

## REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH & WELLBEING

COUNCILLOR DAMIAN TALBOT

PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING  
DIRECTORS: DOMINIC HARRISON &  
MARTIN EDEN

DATE: 7 October 2021

### PEOPLE: A good quality of life for all our residents

#### Public Health

**Blackburn with Darwen's 'Breastfeeding Friendly Borough** - work has been shortlisted in the Public Health category in this year's LGC awards. Despite the challenges of the COVID pandemic the team have been able to secure permanent signage in Blackburn and Darwen town centres demonstrating the Council's commitment to promoting and protecting breastfeeding in the borough to give our babies the best start in life. This year saw a record number of entries and so to be shortlisted is an outstanding achievement. There have been 12 other local authorities shortlisted in this category, with 5 of those from the North West.

#### Leisure Services

Events finally returned to Witton Park this summer with two very successful music festivals. The established dance music of **Restricted Forest** attracted 5,000 people into the wooded arena in the park on the 31<sup>st</sup> of July; whilst the increasingly popular tribute band festival **Restricted Rocks** took place over the August Bank Holiday weekend and was attended by over 9,000 people. Both events received praise and positive feedback for their organisation and entertainment. The impact and benefit on the local economy from visitors into the borough and the feel good factor generated cannot be underestimated. The success of the events strengthens BwD reputation and puts Witton Park firmly on the map as a go to destination for music and events.

#### Healthy Lifestyles & Wellbeing Service

The BwD Tier 2 Adult weight management service provides a collaborative and integrated approach to preventing and managing obesity and its associated conditions. In line with NICE PH53 recommendations, the service incorporates behaviour change support, nutrition education and physical activity. This support is delivered over a minimum 12 week programme. The BwD approach brings together the broad knowledge and skills from the Local Authority's re:refresh team and 3 other local weight management service providers (BwD Healthy Living, Blackburn Rovers Community Trust, Be Strong CIC), all with the shared purpose of reducing overweight and obesity and improving quality of life for the residents of Blackburn with Darwen. The Wellbeing Service is the central point of access for the service. Referrals can be made via tel. 01254 682037 or email: [wellbeing@blackburn.gov.uk](mailto:wellbeing@blackburn.gov.uk)

**Re:refresh team secures funding to launch new cycle track in Witton Park** - A £18,696 grant has been awarded to BwD re:refresh team to encourage more people to ride a bike, after a successful application to British Cycling's Places to Ride capital grants programme. The funding has been used to provide a marked learn to ride track accessible to all in Witton Park along with 2 adult folding trikes and helmets. Opening of the new cycle track took place on Friday 17th September where the Mayor of Blackburn with Darwen, Councillor Derek Hardman, greeted early years bikers who had been invited to try out the track for the first time.

## **Libraries**

The Summer period has been busy with over 530 people participating in the 6 week summer holiday activities which were offered across all 5 libraries and 700 children enrolled on the Summer Reading Challenge. Blackburn Library played host to Logan the Lystrosaurus who attracted many visitors, as part of the town centre Brickosaurus adventure trail.

Read All About It – newspapers are back! Customers have long been asking for the return of the daily papers, not only for the national and local news stories but also as a conversation starter and a means to get together for a chat with other readers.

## **Arts & Heritage**

**Blackburn with Darwen priority place status** - as part of the publication of its three-year Delivery Plan for 2021–2024 Arts Council England has announced that Blackburn with Darwen will be one of the 15 Priority Places in the North where they want to develop new opportunities for investment. This will hopefully bring many new opportunities for the residents and cultural organisations of the borough. Full details will be released in November 2021.

**British Textile Biennial** - October sees the borough taken over by the British Textile Biennial, the programme spans Pennine Lancashire but there are many highlights in the borough including in Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery, banners on the Town Hall, exhibitions in the Cotton Exchange and Blackburn Cathedral and a retrospective show in Darwen celebrating five decades of Italian Sportswear and global sportswear icons. For more information <https://britishtextilebiennial.co.uk/programme>

## **Venues**

**King George's Hall and Darwen Library Theatre** - finally opened their doors to live events and audiences in July and are looking forward to a packed Autumn programme of comedy, music, spoken work and family shows building up to a spectacular Pantomime season. This year's KGH pantomime is Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs presented by a new partnership with Shone Productions Ltd and featuring an all-star cast including Strictly Come Dancing Champion Katya Jones.

**Centenary Celebrations** - October sees the start of a very special 12 months for King George's Hall as it marks the beginning of its centenary year. This impressive building deserves to be celebrated in style over the next 12 months and is an opportunity to celebrate not only 100 years since KGH opened but to celebrate the recovery of the town, borough and the cultural sector after a most challenging of times. King George's Hall's centenary year will start with an all-star party night on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> October, a Halle classical concert on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> and then a massive dance night on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> October with DJ Judge Jules. Throughout the next 12 months there will be many other evenings of celebrations and events to enjoy and get involved in – visit [www.bwdvenues.com](http://www.bwdvenues.com) for more information.