

Report of the Chief Executive**NOTABLE ACTIVITIES****1 Purpose of report**

This report is presented as a monthly update on notable activities that have taken place or are planned and relate to the council's PRIDE objectives.

2 Items of note**2.1 COMMUNITY FUN DAY**

Hundreds of people enjoyed a community fun day at a Wellingborough park on Sunday 18 August. The day of music, entertainment and information was centred on the recently-restored 100-year-old bandstand in the town's Castle Fields Park and was hosted by the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress.

The event was organised by the Castle Fields Community Group, after they were awarded £2,500 of government money to help bring the diverse neighbourhood together. Castle ward was chosen last year as one of 600 areas in England eligible to benefit from money from the Community First Fund, which was created to help local areas become better places to live. The area has been awarded nearly £35,000 over the four-year project, which is divided up based on recommendations from a local Community First panel. The panel is supported by the council and made up of community members and local councillors. Any community group, large or small, based in Castle ward, can bid for some of the money.

2.2 DOWN ON THE BEACH

The Mayor, Cllr Graham Lawman, officially opened the Down on the Beach event in the town centre on 3 August. The event, organised by the Wellingborough Business Improvement District, saw a 130sqm beach arrive on Market Street complete with buckets and spades, deck chairs, entertainment, and Wellingborough rock for sale. The beach, which stayed in the town until 18 August, generated extra footfall in the town centre and was well received by both the public and businesses.

2.3 VISIT FROM WITTLICH SCOUTS

A party of around 30 scouts from our twin town Wittlich was received in the Mayor's parlour on 5 August. As part of their week-long visit to the county, the Mayor also organised for the scouts to enjoy a tour around Silverstone. Later that month, the Mayor and Mayoress were invited to take part in a pig roast and wine festival in Wittlich, where they led the town's carnival parade with the Mayor of Wittlich.

2.4 THI TRAINING BURSARIES

Students of traditional skills such as stonemasonry and carpentry can now apply to Wellingborough Council for help with course fees, thanks to a lottery-funded heritage project.

The five £500 bursaries are being offered as part of the Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI), a project supported by £1.4 million of lottery money that aims to protect the town's history and heritage. To make sure that the necessary skills exist to maintain Wellingborough's historic buildings in the future, the council has teamed up with Moulton College to offer help with course fees and encourage people who are struggling to get access to training. Five £100 vouchers to help with the cost of specialist tools and equipment are also available for students.

2.5 WILBY WAY ROUNDABOUT IMPROVEMENTS

Works to improve the busy Wilby Way roundabout in Wellingborough started on Saturday 7 September. The £3.2 million, six-month programme to widen part of the roundabout and approach roads, and install traffic signals, was announced by the government last year. The money comes from a national fund to improve congestion across the country, and was given to the Highways Agency after they worked with the council to demonstrate that people using the roundabout, especially during peak hours, often experienced bottlenecks, congestion and delays along the A45. The improvement of the roundabout was one of only 20 schemes across the midlands to benefit from the fund and the only one announced in the north of the county.

Works are being carried out between Mondays and Saturdays, using narrow lanes between 6am and 8pm, together with overnight lane and road closures.

2.6 FRAUD PROSECUTION

A Wellingborough woman has been sentenced to two months in prison, suspended for a year, after fraudulently claiming more than £11,000 in benefits. Kelly Ayling, 37, of Flowerhill Drive in Wellingborough, didn't declare that her partner was living in the family home with her, and continued to claim income support, housing benefit and council tax benefit.

On Monday 9 September Ayling appeared at court where she was sentenced to eight weeks custody, which was suspended for a year, as well as 150 hours of unpaid work with a 20 day specified activity and an £80 victim surcharge.

2.7 SCHOOL LITTER PICK

Children from a Wellingborough school teamed up with the council at the beginning of September to clean up their local park. Wellingborough Norse visited the town's Park Junior School to give an assembly to all the children, and then 24 pupils went to Eastfield Park to carry out a litter pick. Supported by Norse, who provided equipment and were on hand to help out, the children collected 12 bags of litter in the 30-minute clean up.

The idea behind the clean up was not only to tidy up the park, but also to give the children experience of using litter picking equipment and help them understand exactly what's involved in picking up after people that throw their rubbish on the floor. It's hoped the message will be taken back to family and friends to help keep the area clean in the future.

If councillors know of schools in their wards that would like help to organise a litter pick, please call Norse on 01933 234 542.

2.8 STITCH UP CANCER

Nearly £50 was raised at the Mayor's reception, held after the full council meeting at the beginning of July, when people donated to add a stitch to Wrenn School's 'stitch up cancer' tapestry. The council has now been presented with a certificate from Wrenn School and Cancer Research UK, in recognition of the donation.

2.9 MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS DAY

The Mayor has been presented with a piece of artwork by the Northamptonshire Mental Health Stigma Programme, in recognition of support for this year's Mental Health Awareness Day. The programme has asked that the council displays the artwork, which was created during the awareness day.

2.10 LATER LIFE MATTERS

The second Later Life Matters event takes place on Tuesday 8 October. The free event will offer the over 50s essential advice and information on a range of subjects, alongside the opportunity to have a go on Wii games, try out line dancing, listen to live entertainment provided by local school children, and much more.

The day-long event is organised by the council and Nene Valley Community Action, with generous support from Northamptonshire County Council through the councillors' empowerment fund. Free transport is available to and from the event. Last year's Later Life Matters attracted more than 200 attendees.

2.11 REMEMBRANCE DAY PARADE

Arrangements are being made with the Wellingborough branch of the Royal British Legion for the Remembrance Day Service to be held at the Cenotaph, Broad Green, Wellingborough on Sunday 10 November 2013 at 10.45am.

A number of organisations have been invited to take part in the parade and service, which will also be attended by the Mayor of Wellingborough, a representative of the local MP, councillors, and senior officers.

<p>3. Proposed action: Council is invited to RESOLVE to note the report.</p>
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4. Author and contact officer

Paula Whitworth, Democratic Services Officer (Communications)

5. Consultees

The Mayor, Chief Executive, Corporate Directors, Heads of Service.

