

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

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**PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING
DIRECTOR: MARTIN EDEN
DATE: 25-9-14**

LEISURE, HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Blackburn Leisure Centre

The sports halls have been successfully handed over to the College in time for the new academic year. One of the sports halls has been equipped with Cricket facilities that meet the English Cricket Board standard. Community use will start in the evenings on a limited basis initially until the rest of the building is handed over in the spring. The pools are being tested for water tightness and the mechanical and electrical works are progressing well, work on the water flumes will start in October.

King George's Hall & Darwen Library Theatre

Darwen Library Theatre has been awarded Strategic Touring funding from the Arts Council in conjunction with Pendle Leisure Trust to develop theatre programming across Blackburn and Darwen. The 'Plugged In' project, which runs until February 2016, will work with existing community groups to programme professional theatre performances into both the King George's Hall and Darwen Library Theatre, alongside a programme of workshops and activities to support the performances.

King George's Hall continues to host an array of shows and events including; Children's Services 'Mini Sing' & 'Big Sing' concerts, Myerscough College Awards & St. Augustine's 50th Anniversary concert, as well as an increasing number of weddings, christenings, private parties along with a varied programme of shows, concerts, club nights and sell-out concerts.

LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICE

The Community Living Room

A successful funding application to Arts Council England has resulted in a grant of £57,740. This will be supplemented with additional funding from Age UK and NHS England. The project's aim is to help reduce social isolation and reach out to older people through arts promotions. Work will focus on three library venues; Blackburn; Darwen and Mill Hill. The project will also provide support for the housebound and they will be encouraged and supported to attend social group. The bid also includes a commission for the development of 'living books', this will involve people telling their stories and storing them digitally on the council's Cotton Town website.

Reveille

The Library and Information Service has been awarded £10,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the delivery of 'Reveille', a project to conserve the borough's First World War Roll of Honour records by creating a digital resource on the Cotton Town website. It will particularly focus on local soldiers remembered on the Thiepval memorial.

The goal is to create a group of 20 volunteers, 10 of whom will be aged between 16 and 25. They will be trained to seek out historical information and support an events programme for local people, as residents will be encouraged to share family memories of the conflict. 'Reveille' is a community-focused initiative with an emphasis on the human story. The project launched in August 2014, the anniversary of the outbreak of the war and will end in July 2015, the centenary of the first Battle of the Somme. This enhancement to the Cotton Town website will provide global and 24/7 access to a rich collection of local records conserved for future generations.

YOUNG PEOPLES SERVICES

Off For Fun Summer 2014

Young Peoples Service delivered a wide range and comprehensive programme of activities for ages 5-19 and all abilities during the summer holidays. Some highlights included:

- Adventure Learning activities i.e.: dinghy sailing, mountain biking, watersports, barge day cruises
- 2 and 3 day residentials throughout the summer
- 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.

In addition, 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. The summer holiday attendance data is still being collated and will be available by the end of September.

Junction4 Skate Park

Construction of the park (ramps and jumps) is now completed ahead of schedule, the building has been repainted throughout and snagging of any remaining issues is well underway to ensure the building is fit for purpose and ready for opening on 20th September. Interest for Junction4 on social media is exceptional, with over 1,600 likes on Facebook since the page was created 2 months ago, and posts reaching over an audience of 5,000 (including international users). In addition, Junction4's Twitter also has 150 followers.