

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

LEISURE and ARTS ADVISORY BOARD

16 March 2009

Report of the Chief Leisure Officer

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

Summary

This report updates Members regarding preparations for this year's event.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Heritage Open Days celebrates England's architecture and culture by offering free access to properties that are usually closed to the public or normally charge for admission. Coordinated nationally by the Civic Trust in partnership with English Heritage, the event thrives on the enthusiasm and expertise of local people and volunteers. This year the event will take place during the weekend of Saturday 12 and Sunday 13 September 2009.

1.1.2 It is a partnership event, with parish/town councils and local historical societies gathering support on the ground in local communities across the borough. This year, the Council is working closely with The Malling Society and Tonbridge Civic Society to help increase community involvement, and also market the opportunities available.

1.1.3 Letters have been sent to previous participants and parish/town councils to encourage their participation. These letters have been sent on behalf of the Mayor Elect to help raise the profile of the event. To help inspire new properties onto the scheme, news releases will be sent to the local media. The event will also be featured in the Council's Here & Now and Leisure Guide publications, both of which will be distributed door-to-door to residents across the borough. There will also be a dedicated page on the Council's website where people can register to take part.

1.2 Marketing

1.2.1 A leaflet listing all the venues and opening times will be available in Tourist Information Centres, libraries and Council owned leisure facilities from the beginning of July 2009. The public will be able to download a copy of the leaflet from a dedicated page on the Council's website. For those properties who register by 1 May 2009, their details will be published in The Guardian newspaper.

- 1.2.2 The Civic Trust's website www.heritageopendays.org lists what places of interest are open nationally throughout the weekend.

1.3 Tonbridge Castle Medieval Fair

- 1.3.1 This year the Medieval Fair, which was established as part of the Council's Tour de France celebrations, will take place during the same weekend as Heritage Open Days. Once again, the Council is delivering this event in partnership with J and J Events. Activities at the Castle will take place over both days. By combining two events, it is hoped that the publicity generated for both will help increase visitor numbers to the Castle and raise awareness of the Castle as a local tourist attraction. Admission to the event is free of charge. The timetable is as follows:

Saturday 12 September		Sunday 13 September	
11.30am	Arming of the Knight	11.00am	Sevenoaks & Tonbridge Concert Band
12 noon	Combat Display	12 noon	Arming of the Knight
12.45pm	Falconry Display	12.30pm	Combat Display
1.30pm	Bosco the Jester	1.30pm	Falconry Display
2.30pm	Arming of the Knight	2.00pm	Bosco the Jester
3.00pm	Combat Display	3.00pm	Sevenoaks & Tonbridge Concert Band
3.45pm	Falconry Display	4.00pm	Falconry Display
4.30pm	Bosco the Jester		

1.4 Art on the Railings

- 1.4.1 As in previous years, local artists Platonic will be co-ordinating the Art on the Railings exhibition throughout this weekend. This event attracts approximately 20 local artists who display and sell their work alongside the River Medway in front of Tonbridge Castle's South Curtain Wall.

1.5 Legal Implications

- 1.5.1 None.

1.6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.6.1 Access to the Medieval Fair and to properties participating in Heritage Open Days is free of charge to visitors. In the majority of cases, the Heritage Open Days are run by volunteers in the local community. The cost to the Council relates primarily to staff time and the printing of leaflets, which can be met from the 2009/10 revenue budget. Other costs relating to the Medieval Fair include the combat display, the jester and the falconry display. These elements are funded from within the existing Tourism and Promotions revenue budget

1.7 Risk Assessment

- 1.7.1 Once participants have submitted forms to the Civic Trust, they automatically receive public liability insurance cover for the days that its properties are open. A

separate Risk Assessment and Event Management Plan will be produced in liaison with the Council's Health and Safety Officer for the Medieval Fair.

1.8 Policy Considerations

1.8.1 Community.

Background papers:

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Nil

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