



## Cabinet Member Report for Community Engagement

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 8 June 2015

### **Councillor Community Fund**

The Councillor Community Fund is open for applications for 2015/16. Training for Councillors on how to use the Councillor Community Fund will be delivered on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> May.

### **Partnership Support**

The CEFAP panel met on the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of February to assess the 49 applications received for the Partnership Grant 2015/16. Out of the 49 applications received, 24 were awarded funding. Service Level Agreements will be developed with the successful organisations ready for the start of the grant award in July.

### **Community Centres**

The Our Place programme continues to develop – all 7 pilot centres have now had Our Place engagement activities take place, with great responses from the local community. Stakeholder groups for each centre will be meeting over the coming months, to develop action plans where they do not already exist, and to build upon the work that has already taken place.

An annual review has been carried out with the management organisation of the community centres.

### **Events**

The VE Day Commemoration Church Service and 3 minute silence was very well received and supported by visitors in and around the Memorial Gardens at All Saints.

Bands in the Park season is in full flow offering music and entertainment in Abington Park for visitors of all ages.

The main events season has started and already we have seen the Beer Festival at Delapre Park and the Race for Life at Abington Park with more high profile event to follow.

The council has provided support and assistance to community & charitable groups in the borough looking to deliver events in our parks & open spaces.

### **Culture & Heritage**

April saw the opening of three exhibitions at Northampton Museum & Art Gallery. 'Fibre to Fabric' showcases work by the Northamptonshire Guild of Spinners, Weavers and Dyers; 'Cinderella' showcases the shoes that inspired the glass slippers in the new Disney film 'Cinderella' and 'Making Presence Felt' curated by artist Fiona Candy explores human identify and the sensory experience of presence. The following month, three exhibitions opened at Northampton Museum & Art Gallery. 'Love in the Time of the Italian Baroque' and 'For the Love of Venice' both of which draw works from the art collections of the museum and finally, 'Change "maker"' explores The University of Northampton's Ashoka U 'Change "maker" Campus status in relation to solving local, global, social and environmental problems.

At Abington Park Museum, Art in the Park opens in May and has attracted exhibits from over 80 artists across the county. During May, an 'Aubers Ridge' event took place at Abington which explored Northamptonshire's First World War History. During the event 'The Slaughter of The Steelbacks' talk attracted an audience of 42.

March saw the third Battlefield Talk, 'The Battle of Edcote' which attracted an audience of 57 generating net profit in excess of £180. Ukulele workshops aimed at Beginners and Improvers took place during March, April and May and continue to be well attended, each one making a net profit of between £187 and £250. During March, a Shoe Making workshop with Hetty Rose was fully booked and made a profit of £734 – the workshop was so popular that another date was booked in July which is also sold out. A third workshop is now booking for August.

Easter workshops at both museums attracted 166 young people and an Easter Egg Trail at Abington Park Museum was enjoyed by over 500 children. Further workshops are programmed for the May half term holidays at both sites along with a Pasta Making workshop for adults.

During April 27,634 footwear photographs were taken of around 4,000 pairs of shoes for the Virtually Shoes project funded by The Arts Council England. In the same month, talks were delivered by the Access and Development Officer and the Shoe Resources Officer to over 465 people at various history and heritage groups.

Several talks took place at Northampton Museum & Art Gallery in May including 'Northampton's Place in the Magna Carta Story', 'The Finds of Roman Northamptonshire' and 'The Knight's Tale' all of which proved popular with the public. June sees two talks linked to the Italian art exhibitions

### **Customer Services - Service Improvements March/April**

Adjustments have been made to both the drop in service and the staff rota within the one stop shop and contact centre. This has enabled us to optimise resources throughout Customer Services reducing wait times in both areas, increasing overall customer experience and satisfaction.

### **Contact Centre**

Customer Services Partnership working continues to grow in strength. We welcomed two new partners into the OSS, The Armed Forces, promoting Army recruitment and The Sunflower Centre, supporting victims of domestic abuse.

The DWP came to a joint meeting with NBC, NPH and LGSS to promote the Work coach available within the OSS. This has already resulted in increased referrals and awareness. Our partners include:

- CAB – advising on benefits and support available
- Bromford – Life skills, training and tenancy support
- CAN – Health, abuse and addiction
- Community Law - advising on benefits and support available
- Mayday Trust – Support with difficult life transitions
- Delos Community – Support with learning difficulties
- TVC – employment and training services
- The Sunflower Centre – Support for Victims of Domestic abuse.
- The Armed Forces – Army recruitment.

Our Partners help us provide a joined up service to the public working together to provide enhanced service for our vulnerable customers.

Councillor Brandon Eldred  
**Cabinet Member for Community Engagement**