

COUNCIL: 30 JANUARY 2020

CULTURE & LEISURE STATEMENT

National Tree Week (23rd November – 1st December 2019)

National Tree Week was established in 1975 by The Tree Council and provides an annual opportunity for organisations to demonstrate a recognition of the importance and value of trees in our towns and cities. I am delighted to confirm that the Council, in partnership with stakeholders of the Parks service, has commenced its annual programme of new and replacement tree planting for the 2019/20 season. The Council is committed to ensuring the vitality of its tree stock and this was marked with our first planting at Bute Park, a new Sorbus, funded through our Trees For Cities Project, in conjunction with Cardiff Civic Society. Over the period of the planting window, I anticipate up to 3,500 new and replacement trees being, subject to grant funding.

APSE Awards 2019

I am delighted to report that Ginny Head, one of our trainees within the Parks service, recently received recognition as the Runner Up in the 'Horticulture Apprentice of the Year' category at the annual Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) Awards. This is an excellent personal achievement given the level of competition and also underlines the administration's commitment to providing such opportunities. The Council also received an Employer Award in recognition of the provision of a quality training scheme.

GP Exercise Referral Scheme

Cardiff Council recently hosted a delegation from a Community Trust based in Falkirk, Scotland who had been recommended to visit the city to gain a greater understanding of the National Exercise Referral Scheme being delivered by the Council in partnership with Public Health Wales. Our programme in Cardiff is the largest and most successful in operation in Wales and the delegation visited a number of Leisure Centres within the GLL portfolio, viewing a wide variety of referral activities. The delegation were extremely impressed by the professionalism of delivery and the number of clients attending all sessions. In Scotland, local variations of GP referrals are commonplace and the Community Trust will be making representations to decision makers and government having seen the impacts of the scheme in Cardiff.

Cardiff International White Water Centre

During last year's flooding in the Midlands and North West of England, flood emergency teams were called into action to help local communities and save lives. Many of these teams have carried out their flood and rescue training at the Cardiff International White Water Centre throughout the summer. It is pleasing to see that the facility doesn't just provide a great recreational experience for individuals and groups, but also provides a critical role in supporting the Emergency Services throughout the UK.

Cardiff at Christmas

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our partners and officers who worked so hard to ensure that Cardiff delivered yet another magical Christmas experience for our residents and visitors alike. The Christmas Markets returned to our city centre to further enhance our capital's vibrant Christmas retail offer. Winter Wonderland also returned with a brand new attraction – the Alpine Ice Trail – which enabled visitors to skate on a magical ice trail under the light festooned canopy of trees in Gorsedd Gardens.

Of course, no Christmas in Cardiff would be complete without our traditional ballet and our ever popular pantomime. Cinderella proved a great hit with audiences at the New Theatre, whilst St David's Hall once again played host to the Russian State ballet of Siberia, performing the festive favourites – Coppelia, The Nutcracker and Swan Lake. We were also very honoured that Father Christmas visited Cardiff Castle again this year and he had a very busy schedule full of eager boys and girls waiting to meet him to discuss their Christmas Lists.

Events

At the start of 2020, it is worth reflecting on the considerable work undertaken by our partners and internal events team in sustaining Cardiff's 'event capital' crown during the last year. In 2019, the Council's Events Team worked with partners and promoters to support the delivery of over 50 events as the city welcomed events, including the Homeless World Cup, ICC Cricket World Cup, Urdd National Eisteddfod, Speedway Grand Prix and the first Fair Saturday. We have worked with external organisations such as BBC Wales, BAFTA, Wales Millennium Centre and the Armed Forces and supported events and activities along with other council services such as Cardiff Harbour Authority, Education, Electoral Services and the Protocol Office.

Similarly, this year's events programme will have much to offer residents and visitors alike. Entertainment leaders Nitro Circus and Live Nation have partnered with Visit Wales, Principality Stadium and Cardiff Council to bring Nitro World Games Wales 2020 to Cardiff on the Bank Holiday weekend of 23rd & 24th May 2020. For the first time outside of the USA, Cardiff will welcome more than 100 of the best athletes in sport's most extreme disciplines to compete in freestyle motocross (FMX), BMX, skate and freestyle scooter for the ultimate world champion title. In parallel, officers are working with colleagues in the music, cultural and creative sectors to develop and host our first signature event later in the year. I look forward to sharing further details with members over coming months.

Museum of Cardiff

Last year marked the Centenary of the 1919 Race Riots in Cardiff. Following a clear steer from members of the Butetown community that the Riots should be commemorated and learnt from, the Museum of Cardiff worked with community groups in Butetown to do just that, running an event in June 2019 and securing grant funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for its *People of Butetown* project, a collaboration with a group of artists from Butetown. While this project took the Centenary of the Race Riots as a starting point to tell stories of prejudice and racism experienced by the community, it also celebrated the community's resilience and creativity.

The Museum of Cardiff commissioned Gavin Porter to create a documentary film (which also featured music commissioned from Anthony Ward), Kyle Legall to create artwork, Zaid Djerdi to produce a series of photographs and Ali Zay to write a piece of poetry. The results of the project were on display at the Museum in November 2019 and have been taken into the Museum's collection. This project is a good example of the Museum's commitment to supporting communities to tell their stories through their voices and to ensure that Cardiff's untold, ignored or hidden histories are heard. Due to demand, the exhibition is back on display until 26th April 2020.

Councillor Peter Bradbury
Cabinet Member for Culture & Leisure
24 January 2020