

COUNCIL: 29 SEPTEMBER 2022

CULTURE, PARKS, EVENTS & VENUES STATEMENT

Museum of Cardiff

The Museum of Cardiff has been awarded a Visit Wales Gold Award for delivering an outstanding and memorable experience for visitors in all aspects of the attraction. This is an accolade, which I believe is richly deserved. It is encouraging to see visitor numbers increasing, with 7,541 people visiting the Museum in July 2022, rising to 10,719 last month. There has certainly been much for people to see and do at the Museum during the summer holiday period, which saw 205 children and their families take part in craft drop-in activities. The Museum was also featured in the Kids in Museums guide to the best free museums for families in Wales: <https://kidsinmuseums.org.uk/2022/08/best-free-museums-for-families-in-wales/>

Thanks to funding from the Welsh Government's Fusion Programme, the Museum of Cardiff supported five schools with their Food and Fun programme this year. For many of the pupils, it was their first visit to the Museum. Approximately 185 pupils took part in 'hands on history' object handling sessions, museum gallery trails and 'My Museum' activities. In addition, building on the Museum's partnership with Independent Living Services, people who attended the virtual reminiscence sessions that the Museum developed during the pandemic are now able to attend in person, with the face-to-face sessions proving very popular.

The Museum has also worked with Norena Shopland to develop a LGBTQ+ timeline for Cardiff. Norena is working with the Welsh Government to develop different timelines around all the counties in Wales, which will be launched in February 2023. The Museum was delighted to be able to contribute to this project, not only by providing additional collections information, but also hosting a discussion panel event on 31 August 2022 to facilitate the important sharing of LGBTQ+ stories and experiences from different points in Cardiff's history. The event was attended by 35 people and panellists included representatives from Glitter Cymru, Pride Cymru, The Queer Emporium, Cardiff Songbirds and G(end)er Swap.

My thanks to all the team for their ongoing professionalism and enthusiasm, ensuring that the Museum of Cardiff continues to capture and tell the story of our amazing city through our communities.

Summer Events Programme

In my Council Statement in July 2022, I provided just a brief outline of the many events and highlights that Cardiff had in store for its communities and visitors during the summer. From the city's Summer of Fun programme of events to the

British Speedway Grand Prix; from music concerts at Cardiff Castle to Luna outdoor cinema; from Pride Cymru to the WWE Clash at the Castle – Cardiff certainly did not disappoint. I was particularly proud to be told by the WWE organisers that Cardiff had delivered an atmosphere and sense of place in just nine months that had taken them 39 years to deliver for their two-day events elsewhere. I would like to thank all the council officers and partner organisations who supported the delivery of our summer events programme. I have been privileged to see first-hand the level of planning and detail that goes into delivering these events. None of it would happen without all our partners and our commitment to a Team Cardiff/Wales effort.

Christmas 2022

The city's focus now turns to Christmas and Visit Cardiff will be working with key partners to launch their Christmas awareness campaign at the end of this month and to promote a 12-week countdown to Christmas. This year, the city will be providing a plethora of Christmas entertainment, including the welcome return of the Christmas at Bute Park Light Trail and the Cardiff Christmas Market. Winter Wonderland will, once again, be split across two venues at City Hall Lawn and Cardiff Castle. St David's Hall will also be welcoming the critically acclaimed Varna International Ballet Company, which is celebrating its 75th anniversary and will be performing in the UK for the first time, presenting performances of Coppelia, The Nutcracker and Swan Lake over the Christmas and New Year period. Cardiff Castle will also be welcoming a new attraction this year with the introduction of the Spiegel Tent. I would encourage Members to visit www.visitcardiff.com to keep abreast of all that the city has to offer for visitors and residents alike over the coming months.

SCEPTRE Awards

The Winter of Wellbeing Pop-Up in St David's Centre has been submitted by the centre for entry into the 'Community Initiative of the Year' category of this year's SCEPTRE Awards, which recognise best practice and the best people in the shopping centre industry. I am delighted to confirm that Cardiff has been shortlisted in the award category, with the winners due to be announced in November 2022. The Winter of Wellbeing Pop-Up was delivered by the Council's Events Team in partnership with the Child Friendly Cardiff Team and St David's Centre during February and March this year.

Green Flag Awards 2022

I am delighted to report that in late July 2022, it was announced by Keep Wales Tidy, who manage the Green Flag Award Scheme in Wales, that the Council had retained Green Flag status for its 15 accredited sites following an independent assessment. Furthermore, the Council's new Green Flag submission for 2022 – Hendre Lake Park in the Trowbridge Ward – was also awarded the status, increasing the total to 16. In addition, Bute Park and Cathays Cemetery retained their Green Heritage status. This is a great achievement, reflecting the successful partnership working that exists with established and emerging 'Friends of' Groups and individual volunteers, the work and commitment of staff in the Parks Service, Cardiff Harbour Authority and Bereavement & Registration Services.

The Green Flag Award Scheme is an international benchmark, with applicants required to demonstrate achievement against a range of criteria including Biodiversity, Landscape & Heritage, Community Involvement, Environmental Management and Marketing & Communications. Cardiff Parks that currently have Green Flag status are as follows:

- Bute Park
- Cardiff Bay Barrage
- Cardiff Bay Wetlands Reserve
- Cathays Cemetery
- Flat Holm Island
- Forest Farm
- Grange Gardens
- Hailey Park
- Heath Park
- Hendre Lake Park
- Parc Cefn Onn
- Roath Park
- Rumney Hill Gardens
- Thornhill Cemetery
- Victoria Park
- Waterloo Gardens

The Administration is committed to increasing the number of Green Flag parks in Cardiff over time, particularly in areas of deprivation, and I am working closely with officers to prepare a forward plan of new award submissions between now and 2027.

Community Engagement in Parks

I am pleased to report the progress being made in respect of the engagement of 'Friends of' Groups and volunteers throughout our parks and public open space provision. Whilst the pandemic had a significant impact on engagement, a total of 16,238 volunteer hours were recorded for 2021/22. Based on activity in the first two quarters of 2022/23, I anticipate an increase being recorded for the current financial year.

The Council recognises the value of such engagement not only in securing improvements in local environmental quality, but also in contributing to the physical and mental wellbeing of individuals and engendering a sense of ownership and pride. As a consequence, policy revenue growth funding was allocated in this area in 2022/23 to meet the increasing demand and interest that emerged during and after the Covid-19 pandemic.

Partnerships are critical to delivery, and the Council continues to work with a wide and diverse range of stakeholders and involvement continues to grow. The Coed Caerdydd project has stimulated interest and, as the planting season approaches, 1,157 individuals have registered for volunteering to support our ambitions for increasing Cardiff's tree canopy.

The Local Nature Partnership also continues to provide a platform for engagement, feeding into the Nature Recovery Plan for Cardiff. Recent activity has seen volunteers receive training in biodiversity monitoring techniques for pollinators, grassland and dormice, in partnership with the Wildlife Trust of South & West Wales and Buglife.

Aqua Park Cardiff

Aqua Park Cardiff returned to Cardiff Bay this year following its enforced break due to the Covid-19 pandemic and, once again, proved to be an extremely popular attraction, generating visitor numbers in excess of 48,000 over the period from July to August 2022. The attraction continues to provide a positive economic benefit to the local business environment and also resulted in the employment of 67 individuals from diverse backgrounds from Cardiff and surrounding areas, predominately in the 16-18-year-old age group.

Wales International BMX Centre

I was impressed to see the progress being made at Riverside Park in Llanrumney with the construction of the new BMX centre, which I anticipate will open in November 2022. The 8-metre and 5-metre starting gates/ramps are nearing completion and hundreds of tonnes of construction materials have been brought in to start the shaping of the track. This, together with the football academy and destination skate park in Llanrumney, will provide a multi-million-pound investment through sport to improve the lives and opportunities of the people of Llanrumney and neighbouring communities. It will also contribute to achieving the objectives set out in Cardiff's Physical Activity and Sport Strategy.

World Supercross Championship

The Council has been in dialogue with major event organisers, World Supercross (WSX), who are managing the World Supercross Championship event on 8 October 2022 at the Principality Stadium to ensure that legacy benefits are maximised for Cardiff. The Council is supporting the event through the supply of materials to build the track at the stadium and have a commitment from WSX to engage with our pupil referral projects at the city's own Motocross facility by sending elite riders to meet the children and hold demonstrations and coaching sessions. The Council is also setting out a longer-term partnership with them to support the proposed move to the International Sports Village.

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Cabinet Member for Culture, Parks & Events
23 September 2022