

# LEISURE & CULTURE NEWS

No. 30 July 2006

## SPORT AND HEALTHY LIVING

### SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

#### Active Coaching Team Launched

Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust's Sports Development Unit has appointed seven new Community Sports Coaches to form the 'Active Coaching Team'.

The team, funded externally, will work to support the Trust's vision 'Getting Wigan Active' by helping the community get physically active. They will also work alongside Community Safety and other partner organisations in the Borough's townships to provide diversionary activities for young people to combat anti-social behaviour.

The team has been in operation for little under three weeks and has already managed to engage with over 300 young people from across the Borough.

Lynsey Randall, Principal Sports Development Manager, says, "The new team will be tasked with engaging with the hard to reach elements of our community by using sport as a vehicle to encourage social inclusion. In a short space of time the team has already launched new initiatives working with CYPs and the Wigan Athletic Media bus which have resulted in hundreds of young people receiving the benefits of physical activity."

The team consists of four Multi-skill Coaches who will work in the Borough's schools. The other three coaches will support the multi-skills principles whilst focussing on Rugby League, Cricket and Netball in schools and clubs throughout the Borough. All seven coaches will work alongside the existing three Multi-Skills Coaches and the Rugby League Co-ordinator.

Contact: Lynsey Randall, 01942 404981

#### Primary School Festival A Success

The Wigan Primary Schools Festivals took place on 8<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> June at Robin Park. Children from 89 schools from across the Borough competed in gymnastics, rugby league, tennis, cricket, netball, basketball, hockey, football and athletics.

The festivals were hosted by Wigan Sports Development Unit in partnership with Abraham Guest and Lowton Sports Colleges, and the School Sports Co-ordinators.

1250 children in total participated over the two days, with over 50 Junior Sports Leaders and volunteers from local clubs also involved.

Contact: Keith Eckersall on 01942 828554

## ACTIVE LIFE

#### New Era for Leisure in Leigh

As part of the £75million Leigh Sports Village project, building work on a brand new sports centre and swimming facility has commenced.

When complete, Leigh Sports Village, will be the focal point for all leisure activities in Leigh. The new £6.4million public sports centre is scheduled to be completed by May 2007 and will be managed by WLCT.

It will include the following facilities:

- **Swimming pool** - The 25m, six-lane pool is designed to host competitive swimming galas with spectator seating for 180 people and room for 150 competitors.

- **Sports Hall** – consisting of eight courts, can be used for badminton, basketball, netball, volleyball and football. Seating for up to 250 people and can be used to host major sporting events.
- **Fitness Gym** - The fitness suite will consist of a range of weight resistance and cardiovascular equipment to enable people to achieve a full body workout.
- **Multi-Purpose Room** - The multi-purpose room will provide a range of aerobic sessions and martial arts activities for up to 50 people.



Rodney Hill, Chief Executive of WLCT, says, "The new pool will be the finest swimming facility in the Borough and the sports hall and gym will focus on the needs of the community and sports clubs in Leigh. Our vision is for the people of Leigh to become more active both physically, mentally and creatively. Today is a significant step to achieving that goal."

**Contact: Martin Eden on 01942 828521**

### **Robin Park Scoops Double Award**

Robin Park Sports Centre and has scooped two major awards that place it firmly at the top of the tree of the North West's sports and leisure centres. Robin Park Arena has made great strides recently and staff are delighted to see their hard work being recognised regionally.

The Arena has received UK Athletics' North West 'Partnership of the Year' award for the excellent work done to provide opportunities for local athletes to train and for the strong partnerships they have formed with Wigan Borough's sports clubs and schools. UK Athletics was particularly impressed that over 2,000 children attended athletics coaching sessions at the venue in 2005.

Meanwhile, resident Groundsman, Cliff Aspey, who is part of the Trust's Grounds Maintenance Team, has won the Football Association's 'Groundsman of the

Year' award for Lancashire. Cliff's award is particularly impressive, as Robin Park's pitch has hosted over sixty major games this year – significantly more than any previous year.

**Contact: Mike Woodruff on 01942 404957**

## **ACTIVE LIVING**

### **Sport Relief for Wigan**

Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust is organising a Sainsbury's Sport Relief Mile on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2006 at Wigan's premier sporting venue, Robin Park Arena. The professional running track will play host to an eclectic mix of runners, walkers and wheelchair users of all ages and abilities, who will all be aiming to complete a mile to raise sponsorship money in aid of Sport Relief.

The Sainsbury's Sport Relief Mile will see the UK unite to complete a mile to raise money to help vulnerable people leading tough lives at home and abroad. The Trust is inviting people from Wigan Borough and beyond to unite behind the cause and enjoy a fun event suitable for all ages and abilities at Robin Park Arena.

The Robin Park event will take place between 10am and 1pm, and those wishing to take part can register online at [www.sportrelief.com](http://www.sportrelief.com) or by calling 0845 605 8000 for an entry kit. The miles will take part in waves and the Trust will provide a free aerobics warm up for all participants.

**Contact: Emma Moran on 01942 828572**

### **Eating Well @ World Cup**

Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust has launched an exciting project to get the borough's workers thinking about what they eat as part of the Well @ Work programme.

WLCT has joined forces with organisations like the British Heart Foundation, the Department of Health, Sport England and the Big Lottery Fund to pilot the Well@Work project over the next two years.

Active Living Officer Alison Gilfoyle has worked in partnership with HJ Heinz and HMP Hindley YO1 on the scheme. As part of the healthy eating element of the campaign she has devised a series of World Cup Menus to promote good, healthy food.

The scheme has proved very popular with staff that have been munching on everything from 'risotto alla

Milanese' (Italy) to 'chicken with shrimp and peanut sauce' (Brazil).

The scheme will continue to run as part of the Active Living Team's drive to increase opportunities for the Borough's residents to get physically active and lead healthier lifestyles.

**Contact: Alison Gilfoyle on 01942 488486**

## **LIBRARIES, HERITAGE AND INFORMATION**

### **HERITAGE SERVICES**

#### **Volunteers Recruitment**

Heritage Services are leading Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust's campaign to encourage more members of the community to take an active role in leisure and cultural activities across Wigan Borough.

Volunteers' Week, a national celebration of volunteers and volunteering which took place in June, was used to launch the Trust's volunteer recruitment campaign.

Many of the Trust's services are looking to recruit new volunteers. Whether they are motivated by steam engines, a desire to be a sports coach or a passion for parks, there is something for all members of the community to be involved in.



Wigan Pier's Volunteers' Officer, Debby Hill, is actively seeking new volunteers for the History Shop and the Trencherfield Mill Engine. Similarly, Sharon Saunders from the Parks and Countryside Team and Lizzie Hendley from Sports Development, are continually looking for volunteers in their service areas.

Debby says, "Volunteering is a two way process and those who choose to take up the opportunity find

themselves with a rewarding and enjoyable pastime as well as a whole new circle of friends."

Wherever possible Trust volunteers will have their expenses covered.

To learn more about WLCT's volunteer programmes please contact the following:

- Heritage Services: Debby Hill on 01942 704757
- Sports Development: Lizzie Hendley on 01942 404995
- Parks and Countryside: Sharon Saunders on 01942 828829
- Wiend Children's Centre: Andrew Pickup on 01942 828102
- Libraries: Anne Turner on 01942 486978

## **LIBRARIES**

### **Got Kids? Get Reading!**

Katherine Muirhead, Bookstart Plus Officer in the Hindley/Hindley Green area, is currently delivering the second stage of the Reading Agency initiative's 'Got Kids? Get Reading!'

This scheme is a collection of books for the parents and carers of young children under five. It includes a six week programme that can run alongside existing collections to encourage literacy and reading within families.

Working in partnership with Wigan and Leigh College's Adult and Community Learning Department, the scheme was rolled out at Hindley's Surestart Children's Centre. It has proven to be a real success, with one parent commenting, "I sat down and started reading the book that I'd taken out of the collection. My son came up to me and asked me what I was reading and then went to get his own book. We ended up sat together reading our books."

It is hoped to set up another of these schemes in September working with teenage mums at Bamber Court.

**Contact: Katherine Muirhead on 01942 255287**

## COMMUNITY REGENERATION

### TURNPIKE GALLERY

#### Children Inspired by Home Environment

Over 500 school children visited the 'Home Environment' exhibition at the Turnpike Gallery in June.

The exhibition showed sculptures by Wigan-based artists Brian Taylor and Hawys Mather made from natural materials collected locally.

Brian was artist-in-residence at the gallery during National Architecture Week (16-25 June), and pupils visiting the exhibition helped on constructing a large sculpture to be sited at Pennington Flash.



The Turnpike's next exhibition, 'Audio Art Lab' invites visitors to enjoy an interactive experience that explores sound and how it is produced. Each artist has produced works that respond to the visitor's physical movements and interactions.

The exhibition promises to intrigue and delight visitors of all ages at the gallery this summer. Audio Art Lab opens at 12pm on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> July.

**Contact: Martyn Lucas on 01942 404469**

## ARTS AND FESTIVALS

### Hot With Festival Fever

Wigan Borough is in full swing with festival fever and WLCT's recent events have proved hugely popular again this year.

Hot On The Streets, Wigan's favourite fun festival of street entertainment, returned to the heart of Wigan town centre in June. Now in its fourth year, the free festival which brought professional dancers, magicians, comedians and musicians to Market

Square, was witnessed by over 4,000 people over three days.

Watch out for Hot On The Square, in Leigh from July 15<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup>.

Meanwhile, Wigan music scene's free annual outdoor party took place at the Haigh Festival on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June. The free outdoor music festival, organised by the Trust in conjunction with the Wigan Music Collective, was witnessed by over 3,000 people.

With, the Wigan International Jazz Festival (15<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> July), Arts For All (9<sup>th</sup> July) and the Wigan One World Festival (6<sup>th</sup> August) still to come, the Borough will be kissed with colour, noise and celebration this summer.

**Contact: Chris Wyatt on 486929**

### Connecting Through Dance

Greater Manchester united for an exclusive performance of dance at the Waterside Arts Centre in Sale, on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> June.

An invigorating night of integrated dance performance, co-ordinated by Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust and directed by Touchdown Dance Company, celebrated talented disabled and non-disabled performers of all ages, from across Greater Manchester.



The two-hour long performance, featured touch and sensory dance, and included appearances by dance groups from across Greater Manchester, including Atherton-based 'Konnnect 2'.

The performance followed a week of workshops and training sessions for all those involved and for those who work with people with disabilities and dance groups.

Vicky Fletcher, Arts Development Officer for WLCT says, "The performance was excellent and was really well-received. It was a great opportunity for us to showcase the talent and appetite there is for dance across Greater Manchester and to forge new partnerships."

**Contact: Vicky Fletcher on 01942 486918**

## **ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**

### **CEMETERY SERVICES**

#### **Cemetery Walks Prove Popular**

The Trust's Cemeteries Team, together with Heritage Service's Tony Ashcroft, organised a series of Cemetery Walks that always prove popular with local history enthusiasts.

On a wet Monday evening in May, at Atherton Cemetery, Tony guided a party of twenty around many notable graves and memorials in Atherton Cemetery.



Cemeteries are the guardians of many historic tales and give us huge amounts of information about the Borough's social history. Tony has a wealth of knowledge and he always gives an interesting tour. Tony's tours are repeated throughout the year and also take place at Leigh and Tyldesley Cemeteries.

**Contact: Tony Bassett on 01942 828855**

## **GROUNDS MAINTENANCE**

### **Tropical Wigan**

The unusually warm and wet weather conditions that can only be described as 'tropical' are having a major

impact on the Borough's green and pleasant land and on the Trust's Grounds Maintenance Team.

The Borough's flora is growing at rates never seen before. The late start to the spring, together with the mild and wet conditions, has seen an explosion of grass and weed growth which the team is currently battling hard to control.

Paul Barton, Grounds Maintenance Services Manager, says, "We have gardeners with over thirty years experience who can't remember seeing the vigorous growing conditions we are experiencing at the moment. With over three million square metres of grass to be cut every week, we have had to recruit extra staff into our grass cutting teams to help keep up with current growth rates. We are doing our very best in what are difficult conditions."

Although the pressure on the team has increased over recent weeks, there are some positives to be drawn from the current conditions.

Paul continues, "The warm and wet weather has helped to produce an exceptional show of daffodils, crocus and tulips that have brought a dazzling display of colours to many areas of the borough. Our team was busy planting flowers and shrubs during the spring and is now enjoying seeing their hard work coming to fruition."

**Contact: Paul Barton on 01942 731405**