

OFFICERS' INFORMATION REPORT

1. Civic Matters: Lucy Clarke, Civic Officer

The annual Sheriff's Darwin Walk took place on Sunday 7 April. The walk started at Bunkers Hill, Beacon Park and follows a well-established route around the City Boundary. Encouraged by the good weather over 30 people took part, many bringing along their dogs to join in. At the halfway point, Mabel's Tea Rooms at Curborough Hall Farm kindly supplied the splendid and much needed refreshments. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the walk which raised £60 for the Mayor & Sheriff's Charities.



On Monday 8 April the Mayor and Sheriff held their annual Entertainment & Tea for the over 70's at Curborough Community Centre. The event was thoroughly enjoyed by over 80 guests and carers. A trader from the weekly general market, Paul Smith, kindly donated daffodils for the table decorations. This year guests were entertained by Tom Faulkner who sang a variety of songs from all genres and decades resulting in lots of audience participation.

On Easter Sunday the Civic party, including the newly appointed High Sheriff of Staffordshire Mr Ashley Brough, processed from the Guildhall to the Cathedral. After the service refreshments were served in the Guildhall including the traditional Simnel cake. This was the last civic engagement for Cllr David Leytham as Mayor and Mr Michael Mullarkey as Sheriff, providing them with the opportunity to thank all those who have helped during their year in office. Toasts were given by Cllr Mrs Janet Eagland and Cllr Mark Warfield on behalf of the Mayor and Sheriff.

On Tuesday 23 April the annual St. Georges Court was held in the Guildhall. This traditional manorial court was very well received with over 100 people in attendance. Ale Tasters Nick Sedgwick and Colin Ablitt once again gave their witty reports along with this year's High Constables, Jack Crawford and Jonathan Oates. Geoff Mumford from Burton Bridge Brewery kindly supplied the Ale which didn't last long! The Court was then closed, and proceedings were ended with the Toast to '*The Immortal Memory of St George*' by Cllr Tony Thompson.

Final accounts are still awaited but indications are that Cllr David Leytham and Mr Michael Mullarkey will have raised just over £10,000 during their year in office as Mayor and Sheriff. It is anticipated that cheques will be presented to representatives from their chosen charities, St. Marys on the Market Square and Lichfield Greenhill Bower Charitable Trust, in late June or early July.

On 13 May the Annual Council and Banquet was held. The new Civic team for 2019 - 2020 are; Mayor, Cllr Mrs Deborah Baker; Deputy Mayor, Cllr Robert Yardley and Sheriff, Dr Daryl Brown.

During the Council meeting the Mayor named her chaplain as Reverend Nest Bateman and her cadet, Benjamin Dodds from the local Lichfield Unit Police Cadets. Following the meeting a banquet was held for 107 guests. During the speeches the Mayor and Sheriff announced the charities they will be supporting during their year in office which are; Lichfield & Hatherton Canal Restoration Trust, St. Giles Hospice and Voluntary Transport for the Disabled.



On Sunday 26 May the Civic party led by the RAF Marching Band processed to St Michaels church for the annual Bower Sunday Service which was conducted by Revd Simon Baker. The Mayor gave a reading as did the Chairman of the Bower Committee, Mr Michael Mullarkey. Upon returning to the Guildhall guests were treated to a short performance by the Marching band before refreshments were served.

The Court of Arraye was held in the Guildhall on Monday 27 May. The 7th Lichfield Scout Group kindly helped once again providing seven Men at Arms. This year's High Constables; Cllr Mrs Janet Eagland and Dr Jeremy Duncan Brown called on the Dozeners to give their reports to the Lord of the Manor. HM Deputy Lieutenant of Staffordshire, Wing Commander Sharrard-Williams was also in attendance. This year's Lichfield Greenhill Bower Queen, Lydia Pitt and Ambassador, Victoria Smith were then crowned by the Mayor before the procession continued with the traditional route around the city.

Preparations remain ongoing for various charity events as well as the traditional civic events including Swinfen Broun Bowls Match and the Sheriff's Ride.

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



3,200 visitors came to the Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum in April and early May representing a busy Easter period. Activities for families over the school holidays included an Easter trail devised by volunteer Margery Dunlevy, an Easter branch to decorate and a 'Crafternoon tea party' craft event created by Attendant, Kevin Lynch. For adult visitors, Attendant Sue Bray hosted another popular History Workshop and behind-the-scenes library visit, on the subject of Johnson and women, and a temporary exhibition '*Imagination and Reality: Johnson and the Use of Travelling*' opened on 4 May. The display, researched and written by volunteer Nicola Young, runs until Sunday 7 July.

Group bookings included a breakfast tour as part of a weekend of alternative activities for the Crimean War Research Group, a visit from the Three Brethren U3A from the Scottish Borders and a private evening tour for a media company. Lichfield Arts returned to the Museum for the third year running to host a song writing workshop with legendary folk musician John Tams.

Filming took place for an ITV segment on language in the region with news presenter Samenna Ali-Khan which is due to be aired later in the summer. The Birthplace episode of '*Walks of Life*', filmed in July 2018 was aired in May and featured an interview with the Museums and Heritage Officer by presenter Mehreen Baig.

Behind the scenes work has included discussing potential partnership with the Friends of Lichfield Library and the Lichfield Society of Artists. A new regular volunteer, Isabel Moseley, has joined the Museum bringing conservation expertise. The Museums Administration Assistant attended a training session on Museum Collection Documentation, organised by West Midlands Museums Development. On the Development Project, the MHO met with the architect about plans for ground floor access, and an advisor from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to discuss revisions to the Expression of Interest application.

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



Recent tree works have included a mature birch branch at St Michaels which was demonstrating a hazard beam split and has now been made safe, however it cannot be removed until after the blue tits have fledged from a woodpecker hole. St. Michaels is proving to be one of the best wildlife habitats in the City. Other tree works in Jordan Close and Seward Close has improved the visibility for drivers in the area.

Work has started in earnest for the Lichfield in Bloom entry 2019 with the roses in the Heather Gardens getting some much-needed attention. New additions on the judges route this year include Erasmus Darwin's Herb Garden, Monks Walk Garden, Spires Care Home, and new projects from the Lichfield and Hatherton Canal's Trust, Swinfen Hall and the Dovehouse Community Garden.

Plant donations from residents are very much appreciated and represents a move from the less environmentally friendly annuals to established perennials which need less water and less manufactured compost.

The Bloom judges are always pleased to see project legacies, such as the Greyfriars Garden flower bed which is now a colourful display thanks to the hard work of the 1st Lichfield Scouts last year.



4. Twinning: Gabriele Lasch-Burden, Twinning Officer

On 12 April, Lichfield welcomed a group of 16 friends from our French twin town of Sainte Foy-les-Lyon. It was a busy weekend with a packed programme of visits which included afternoon tea at Elford walled gardens, a guided tour of Lichfield and a friendship evening with buffet and piano entertainment. As one of his last duties as Mayor before leaving office, Cllr David Leytham welcomed the group to the Guildhall where they enjoyed a tour of the Old Prison Cells and the Mayor's Parlour before heading off to the Wedgwood Factory and Museum at Barlaston. The group returned to France on Tuesday with fond memories of an enjoyable friendship weekend.



From 11 – 18 May a group of 16 students and their 4 teachers from the Limburg FDS vocational college took part in the first ever exchange programme with the Lichfield Campus of the South Staffordshire College. They joined the Lichfield students in lessons every morning for a week and arranged excursions and visits in the afternoon. Excursion highlights included trips to London, Warwick Castle and Birmingham. They were also treated to a guided tour of Lichfield and

enjoyed attending the City Council's Annual meeting. All the students were accommodated by Lichfield host families. The head teacher of the German college, who accompanied the students, thanked everyone involved for a wonderful week and it is hoped that there will be further exchanges in the future.

5. Guildhall: Helen Winter, Guildhall Bookings Secretary

Twenty-one meetings have been held in the Guildhall and the Guildroom has also been used for both the Local and European Elections. The Old prison Cells are open on Saturdays from 10.00am – 4.00pm and there have been some additional Green Badge Cell Tours during the week.

A new company, Angels in Mind, booked the Guildhall in April for the first time for a Mind, Body and Soul event with a quirky vintage twist. The event was held over two floors showcasing a mix of Angel card readers and Reiki therapists. Vintage clothing and beautiful

hand-crafted items were also on sale and visitors could take refreshments in the pop-up vintage tearoom. Other bookings have included a fabric sale, Cats Protection tabletop sale, two craft fairs, Lichfield Friends 2 Friends hired the Corridor Gallery and the Scouts used the Guildroom for their annual St George's Day Parade.

Concerts have been held by Lichfield Sinfonia and the City of Lichfield Concert Band and Lichfield Arts have held five concerts, as well as their Blues and Jazz Festival.

Additional bookings have included the Erasmus Darwin House Anniversary Dinner, a Bible Exhibition, a Cavalry Banquet and 50th Birthday Party. There have been four Wedding Receptions and one Wedding Ceremony since the last report. . The popular Bower Model Fair was again held in the Guildroom on 25 May attracting a large number of visitors.



Maintenance works in the Guildhall have included the annual service of the blinds in the main Hall and repair works to the lift. Further maintenance on the lift is scheduled during June/July to alleviate the breakdown issues recently experienced; the delay being due to the lead in time for the required replacement parts. In the meantime all hirers are being kept informed and extra staff are on hand to assist with large bookings.

Boley Park Community Hall continues to be popular for childrens birthday parties. The Boley Park Pre-School have also held their Spring Fair and the Stamp Fair will return again at the beginning of June.

6. Deputy Town Clerk: Sarah Thomas

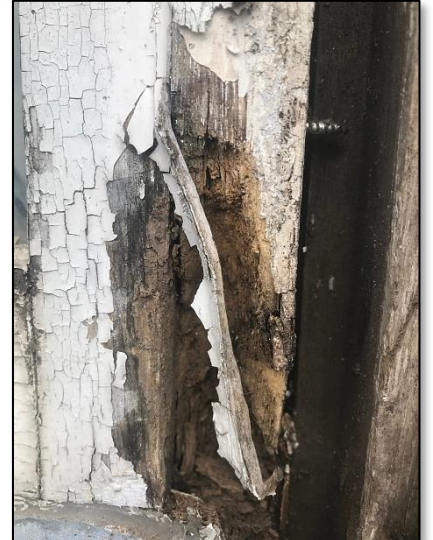
The Deputy Town Clerk has been working closely with the Town Clerk and Civic Officer throughout May at the Annual Council meeting, Annual Town meeting and Court of Araye in addition to assisting with preparations for the next Council meeting in June.

Some much needed repairs have recently been carried out to a total of 9 window frames at the Guildhall as part of the 2019/20 Repair and Renovations programme as approved by Council at its meeting of 28 January 2019. As can be seen from the photographs overleaf, much of the woodwork was beginning to rot and several areas of paint had begun to peel away.

Contractors accessed the windows via a cherry picker from the rear of the Guildhall and in order to minimise disruption to the residents of Dominium Court, work was carried over two consecutive weekends. Whilst carrying out these repairs the opportunity was also taken to clear and repair the Guildhall guttering and replace the defective security light.

Preparations continue for the Sheriff's Ride and Christmas Lights Switch On; the Deputy Town Clerk will shortly be attending the Safety Advisory Group meetings at the District Council for each of these events.

Moulton Room and Minstrels' Gallery Windows Prior to Repairs



Moulton Room and Minstrels' Gallery Windows Following Repairs

