

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

LEISURE and ARTS ADVISORY BOARD

22 September 2010

Report of the Chief Leisure Officer

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 TONBRIDGE ARTS FESTIVAL

Summary

The report updates Members on the confirmed programme for the inaugural Tonbridge Arts Festival, organised by a community led Committee.

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 In July 2009 the Council was approached by Tonbridge School to reinstate the School's original Arts Festival concept but to broaden the range and appeal by making it a community-wide event. At the same time, the Council became aware that West Kent College wanted to devise a literary event in partnership with Tonbridge Library. As both events were likely to attract a similar audience, it was suggested that these organisations worked together to deliver an Arts Festival for the local community.
- 1.1.2 A Committee was formed with representatives from Tonbridge School, West Kent College, Hillview School for Girls, Tonbridge Library and this Council. The Chairman is a local resident who has a keen interest in the arts and is currently Chair of Little Bridge Theatre and has taken part in projects organised by Claque Theatre Company. The Festival patron is well known comic Arthur Smith.
- 1.1.3 The Tonbridge Arts Festival constitution includes the following objectives:
- Deliver a week-long Arts Festival encompassing a wide variety of art forms.
 - Deliver performances by world-class artists and local amateur groups in different venues across Tonbridge.
 - To bring the joy of the arts to the people of Tonbridge and beyond.
 - Implement a ticket price policy which encourages "fair access for all".
 - Include free events where possible.

1.2 Event Programme

- 1.2.1 Three sub groups were formed to concentrate on delivering a programme of performing, visual and literary arts events over the duration of the Festival.

1.3 Performing Arts

- 1.3.1 A wide-ranging programme of performing arts events has been incorporated into the programme. These include classical concerts, comedy performances (Arthur Smith, assisted by local comedian Stephen Upsall), drama workshops (delivered by Louise Jameson), Kent's Got Talent, salsa band concert and workshop, a Tonbridge Ghost Walk created and performed by West Kent College students as well as an evening with international magician Jonathan Shotton.
- 1.3.2 A series of performing arts workshops will take place at Hillview School for Girls and include the following: circus skills and clowning, singing for musical theatre, dancing for musical theatre (with Sister Act's Ivan De Freitas) songwriting, mask and movement (with the Lion King's Jamie Simmons) and acting for TV with IT Crowd's Adam Leese.
- 1.3.3 To try and encourage young people to attend the Festival, an evening of live music by well known local bands that have played at the Forum in Tunbridge Wells, will take place at Tonbridge School in Big School Hall.
- 1.3.4 The Original Bucks Fizz will be performing some of their greatest hits at West Kent College's new Media and Arts Centre. The concert will include their three No 1 singles; "Making Your Mind Up", "Land of Make Believe" and "My Camera Never Lies". With more than ten albums and chart and touring success all over the world, Bucks Fizz is one of the most popular and enduring pop groups from the eighties and promises to bring the Festival to a close in spectacular style.

1.4 Literary Arts

- 1.4.1 The Literary sub group has commissioned the following events:

Rob Parkinson – is the Festival's story teller in residence for the duration of the event. He will perform Bedtime Stories for 4 – 7 year olds at Tonbridge Library and deliver workshops at West Kent College and Tonbridge Library.

Josephine Cox - best-selling author of '*The Journey*', '*Songbird*', '*Journey's End*', '*Born Bad*' and '*Blood Brothers*'. She is widely recognised for her authorship of immensely popular North Country sagas. Josephine will talk about her books and inspiration.

The Joe Craig Show - *one of the best spy kids authors... outstanding at both writing and plotting.*" *The Times*. The six books in his award-winning Jimmy Coates series have won over young fans across the world and converted thousands of previously reluctant readers with an electric mix of action, suspense and thrilling twists

Heist – a talk by Howard Sounes - the author Howard Sounes will talk about his book *Heist* giving an account of the largest cash robbery in UK history, which took place in February 2006 at the Securitas depot in Vale Road, Tonbridge.

An afternoon with Jane Austen – Walk, Talk and Church Service - an afternoon exploring one of literature's greatest writers, Jane Austen, with a fascinating guided walk around Tonbridge, followed by an informative talk from Councillor Vivian Branson, from the Jane Austen Society, Kent Branch, culminating with an 'Austen' themed church service.

1.5 Visual Arts

1.5.1 Events organised by the Visual Arts sub group include:

The Big Picture – based on Rolf Harris's giant portrait project where he led a group of more than 100 artists to recreate a giant canvas of a famous portrait of King Henry VIII, Tonbridge Art Group will be re-creating this concept as part of the Festival with a painting located by the River Medway in the grounds of Tonbridge Castle. School children and residents are encouraged to take part and paint one of the 221 panels to help finish the piece before the final picture is unveiled.

Platonic Fish Project – Platonic is a group of five local women artists who have been working with primary schools to create an installation of fish made from recycled materials. Focussing on the river that flows through Tonbridge, children have been encouraged to use their imagination to create fish of all shapes and sizes from plastic bottles and bags, tin cans, cardboard and other used materials. All the fish will be on display around Tonbridge for the duration of the Festival.

Open Art Exhibition - the Open Art Exhibition is calling for artists who live or work in the borough of Tonbridge and Malling. Artists aged 16+ are invited to submit 2D work in any medium for selection by sculptor Guy Portelli, South East Open Studios Chairman, Rod McIntosh and Liberty Gallery owner, Patsy Dixon. A percentage of proceeds from sales is being donated to the Hospice in the Weald and Guy Portelli is creating an award for the best piece in the show in memory of Jenny Brunger who was cared for by the Hospice.

An Evening with Guy Portelli - Guy Portelli is a renowned sculptor who has been creating exciting, dramatic pieces of work since the 1980s. He recently became a household name with his highly successful appearance on the BBC's *Dragon's Den*, which resulted in a bidding war between the dragons! Guy will be talking about his work and his *Dragon's Den* experience.

Tonbridge Film Makers Workshop - Tonbridge Film Makers will host a video film workshop to help people get better results from their camcorder and to improve their editing skills.

1.5.2 A full list of Festival events can be found in on the Festival website, detailed at sub-section 1.7.1.

1.6 Venues

- 1.6.1 Events will take place in various venues throughout the town. These include Tonbridge Castle, The Angel Centre, Hillview School for Girls, West Kent College's new Media and Art Centre, Tonbridge School's EM Forster Theatre, as well as Tonbridge Library, Mojoes, Slug and Lettuce and Café Nero. St Stephen's Church and Tonbridge Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul will also be hosting various Festival related activities.

1.7 Marketing and Promotion

- 1.7.1 West Kent College students have built a website www.tonbridgeartsfestival.co.uk for the Festival which lists all the event details such as activity, date, time, venue and ticket prices. Tickets will go on sale from 1 September and can be purchased in advance from The Angel Centre.
- 1.7.2 A programme detailing all Festival events will be available from all Festival related venues. The programme will be distributed door to door to residents and circulated widely throughout the town. The Courier has come on board as the official media sponsor for the event.

1.8 Sponsorship

- 1.8.1 The Committee has worked hard to source sponsorship for the Festival from a variety of organisations and interested parties. To date £13,300 has been raised for this inaugural event. This includes a grant from Grassroots of £4,950 and a contribution of £2,000 from the Council's arts programme. Other sponsorship has been obtained from Tonbridge Audi (£1,000), Warners (£1,000) and Bespokes Accountants (£1,000). Sponsorship packages have been created to give key funders various levels of hospitality and advertising.

1.9 Legal Implications

- 1.9.1 Tonbridge Arts Festival Committee hold public liability insurance for the overall event which will particularly focus on events such as the art installations at Tonbridge Castle or Angel Walk. Each venue hosting a performance or workshop will operate under its own insurance policies. All artists contracted to the event will have to produce their own public liability insurance certificates and have Criminal Record Bureau clearance.

1.10 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.10.1 £2,000 has been allocated from the Council's arts programme to assist with the Festival, representing excellent value for money.

1.11 Risk Assessment

- 1.11.1 Tonbridge Arts Festival Committee will ensure that each venue has its own risk assessments in place.

1.12 Policy Considerations

1.12.1 Community. Healthy Lifestyles.

Background papers:

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Nil

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