

# Service News

## ***Incorporating Performance Indicator Outputs where 'Exceptional'***



The beautiful Old House Museum in High Town

The Summer was hugely successful for Heritage Services, with record numbers of the public visiting the service's two highest profile sites; The Old House in Hereford and Ledbury Heritage Centre.

The installation of a virtual tour at The Old House - panoramic 360 degree photographs of all of the rooms incorporated into a computer programme - has drawn people in to revisit the house and has attracted mobility impaired visitors. This innovative project means that visitors can now navigate their way around the building while sitting at a computer on the ground floor, allowing even visitors unable to climb the stairs to enjoy the splendours of the upper floors.

Special exhibitions at Broad Street and Ross-on-Wye

proved a big draw. Ross-on-Wye Heritage Centre played a pivotal role in the International Festival by providing a starting point for organised walks, general information and a focal point for activities. Complementary workshops and exhibitions took place.

Museum on the Move also had a great summer and attended galas and carnivals to great acclaim.

The only exception to this pattern is Bromyard, where figures are low due to acute staff shortage. Volunteer staff at this Centre have stated that they are now too old to continue. A campaign to draw new volunteers to the Centre has to date received a poor response.

### The figures:

**Number of visits to museums per 1,000 population has already achieved 578 of the 814 annual target.**

**Those visits that were in person: 544 achieved at half year against 775 target.**

**Number of pupils visiting museums and galleries has already overachieved the annual target of 3,100 by 778.**

**Customer satisfaction rates with sites is currently running at 90% (against the target of 60%, based on last year's output) largely as a result of the range and diversity of temporary exhibitions staged through the summer.**

**Satisfaction levels remain high with heritage service staff at 90%. This is a clear 20% above target.**

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## **Local Development get Big Customer Response**

The Local Development Team undertook their annual customer survey during this period and, by widening their list of customers to include the partnerships they have been developing in the market towns, this year's response has more than doubled the amount of feedback they have available to them. The Team

had 110 questionnaires returned, compared to just 44 last year. The results are currently being analysed and the Team will report on the outcome next time.

Following the award of Market Towns Initiative Funding for the towns of Leominster and Ross-on-Wye (reported last time), the Team have now

secured additional funding enabling the recruitment of support officers to monitor the programme within each of those towns. Angela Williams joined the Authority on 29th September as the Ross-on-Wye Support Officer and the new officer for Leominster has since taken up post.



Audit of the Authority's mobile telephones

## Calling Directorate Support

To enable the Authority to realise the full benefit of the expected £50k per annum savings from I.T. Services Division's negotiation of the new framework contract for mobile telephones a full audit of existing mobiles was necessary. Throughout August and September, members of the Directorate Support Unit provided project support to I.T. Services by completing a full inventory of the 787 existing mobile phones across the Council.

The publication of the first

Guide to Performance Indicators was well received. Results of the satisfaction survey to date indicate that 90% of you rate the value and content of this guide as excellent, with a lower 62% rating its ease of use as excellent. This knowledge enables informed improvements to be made to next year's edition.

The satisfaction survey also revealed that our Performance Indicator reports are less liked. Only 50% of you rated these as excellent which has prompted

this trial of a completely new approach. Your opinions are essential to our work so please keep them coming in.

The Directorate Support Manager began project management work on the 'big move' to the Bulmer's building in Plough Lane. The project plan has been drawn up, which includes an amazing 600 plus tasks as diverse as cancelling the milkman to administering the use of smart card technology. The monitoring and implementation of all these tasks is ongoing.

## Herefordshire Partnership Support Services update Plan

*"re-visit the Herefordshire Plan in order to focus on the achievements that have been made since the original plan was written"*

The Herefordshire Plan has been revisited in order to bring it up to date, focus on some of the achievements that have been made since the original plan was written and ensure it is easier to use and access. The revised Plan will be circulated widely in October and November. The Team have also been compiling the annual consultation calendar. The calendar, which details more than 70 community consultative and involvement actions/events planned for the next twelve months, is available on the Herefordshire Council intranet. Parish Plan support work is gathering

pace, with networking events, training and advice now provided to over 30 local communities. A series of training events is currently underway.

The 9th edition of the Funding Directory was published, and is now available on the Herefordshire Council website. Some of the external funding applications supported by Project Development Officers which were successful during this period, include notable grants to the Anne Frank Exhibition, Age Concern and Hereford Cathedral. Meanwhile further funding to

support the Hereford City Small Project Fund has been secured and projects are being identified.

Significant work is being undertaken to restructure and re-launch the Herefordshire Learning Partnership. Wide consultation was undertaken during the summer regarding the aims, objectives and membership of the Partnership. Consultation findings supported its continuation, and it is hoped that the updated Learning Partnership will hold its first meeting in November.

## Parks, Countryside & Leisure Development positively Blooming



Britain in Bloom a success

The Britain in Bloom successes were announced. Pleasingly, all market towns which entered gained awards, with Ledbury winning the small towns award at national level.

The refurbishment of Queenswood outbuildings into office accommodation was completed.

The North Herefordshire replacement pool project progressed to stage two of a

Prince 2 five stage timetable.

The first build in the County under the new Jarvis Partnership was completed at Lady Hawkins Community Leisure Centre, Kington. It provides a new customer reception and an office, greatly improving the daytime service provided at the Centre, also ensuring that the facility is fully DDA compliant. Included in the build were additional

disabled parking spaces with ramped access and a fully automatic entrance door.

Major restructuring of the Service was undertaken, including the implementation of interim management arrangements until 31.3.04. Certain senior posts were seconded to the Environment Directorate to manage the Herefordshire Jarvis Services and Owen Williams contracts.

## External Liaison help show Racism the Red Card

Final arrangements for the staging of The Anne Frank Exhibition and other fringe events (running for the month of October) were organised during this period. The purpose of these events is to raise the profile of the cultural diversity of the County and raise awareness of specific initiatives such as 'Show Racism the Red Card'.

It is becoming widely recognised that physical activity has a role to play in addressing many agendas and tackling issues concerning health, safety, crime reduction and environment. LIFT, the Herefordshire exercise referral scheme that has been successfully tackling certain of

these issues on a County wide basis, is now in the process of seeking consultants to provide a comprehensive overview of the scheme. Their brief is to identify the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for the scheme to improve and develop, thus ensuring that LIFT is an economically viable, patient/community-driven scheme which is capable of running for another decade.

The partnership post between Sports Development and the Community Safety Partnership has been appointed. This project does not yet have a name but will use sporting activity as an intervention for young people at risk of offending.

Also during this period:

- Child Advocacy awareness sessions have been arranged for delivery next month.
- A girls Football Development Officer was appointed to promote the ever increasing demand for girls football.
- Herefordshire received 6 months funding to deliver the Active Sports Programme.
- The Footprints Project will continue to develop due to a successful bid for funding from The Forestry Commission.
- Two community gyms are to be developed in South Wye.



Anne Frank

## Libraries improve Services

Feedback gathered from an extensive consultation exercise undertaken in September involving users and non users, will be used to influence service planning and development.

The Division continues to focus on the restructuring necessary to facilitate greater integration of Library and Information Services with INFO in Herefordshire. Project work is underway to enable the delivery of the new multifunctional service access

point at Bromyard early in the new year, which will see INFO in Herefordshire, Library, Leisure and Tourism services all under one roof with a single reception point.

This years Summer Reading Challenge, themed a 'Reading Maze' was launched at Hampton Court in July. The launch included a maze mown into the lawns and various children's activities. The challenge which runs during the school holiday, was hugely successful, many of this years

young readers attained certificates and medals.

Further improvements made to the central library in Hereford included new shelving, displays and furniture which has improved access, provided a new separate computer suite and freed up space in the reference library.

Library on-line services were also further improved, when the new online catalogue went live in September.

*Increasing the take-up and access to information, advice and cultural opportunities*

## Cultural Services raises its Profile

September was Archive Awareness Month. The Archive Service (formerly known as The Records Office) held a host of events including a very successful open day which attracted almost 200 people, generated a great deal of interest and helped to raise the profile of the service. The recruitment of a Principal Archive Officer was also in progress during September.

August and September are traditionally a very busy period for Cultural Services, as it is the height of the visitor season. Tourist Information Centres were traditionally busy and required the arrangement of additional staffing. Business was good and increased income was generated through the Centres.

The Ross International Festival and the Three Choirs Festival both took place in August: these are two events which received funding assistance from the Authority.

H.Art (Herefordshire Art Week) was held during September; it was bigger and better than ever and once again it received satisfyingly positive feedback.



Soup and coal tickets from Leominster

## Economic Investment and Development Team go Public



Work commences on Leominster Access Road

The works contract for the Leominster Access Road was let in to Mowlem Plc in August and work commenced on site in September. A public open day was held to explain what will be happening.

Officers continued work with AWM on the development and marketing of the Leominster Enterprise Park.

Liaison with contractors and other Council departments continued on the construction of a new link from Holme Lacy Road to Netherwood Road which is required as part of the proposed Rotherwas Access Road development.

Likewise, a link road from Netherwood Road to the South Magazine which will release some 9 hectares (23 acres) of development land once the access road is constructed.

Funding of over £700,000 has been secured for the schemes from AWM. The work is scheduled to be completed in November 2003.

The Team continues to manage the development of 6 new industrial units at Twyford Road which are due to be completed by the end of October 2003.

Officers finalised designs for the Rotherwas Business Centre to incorporate office units, a training/conference suite and high-tech units. Consultants commenced production of the business plan for the Centre, and building work is programmed to start in Spring 2004.

During the period the Team experienced an increased number of companies looking for larger premises to expand into. Some of this expansion

is being aided by grants that the Team supports, such as The Prograta Fund scheme (2 new grants for Herefordshire companies), Creative Industries Fund (3 companies awarded grants) and the Start-Up grant scheme (4 new grants).

Other ongoing projects are the rail freight study (reported last time) and the arrangements for a series of business roadshows in the market towns during November.

Development of the new economic strategy for Herefordshire will start soon following the appointment of consultants EDAW to carry out stage 1 of the project. This stage will involve widespread consultation with key Herefordshire stakeholders, as well as the public, and will result in a new vision for the future.



Twyford Road units nearing completion

## Community Youth Service is the Way 2 Go

In September the Community Youth Service launched a range of new information services for young people. 'Way 2 Go' provides a comprehensive range of both local and national information in free and young people friendly formats via book, email, text and a free-phone line. All of the feedback to date has been very positive.

A wide range of summer programmes and events took place throughout the County. Programmes varied from taster days and accredited courses to renewing friendships with international 'exchangees'. Events have included music workshops, sailing, FA coaching, archery, rock climbing and graffiti art.

The summer was the most successful ever for the Hereford Canoe Centre, with 65 young people achieving the BCU 1 star awards (in spite of the very low water levels).

The 'Youth Times' roadshow has been attracting large numbers of young people. An impressive 39 have signed up to become more involved in the editorial or reporter teams that will produce and manage the new magazine for young people. It is planned to publish the magazine in both paper format and electronically, as part of the e-gateway. The Youth Times programme is being delivered in partnership with The Rural Media Company in such a way as to concurrently provide

training for youth workers in the media and arts.



Way 2 Go book—one of the formats used for the new information service