

## **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR LEISURE, CULTURE AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

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**PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING  
DIRECTOR: MARTIN EDEN  
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### **DARWEN LIBRARY BUILDING WORK**

The work has now been completed. It was focussed in the foyer area and included repairs to the timber windows, plasterwork in the dome and some glazing fixing on the leaded lights and damaged panels. We have had lots of positive comments from customers since the work was completed.

### **BLACKBURN CENTRAL LIBRARY – EXTERIOR RESTORATION**

Good progress has been made with regard to the stone repairs on King Georges Hall following the removal of the link bridge. Work on the masonry will move forward from September. External hoardings charting the history of Blackburn Library and its services have been erected.

### **SUMMER READING CHALLENGE**

Creepy House, this year's national Summer Reading Challenge is ongoing across the Borough's libraries. Children are encouraged to read 6 books during the summer holidays and can collect various awards and prizes along the way. As well as being great fun, the initiative helps children to keep their reading and literacy skills 'sharp' during the long break from formal learning. To date over 1,300 children have enrolled on the scheme.

### **COTTON TOWN – BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN'S DIGITAL ARCHIVE**

ITM&G and the library staff are working hard to ensure a public access 'go live' date of the new site. The library service has been consulting with service users and representatives from local organisations encouraging feedback and ideas with regard to shaping the look and feel of the site and developing its future content. Outcomes of this work will be picked up as part of Phase 2 of the project, once all the existing content is accessible. A formal launch will take place on 1<sup>st</sup> October.

### **BLACKBURN LEISURE CENTRE DEVELOPMENT**

This 8.5million project is in partnership with Blackburn College on College land and will replace Waves. It is due to open early 2015 and Waves will then close. The objectives for this development are to provide a cost effective centre (costing less than Waves to run), to provide for the primary market of Blackburn but with a wider catchment to bring people into the town centre, particularly families and to ensure that the design is welcoming and encourages participation.

The new centre will have a 6 lane large pool, two flumes into separate aqua-catchers and a small pool with a moveable floor, there will also be a Water Play Zone a very shallow water area with features for small children.

There will be an 80 station fitness suite, an aerobics studio, a steam room and a sauna cabin and a training room. There will also be two sports halls and a performance lab for the college. The community will have use of the sports halls in the evenings and at weekends.

The consultation plans were displayed at the College, at Waves and at Blackburn market plus local coverage in the LET. There were 75 responses to the consultation mostly from users of Waves. Many were very positive most looking forward to a new building, there were a large number of responses about certain types of equipment for the gym, some comments about more women only private sessions not visible from outside and general comments about the programming of the centre. Many of the facility requests will be provided in the new centre such as larger lockers, private showers, no steps to the pools, kids water fun space, close disabled parking.

### **PENNINE LANCASHIRE MUSEUMS**

Blackburn Museum and Turton Tower are both part of the Pennine Lancashire Museums Consortium a group of 9 museum venues operated by 6 different managing organisations. Working together as a group has allowed them to bid for Arts Council strategic funding. The successful bid for £300,000 has allowed the group to continue to investigate the most effective marketing methods. Previous marketing research had shown most new visitors to venues had responded to radio advertising.

This summer a marketing campaign consisting entirely of radio advertising was undertaken to see if on its own this form of advertising can increase visitor numbers to the venues. The results of this evaluation will influence a further marketing campaign that will begin in October.

The funding is being used in a number of other areas. A business development manager has been appointed to increase income generating activities across all the sites. Displays are being improved at some of the venues. Blackburn Museum will also be creating a permanent early history gallery.

### **YOUNG PEOPLES SERVICES**

Off For Fun – Summer 2013

The Young Peoples Service delivered a wide ranging and comprehensive programme of activities for ages 5-19 and all abilities during the six weeks summer holidays. Youth clubs and centres across Blackburn with Darwen staged additional provision during July and August. Some highlights included:

- Adventure Learning activities ie: dinghy sailing, mountain biking, watersports, barge cruises and residential trips.
- Inter-centre sports competitions every Friday in preparation for the National Street Games in Manchester.
- A week long Waterpark's residential.
- MUGA's open every evening throughout the borough.
- Play schemes within Leisure Centres and Community Centres every afternoon throughout the six weeks.
- Mobile play schemes throughout the six weeks in the Borough's parks.

The Leisure Inclusion team also offered all day, all week provision for Children with Disabilities at Kaleidoscope Youth Centre. Activities included dance & movement, cooking, pool tournament, arts & crafts, boccia, wake & shake and sensory activities. Although data is still being collated, initial figures indicate Young Peoples Services have engaged with over 15,000 young people taking part in wide variety of different activities throughout the summer. This is in addition to normal YPS provision which runs continuously throughout the year. Over the coming week's further analysis will be conducted including a comparison to previous years.

## **LEISURE, HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

### **BSF Community Use**

All four BSF schools offer a varied programme of community use 7 days a week including adult learning, sports sessions and health and fitness activities and provide excellent venues for community events. The BSF facilities have been operating for different time periods but each has shown increased attendances as their programme has developed and the community's awareness has improved through better signage, new leaflets and banners and social media engagement. In Quarter 1 2013-14 there have been 27,117 community use attendances across all 4 sites of which 9,390 were juniors. Since the start of BSF Community Use there have been a total of 88,480 attendances which demonstrates the positive contribution BSF schools have in promoting increased participation, learning and skills development.