

OFFICERS' INFORMATION REPORT

1. Civic Matters: Lucy Clarke, Civic Officer

The Mayoress, Mrs Jan Leytham Gain was delighted to welcome over 100 guests to the the Guildhall on Saturday 28 July for the 'Mayoress at Home'. After a reception drink, High Tea was served at 2:30pm with 'Jazz Tones' providing musical entertainment.

Mabel's Tea Rooms from Curborough Hall Farm supplied the cakes, scones and sandwiches. Paul Smith, Greengrocer from Lichfield General Market generously sponsored the event with beautiful fresh strawberries, grown locally at Elmhurst Farm, Lichfield. The afternoon concluded with the Mayor and Sheriff drawing the raffle which raised £460 for their chosen charities; St Mary's on the Market Square and Lichfield Greenhill Bower Charitable Trust.



At the time of compiling this report, preparations continue for the Mayor and Sheriff's first charity event, to be held on Sunday 26 August in the Guildhall. The Summer Artisan Market with Fizz and Gin Bar will be held from 10am until 4pm. This 'Free Entry' event (though donations will be welcomed) takes place during the Food Festival weekend. Local businesses will be showcasing their bespoke, unique handcrafted designs and creations whilst supporting the Mayor and Sheriff's charities. The Bower Queen, Charlotte Mace and Ambassador, Danielle Cliff have both kindly agreed to come along to support the Mayor and Sheriff. Once again Paul Smith has kindly agreed to sponsor this charity event by supplying strawberries, raspberries, lemons and limes for the Fizz and Gin bar.

Preparations continue for the Sheriffs Ride on 8 September; Samuel Johnson Birthday Celebrations on 22 September and charity events which include a Barn Dance on 31 October and a Christmas Wreath Making workshop on 27 November.

2. Markets: John Beard and Lisa Howard, Markets Officer

The Markets Officers have recently undertaken a number of initiatives in a bid to increase stall occupancy across all Markets. Lapsed traders have been contacted and asked if they wish to return, to date a total of 35 have been approached which has resulted in 3 returning to trade regularly. In addition the Lichfield markets have recently been listed on a new free

app called Marketti. This has been built and designed by a former NABMA employee specifically to promote local markets and a roadshow to promote this will visit Lichfield in late September /October. www.marketti.co.uk

At the end of July a NABMA representative visited Lichfield to conduct a Markets 'health check' and we are currently awaiting his report. In an attempt to attract more traders to the Farmers' Market a 'Buddy scheme' is being piloted for September, October and November. If a trader introduces a new trader both parties will qualify for reduced rent. It is hoped that this will not only increase stall occupancy, which has fallen over the last few months but also provide a wider variety of goods.



In August a Family Fun Day was organised for the Farmers' Market to maximise footfall during the school holidays. The Town Crier and Georgian Jono (Johnathan Oates) were on hand to promote the day and the Mayor and Mayoress added their support visiting stalls and engaging with the public. Activities included face painting, a children's treasure trail, 'guess the weight of the cake' and other activities

provided by Lichfield library. There was musical entertainment from a local saxophone player and the 'Owl Experience' proved very popular giving visitors the opportunity to get up close and handle the birds.

The cake for the competition was made by Lichfield Country Markets and raised £32 for the Mayor & Sheriff's charities. Dorothy Latimer guessed the correct weight of 4lbs 4oz and later collected her prize from the Mayor in the parlour. The event created lots of engagement on Social Media and created a real buzz around the Market Square.

A similar event is being planned for September with a pre-school focus and Lichfield Library will distribute leaflets at their Baby Bounce and Rhyme groups. Staff from the Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum will also attend to promote the Heritage Weekend.



3. Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum: Jo Wilson, Museums and Heritage Officer



The summer holidays have been a busy time at the Birthplace Museum, with 2086 visitors in July and 1173 in the first two weeks of August. Children's craft activities 'Summer Fun at Sam's House' have been very popular, with many of the Thursday sessions fully booked. Calligraphy exhibition 'Blazing Words, Glitt'ring Gold' has also continued throughout July, with excellent feedback from visitors. The Autumn and Winter events programme leaflet was printed and promoted on the Museum website and social media – with a startling 'reach' of 74,000 facebook users already achieved for one of the Christmas events.

Recent group visits include A-Level Workshops being delivered for KEVI School Stafford and Belper School, an outreach talk to Great Wryley Historical Society and a visit from a group of Syrian refugee families taking part in an

English Language course in Lichfield. The Museum was also represented at a Tamworth Cultural Education Partnership event to raise awareness of the Birthplace with local teachers.

The BBC filmed several pieces at the Museum for a new major programme 'Walks of Life' to be aired in Spring 2019.

The Birthplace has received the good news that the volunteer team is a finalist at the West Midlands Museums Development Awards in the 'Museum Champions' category and have been invited to an awards ceremony in Birmingham in September.

Following the extraordinary meeting of the Birthplace Advisory Committee in July, work has begun on project planning and gathering broad costs to prepare a project enquiry submission to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Work continues on the 'Eighteenth-Century Textual Studies at Lichfield' project with Keele University, with academics spending time in the Museum library to prepare their workshops for 2019 and applications now open for attendees. A dedicated website has been set up at: <http://c18bookhistory.org/>. A further week of events with local schools is also being organised. Other recent work has included preparation for Johnson's Birthday celebrations and Lichfield's Heritage Weekend; the addition of new lines in the bookshop including bespoke items by an illustrator based on the Dictionary, and a new discovery trail created for older children.

4. Twinning: Gabriele Lasch-Burden, Twinning Officer

Whilst schools and colleges are still closed for the summer holidays and no exchanges taking place during that time, there are a few confirmed twinning projects coming up:

Two apprentices from the Limburg City Council will be spending a week in Lichfield at the beginning of October to experience the local government structure. They will be spending

time at the City Council, District Council, Library, Samuel Johnson Birthplace, Friends2Friends, Erasmus Darwin House and Talent Match to give them a varied insight into different organisations. They will be staying with a host family from the Twinning Association.

Limburg City Council have confirmed that they have invited Peter Walker, Lichfield Cathedral artist-in-residence, to once again illuminate their cathedral for the beginning of the Christmas market. This light festival will take place on 30 November and 1 December. This was originally meant to be a biennial event, but due to Limburg Cathedral being painted and clad in scaffolding next year, it was brought forward to this year, following the great success and response of last year's illumination.

At least one Limburg school has confirmed their participation, with another possible high school, in next year's Lichfield Mysteries. The event will be on Saturday 9 February 2019 at the Friary School theatre, each participating school will perform one play from the full cycle.

In order to include more youngsters in Twinning, the Limburg Twinning Association, in conjunction with the Council's Youth Services, are looking into offering exchange summer holiday camps in the twin cities. A one week coach trip is planned for a maximum of twenty teenagers from the ages of 14 to 16, together with the appropriate amount of accompanying adults with the accommodation being in host families or youth hostels. It is hoped that this could also be facilitated in Lichfield and anyone wishing to take part or provide assistance should contact the Twinning Officer. A group of visitors from our French Twin Town of Ste. Foy-les-Lyon has been invited by the Twinning Association to visit Lichfield next April.

5. Guildhall: Jane Varley, acting Guildhall Bookings Secretary

August is traditionally a quieter month for bookings, with some of our regular hirers taking a summer break. There have been some new weekday bookings from the National Citizenship Service who have used the Whytmore Room for several training days.

It is "wedding season" and in a short few weeks there have been five wedding ceremonies and two reception parties. Enquiries for future bookings are steady with several viewings taking place in recent weeks.

During this quieter period the opportunity has been taken for some low level maintenance and cleaning to be carried out including the redecoration of the Ashmole room.

August Bank Holiday weekend was particularly busy at the Guildhall this year with a wedding ceremony, evening wedding reception, a two day sale by Lichfield Leather in the Guildroom and a fundraiser for the Mayor & Sheriff's Charities. These events ran alongside the ever popular Food Festival in the City.

6. Open Spaces and Tree Management: Nick Burton, Open Spaces Officer

The judges for the Heart of England in Bloom visited on 26 July and had a full tour seeing the best of Lichfield in terms of horticulture, the environment and the community. Projects such as the new Garden of Reflection at Gallows Wharf were showcased along with Netherstowe allotments that really showed off the best of horticulture, composting and community projects. Empty plots have been found new owners and help is offered to those struggling to keep on top of up-keep.



The Bloom Committee would like to thank all those involved for the hard work they put in to impress the judges, particularly in such sweltering temperatures. Plants had to be watered every day for months to maintain the high standards expected. The BBC were also in attendance filming much of the day's activities and it is hoped the programme will be aired next Spring. The results of the competition will be announced on 21 September.

Work on the roundabout at the junction of St Foy and the Birmingham road was completed. Further planting is planned for the autumn to keep the island fresh and is financed by the sponsor Jukes Funeral Services.



The work at St. Michael's Church to remove the diseased trees continues. This work has generated an added benefit in that Thomas Law's Mausoleum now has pride of place and is visible from the road once again.

The structure originally included a clock with two dials which were illuminated at night by gas. The Mausoleum is Grade II listed.

7. Deputy Town Clerk: Sarah Thomas

In preparation for the Sheriff's Ride the Deputy Town Clerk and Civic Officer attended the Safety Advisory Committee at the District Council on 19 July in order to fully brief them on the requirements of the day. As a result the Council has been asked by the Police's Tactical Planning unit to provide a Traffic Management Plan. This is the first time this has been

required and the Deputy Town Clerk is working closely with the Police and a specialist events team to produce this detailed and complex document in time for the Sheriff's Ride.

Work continues to progress with the City Council's Health & Safety Consultants, Terrain. A training course has been arranged on 19 September for key members of staff which will include manual handling, working at height and fire safety awareness. In addition the City Council's consultants will attend this year's Sheriff's Ride to conduct a full and up to date risk assessment.

Maintenance work has continued throughout the summer months with a much needed redecoration of the Ashmole room in the Guildhall:



Redecoration has been undertaken at Boley Park Community Hall during the summer break, and new flooring has also been installed in the entrance area, toilets and store room. Repairs have also been carried out to the fire doors at the rear of the main hall; replacement hinges now allow them to remain open at 90 degrees and make the doors lighter to operate.



Preparations continue towards the installation of Bollards on the Market Square and the Christmas lights switch on.