

Culture Matters

Issue 4, Summer 2010

The quarterly newsletter of the Cultural Theme Group

Welcome by Councillor Rob Adams, Chair of the Cultural Theme Group

There can be no doubt that the new financial year will bring with it challenges, not least the preparation for cuts in public sector funding. The Cultural Theme Group offers the opportunity to deliver services and use resources more creatively across public sector organisations, thus ensuring that we offer excellent services that are best possible value for money.

We have embarked on the final year of the current Local Area Agreement (LAA), therefore it is critical that culture continues to show the important contribution it makes in achieving the overarching outcomes.

Culture will also play a significant role in supporting District LSP's with the implementation of their projects in areas of highest need. I am delighted that partners have come together so successfully to respond to these issues.

I hope you enjoy Culture Matters, which continues to evidence best practice in partnership working in the county's cultural sector.

Rob Adams

Chair, Cultural Theme Group

For copies of the Cultural Strategy please contact Diane Thomson at Worcestershire County Council, tel: 01905 765770 or email DEThomson@worcestershire.gov.uk.



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ARTS UPDATE

The **arts partnership** has a new Chair - Professor Judith Elkin from the University of Worcester. The partnership made up of representatives from all sectors in the arts, has just met for an away day and highlighted a number of key areas for its first year. Broadly, these are to develop:

1. Arts advocacy, visibility and promotion
2. The arts offer for children and young people
3. Arts and health projects
4. The visual arts sector
5. The offer of arts in non arts spaces including faith buildings etc.

Look out for more information on how these will be developed over the forthcoming year. These projects will form part of an action plan for the arts strategy which will be launched this summer.

The new **shindig** season is currently under way. As usual there are a whole range of fantastic shows to see across the whole county. If you want to know more contact County Arts Officer, Steve Wilson (pictured, details below).

Steve has also been working with children centres in Wychavon on a pilot project bringing music and dance to the **under 5's** and their parents with the aim of developing new skills for toddlers and parents alike.

In April, Worcestershire County Council and Worcester City Council launched two new pieces of **public art** in the city. These are based at The Worcester Woods and at The Commandery and are due to the new partnership being developed with Meadow Arts who help place contemporary arts in outdoor settings.

For further information please contact Steve Wilson, County Arts Officer, Worcestershire County Council, tel: 01905 765754, email: swilson@worcestershire.gov.uk.



OLYMPICS UPDATE

National Overview of the Cultural Olympiad

The Cultural Olympiad will involve a series of events to showcase the UK's arts and culture to the rest of the world.

The four-year London 2012 Cultural Olympiad started in September 2008, at the end of the Beijing 2008 Paralympic Games. It is the largest cultural celebration in the history of the modern Olympic and Paralympic Games, designed to give everyone in the UK a chance to be part of London 2012. Inspiring creativity across all forms of culture, especially among young people, the aim is to make a real impact. Its legacy will last well beyond 2012.

Millions of people around the UK are already part of the Cultural Olympiad, through the Inspire programme and Open Weekend.

The Cultural Olympiad will culminate with a UK-wide festival in 2012, bringing together leading artists from all over the world.

The following large-scale, UK-wide projects in the Cultural Olympiad will create new opportunities and open new horizons - they will all be phased in between now and 2012 (some are already underway).



Unlimited

Celebrating disability art and culture

Stories of the World

Allowing people of all backgrounds to explore the meaning of objects in new ways

Artists Taking the Lead

Encouraging artists to use the nation as a blank canvas and showcase the UK's creativity

Sounds

Showcasing the sound of the nation in 2012

World Shakespeare Festival

Celebrating Shakespeare through a series of international collaborations

Film Nation

Inspiring new talent to participate in film

Discovering Places

Inspiring the UK to discover their local environment

Somewhereto

Empowering young people to use space on their own terms

Outdoor arts

A major outdoor arts project for 2012



The buzz the 2012 Olympic Games will create – especially in the cultural sector – will offer the opportunity for organisations to change public perceptions and appeal to different customers.

Peter Turvey, Worcestershire Opportunities Coordinator for the 2012 Games says: "This is a once in a lifetime opportunity. The Olympics was last in the UK in 1948 and by 2013 it will be too late! Carpe diem!"

For further information click on the London 2012 Website: www.london2012.com – follow the 'Get Involved Now' link and click on 'Cultural Olympiad'.

For further information please contact Peter Turvey, Worcestershire Opportunities Coordinator 2012 Games, tel: 07795 332508, email: pturvey@worcestershire.gov.uk

Keep up to date with what is happening in Worcestershire and the 2012 Olympic Games opportunities at

www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk/olympics

People Dancing

We are delighted to inform you that Worcestershire's main Cultural Olympiad proposal "12" has received further funding support.

"12" has two main elements working side by side. The first encompasses dance classes at grass roots level in individual districts working with cross sector teams including arts, sports, health, community development, youth and school partners. These classes will be led by specialised dance tutors who will work alongside and mentor local dance workers. Once these groups become established there will be a series of dance flashmob (where people congregate in public spaces) activities across the county. This will ultimately lead to a number of high profile dance events each containing a strong film element in year three.

The project is being led by Dancefest, the county's dance agency, and has been put together by Charlotte Brennan who in turn has been funded by the Elmley Foundation. The total budget for "12" is £265,000, made up of funding from the Cultural Olympiad People Dancing Programme - £100,000, the Arts Council - £60,000 and £56,000 from the Health Improvement Fund. The remainder has come from the many partners including £3,000 from Worcestershire County Council.

For further information please contact Steve Wilson, County Arts Officer, Worcestershire County Council, tel: 01905 765754, email: swilson@worcestershire.gov.uk



Go Wild in Worcestershire

A fun summer event for all the family is set to give everyone the chance to 'Go Wild in Worcestershire' and have a go at some of the great activities the county's parks and countryside sites have to offer.

It is taking place at Worcester Woods Country Park on **Saturday, July 24**, and is part of the national **Olympic Open Weekend** - with just over two years to go until the flame is lit at the London 2012 opening ceremony.

Everyone is invited to come along between 10am and 4pm to have a go at a range of activities including climbing, canoeing, conservation tasks, health walks, archery, orienteering and kiteflying.

The 200-acre site near to County Hall, with waymarked trails, woodlands, wildflower meadows, children's play area and award-winning café, offers the perfect setting for people of all ages to try something new in Worcestershire's great outdoors.

'Go Wild in Worcestershire' has been organised by Worcestershire County Council with support from a range of partners including the Scouts, Outdoor Recreation Centres and local clubs.

For more information please contact Joanne Barrow, Community Greenspace Officer, tel: 01905 766155 or email jbarrow@worcestershire.gov.uk



THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS

Sports Partnership celebrations

Encouraging children to take up sport needn't be an uphill battle, thanks to **The Sports Partnership Herefordshire and Worcestershire**.

Now in its second year of delivering Sport England's Sport Unlimited programme, The Partnership has recently announced results that are cause for celebration!

Crowned number one in the country for delivering its year one target of 5,928 young people encouraged to take part in sport, The Partnership has also encouraged up to 8,000 youngsters to take part in an activity lasting



'Over 11,000 young people engaged in sports and activities across Herefordshire and Worcestershire'

for 8 consecutive weeks or more. It has also delivered nearly 600 sessions in more than 40 different sports!

Steve Brewster, Partnership Director explains: "We are delighted to announce such positive results for the counties of Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Being able to deliver excellent quality sporting provision for young people is at the heart of what we do and we are therefore immensely proud that we have achieved national recognition for doing just this."

Sport Unlimited – which was officially launched by Sport England last year – is targeted at youngsters who may have an interest in sport but who aren't engaged with community or club sport. The first step in the programme was to establish what sports young people actually do.

Steve continues: "**Sport Unlimited** has offered an exciting opportunity to deliver a variety of new and old sports and activities across Herefordshire and Worcestershire in blocks of 8 to 10 week sessions. Working in partnership with many local providers and coaches over 600 local sessions took place in the programme's first year engaging over 11,000 young people. The success of these activities and the resulting health and social benefits for those taking part have been outstanding."

During 2010/2011, The Partnership will be building on its **Sport Unlimited** success by offering a wider variety of sporting opportunities in new and innovative sports. It will also be engaging with partners to ensure the legacy and sustainability of the programme is carried on, through retained participation by the young people for many years to come.

At the forefront of increasing participation in sport and active recreation in the two counties, The Sports Partnership Herefordshire & Worcestershire is an alliance of the seven local authorities and two primary care trusts (PCTs) of Herefordshire and Worcestershire, Sport England, the University of Worcester, National Governing Bodies of sport (NGB's) and other key organisations.

There are 49 County Sport Partnerships (CSPs) in England. Each are networks of local authorities, NGB's, clubs, schools, school sport partnerships and PCTs. All are working together to increase participation in sport and physical activity.

CSPs are contracted by Sport England to support NGBs and other agencies to achieve a national target set by DCMS – the Department for Culture, Media and Sport - to get 1 million more people participating in sport by 2012, and a further ambitious Department of Health target of getting 2 million more people active by 2012.

For further information please contact Sue Bentley, Partnership Support Officer, tel: 01905 855498, email: s.bentley@worc.ac.uk

'The Sports Partnership Herefordshire and Worcestershire delivered nearly 600 sessions in more than 40 different sports'

Health and Wellbeing working with culture

The County Council's Joint Commissioning Unit within Adult and Community Services brings together health and social care in respect of funding, commissioning and shaping of future services.

The Health & Wellbeing Team, as part of the Joint Commissioning Unit are responsible for the commissioning and monitoring of low level preventative services that help people aged 55 and above live healthier lives and maintain a good level of mental and physical wellbeing.

Our role is to look creatively at activities and services which enable people to become more independent and socially included in their communities. We are keen to work with existing and potential cultural services where meaningful activities are already taking place, in a way that these can also be promoted as ways of encouraging social interaction and maintaining mobility and improving wellbeing.

Reaching people in rural and village locations is just as important but sometimes harder due to the limited transport facilities and limited venues available. Current work for the Health & Wellbeing team is to establish what current opportunities are available and explore the potential for combining different activities at existing venues. This is where working with cultural services will potentially open up new and exciting opportunities.

For further information please contact Judith McGuire, Project Manager – Health and Wellbeing Team, tel: 01905 822637 or see healthandwellbeing@worcestershire.gov.uk



Redditch – a secret archaeology?

Emma Hancox from **Worcestershire's Historic Environment and Archaeology Service (WHEAS)** has uncovered a forgotten aspect of the development of Redditch.

During the construction of the new town in the 1970s an earlier generation of archaeologists worked closely with the planners to preserve the town's **archaeological and ecological treasures** – by building around them.

Unlike many parts of the county developed during this time, Redditch has surviving archaeological sites, historic hedgerows and ancient trees scattered across the urban area. Here are a few examples:-

◆ Tanhouse Lane was built to one side of, rather than on top of, Ryknild Street, the Roman Road from Metchley Fort in Birmingham to the Roman town of Alcester. The road, the road-side ditches and the later hedgerows survive.

◆ Church Hill Middle School is built entirely within a massive medieval fish pond, with the dams forming the school boundary.

◆ Buildings, ponds and leats associated with the 18th and 19th century Redditch needle industry were incorporated into the Arrow Valley Country Park

Emma and colleagues at **WHEAS**, in partnership with the Borough Council planners and local people, are now helping to protect these important remains through the planning process. The partners have also encouraged residents to get out and about and explore their secret archaeology by organising a number of guided walks and talks. More are planned for this year.

For further information please contact Emma Hancox, Historic Environment Record Officer, tel: 01905 855494, email: ehancox@worcestershire.gov.uk



An ancient tree still standing in Sandhurst Close

Nothing Works Wonders

“Malvern water said Doctor John Wall, is famous for containing just nothing at all”. With this little ditty about the purity of the water that springs from the Malvern Hills, the Malvern Water Cure was launched. For three centuries the fashionably ill came to Malvern to ‘take the waters’. They drank them, they bathed in them, and they walked to their sources. This combination of ‘flushing’ and exercise no doubt improved their constitutions and in gratitude many embellished with elaborate structures the springs from which the water issued.

With the 20th century’s desire for chemical cures, the ill turned their backs on the ‘nothing’ in Malvern water. The elaborate well heads fell into disrepair and needed some restoration. This came in the form of a Heritage Lottery Grant and a partnership, led by the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Both the Malvern Spa Association and Worcestershire County Council’s Countryside Services were heavily involved in giving vital support to the project.

In all, 17 of the major well heads were restored. Many are just small structures, not unlike fire places but coloured by glazed tiles and inscribed with dedication plaques. Others are major structures such as the North Malvern Clock Tower, over 30m high (pictured). The visitor can learn more about the whole project and the water cure by visiting Holywell in Malvern Wells, where



“Malvern water said Doctor John Wall is famous for containing just nothing at all”



a small visitor centre has been installed. If you go at the right time you may even see, through the windows at the back of the centre, water being bottled. This is the original Malvern water and was bottled and sold by Schweppes at the Great Exhibition in 1851. The restoration project has helped the owner restart bottling water again at this historic site.

Many of the springs are decorated on the May Bank Holiday each year in a festival of well dressing. This popular event brings crowds of well wishers to the Malverns and is organised and promoted by the Malvern Spa Association, who also runs guided tours that tell of the history of water and Malvern.

So to find out more about how ‘nothing at all’ has become ‘something again’, take a look at Holywell’s website www.holywellspringwater.co.uk, the Malvern Spa Association’s website www.malvern-hills.co.uk/malvernspace. Or even better for you, ask for a walks leaflet on 01684 560616 and take a stroll in the footsteps of those who sought cures from the purity of Malvern’s waters.

For further information please contact David Armitage, Assistant AONB Partnership Manager, tel: 01684 560616, email: darmitage@malvernhillsaonb.org.uk

Summer Events

From Ration Books to Rolling Stones
Worcestershire County Museum
Monday 3rd May to Sunday 14th
November

Tel 01299 250416

Rock and Roll yourself back to the iconic '50s and '60s to explore two decades of great social change. A nostalgic exhibition that illustrates a changing world through the experience of childhood, the home, cultural icons and fashions.



Astley to Shrawley Walk

Sunday 23rd May

Tel: 01905 855455 (to book onto the walk) or email

mobogaard@worcestershire.gov.uk
Guided archaeological and historical walk starting from Astley Church. The walk is steep in places and 6k in total.

Echoes of Old Sidbury

The Commandery

Friday 28th May to Thursday 29th
July

Tel 01905 361821

The Commandery has stood in the heart of Sidbury for eight centuries bearing witness to war, pestilence, poverty and prosperity. Come and discover how Sidbury has grown and developed from the Roman period to the 1950s and catch a fascinating glimpse of Worcester through the ages.



Family Trees in the 21st Century

The Commandery

Friday 28th May to Thursday 29th
July

Free Children's Activity

Tel 01905 361821

Come and make your own family tree using the template and materials provided. Include yourself, friends, family, pets and even your favourite toys and hobbies to create a fun and personal family tree.

Illuminating Workshop

The Commandery

Wednesday 2nd June

10.30am - 12.30pm or 1.30pm to
3.30pm

Pre Booking essential

Suitable for 7 to 12 year olds

£4.50

Tel 01905 361821

Write your name in Gothic style and learn how to decorate it in the Monastic way. Take home your personally illuminated name.

Design & Make a Tudor Wall Hanging

The Commandery

Thursday 3rd June

10.30am - 12.30pm or 1.30pm to
3.30pm

Pre Booking essential - Suitable for 7
to 12 year olds

£4.50

Tel 01905 361821

Create your very own decorative Tudor wall hanging inspired by the Commandery's features using collage and paint. Explore and sketch the building's fascinating features and apply them to your design.

Medieval Festival

Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th June,
11am to 4pm

Forge Mill Needle Museum, Redditch.

Tel 01527 62509

Experience medieval life in the Knight's encampment! Witness the drill and arming of military men and see the ritual of dressing English Knights in full battle armour. Wander

amongst the camp and see everyday life in action with cooking and craft demonstrations - you can even take part in some medieval dancing set to authentic music! Be entertained medieval style with the amusing jester!



Evesham Town Walk

Sunday 6th June

Tel: 01905 855455 (to book onto the walk) or email

mobogaard@worcestershire.gov.uk
Guided archaeological and historical walk exploring the origins of this riverside market town.

Shakespeare At The Commandery

Much Ado About Nothing

Tuesday 8th to Saturday 19th June
(Excluding Monday 14th)

7.30pm (2.30pm on Sunday 13th)

Tickets £13.50

Worcester Live 01905 611427

Comedy, romance and deception abound in one of Shakespeare's most popular plays. Come and enjoy outdoor theatre in the heart of the city in our walled gardens. This year pre-show entry includes entry into the Sidbury exhibition in the Great Hall.



Summer Events continued

Rubery Festival

Sunday 13th June
Rubery Town Centre
This is a community family event supporting local organised charities. There will be different family entertainment in the day, including local talented performances.

Talk on Tudor Worcestershire

The Commandery
Tuesday 22nd June
2.30pm
£6.50 (Pre booking essential)
Tel 01905 361821
Join Robin Whittaker, Archives Manager and Diocesan Archivist from Worcestershire Record Office as he brings Tudor Worcestershire to life via this special talk. Using original Tudor documents including letters, wills and city records, Robin will illuminate the local social, religious and political life of that period.

Bromsgrove Carnival

Saturday 10th and Sunday 11th of July
Come and watch the procession from the Artrix in the high street on the Saturday which finishes in Sanders Park where this fantastic annual community event takes place. There will be food stores, local charities and organisations, a fayre, music and fun activities for all the family.

Green Fair and 10th Anniversary Celebrations

Sunday 11th July, 10am to 5pm
Arrow Valley Countryside Centre
Tel 01527 464000
Visit the Countryside Centre to enjoy an extravaganza of entertainment, family activities, stalls and displays.

Roman Relics and Medieval Madness

The Commandery
Monday 26th July
£12.50
Suitable for 7 to 16 year olds
Pre booking required
A day packed with fun archaeological activities including a workshop on Roman Pottery, using Querns, creating a Roman Mosaic, excavation techniques and Medieval manuscripts.

Festival of British Archaeology

The Commandery
Monday 26th July to Thursday 29th July
A four day event including children's holiday activity sessions, a family day and a Local Archaeology Day School.

Forensic Fun for all the family

The Commandery
Tuesday 27th July
FREE ADMISSION
11am to 4pm
A full day of activities for all age groups including Anglo Saxon Grave activity, facial reconstruction, skeleton tabards, recent discoveries and city cemetery tours! Please bring a picnic!

Local Archaeology Dayschool

The Commandery
Thursday 29th July
10.30am to 5.30pm
£12.50
A fantastic opportunity to spend the day with members from the County Archaeology Team, Museum Collection Officers and Historic Environment Record Officers. You will have the opportunity to hear about

the excavations at the Commandery and participate in a number of workshops including 'Looking At Finds', 'Historic Records' and 'Roman Pottery'. The day will finish with a guided tour of The Commandery: 'Investigating The Building'.

Street Theatre in North Worcestershire

Wednesdays & Thursdays in August
Come and experience some fantastic street theatre taking place on the first 3 Wednesdays and Thursdays in August! All the Wednesday events will be held at the Recreation Ground, Recreation Road, Bromsgrove on the 4th, 11th and the 18th August. On Thursday 5th August ~ Street Theatre will be at Wythall Park, Silver Street, Wythall. On Thursday 12th August ~ Street Theatre will be at Hagley Park, Worcester Road, Hagley and finally on Thursday 19th August ~ Street Theatre will be at St Chad's Park, Leach Heath Lane, Rubery.

Dinosaur Day

Forge Mill Needle Museum, Redditch.
Sunday 8th August, 11am to 4pm
Tel 01527 62509
Celebrate Forge Mill's exciting dinosaur exhibition, The Ballad of Big Al, with a special Dinosaur Day. Events include performances of Bone Idol by the Avonmill Players, meet a fossil expert, dig for fossils, dinosaur craft and dino face painting.