16 Lancashire Invasive Non-Native Species Project**

Following a pilot based at the Ribble Rivers Trust, the Lancashire Invasive Non-Native Species Project is starting to work across River Wyre, Douglas and Lune. The primary aim being to focus on freshwater species and to survey the upper limits of the species and coordinate data and work with DEFRA and develop partnership working to reduce the impact of these invasive species. The species include Himalayan Balsam, Giant Hogweed, Japanese Knotweed, American Mink and Signal Crayfish. This is a project that volunteers and local people can get involved with, one way to do this is to report invasive species that you see on these rivers to [www.lancashireinvasives.org](http://www.lancashireinvasives.org)

**2.17 Beach Cleans**

During the course of one week volunteers on the beaches of Fleetwood and Cleveleys collected over 90 bags of litter from the beaches. The Council collects litter from the beaches and promenade every week, so this litter found indicates the amount that is sea or wind-born rather than being dropped by visitor. The volunteers are encouraged to find out about the sources of this litter and how everyone can get involved in recycling and reducing litter and in particular decreasing the amount of plastic items that get into the water cycle from homes and offices. Volunteers involved have been Wyre Councils Volunteer Rangers, Rossall Residents Association, Sealife Centre Volunteers and Volunteers from Veolia and also members of the public and other volunteer groups.

(e) Heritage Open Day Activities

**2.18** A successful Heritage Open Day programme took place on 6 to 9 September. The Heritage Open Days celebrate England's fantastic architecture and culture and offer a once a year chance to visit places that are not normally open to the public.

**2.19** In Wyre this year the council organised a comprehensive programme of activities:-

- Marsh Mill was open for tours to the top of this ancient windmill.
- Fleetwood Cemetery held two guided walks on the heritage of the cemetery.
- At Broadwater Wood customers found out about the potted history of the wood and how the woodland is being managed for wildlife.
- At Stanah guests were invited to find out about the nocturnal wildlife of the Wyre Estuary.
- Marine Hall opened its doors to an exhibition on the Seachange project including the Marine Gardens, Rossall Point Tower, The Mythic Coast Artwork and Sea Swallow book and the history of Marine Hall.
- At Memorial Park visitors found out about the history of this grade 2 listed Memorial Park and how local people have been involved in its creation this event .
- A special coach tour organised by the Forest of Bowland AONB took people to visit Greenhalgh Castle and Claughton Hall and Wyresdale Park amongst some historic places in western Bowland.

- At Bleasdale visitors were treated to a special visit to places connected with the discovery of the Bronze Age Circle. An estimated 500 + people attended the exhibitions, tours and walks over the 4 days.
- The Fleetwood Civic Society also took people on guided tours of the Lower Lighthouse and the Mount, both historic buildings in Fleetwood, and had many 100`s of people attending these each day.

**2.20** Many of the activities above were lead and organised by volunteers from many organisations who have shared their knowledge and enthusiasm for the heritage in Wyre.

(f) Volunteering

**2.21 Wyre Together Showcase Event**

The Council attended the Wyre Together Showcase Event at Thornton YMCA. This was a useful networking event and opportunity for local people and volunteer organisations to find out about each other and what they do and also to sign up to volunteer in new ways. Over 60 groups attended and new volunteer opportunities were promoted.

**2.22 Teen Rangers**

The Councils Teen Rangers helped the Volunteer Rangers to build bird and bat boxes during the Country Park Open Day and will be helping out at the Family Sculpture Day.

(g) Parks and Open Spaces

**2.23** Specialist consultants have now been appointed to assist us take Memorial Park to the stage 2 Heritage Lottery Fund/Big Lottery Funding restoration application. The company are called Landscape Projects, based in Manchester comprise of a team of specialists in landscape history, conservation architecture and have experience with other successful Heritage Lottery applications. They will bring together the detail needed for a submission at the end of February 2013.

**2.24** Designs are currently being evaluated after tenders where received or the refurbishment of the children`s playground at Bilborrow. Works on site are planned to start before Christmas.

**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.