

CABINET MEMBER LEISURE AND TOURISM

CABINET BRIEFING - 5th AUGUST 2010

LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

Green Flag Awards

Seven parks and open spaces in Sefton now have Green Flag status, up from five last year.

For 2010, both Derby Park and North Park in Bootle have received the prestigious title, in addition to retaining the awards for Botanic Gardens and Hesketh Park in Southport, Southport Crematorium, Thornton Garden of Rest and Coronation Park in Crosby.

The Green Flag Award scheme is the benchmark national standard for parks and green spaces in England and Wales. It was first launched in 1996 to recognise and reward the best green spaces in the country. It is a valuable tool for improving the quality of a park or open space to a high standard for the benefit of the local community.

Summer Activities in Parks

There are well over 100 activities being held in Sefton's parks and open spaces during the school summer holidays. In addition to the programme of Summer Fun Days held in many of the borough's parks, park rangers are organising activities such as kite flying, games, health walks and treasure hunts. A number of events are also being delivered by other partners, such as Sefton CVS, Positive Futures, Southport and District Brass Band Association, and the Playin' Out Team.

SPORT AND RECREATION

Crosby Lakeside Centre Bar & Bistro launched

Lakeside Bar & Bistro was opened to the public on Monday 12th July, serving over 1000 customers in 10 days. Very positive feedback has been received from visitors of the Centre regarding the service and excellent food.

Launch of Summer 2010

Active Sefton are linking in with Sefton Youth Service for this year's summer activity programme, now called 'Free & Active Providing Places to Go, Things to Do'.

Positive Futures Unite in Liverpool

Several weeks of nominations resulted in the Positive Futures team winning Liverpool Unites 'Community Project of the Year'. An awards evening was held at the Adelphi Hotel on Thursday 15th July. The team also won a donation of £1000 from Liverpool Unites to help towards venue costs, equipment, hire of coaches, courses for the young people to attend as well as funding trips out.

Olympians visits Meadows

On Sunday 27th June 2010 Olympic Bronze medallist Steven Parry visited Meadows Leisure Centre and Library. 50 young swimmers turned out to meet Steven, who gave an inspirational talk to the swimmers and their parents about his career and hosted a question and answer session. Jim Lloyd, a 1960 bronze medal winner for boxing, also gave visitors to the Centre insight into his experiences.

Active Workforce 5K Challenge

Active Workforce hosted its fourth 5K challenge at Crosby Lakeside Adventure Centre on 16th June for staff from Sefton Council and our partner organisations.

Bootle Gains Quest Accreditation

Bootle Leisure Centre have managed to maintain and improve on their "Quest" accreditation, the UK Quality scheme for Sport and Leisure, which defines industry standards and good practice. The Centre achieved a score of 88%, which ranked them as "Excellent" and placed them sixth in the country and first in the North West.

LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES

Summer Reading Challenge in Libraries – "Space Hop"

This year's challenge has space as its theme. The launch took place at Hesketh Park, Southport. Children from three local schools visited the Victorian observatory, John Mayhew – a local author spoke to them, and the Park Rangers took them on a space themed treasure hunt around the park. As in previous years, children read six books during the summer, receiving stickers and incentives along the way (book bag, glow in the dark wristband, and a paper mobile 'glow in the dark').

Staff from libraries have been visiting schools across Sefton to publicise the challenge. They have been so successful that 1500 children have joined even before the schools break up (323 at Meadows!)

Southport Temporary library opens

Southport Library opened for business at its temporary premises in the Visitor Office at Tulketh Street. It has received very positive feedback, most people being pleasantly surprised by its size, appearance and the range of stock it is able to offer.

TOURISM

Marketing

PR - the Southport International Jazz Festival was covered by radio and press. David Tanner (Business Tourism PR) continue to secure exposure in a range of trade publications and associated websites (equivalent advertising value of over £100,000).

Design & Print – The Southport Air Show and British Musical Fireworks Championships leaflets has been designed, printed and are in distribution. The Sefton Trail leaflet (borough-wide leisure offer) is in design with an August print / delivery date. First drafts of the 2011 Southport Short Breaks & Holiday Guide designs have been received, advertising sales have commenced.

Website/new media – The move to the new ‘enterprise’ web platform for visitsouthport.com is well underway, the new site will go live early August. The tourism Facebook and Twitter sites are now both active with daily (or more frequent) updates.

Travel Trade – Work we have done with the industry (exhibitions attended, travel trade newsletter, new travel trade guide etc.) continues to produce results. Coach figures have shown a substantial increase during the first 6 months of 2010 – over 17% up on the same period last year.

Events

Southport International Jazz Festival took place 27 – 31 May and attracted approximately 16,000 visitors. Headline gigs took place at the Prince of Wales, Scarisbrick Hotel and Christ Church whilst the Arts Centre is closed.

Southport Summer Classics - Friday 30 July, Magic of Soul and Motown, Saturday 31 July is traditional proms style concert with the Northern Chamber Orchestra Sinfonia. At time of producing this article, tickets are going well for the Friday; however a little slow for the Saturday.

The “Lord St Celebrates” series of events taking place over four weekends, three have already taken place and the final weekend celebrating street theatre will be on 14th and 15th August. This is a joint initiative between Tourism and Sefton Arts and uses Partners for Growth funding.

Business Tourism

The first completed quarter of 2010 brought in 15 confirmed events for future years with an estimated economic impact to the borough of almost £7m. A number of excellent familiarisation visits took place including CAMRA who are considering bringing an 800 delegate event to the resort in 2013 and United Reformed Church and Rotary International District 1050 who have both since confirmed their events that together are worth almost £1.3m.

With the support of The Mersey Partnership we have arranged for all of the Southport venues to be accredited on the Meetings Industry Association (MIA) scheme – AIM (Accredited In Meetings). The Conference Team is also AIM accredited so we can now promote Southport as a completely accredited conference destination.

The destination is also taking part in LJ Forecaster – a research project which helps the venues and destination identify possible gaps in business allowing us to act accordingly. The research also allows us to compare ourselves with other destinations so that we can analyse how we are performing in terms of forward bookings, monthly pick-up and average room rates.