

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

COUNCILLOR DAMIAN TALBOT

PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING
DIRECTOR: MARTIN EDEN
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ARTS AND HERITAGE SERVICE

***Music of Courtly India* – Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery hosts British Museum Partnership Spotlight loan.**

From 30 June until 26 August visitors to Blackburn Museum can see on loan from the British Museum in London, works made in India for courtly patrons including stunning ragamala paintings dating from 1610 and an ivory sarinda instrument from around 1700.

This loan to Blackburn coincides with the 70th anniversary of Indian Independence and partition. *Music of Courtly India* runs alongside *India's Gateway*, a photographic exhibition at Blackburn Museum that aims to capture life in both Gujarat and Mumbai, areas that through trade and migration have developed strong links with the UK and in particular East Lancashire as a result of the textile industries of the past. *Music of Courtly India* is accompanied by a free talk by Dr Imma Ramos, the British Museum's curator of the South Asia collections on July 20 from 5:30-7:30pm.

LEISURE, HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Walk in the Park 2018 - A second year of National Charities Partnership funding (Tesco, British Heart Foundation and Diabetes UK) has been secured following last year's successful family event in Witton Park. This year there will be events at Witton Park on 15th July and Bold Venture Park on 12th August. As well as introducing new extended walks around the parks there will be lots of FREE family fun activities.

Witton Park Events - The athletics season is now in full swing with local schools and colleges using the track for curriculum training, after-school athletics clubs and sports days. Blackburn Harriers have also been busy hosting a Mid-Lancashire Athletics competition, a Youth Development League meeting (lower age group) and also an evening Open Track and Field meeting – all of which have been well attended. The Ribble Valley horse show started their monthly programme in April, which will run until September. These events continue to be very well supported and are popular with both attendees and spectators alike. Other events in the park have included a celebration event for Couch to 5k; 'Walk a Mile' event organised by BwD Carers service; a charity fun run in aid of the Manchester victims and 3 book-themed, family fun toddler trail activity days .

British Cycling 'Ride Active' pilot project;

The borough has been successful in a bid to be a host for British Cycling 'Ride Active' pilot project; one of only two areas selected. Ride Active focusses on the important social aspects of exercise and will offer cycle training in a fun and flexible way aimed at encouraging inactive people, people who have just learnt to pedal but are wobbly, people lacking confidence to cycle and people who have not cycled for some time. Pilot project will start July 2017 for 12-16 weeks.

LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES

Summer Reading Challenge - This year's national scheme for 4 - 12 year olds, running from 1st July to the end of September is called 'Animal Agents'. Children read six books during the summer holidays and win various prizes and awards along the way. Those who complete the scheme will also receive a certificate and a medal. As well as being great fun, the scheme helps children to keep their reading and literacy skills 'sharp' during the long summer holidays. In addition to the usual marketing the scheme will be promoted in school assemblies in the run up to the end of the summer term.

VENUES

KGH and DLT have seen a varied programme of entertainment over the last quarter. Comedy has come in the form of the regular monthly comedy clubs (both KGH and DLT) and through nationally acclaimed acts such as Jon Richardson and Omid Djalili. Live music was represented by Paul Weller, Toyah, You Me at Six and S2S and Kaluki attracted 4,200 people for a weekend of dance music. The Halle Orchestra played "Chopin" and "Dvorak" and The Vienna Festival ballet put on their production of Cinderella. Children's entertainment Milkshake Live over May half term was a well-attended afternoon. KGH also hosted 2 boxing events in the Concert Hall including a successful charity evening.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

The Easter holiday programme was delivered from Monday 10th April to Friday 21st April 2017. A wide variety of activities took place across the Borough, for age ranges from 5 – 19 years.

- Play/Youth projects – every afternoon at leisure centres and community centres.
- MUGAs – every evening at six venues across the borough (2 in each neighbourhood area).
- Programme of Positive Activities – including: Barge and Activity residentials, powerboating, sailing and water fun sessions at Queens Park.

The Leisure Inclusion team also offered full and half day provision for Children with Disabilities at Kaleidoscope Youth Centre. Activities included dance & movement, cooking, Easter arts & crafts, boccia and sensory activities. All other generic youth provision throughout the borough remained open for the duration of the holiday period.

OFF FOR FUN 2017 – Summer Programme

The Off for Fun Summer Programme will commence on Monday 31st July and run until Friday 25th August. Brochures and publicity materials have been distributed to all primary schools within Blackburn with Darwen, Community Centres, Leisure Centres, Libraries, Town Halls etc. In addition, information has also been circulated via the weekly Headteachers bulletin.

A wide variety of activities are available, across the Borough, for all age ranges from 5 – 19 years.

Activities include:

- Play/Youth projects – every afternoon at leisure centres
- MUGA's – every evening at eight venues across the borough
- Programme of Positives Activities – including: Barge and Activity residentials, adventure days, cycling and water fun sessions at Queens Park

Throughout the holiday period, the Leisure Inclusion team will also offer all day provision for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities at Kaleidoscope Youth Centre. Furthermore, for the 8-19 age group, there is an Additional Needs Scheme for children with more moderate needs who can participate in small group activities and a Complex Needs Scheme for children and young people who need 1:1 supervision. Activities will include dance & movement, cooking, arts & crafts, boccia, sensory activities and trips.

All other generic senior youth provision throughout the borough will be open for the duration of the holiday period.

COMMUNITY ASSETS

Following health and safety concerns about the poor condition of the car parks at Greenfields Community Centre and Bangor St Community Centre, the car parks were re-surfaced during week commencing 19th June 2017 to ensure the centres continue to remain accessible and safe for all users.

Lead volunteer Doreen Mitchell retired in April 2017 from Ivy Street Community Centre after volunteering in varying capacities for nearly 30 years since the centre opened in 1988. She has helped to manage the centre for the last four years and has now stepped down from her management position but will continue to help other volunteers if required.