

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

LEISURE and ARTS ADVISORY BOARD

26 February 2013

Report of the Chief Leisure Officer

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 TONBRIDGE ARTS FESTIVAL

Summary

The purpose of this report is to update Members on preparations being made for this year's event.

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Members will be aware that Tonbridge Arts Festival was established in 2010. The aim of the Tonbridge Arts Festival is to bring the joy of the arts to the people of Tonbridge. Ticket prices are low, and many events are free of charge, to allow as many people as possible to share in the excitement of the Festival. The event is organised by a Committee which is made up with representatives from K College, Tonbridge School, Hillview School for Girls and Tonbridge Library. The Council is also represented on the Committee.
- 1.1.2 Key partners represented on the Committee provide staff resources, use of venues, marketing facilities, financial support (where appropriate) and event management advice to ensure the Festival is delivered effectively and that health and safety requirements are met. The Committee is chaired by local resident and arts enthusiast, Andy Brett.
- 1.1.3 Initially the Committee agreed that the ten day arts Festival would take place every two years. Last summer, an exciting programme of literary, visual and performing arts activities was delivered across the town. As a result of the support received for the event from all areas of the community, the Committee felt a 'Mini Festival' should be held to maintain the profile and build on the success of the event in 2013.
- 1.1.4 Simultaneously, the Council was considering its options with regard to the three day Festival of Music. The Council entered into discussions with Tonbridge Arts Festival Committee proposing that the programming of the Festival of Music be incorporated into Tonbridge Arts Festival and co-ordinated by its Committee.
- 1.1.5 It was agreed that the 'Mini Festival' should reflect the Music Festival's original roots by incorporating popular music that would appeal to a wide audience,

include community involvement and work with local schools. The need for tickets to be reasonably priced was also acknowledged.

- 1.1.6 The Tonbridge Arts Festival Committee agreed to take on the project and work with the Council. Tonbridge Castle would be the main focal point for the Festival and the three day event would follow in the same format as the ten day programme, incorporating various literary, performing and visual arts activities taking place at different venues across the town.

1.2 2013 Arts Festival Programme

- 1.2.1 The main events for this year's Festival are as follows:

Date	Daytime Event	Evening Event
Friday 5 July	Kate Mosse – Author visit at Tonbridge Library	Killer Queen at Tonbridge Castle
Saturday 6 July	Schools Castle Drama performances at Tonbridge Castle	Proms at Tonbridge Castle
	“Introducing Jane Austen: her life and works” at Tonbridge Library	
	Street theatre performances	
Sunday 7 July	Music performances at Tonbridge Castle.	Grease Sing –a- Long at EM Forster Theatre
	Hand Jive world record attempt at Tonbridge Castle.	

1.3 Daytime Events

- 1.3.1 To tie in with the literary theme, Tonbridge Library will be hosting an author visit by Kate Mosse on Friday 5 July. Kate Mosse is an English author and broadcaster who is best known for her 2005 novel Labyrinth, which has been translated into more than 37 languages.
- 1.3.2 During the day at Tonbridge Castle on Saturday 6 July, four local schools will be performing drama pieces on the Castle Lawn. The Committee will be working with Hillview, Judd, Longmead and Woodlands to deliver this element of the Festival. A professional drama facilitator (Colette Redgrave) will work with the schools to devise performances using ‘castle’ as the theme. Whilst it is anticipated the four schools will create very different concepts, part of the criteria is that all four schools will work on a combined piece to mark the end of the performance. The plays will take place on the Saturday afternoon, before the Proms concert.
- 1.3.3 For Jane Austen enthusiasts, Vivian Branson will host an afternoon literary presentation entitled “Introducing Jane Austen: her life and works”. This will take place on Saturday afternoon at Tonbridge Library. Other activities throughout the day include street theatre performances, which will take place at various locations across the town on Saturday throughout the day.

- 1.3.4 Music performances of all genres will be the focus of activities at Tonbridge Castle on Sunday 7 July. Local groups, be they jazz, brass, wind bands, choral societies or contemporary musicians will be invited to perform on stage between 2pm-5pm.
- 1.3.5 An exciting new development as part of the Festival includes the Committee's plans to attempt a Guinness World Record on the Castle Lawn! Linking in with the Grease-sing-along, the Committee has contacted the Guinness World Record organisation to see if it is possible to hold a record attempt of the most amount of people doing the 'hand jive' (from the film) at the same time. 400 participants are needed to help break the record. Tonbridge Arts Festival will work with professional dance facilitators who will co-ordinate the choreography.

1.4 Evening Events

- 1.4.1 Killer Queen are performing at the Castle on Friday evening. The band was formed in 1993 and by 1995 the band's UK popularity had grown to such an extent that they secured a residency in London's Strand Theatre becoming the first tribute act to have a show in the West End. As well as touring in the UK, Killer Queen have performed in Europe and Russia. On returning from this particular tour, Killer Queen won an award for 'Worldwide Best Tribute Band'.
- 1.4.2 On Saturday evening there will be a proms concert with firework finale, performed by two local organisations, Bacchus Wind Orchestra and Sevenoaks & Tonbridge Concert Band. Both groups have been advised of the style of programme required and will provide a play list once both Musical Directors have met to discuss how the performance will work.
- 1.4.3 Whilst both organisations are run as amateur wind bands, they have a wealth of experience between them, performing to a high standard and in prestigious venues locally as well as at the Queen Elizabeth Hall in London.
- 1.4.4 A Grease sing-a-long show will take place at the EM Forster Theatre at Tonbridge School. It is a fully interactive show that gets the audience singing and dancing in the aisles. The audience is encouraged to dress up as characters from the film. The evening will begin with a live show in which a compere will lead the audience through a vocal warm up, judge the fancy dress competition and award prizes. Goody bags are then given out and the host then shows the audience how to use the items in the bag throughout the film. Audience participation is essential. Then it's time to sit back and watch one of most popular films of all time.

1.5 Ticket Prices

- 1.5.1 The afternoon events and activities are being provided free of charge with the exception of the Kate Mosse visit to Tonbridge Library, which will be priced at approximately £5 per ticket.
- 1.5.2 For the evening events the Tonbridge Castle Proms and Grease sing a-long have adult tickets priced at £15 and concessions at £10, with family tickets at £40. The

Killer Queen performance will be £20 for adults and £15 for concession and £55 for a family ticket. A discount will be offered to those that purchase tickets in advance for the Killer Queen and Tonbridge Castle Proms performances before 30 April.

1.6 Ticket Sales

- 1.6.1 Tickets for both the Killer Queen event and Tonbridge Castle Proms will be available to purchase online at www.tonbridgeartsfestival.co.uk and in person from Tonbridge Castle Gateway Office.
- 1.6.2 Tickets for the Grease sing-a-long will only be available from the EM Forster Theatre Box Office (01732 304241).
- 1.6.3 Tickets for all Festival related events will go on sale from 1 March.

1.7 Marketing

- 1.7.1 Leaflets will be produced and distributed widely including Council facilities, local shops, K College, Tonbridge Library and the EM Forster Theatre. Posters will be put up in billboards across the town and a banner will be placed across Tonbridge High Street.
- 1.7.2 The Festival will be featured in the Council's Here & Now publication, which is distributed door-to-door to residents, and news releases distributed to the local media. Adverts will also be placed in appropriate publications and letters will be sent to contacts on databases collected from previous events.
- 1.7.3 Tonbridge Arts Festival Committee will have a stall at the Summer Carnival and Tonbridge Taster Day promoting the events.

1.8 Legal Implications

- 1.8.1 None.

1.9 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.9.1 The Tonbridge Arts Festival Committee is supported financially from within existing revenue budgets together with external sponsorship and income from ticket sales.
- 1.9.2 To date sponsorship has been received from Warners Solicitors and Fidelity Investments.

1.10 Risk Assessment

- 1.10.1 The Tonbridge Arts Festival Committee is aware of the health and safety paperwork required. Events on Open Spaces forms will be submitted for the use of Tonbridge Castle Lawn; Risk Assessments and an Event Safety Plan will be

produced and passed to the Council. Tonbridge Arts Festival has its own public liability insurance certificate.

1.11 Policy Considerations

1.11.1 Healthy Lifestyles, Customer Contact, Community.

Background papers:

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Nil

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Chief Leisure Officer