

## ***Report to the Council***

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date:** 28 September 2010

**Subject:** Leisure and Wellbeing

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Mrs R Gadsby

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### **Recommending:**

**That the report from the Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder be noted.**

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### **Leisure/sports facilities**

Following recent meetings with the Council's leisure Providers, SLM, we are now very close to finalising the agreement with to extend their existing contract to January 2016. Members will recall that investment in facilities was one of the key components of the extension and I can inform members that all the alterations and improvements at the Loughton Leisure Centre have been satisfactorily completed. New fitness equipment is to be provided at Epping and Ongar centres over the forthcoming year or so.

### **Olympic Games**

I want firstly to inform members about what is called the "Look and Feel" of the games. "Look and Feel" refers to the decoration of local communities with banners and flags etc, and the "Look and Feel" guide from LOCOG which sets out what we will be able to do has now been published. Broxbourne, as the host authority, has been awarded finance from Government to purchase materials from this guide. Some of that finance will be made available for those parts of this District which are close to the white water venue. Officers from both Councils are currently considering what might be possible ahead of Broxbourne submitting the overall proposals to LOCOG. I will keep Members informed as this process moves forward.

The second topic of interest is that of the first full test event which took place at the white water centre over the weekend of the 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> of July. The event was attended by officers and members from all of the relevant authorities and agencies and was considered to be a success. Further testing will be required, not only of the venue as such, but also it's associated emergency planning/resilience arrangements.

I am also pleased to report that the agreement with the Olympic Games Organisers for the use of North Weald Airfield as a park and ride facility for the white water events has been satisfactorily concluded.

## **Community Services**

### **London 2012 Open Weekend**

With just one year to go to the start of the London 2012 Olympic Games, EFDC's Community Services in partnership with Tottenham Hotspur Foundation and Waltham Abbey Town Council, put on a free festival for local young people on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> July at the Town Mead Recreation Ground in Waltham Abbey.

Over 300 young people and families came out on a glorious summer's day to enjoy the activities and events that had been laid on. Fantastic use was made of the new Skate Park, exhibiting the fearless talents of those taking part in the skateboarding and BMX bike competitions co-ordinated by The Abbey Bike Shop and Community Development. Chairman of Epping Forest District Council, Ken Angold-Stephens presented the competition winners with their prizes and Mandeville, the 2012 Paralympics Mascot also came along to support the event, and meet everyone there.

Tottenham Hotspur Foundation Football provided coaching sessions and expert Freestyler demonstrations for budding young football fanatics. Health Works encouraged young people to participate in a healthy lifestyle quiz whilst promoting its summer activities for 11-19 year olds in the Waltham Abbey area and the popularity of the henna tattoo and nail art stalls was obvious from the queues which surrounded them. Epping Forest Arts held screenings of the skateboard classic "Lords of Dogtown" and last year's hit film "Streetdance The Movie", followed by a Hip Hop masterclass from 'Game' one of the film's stars.

### **Limes Farm Hall**

The re-development of Limes Farm Hall is progressing extremely well and the building now has a completed roof and main structure. Work is now being undertaken to complete the installation of windows and exterior finishes and the internal layout is taking shape. The hall is due for completion in November and is promising to be a fantastic community hub for the area.

In addition, the Arts Team have started working with various community groups on Limes Farm estate to create pieces of art which will be sited throughout the new building. Some of the work made will also be included in the District Museum's touring Exhibition *China in the East*. The work at Limes Farm will also form part of the Essex Summer of Art event, and the Leap Festival in 2012.

### **Summer programme**

Record numbers of children attended the summer Playschemes. This year Community Development catered for even more children with specialist care requirements and worked closely with social workers to provide places for children who have specific needs, including children who have severe learning difficulties including; Asperger's, autism, Global Learning Delay Disorder plus children with emotional and behavioural needs. Additionally there has been a rise in the number of 'looked after' children attending Playschemes.

"Green Team" activities for children aged 5 - 11 were immensely popular once again. Environmental activity sessions included; bug hunting, pond dipping, forest survival

skills and den building. Play in the Park sessions were also extremely well attended throughout the summer.

21 arts events were held throughout the district, and were attended by 800 children, young people and families over the summer, with nearly every event sold out. Events ranged from a theatre tour in local libraries, the Wot A Palaver family fun day, and various workshops including hiphop dance, animation and music. Feedback from audiences and participants was overwhelmingly positive with the high quality and value for money of events being consistently praised.

253 young people attended sports and health development sessions over the summer. The sessions included football, cycling, trampolining, outdoor fitness, self defence, capoeira and cricket. In addition, 198 young people aged between 11-19 years old in Waltham Abbey attended HealthWorks sessions over the summer for sessions including trampolining, football, Street dance, cheerleading, multi sports and gym/fitness.

### **Celebrate! Training**

Community Services are working with Loughton Town Council to deliver a free training event for local groups planning to hold events in 2012. The first workshop which takes place on 14<sup>th</sup> September at Loughton Town Council

### **The Elvis Presley Fanclub**

There will be a screening of the documentary made over the summer by a group of people with learning disabilities about local pop group Reachback at the District Museum on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September. The film was made in partnership with VAEF, and the event in September marks the end of the Museum's *I Love Music* exhibition.

### **Young People's Safety**

Epping Forest Youth Council have officially launched their "How Safe are U?" DVD at St Mary's Church in Loughton. The Youth Council produced the DVD for local secondary schools in order to raise pupil's awareness of safety issues. Key message include advice on using public transport, looking after belongings, alcohol awareness and general personal safety tips.

Youth Councillors have also been successful in their bid to secure £900 from the O2 "Think Big" scheme to support three community initiatives; the Ninefields Intergenerational Fun Day in Waltham Abbey, a Play in the Forest event in October half term and part funding for the "Young Person's Guide to Reporting Crime" card.

### **District Museum**

Hundreds of families have enjoyed art and craft activities at the District Museum over the summer holidays, including 80+ children and their families visiting the Museum on Tuesday afternoons, to make a variety of crafts inspired by the *I Love Music* exhibition including paper plate maracas and box guitars.

For the London 2012 Open Weekend in July, visitors undertook a 'Mammoth Challenge' to see who could create the most colourful mini mammoths from recycled milk cartons.

On Saturday 6 August, over 300 people came to the annual Family Fun Day which included the very popular 'Little Red Riding Hood' puppet show and outdoor activities in the Museum garden with younger visitors enjoying sand and water pits while young people and adults created beautiful butterflies and dragonflies out of willow.

On Saturday 20 August, over 150 people enjoyed a special tea tasting and blending workshop with an expert on the subject, a prelude to the China in the East exhibition which forms part of the London 2012 Stories of the World project. The exhibition, which opens in July 2012, will showcase Chinese collections from eastern region museums as well as new artwork created by young people, including the work created by Epping Forest Arts and residents/groups on the Limes Farm Estate for the newly refurbished Limes Farm Hall.

From Friday 15 July to Friday 29 July 2011, Dietmar Doerr from Waltham Abbey's twin town, Hoerstel, was at the museum showcasing a collection of weights and measures. His collection includes Roman weights, coin weights, fish weights and diamond scales. Dietmar is a member of the International Society of Antique Scale Collectors. His engaging manner and enthusiasm for his collection really appealed to our visitors who all enjoyed meeting with him.

The museum's new summer exhibition, 'I Love Music' has been attracting a wide audience, proving especially popular with young people from across the District and beyond. The exhibition was also featured on Absolute Radio's 'Things to Do' section which has attracted some new visitors. The exhibition showcases the talent and influence of music artists, bands, radio and venues of the eastern region and features a 1960s dress worn by Essex pop icon Sandie Shaw and a 1975 poster of Knebworth Park Festival, both on loan from the Victoria and Albert Museum. The exhibition will be on display until 27 September 2011 and will then tour the eastern region.

On Saturday 24 September, between 11am and 3pm, the museum will be showcasing local musical talent to mark the end of the 'I Love Music' exhibition. The day will include performances by local youth band, 'Reachback' plus a film screening of 'The Elvis Presley Fan Club meet...', a documentary produced by the people with learning difficulties working with Epping Forest Arts and VAEF.

In the autumn the Museum Service is planning to celebrate its 30<sup>th</sup> Birthday since the doors opened at the District Museum in Sun Street, Waltham Abbey although the story of the Museum is much longer than this with earlier versions of the Museum existing before the decision was taken to take over the premises in Waltham Abbey. A special exhibition will open to the public on the 8<sup>th</sup> October.