

EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL Wednesday 7th September 2016

Culture

1. Marking Middlesbrough's Heritage

We're continuing to support our local heritage, making it a priority in the Mayor's 2025 Vision – *Fairer, Safer, Stronger*. Supporting and celebrating our local history is vital to boosting local pride, strengthening community cohesion, and increasing visitor figures to Middlesbrough and the area.

In July, a series of blue plaques were put up across the town to mark important locations in Middlesbrough's history. This was part of the Heritage Lottery Fund-supported Tees Transporter Bridge Visitor Experience Project, which has already seen the opening of the new visitor centre at the Transporter Bridge. Locations span from Dorman Museum to Port Clarence, and include the site of Bolckow Vaughan's Ironworks, Florence Bell's Winter Garden and the Middlesbrough Dock Clock Tower. They were designed and produced locally at both Baldwin Solid Surfaces and William Lane Foundry. As part of this project, an App is in the process of being set up and will be released shortly, giving the heritage trail an interactive element.

The Town Hall Heritage Engagement project is also on-going, with the volunteering programme starting over the summer. Twenty five volunteers are now engaged in a range of activities including researching the history of the Town Hall at Teesside Archives, documenting the building project using photography and film, and collecting oral histories from local people about their experiences of the Town Hall. In addition, the 'My Town Hall' pop up exhibition has engaged with local communities at the Mela and Cleveland Show, and will be attending the Town Meal in September. The Town Hall is also taking part in Mima's Pride of Place project, and will be popping up in community venues and at events throughout the building closure.

Mima has also been celebrating Middlesbrough and Tees Valley's local heritage. Following on from its successful *Localism* exhibition, the gallery is now hosting the **Teesside World Exposition of Art and Technology**, a response to the closure of Redcar's steel works. This opened on 25 June and runs until 9 October.

2. Museums

Our museums have been given two major boosts in the past couple of weeks. Middlesbrough Council has been successful as the lead applicant on behalf of a Tees Valley consortium for an **Arts Council Strategic Museums Grant**. The consortium received £86,130 over two years to develop joint working between local museums as part of the wider Combined Authority culture programme of work. The programme of activity will include building on the 'Making a Mark' education programme which has supported thousands of Middlesbrough school children to visit our local museums and learn more about heritage. There will also be a focus on supporting museums to be more resilient by

developing fundraising and commercial capabilities, and through initiatives to develop the number and range of visitors.

Furthermore, both the Dorman and Captain Cook Birthplace Museums have been awarded a 2016 **Sandford Award**, which recognises national excellence in museums' education programmes. The museums went through a rigorous assessment process, including visits by national experts who observed education provision and spoke with teachers and students about their experiences. The feedback from judges commended the expertise of our education teams, and praised opportunities for children to learn through contact with our collections. The Dorman's education facilities were highly praised, and we aim to provide even more excellent education and learning facilities through the forthcoming development works at the Cook.

3. Mima

During August and September, mima is hosting the national touring project 'Caravan Gallery'. Devised by artists Jan Williams and Chris Teasdale, who have toured internationally, the Caravan Gallery is a unique mobile touring venue, which enables the artists to take their work into communities as well as traditional gallery spaces. Together with mima, they are delivering the Middlesbrough Pride of Place project which has seen an empty shop on Linthorpe Road converted into an alternative civic information centre. Members of the public are invited to come and take part in activities and share Middlesbrough related artworks and memorabilia.

Work continues in the mima building on the redevelopment of the café, which will re-open in September. The café franchise is now held by 'The Waiting Room' and there has been a significant uplift in patronage, with the ground floor a bustling hive of activity.

Alongside the Teesside World Exposition of Art and Technology, mima is hosting **If All Relations Were to Reach Equilibrium, Then This Building Would Dissolve**, a project exploring migration on Teesside. Much of the project is community-led, with many artifacts and artworks being created by asylum seekers. The project runs until 18 September and features a weekly communal meal, which has been a big hit.

Under an innovative leadership team, mima is going from strength to strength. Ways are being looked into to build on community outreach, and the concept of 'useful art'. Cultural exchanges, particularly with our twinned town, Oberhausen, are also being considered.

4. Middlesbrough Theatre

The theatre has had an excellent first quarter of 2016/17 with a 32% increase in the number of performances presented and an increase in attendances of 94% (from 6576 in 15/16 to 12751).

Amateur and professional productions have seen significant increases in audience figures. Some of the increase is as a result of the relocation of some classical performances due to the Town Hall closure, however this only accounts for one third of the increase in attendances at professional performances.

Advance sales for the autumn season are also looking strong, and the pantomime in particular is selling well with 39% of seats sold or reserved which is an additional 2300 seats compared with the same point last year.

Leisure and Sport

5. Junior Park Run

Middlesbrough's first Junior Park Run took place on Sunday 14 August at Hemlington Lake, and was a big success. The weekly event is open to all 4-14 year olds to run independently or with their parents around the 2km course. The event is entirely staffed by volunteers and will provide an ideal starting point for children wishing to get involved in running. Events such like these are vital in tackling health inequalities across the town. That is why this event, like our other Park Runs, are free to enter, with the aim of maximising take-up. Further details about the Hemlington Lake Junior Park Run can be found via <http://www.parkrun.org.uk/hemlingtonlake-juniors/>

6. Leisure Venues Capital Developments

The development at the Neptune Leisure Centre is now complete and comprises of a new and larger gym space than was previously available, new changing facilities and two dance/fitness studios. The development has also seen the Joe Walton's community room move to the Neptune's ground floor, a move that has received positive comments from residents and other user-groups.

Developments at the Rainbow Centre are nearing completion and will see a new and extend gym space that will be visible to the reception area. The Rainbow Centre will also see new changing facilities, cycle and dance/fitness studios.

Finally, work has commenced on the development of a mezzanine floor at Middlesbrough Sports Village.

7. Cycling – Go Ride Coach

Building on the Tour de Yorkshire legacy, the Go Ride programme continues to deliver cycle programmes in the community for young people and link that activity back to sustained opportunities at Middlesbrough Sports Village and the cycle clubs that use the facility.

Over three years, Public Health are putting in £30k per annum, which is being more-or-less matched by British Cycling each year. The coach works full time to engage secondary school age children and community groups. The Go-Ride coach has access to a pool of 20 mountain bikes. In addition to this, 20 track specific cycles have been purchased via British Cycling. This allows anyone, regardless of experience, to access the velodrome through an accreditation programme. Linked to this purchase is 8 hours coaching per week from British Cycling and 5 hours per week from SLM.

Some of the work undertaken by the Go Ride programme this year includes;

- 755 opportunities to participate in the Go-Ride schools programme.
- 464 opportunities to participate in the Go-Ride community programme (this includes Activity Coaching
- Programmes, Club Support Sessions and Rider Development Sessions).
- 178 participants at Go-Ride come-and-try sessions linked to events.
- Four Go-Ride Racing events, with 53 opportunities for young people to try their first race.
- The Go-Ride Coach has provided a total of 1,450 opportunities for young people this year.

8. Cycling – Cycle Circuit/Velodrome User Group Meeting

A meeting to establish a Cycle Circuit/Velodrome User Group Forum is being held on Monday 12 September at Middlesbrough Sports Village. All interested parties are invited to attend. It is intended that this group will meet regularly with a view to ensuring that the cycling community can influence and direct the development of cycle facilities and their use at Middlesbrough Sports Village. Whilst the terms of reference are yet to be set for this group, it is anticipated that it may become a constituted group that may seek to self-fund projects in the future.