



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

F60

Council **30 June 2014**

CABINET MEMBER REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL

Report by Cllr Sarah Stamp ***Leisure, Culture and Heritage Portfolio***

Portfolio includes:

- Arts and Culture
- Festivals and Events
- Heritage Services
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Public Halls
- Tourism (Destinations and Events)
- Sport

1. *Parks and Open Spaces*

1.1 *Events & Activities*

1.1.1 Since my last report in February, there have been twenty seven externally organised events held in the Borough's parks and open spaces. These include two fairs, a circus and the recent very successful 'cars on the green' motor show in Nowton Park. Officers have also recently negotiated terms with an operator who will promote a number of car boot sales on Haverhill Recreation ground.

1.1.2 Green Flag judges visited Nowton Park and the Abbey Gardens on the 20 May 2014. A mystery shopper will visit East Town Park and West Stow Country Park later this year to assess their continued accreditation under the Green Flag Scheme. The results of these judgements will be known by the end of July and I will keep Members updated on the results.

1.2 *Abbey Gardens*

1.2.1 The carpet bed in the Abbey Gardens this year marks the Magna Carta 800 celebrations. The Magna Carta mosaic, located on the toilet block, has been relocated to a more prominent location near the carpet bed.

1.2.2 I was very pleased to attend the Abbey Gardens Water Garden reopening on the 14 May 2014. This work was made possible following a generous donation by an individual who wishes to remain anonymous.

2. Heritage Services

2.1 Moyses Hall

- 2.1.1 A new external sign has now been installed on the Cornhill Walk museum wall to help improve awareness of the museums location in the Town Centre. The museums reception desk has also been relocated to free up the central under-croft. This relocation will enable the under-croft to be used in a more flexible manner for both exhibitions and events.
- 2.1.2 The Victorian exhibition which was displayed in the Great Hall was very well attended by local school groups. The museums' staff are currently working on a 1970's exhibition which has been funded via a successful HLF grant, and is scheduled to be opened in early July.

2.2 West Stow

- 2.2.1 The County Strategic Heritage Forum was held at West Stow on the 6 May 2014. There was a short tour of the facilities before the general meeting. The National Trust, Records Office, Suffolk Coastal DC and The Bury Society were just a few of organisations represented at the forum.
- 2.2.2 Visitor numbers to the Anglo-Saxon Village, for the year to date, are encouragingly up on the same period for the last two years.

2.3 Museum outreach work

- 2.3.1 Some of the Borough's costume collections are being displayed at Ickworth House for their 'costumes through the ages exhibition.'
- 2.3.2 To complement the Theatre Royal's back stage tours, between May and August, we have lent the theatre some period costumes and accessories.
- 2.3.3 As part of the Magna Carta celebrations we have loaned two exhibition cases to the cathedral and some display material. Visitors to that exhibition have been given vouchers entitling them to free access to Moyses Hall. This offer has provided greater footfall to the Museum and increased secondary spend.

3. Tourism (Destinations & Events)

- 3.1 The Tourist Information Office has now been successfully moved to The Apex and supporting information points for tourists have been set up around Bury St Edmunds. These include the Cathedral, The Theatre Royal, Smiths Row, the Library, the Bury St Edmunds Town Council offices and Moyses Hall. Coach operators have been informed of the move.

4. Public Halls

- 4.1 I am pleased to advise that a capital investment from Sodexo in the Apex will see the addition of 48 chairs for visitors to sit on during intervals and pre-event dining.
- 4.2 The box office at The Apex allocated over 6,000 tickets for the Magna Carta viewing at the Cathedral which drew thousands more through groups and schools into Bury St Edmunds helping to boost the economy in the month of May.

5. Bury Festival

- 5.1 This year's Bury St Edmunds Festival, held over ten days, was well received with a total of sixty events involving 12 venues including 2 specific outdoor spaces in addition to walks and tours across the Town

6. Sport & Physical Activity

6.1 The 2014 Women's Tour

- 6.1.1 The first Women's Tour completed its final leg in Bury St Edmunds on the 11 May 2014. After five gruelling stages the tour arrived at its final destination on Angel Hill with approximately 6,000 people watching a close finish where Marion Voss (World No.1) was crowned champion. The event is one of the largest female cycling events in the world and attracted the world's top riders including World and Olympic champions.
- 6.1.2 The hosting of this event demonstrated the value of partnership working with representatives from St Edmundsbury Borough Council, Suffolk County Council, Abbeycroft Leisure and Our Bury St Edmunds all playing a key part in this event. Feedback has been fantastic with the event being televised and really showcased the best of Bury St Edmunds.

6.2 Glasgow Games Queens Baton Relay

- 6.2.1 Abbeycroft Leisure hosted the Super 8's Schools Athletic competition arranged by Forest Heath Schools Sports Partnership. The competition received a visit from the Commonwealth Games Queens Baton Relay and over 800 participants watched the baton relay arrive at Bury St Edmunds Leisure Centre, carried by Lilly Reynolds who has represented England at under 19 level in cricket. The Baton Relay was welcomed by a guard of honour formed by pupils from Tollgate, St Edmundsbury, Sextons Manor and Howard Primary Schools.
- 6.2.2 This Queens Baton Relay is the world's most engaging relay and its journey through 70 nations and territories celebrates the vibrancy and diversity of our modern Commonwealth and counts down to the Games that start in Glasgow on the 23 July 2014. Young people attending also had the opportunity to meet Britain's greatest ever female gymnast Beth Tweddle MBE.

6.3 Explore Outdoor Enrichment Day

6.3.1 Abbeycroft Leisure's Explore Outdoor Programme engaged with over 200 children and young people for a school enrichment day at Howard Middle School. Students engaged in 14 different activities:

- Team Building
- Camp Cooking Fire Lighting
- Catapult Building
- Den Building
- Geo Caching
- Climbing
- Archery

6.3.2 The programme helps build self-esteem, confidence, citizenship and leadership skills and all children thoroughly enjoyed the day.

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