

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**LEISURE and ARTS ADVISORY BOARD**

**16 September 2013**

**Report of the Director of Street Scene and Leisure**

**Part 1- Public**

**Matters for Information**

**1 EVENT PROGRAMME UPDATE**

**Summary**

**The purpose of this report is to update Members on this year's event programme.**

**1.1 Background**

- 1.1.1 Members will be aware that whilst the Council delivers some events directly, the Council also plays an important role assisting community groups to deliver their events, particularly when on Council owned land. In these cases the Council is often represented on committee groups and provides event management advice, in relation to the preparation of health and safety documentation as well as support for the event through the Council's Safety Advisory Group where appropriate.

**1.2 2013 Event Programme**

- 1.2.1 Tonbridge Passion Play - Towards the end of 2012, the Council was approached by the Churches Together organisation who advised that they wished to put on the first ever Passion Play performance on the Castle Lawn during the following Easter Bank Holiday weekend. Churches Together represent four Anglican churches from the North Tonbridge area.

The challenge for the organisers was to deliver a dramatic presentation which depicted the Passion of Jesus Christ: his trial, suffering and death. The Passion Play is a traditional part of Lent in several Christian denominations.

The event took place on Good Friday (29 March) and was free for the public to attend. The Passion Play was a great success and approximately 2,000 people watched the performance. Churches Together have already submitted plans to the Council for a similar event in 2014.

- 1.2.2 Dambusters 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, Kings Hill - This event celebrated the exploits of Barnes Wallis, Guy Gibson and the aviators of 617 Squadron on the

most famous raid in the history of the Royal Air Force. The event took place in Gibson Drive, Kings Hill and comprised of a memorial service, which was attended by 80 dignitaries (including the Lord Lieutenant of Kent) and 120 local school children. The public were also invited to attend the memorial service and then visit the piazza in front of the Control Tower at Liberty Square to watch the fly past by a spitfire. The flypast was witnessed by approximately 800 residents and invited guests. The Council worked in partnership with Liberty Property Trust UK Ltd to organise the event.

1.2.3 Tonbridge Summer Carnival - The annual Summer Carnival took place in June and was organised by Tonbridge Lions Club. The Carnival Procession included a variety of walking groups, floats, classic cars and the Southern England Marching Band Competition. Following the Carnival, a traditional summer fete took place on the Castle Lawn. Entertainment in this area included the Cannon School of Irish Dancing, a Punch and Judy performance and music provided by local bands. The event was attended by approximately 5,000 people throughout the day. Funds raised during the day totalled £5,400 which will be donated to local charities.

1.2.4 Music at Malling - Summer Serenade - This year was the third annual Music at Malling event which takes place in various historical venues in and around West Malling. The Festival promotes the work of contemporary composers alongside the classics and engages the community with the highest quality of creative work in a series of concerts and talks alongside education and outreach events.

To help raise the profile and awareness of the September Festival, the organisers decided to launch the event in June with a one off concert at St Mary's Church. The concert featured Chamber Domaine who performed Schubert classics which were accompanied by the outstanding young baritone Jonathan McGovern. This year's main event will take place from 26–29 September.

1.2.5 Tonbridge Arts Festival - Whilst the original agreement between the partners involved in organising Tonbridge Arts Festival was that the 10-day event would take place every two years, following the success of last year's programme, it was decided that a 'mini' event should take place this year. It was felt this approach would help maintain profile and momentum amongst residents, businesses and community groups. The event would also incorporate the delivery of a three day 'Tonbridge Castle Festival of Music and Fireworks'.

Whilst the Tonbridge Arts Festival Committee would lead on the event, it was supported by the Council and included a financial contribution of £5,000.

Following additional financial support from private sponsors including Warners and Fidelity, the Committee was able to deliver an exciting programme of events for the weekend of the 5/6/7 July which included the following:

Date	Daytime Event	Evening Event
Friday 5 July	*Kate Moses – Author visit at Tonbridge Library	*Killer Queen at Tonbridge Castle
Saturday 6 July	Theatre on the Lawn – 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 on the Lawn - Seven local bands/artist performed an eclectic mix of music.	*Grease Sing–a-Long at EM Forster Theatre
	Hand Jive world record attempt at Tonbridge Castle.	

*\*These events were ticketed.*

Final ticket sales for the weekend were as follows:

Date	Event	Numbers attending
Friday 5 July	Kate Mosse (afternoon) @ K College	64
	Killer Queen (evening) @ Tonbridge Castle	1,454
Saturday 6 July	Tonbridge Castle Proms	378
Sunday 7 July	Grease Sing-a-Long @ EM Forster Theatre	164

Tonbridge Arts Festival Committee will be meeting in the autumn months to discuss the way forward for the 2014 event.

- 1.2.6 Summer Band Concerts - Every weekend in August, the Council arranges for a variety of musical performances to take place at Tonbridge Castle. The concerts are delivered by a mixture of amateur and professional musicians and are free for the public to attend.

Maidstone Winds, Bells Yew Green Big Band, Strictly Sinatra and The Oxted Band all performed as part of this year’s programme. Maidstone Winds and Strictly Sinatra had not performed at the Castle before.

Typically, the afternoon performances attract around 350 – 400 people each week. Hildenborough Women’s Institute provided refreshments.

- 1.2.7 Heritage Open Days - Heritage Open Days celebrate England’s fantastic architecture and culture by offering free access to properties that are usually closed to the public or normally charge for admission. Nationally the event is co-ordinated by The Civic Trust with funding support from English Heritage. Locally, the Council delivers the event in partnership with The Malling Society and Tonbridge Civic Society.

The event took place over the weekend of 14/15 September and this year 20 properties took part from across the borough. These included Aylesford Priory,

Ditton Heritage Centre, Ightham Mote, Snodland Millennium Museum, The Oast Theatre and Douces Manor, West Malling. A list of all participating venues can be found at **[Annex 1]**.

- 1.2.8 Tonbridge Castle Medieval Fair - This annual event also took place during the weekend of the 14/15 September. Initially the Medieval Fair was introduced as part of the Council's Tour de France celebrations in 2007 and has returned each year since due to popular demand.

At the event the public witnessed combat displays, cookery demonstrations, tarot card reading, archery, traditional music and dance and were entertained by a Jester. New for this year was the inclusion of a Punch and Judy show and face painting for younger children to enjoy. There were also various stall holders selling jewellery, pottery and medieval costumes, plus a hog roast was available throughout the weekend.

The Medieval Fair was open from 10am – 5pm each day and was free for the public to attend.

### **1.3 Forthcoming Events**

- 1.3.1 Busking for the Royal British Legion - On 28 September at the Watergate in Tonbridge High Street the Royal British Legion will be hosting a street music event in order to promote the values of the Legion, encourage youth membership and gain valuable funds. The event will also promote the Tonbridge Memorial Gardens Trust fund.

The event will comprise of 12 hours of busking to be performed by local groups or individual performers. Initially organisers had advised of using a small stage in the Watergate area, but as profile and awareness of the event grew, the need for additional space soon became apparent. Areas such as The Botany, Angel Walk, the Market and Ian Chaffeld Butchers will now also host musical performances from 10am-10pm on the day.

Funds raised from the event will be split equally between The Royal British Legion and the Tonbridge Memorial Gardens Trust fund.

- 1.3.2 Tonbridge Christmas Festival - The event takes place on the last Sunday in November in Tonbridge High Street and comprises of live music on stage, Christmas Light Switch On, firework display and a fun fair. Last year the event raised £3,000 which was donated to the charity, Compaid, and was organised by Tonbridge Round Table.

This year's event will be organised by Tonbridge Rotary Club and supported by the Borough Council and will take place on 24 November. The programme of activity is still being confirmed by the Rotary Club. Medway School of Dancing has agreed to sponsor the event and other private sponsors are still being sought.

## **1.4 Legal Implications**

1.4.1 None.

## **1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

1.5.1 With specific reference to Tonbridge Arts Festival, Music at Malling, Tonbridge Castle Medieval Fair and Tonbridge Christmas Festival, these events are supported from within the Council's arts and tourism budget.

1.5.2 As mentioned throughout the report, in many cases community groups are able to secure private sponsorship in addition to the Council's contribution.

## **1.6 Risk Assessment**

1.6.1 Where an event takes place on Council owned land, event organisers are asked to complete an Event on Open Spaces form and submit a risk assessment and copy of their public liability insurance certificate. Depending on the scale and nature of the event, event documentation may be submitted to the Council's Safety Advisory Group for consideration.

Background papers:

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Nil

Robert Styles

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