
OVERVIEW OF LEISURE PORTFOLIO

Purpose of Report

1. During the last eight-week cycle the following were the main areas of work under my Leisure Portfolio.

Social Inclusion

Black History Month

2. To celebrate Black History Month, the Arts Centre and partners programmed a range of workshops during the October half term school holiday. Children and young people experienced a range of authentic music and arts including Arts Isiziba who performed authentic drumming, songs and arts.
3. Local artist Naina Malde held a story telling workshop illustrating Divali and an arts and crafts workshop where children created small Rangoli mats.
4. Local celebrity and winner of BBC1 “Strictly Dance Fever” Darrien Wright hosted dance workshops with young people. To conclude the celebrations the dance group performed to an audience of family and friends.

Asian Lifestyle Event

5. An Asian Lifestyle Event took place at Darlington Arts Centre on Sunday 5 November 2006 between 1.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m.
6. A range of authentic dance and music provided a visual and acoustic atmosphere with a variety of Asian food offered to participants. In addition there was an opportunity to purchase Asian arts and crafts and traditional clothing.
7. The event was organised by the Darlington Bangladeshi Association in association with Darlington Borough Council, SureStart, YMCA, Fair Share, Central Community Partnerships, Asha Group and the Children’s Fund.
8. The aim of the event is to reach out to Asians and non-Asians bringing them together to celebrate cultural diversity to break down social cultural barriers. All proceeds from the event will be given to the British Heart Foundation.

Dolphin Centre Refurbishment

9. The Dolphin Centre refurbishment continues to make steady progress. The new catering facilities were completed and operational for the Mayor's Ball 2006 and the main sports hall has been resurfaced.
10. The Communications Strategy that has been delivered alongside the refurbishment project has been recognised by the Chartered Institute of Public Relations as a model of good practice and short listed for a national award.

Art Centre Refurbishment

11. The first phase Arts Centre refurbishment is almost complete. The new dance space has been completed and already hosted two successful theatre performances for Children. Access and facilities in the new areas have been greatly improved with fully accessible dressing rooms for artists and a chair lift for access to the Garden Bar.

Eastbourne Sports Complex

12. Zone Active Project launched a new six-a-side football league for 13-15 year olds on the 1st November 2006. The league will hold a maximum of 12 teams and will run as an eight-week pilot with a view to expanding in 2007.

Sport and Physical Activity Development

13. The Sports Development team has implemented the first coach wide database system for Darlington. This has been set up to help ensure that all coaches who deliver sessions in schools and the community are fully qualified, have the relevant CRB Checks and have attended the relevant CPD (Chartered Personal Development) courses.
14. The Breakfast and After School Clubs commenced at Dodmire Primary School and Skerne Park Primary School in September 2006. The clubs are delivered through the Zone Active Project with over 70 children attending on a weekly basis.
15. In partnership with Darlington Swimming Club and the ASA the Leisure Services team are supporting a bid for a full time community swimming sports coach who will be based at the Dolphin Centre. If successful they will work within the swimming club as head coach and deliver on a high quality swimming programme ensuring a school club link with all of the schools in Darlington.

Lifestyle On Referral Scheme

16. Following a comprehensive review of Darlington's existing GP Referral scheme, Leisure Services and Darlington PCT have now appointed a Lifestyles Coordinator, Philip Crosby. Since the appointment of the Lifestyle Coordinator the current GP Referral Scheme has undergone review, ready to develop a broader menu of services for patients.
17. From 15 January 2007, a new 12-week Lifestyle on Referral programme will be implemented. The new course will consist of exercise on referral within the Dolphin Centre, community based courses such as a chronic back pain clinic, a specialist obesity courses in partnership with the Pioneering Care Partnership, fitness and relaxation classes for mental health patients and Arts On Prescription delivered by the Arts Centre.

Summer Activities Programme

18. The Leisure and Arts programme of activities ran successfully over the summer with an increase in participation from the previous year. An extensive programme of activities took place during the October Half Term with activities such as Star Track Athletics at the Dolphin Centre and a Fundamentals activity week at the Education Village. The purpose of the week was to encourage those who may not usually participate in Sport and Physical Activity to take part.
19. Physical activity provision (through the Zone Active Project) for Key Stage 3 & 4 EOTAS (Education Other Than At School) based at McMullen House and Gladstone Street commenced in September 2006. The aim of the project is to encourage young people to participate in further activities and to complete a junior or Community Sports Leaders Award.

Arts Development

National School Film Week

20. To celebrate National Schools' Film Week (18th – 22nd October 2006) "Over The Hedge", an animated film was screened at the Arts Centre. Over 400 children and their teachers from three schools attended the free of charge event. For many of the children this was their first time visiting a cinema and the Arts Centre.

Family Learning Week

21. As part of Family Learning Week (19th October – 3rd November) the Arts Development Team are working in partnership with young children and families from SureStart based in McNay Street.
22. The arts based project is to create a 25 feet Guy Fawkes for the centre of the bonfire at the Firework Spectacular 2006 on 4 November at the South Park. The project is an excellent opportunity to encourage young families to participate in a community arts project coupled SureStart's initiative of the Family Learning Week.

Full On Futures 2006 Event

23. The Full On Futures Event took place on 13 – 17 November 2006 at the Education Village in conjunction with Beaumont Hill Special School's Vocational Status Launch.
24. The event organisers Carolyn Barker from Beaumont Hill School and Josie Stewart from Creative Partnerships planned a range of creative, enterprising and inspiring talks, presentations, activities, performances and workshops at the Education Village during the Enterprise Week.
25. A number of creative industries and businesses from the region held workshops sharing their creative and business professionalism with children and young people. Activities included a weeklong competitive business task for Year 10 pupils and performing arts workshops in dance, drama and aerial trapeze for lower school pupils.
26. It is estimated that 600 children and young people attended the event. 8 businesses held workshops and task based project work with year 10 pupils and 3 performance groups and workshop for children from Beaumont Hill, Haughton and Springfield.

Visual Arts

Myles Meehan Gallery

27. Lens based artist Lindsay Duncanson exhibiting "Homescapes" in the Myles Meehan Gallery from 22 September – 4 November 2006. The exhibition developed a body of work that first emerged through a commission with curator Wendy Scott in 2002.
28. Lindsay's work explored the notions that we use to frame ourselves within our lives and landscapes. She used illusions in geometry the mind creates to cushion us against the immensity of nature and the world thus exposing the vulnerability that these constructs protect us from. The exhibition illustrates these structures and shapes signifying our connection of the home.

Marketing and Sponsorship

29. The Marketing Team are in discussions with local businesses to securing partnership packages with Darlington Football Club, SAKs Hair & Beauty and Bertie Clothing as part of the NEW Fit 4 Life packages where members will now benefit from a 10% discount at the above businesses.
30. Capita Symonds and media partner Cleveland Radio sponsored this year's R & B Festival which took place on 14-17 September 2006
31. Roman Ltd sponsored a performance by the Northern Sinfonia at the Civic Theatre on 10 October 2006.
32. Raj Bari restaurant in Yarm have agreed a three-year contract to sponsor the Durham Tees Valley Airport car park roundabout.

Employee Awards 2006

33. The Employee Awards 2006 took place on Monday 6 November 2006 at the Dolphin Centre. The main sponsors of the event Computers in Personnel and RH Associates have also sponsored the corporate Learning and Development Award.

Collections

34. The study centre continues to attract a wide variety of enquiries, which are increasingly received by email via the website from researchers across the country. The new Keeper of Collections joined the museum at the beginning of October and is currently getting to know the collections. Day-to-day work to ensure that the museum's catalogue is kept up to date and the objects are all stored to archival standards continues.
35. The museum was recently visited by the great-great-great-granddaughter of John Pease, who was prominent during the early years of the S&DR. As a result, the museum has been given Pease's personal set of Minutes from railway board meeting in 1847, which were posted to his home as he had been unable to attend the meeting owing to the death of his son. This important archival document is a wonderful addition to the collections and the family were delighted that museum staff were keen to keep in touch in case any future material came to light.

Access

36. The recently appointed Museum Access Officer has been developing contacts with relevant organisations and other Council Departments, and starting to make plans for future community-based outreach activities. Over the half term week, the museum will be hosting activities targeted at families, including drama workshops and art and craft activities. Participation in this is being promoted through SureStart and selected primary schools.
37. The two-day Community Railfest event was held in the last weekend of September. The event was declared a success as it attracted 1,399 visitors to the museum, with over 10,000 visitors estimated to have visited the main event at Bank Top station.
38. The museum is now planning for the witches and wizards Halloween gathering at the end of October. The event is marketed towards family fun with added attractions such as an owl and bird handler.

Library Activities

39. There was a week of 'Karibu' events in 'The Word' for half term. Karibu is an African Project based in Middlesbrough and the Connexions Service paid for the events. There were displays of African artifacts from Durham Learning Resources, lots of African textiles and crafts on show. Daily events including: African drumming (very popular, very loud and great fun for all). African crafts and mask making (best attended event) with 59 people crowding the tables to take part. There was also storytelling and poetry.

40. Representatives of two of the adult reading groups (of which we have a total of 6 now, meeting in the library and several others supported with books but run independently) were involved in 'shadowing' the Booker prize this year. The groups read as many of the books as they could, enjoyed a trip to London to meet the Booker panel chair and publishers representatives, and finally came up with a winner - which was the same as the panel's.
41. There are 19 adult education classes running in the libraries with a total of 155 learners. The number of learners is increasing and there is difficulty finding enough space to put on all the courses, which people want to do!

Councillor Lee Vasey
Cabinet Member with Leisure Portfolio