

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR LEISURE AND CULTURE**COUNCILLOR DAMIAN TALBOT****PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING
DIRECTOR:****MARTIN EDEN****DATE:11.06.2012****LEISURE, HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

The re:refresh programme continued to perform strongly in 2011-12 in engaging citizens into an active lifestyle. BeeZ card attendances increased to over 500,000 and 4,116 new adult members took part in exercise (target was 2,122). The programme of free leisure was reviewed; changes were made throughout the year in response to local data to address identified gaps in provision and uptake. Third sector sports engagement and capacity building activities have taken place throughout the last 12 months including the development of the Community Sports Forum. Community volunteers developed and delivered 224 small scale local projects to improve health and wellbeing. Health Trainers now work with Healthy Living Pharmacies to raise people's awareness of health messages, sign post to local services and provide brief interventions to those who require additional support.

The re:refresh 2012 programme was launched on 1st June 2012 and runs to the 9th September 2012; Blackburn with Darwen's Community Sports Festival, inspired by the London Olympics. The festival aims to encourage increased levels of physical activity, promote the benefits of healthy living and raise awareness of local sports clubs and volunteering opportunities with over 45 events over 40 different days, at venues and open spaces across the borough for all age groups and abilities to take part.

LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICE

A report on the Blackburn Central Library cladding to restore the façade to its original 1920's appearance went to June's Executive Board meeting for approval.

The Library Service has secured £1,500 from the Arts Council linked to celebrating Black History Month in October. The funds will be used to deliver events and activities for groups of all ages with the theme 'Tall tales, traditional crafts'.

CULTURE AND EVENTS**King George's Hall (KGH) and Darwen Library Theatre (DLT).**

Programme highlights over the last couple of months have been Ian Anderson from Jethro Tull with over 800 attending, Soul night over 1,000 attending and the Mecca nights in Blakeys. George's comedy club once a month continues to be popular. The Afternoon Music Halls and DLT's Variety Shows have picked up with Darwen's Variety show in June sold out. Due to demand, Blancmange had a second sell out at DLT. KGH hosted the election count and provided the venue for the Schools Dance festival, the BIG and MINI sing

and several weddings. Blakeys promotions have included the Jubilee and EURO2012 football games.

Olympic Torch Relay London 2012.

The Torch came to Blackburn on Saturday 23rd June 2012 starting at the Revidge junction on Preston New Road. It then travelled to the Town Hall and then out along Accrington Road. Support for the Torch bearers was fantastic with large crowds turning up to line the route and coming into the Town Centre for the Community Celebrations. Schools, Sports Clubs and Community groups cheered the torch bearers on.

Alongside the Olympic torch relay there was a whole host of events and performances held in Blackburn Town Centre. The event was started with a band made up from local schools and a steel band as a 100 strong choir sang the runners out of town. The Town Hall square hosted a mix of local sports, arts and dance clubs demonstrating and showcasing the best of our local talent.

Darwen Music Live

The Council, in partnership with Darwen Town Council and local sponsors once again supported Darwen Music Live this year, with a return to a two day event on the 3rd and 4th June 2012. The festival was a great success in spite of wet weather on the Sunday, with large crowds swelling the town centre on both days. Thanks should be expressed to all those who have helped to sustain what is now a volunteer led event.

BLACKBURN MUSEUM AND ARTS SERVICE

The Museum and Art Gallery is celebrating the centenary of Kathleen Ferrier's birth with a popular exhibition about her life. One of Blackburn's most famous residents, Kathleen Ferrier's popularity remains as strong as ever with new generations of music lovers discovering her unique singing voice.

A photographic exhibition by Blackburn College photography students is dotted around the building it looks at various aspects of Blackburn and themes within the Museum.

As part of the Cultural Olympiad celebrating international connections across the world, Lokesh Ghai has a space in the Skill and Labour Gallery. As a practising textile designer from Ahmedabad, Lokesh has been making work based on the historical connections between the borough and the Indian subcontinent. To create an interesting workshop space for visitors Lokesh has created a shrine like those found in textile factories in India but in his example there are many references to Blackburn's textile connections.

YOUNG PEOPLES SERVICES

A Duke of Edinburgh Awards evening took place at King Georges Hall on Tuesday the 29th of May where over 35 young people accompanied by parents, family, friends and teachers, were presented with their Bronze, Silver and Gold awards, by Maureen Bateson, Exec Member for Children's Services.

The evening was further enhanced by a talk given by Amaay Shah, who spoke about the positive effect participation in the scheme had had on her life.

Summer holiday planning is well under way including staff recruitment. Two new youth clubs have been set up for children with complex needs and children with moderate learning difficulties at Kaleidoscope Youth Centre, running fortnightly. The half term provision for children with disabilities was very popular with forty young people signing up to participate.

YPS has supported the four Stay-Safe events across the borough, and will be involved in another on Friday 1st June, when the service will be offering specialised youth work support to the Stay-Safe agenda.

West Blackburn

Young Peoples Services is committed to delivering a number of gigs at Blakeys after the success of the first one held there at Easter.

The Pavilion Project based in Highfield Park has been established to provide positive activities for young people in the Ivy Street area, with the aim of reducing high levels of anti-social behaviour.

East Blackburn

A successful Open Day was held at Kaleidoscope in April to promote youth activities. Kaleidoscope Youth Centre is being re-developed to improve access and increase opportunities for children with disabilities. This work is involving structural changes to the building and the acquisition of new resources.

Roe Lee Youth Club has re-opened for 13-19 year olds at Peridot Close supported by Twin Valley Homes.

Darwen and Rural

YPS is working to deliver a twin town model which is part of the new strategy for young people in Blackburn with Darwen. Planning is under way to enhance and increase provision out of the Darwen Knott Street centre and also rural areas. Additional staff are being recruited for this.