

**WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL  
NOTES OF THE  
HERITAGE ARTS AND CULTURE COMMITTEE  
HELD VIA ZOOM ON 18<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2021**

**Meeting Commenced:** 10:01 am

**Meeting Concluded:** 11:33 am

**PRESENT:** Councillors John Crockford-Hawley (Chairman), Peter Crew, Catherine Gibbons, Jan Holloway and Pete McAleer; Sarah Pearse (Deputy Town Clerk), Molly Maher (Development Officer), Fay Powell (Assistant Town Clerk – Frontline Services), Matt Hardy (Visitor Services Manager), Sally Heath (Theatre Manager), Becky Walsh (Communications Officer), Emma Williams (Committee Administration), Cara MacMahon (NSC Heritage Action Zones Project Officer) Tom Newman (Culture Weston/Theatre Orchard) Bethan Murrery and Sam Astill (South West Heritage)

<b>220</b>	<b>Apologies for absence and notification of substitutes</b>  Apologies were received from Malcolm Nicholson (Town Clerk). Apologies were also received from Richard Blows in advance of the meeting, however they were not noted in the meeting.
<b>221</b>	<b>Declarations of interest</b>  There were no declarations of interest received.
<b>223</b>	<b>To approve the accuracy of the Minutes of the last meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021</b>  The minutes of the meeting had been previously circulated with the agenda.  <b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor John Crockford-Hawley <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Peter Crew  <b>RESOLVED:</b> That the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman
<b>224</b>	<b>Budget for 2020/2021</b>  A detailed income and expenditure report had been previously circulated with the agenda.  <b>RESOLVED:</b> That the report be noted
<b>225</b>	<b>Blakehay Procurement</b>  A report written by the Deputy Town Clerk had been previously circulated with a supplementary report from SJ Chartered Building Surveyors.

The Deputy Town Clerk reminded members that the agenda item had been discussed at the last Policy & Finance Committee meeting and it was recommended that the approval a contractor, be appointed by the HAC Committee.

*Sam Astill joined the meeting at 10:03 am.*

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that members of the Policy & Finance had agreed to recommend the usage of general reserves, in order to finance the shortfall in funding for all the necessary maintenance work on the Blakehay Theatre. Utilising funds from general reserves meant all works were affordable and that CRF monies awarded in 2020, would not need to be returned unspent.

*Councillor Catherine Gibbons joined the meeting at 10:05 am.*

Steve Matthews added that all three contractors had now submitted their tender applications, one received the morning of the HAC meeting, which did not meet the required specification, as no offer of aftersales maintenance had been included in their submission.

Debate ensued, with members keen to see the contract awarded to the contractor able to deliver the best work, not necessarily that which submitted the lowest quotation.

Steve Matthews stated that the current maintenance contract was held by John West, and so members' may wish to give consideration to selecting John West's tender application, as it would mean a continuation of service, with all aspects for aftersales maintenance, fulfilled.

*Cara McMahon joined the meeting at 10:12 am.*

Discussions continued with several members expressing preference to appoint a contractor with whom the Council were already familiar, and one that was Real Living Wage accredited and locally-based.

Members were reminded that John West had submitted a costlier tender than others, but the difference was less than 3% of the contract value. Costs had increased as the ventilation system specification had been altered to include uprated filtration processes, better able to overcome airborne viruses. The alterations also included a roof-mounted flue for the ventilation system that had to be suitable for the theatre's location within a Conservation Area.

Several members expressed their desire to select John West as the awarded tender application and therefore

**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor Peter Crew

**SECONDED BY:** Councillor John Crockford-Hawley

A vote was taken and **unanimously carried**. It was therefore

	<p><b>RECOMMENDED:</b> That John West be the contractor recommended to Full Town Council as the approved tender applicant for works to the Blakehay Theatre which would require use of General Reserves to a sum of £133,920.</p> <p><i>Steve Matthews and Sarah Pearse left the meeting at 10:22 am.</i></p>
<p><b>226</b></p>	<p><b>Marketing Report</b></p> <p>A report written by the Communications and Marketing Officer had been previously circulated.</p> <p>The Communications and Marketing Officer invited questions from the Committee, adding that the planned North Somerset Council film profiling the High Street and retail in Weston-super-Mare, would not be a collaborative project between the filmmaker appointed by NSC and the Town Council. There was previous synergy between said filmmaker and the Communications and Marketing Officer acting as editor for their productions, however, this was not the case for this project.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the report be noted.</p>
<p><b>227</b></p>	<p><b>Weston Museum Management Report</b></p> <p>A report written by the Visitor Services Manger had been previously circulated.</p> <p>The Committee were advised that a 3D interactive video tour of the Museum was now ready to film, with aspirations to create similar content for other WTC services. Viewers of the film would be able to virtually ‘walk’ through the Museum exhibits and interact with detailed information for key items. The service would also provide support to Museum visitors with sensory sensitivities and social anxiety, ahead of planning a visit once the Museum reopened; galvanising their Disability Confident accreditation.</p> <p>The Visitor Services Manager went on to update on activities by the Volunteer Coordinator, who had been working alongside the Grounds Officer in looking to recruit Weston in Bloom project volunteers.</p> <p>Discussions took place surrounding the use of ‘volunteer’ as title for the support staff; with some members expressing thoughts as to whether another word would better celebrate the volunteers’ commitment and passion for the work. The Assistant Town Clerk added that this was already under consideration, with aims to create a more inclusive team dynamic; lanyards were being deliberated as a way to spotlight the volunteer staff.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the report be noted.</p>
<p><b>228</b></p>	<p><b>Blakehay Report</b></p> <p>A report written by the Theatre Manger had been previously circulated.</p>

	<p>An update was provided by the Theatre Manager surrounding the ‘Road Map’ for reopening the Blakehay; the first step of which would see the return of classes in the studio areas, with filming in the auditorium and outdoor shows anticipated over the summer. The first show with an audience was planned for 28<sup>th</sup> August 2021, if all restrictions were removed as per Westminster’s current aspirations.</p> <p>Congratulations were given to the Blakehay as recipients of South West Theatre of the Year 2020. The Theatre Manager added that the Blakehay was also potentially being shortlisted as a winner at the South West Business Awards in the Tourism and Leisure category. The decision would be announced on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021.</p> <p>One member asked if, as part of the reopening plans, the Blakehay was considering audience members provided ‘Covid Passports’ upon booking or admission to the building. The Theatre Manager replied that this was not planned and that they were taking guidance from UK Theatre’s national campaign of theatre safety, in order to build confidence in their returning audiences.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the report be noted.</p>
<p><b>229</b></p>	<p><b>WSMTC Grant Development</b></p> <p>A report written by the Development Officer had been previously circulated.</p> <p>The Development Officer delivered a precis of her report, explaining that a wider Fundraising Strategy had been drawn up in the summer of 2019 with the Visitor Services and Theatre Managers. The strategy was now being amended to reflect changes during the last year, with the hope that robust new objectives could be worked towards following the pandemic.</p> <p>A question was asked by a member as to the rationale behind the rejection of a grant application by Sainsbury’s PLC, to fund a sensory theatre project. The Development Officer replied that the response received from Sainsbury’s had been generic and without specific details as to the Council’s application, however it was possible to reapply for that funding every twelve months and it was her intention to do so.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the report be noted.</p>
<p><b>230</b></p>	<p><b>South West Heritage Trust Update Report</b></p> <p>A report written by Bethan Murray had been previously circulated.</p> <p>Sam Astill introduced Bethan Murray as the new lead officer for the Weston-super-Mare area, and was welcomed by the Committee.</p> <p>The report outlined the recently completed conservation work on the frame of William Mable’s portrait, and that a number of frames of Ivy Millicent James’ works would be restored in time for the upcoming eponymous exhibition.</p>

	<p>The Communication and Marketing Officer reminded Bethan that this exhibition was planned to coincide with the unveiling of an associated Blue Plaque, and that an event was planned for this.</p> <p>The SW Heritage Trust report continued to detail other recent improvements made at Weston Museum including the reorientation of the Fossil Fish exhibit and repairs to damp ingress in the temporary exhibition space. Rubber stoppers had also been installed to glass shelving to prevent exhibits slipping down the surfaces, caused by floor vibrations.</p> <p>The second scheduled exhibition was planned for May '21 entitled 'Wild Hares and Hummingbirds' which had previously been open at Somerset Museum. This had been adapted for opening at Weston Museum and as a result would have a greater family-friendly appeal. The third exhibition in the space was scheduled for February 2022 and plans were ongoing.</p> <p>Sam Astill added that these future exhibitions would be decided in collaboration with the Council and Weston Museum with funding plans integral to those ideas.</p> <p>One member enquired as to the process for submitting ideas for temporary exhibitions, as she believed that a local photography exhibition documenting redevelopments in Weston and North Somerset, may prove popular. Also, would space be available in Weston Museum to showcase amateur locals' artwork and/or photography? The Visitors Services Manager added that the new upstairs function room in the Museum would be a suitable location for such exhibitions.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the report be noted.</p>
231	<p><b>Friends of Weston Museum Verbal Report</b></p> <p>There was no representation by Friends of Weston Museum present at the meeting, however the Visitor Services Manager advised that the Friends' Annual General Meeting had recently taken place, and the minutes for which could be circulated at the next HAC Committee meeting if requested.</p>
232	<p><b>North Somerset Council and Heritage Action Zone Report</b></p> <p>A report written by the NSC Heritage Action Zone Officer had been previously circulated.</p> <p>The HAZ Officer outlined ongoing developments to the Walker &amp; Ling shop façade refurbishments, as well as an application to Historic England for a £70,000 Community Engagement program designed to bolster several projects on High Street and Town Centre promotion. Once a decision had been received from Historic England, it was the intention of the HAZ Officer to engage with Weston Museum over a number of these projects. Details of this project would be publicised once NSC were no longer subject to purdah restrictions.</p>

	<p>The Chairman provided a brief update on the commencement of works to Spider Lane, which had altered slightly, but would still see significant improvements to the area adjoining the Winter Gardens Pavilion.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the report be noted.</p>
<p><b>233</b></p>	<p><b>Culture Weston and Theatre Orchard Update Report</b></p> <p>A report written by Tom Newman had been previously circulated.</p> <p>A summary of the report was delivered by Tom Newman and questions invited from Committee.</p> <p>The Chairman commented that it was currently difficult to learn about cultural events and projects in Weston, and whether there were plans to create a more comprehensive listing in the future. Tom replied that the Culture Weston website may create a listing of this nature, and that in collaboration with the Visit Weston and the Weston Place Agency websites, would be better promoted going forward.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the report be noted.</p>
<p><b>234</b></p>	<p><b>Town Council Involvement in The Old Town Quarry – Verbal Update</b></p> <p>In the absence of the Town Clerk, a verbal update was provided by the Assistant Town Clerk, with the Chairman commenting that the lease had now been agreed with North Somerset Council for WTC to acquire the Quarry.</p> <p>The Assistant Town Clerk added that whilst the final legal requirements were being finalised, the Grounds team were in regular communication with the sitting tenants at the Quarry, answering and resolving any questions or queries they might have.</p> <p>The Chairman reported that the Civic Society would hold their Annual General Meeting in April, and it would be preferable to have a more definite update to deliver to its members by that date.</p>
	<p>There being no further business the meeting concluded at 11:33 am.</p> <p>Signed.....Dated.....</p> <p>Chairman of the Heritage Arts and Culture Committee</p>

## **Heritage, Arts and Culture Committee May 2021**

Communication and Marketing Report - written by Becky Walsh, Communications and Marketing Officer

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Agenda Item No. 6 – Communication and Marketing Report

### **Blue Plaques**

The last two plaques have been ordered. The next stage is the proof to be approved.

### **Film project**

North Somerset Council are to make a second film with film maker Sally Low. This new film is too close in idea to the one we were working on which was to show case everything great about living in Weston. Another idea was discussed at a team meeting with Sarah Pearse which we would like to discuss at this HAC meeting.

I'm looking into creating drone film footage from the Quarry linking it to Worlebury hill fort.

**'Love the outdoors' Ellenborough Park West event is being planned for September.**

Will be able to talk more about this at the HAC meeting.

*Members requested to note this report.*

## Heritage, Arts and Culture Committee May 2021

Museum Progress Report - written by Matt Hardy, Visitor Services Manager

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### Agenda Item No. 7 – Museum Progress Report

#### **Operations**

In line with the government reopening roadmap, the museum will reopen to the public from 18<sup>th</sup> May. Our opening times will be Tuesday to Saturday 10am until 4pm. It should also be noted that the covid restrictions which were previously in place will continue, in line with the latest government advice.

Our new temporary exhibition, *Wild Hares and Hummingbirds*, is now installed. Based on the book, 'Wild Hares and Hummingbirds: The Natural History of an English Village', by the naturalist Stephen Moss, the exhibition runs from 18<sup>th</sup> May until 18 September 2021. Due to the very interactive nature of this exhibition, certain objects will be temporarily removed when we first reopen. However, these will be able to be reintroduced as restrictions ease.

In order to promote our reopening, we will be sending out a press release this week (at time of writing). We will also be running a series of posts and videos on our social media channels.

Weston Museum is now registered as an official wedding venue and is listed on the Somerset Wedding registration service website.

#### **External Bookings**

Wedding booking enquiries have been coming in at a vast rate. In the last few weeks we have had seven enquiries and three firm bookings. There is a yearlong backlog of people wishing to get married so we intend to ride this wave before advertising the packages available properly. The function suite is now complete. We have just had the shutters installed in the new function room with stunning results. We are going to start launching events/functions again in June and have already begun planning an extensive summer programme based around our *Wild Hares and Hummingbirds* exhibition in the William Mable gallery.

#### **Retail**

We have a new jewellery supplier in the shop to complement the two existing suppliers. Covid restrictions will need to remain in the shop with a reduced offer to allow clear access into and out of the main doors. Sophie has put in place a rotation for the sale or return suppliers so everyone has a fair viewing from the customers.

#### **Community Engagement**

Jane and Sherry have started conversations with Louise Wright, Librarian, Outreach and Families and Kathrine Smart, Community Service Supervisor (North Somerset Library Service) about working more closely together to deliver community events and outreach.

We would like the library service to deliver the museum reminiscence boxes to enhance the library loans service of large print books and iPads. This will save Officer and Volunteer time, which can be focussed elsewhere. The museum will store the boxes and will retain the right to use boxes for museum outreach and events. Jane will continue to do targeted work with memory cafés using volunteers.

Louise will explore the possibility of Jane being able to accompany the mobile library service (subject to Covid restrictions) with the aim of promoting the museum and projects such as Know Your Place to other parts of North Somerset, targeting rural areas.

## **Heritage, Arts and Culture Committee May 2021**

Museum Progress Report - written by Matt Hardy, Visitor Services Manager

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Jane has been in touch with the library supervisors at Nailsea, Portishead, Pill, Clevedon and Winscombe libraries, with the aim of re-starting Know Your Place drop in sessions and participating in nationally run library events, e.g. Fun Palaces. She has had a positive response and subject to Covid, the library service is hoping to facilitate museum outreach in October 2021 (subject to Covid restrictions).

Kathrine has given some useful suggestions about the museum starting a reading group in Clara's café. This could potentially be run by a museum volunteer who would facilitate the sessions. The library would give support by issuing a book club card and reserving multiple copies of the books.

Sherry and Katherine have offered support to the libraries summer reading challenge. The theme of super wild heroes, fits perfectly with the latest museum exhibition, Wild Hares and Humming Birds.

An agreement between the museum (WTC) and the North Somerset Libraries Service will be formalised as talks progress.

The Gypsy & Traveller community exhibition case study has been turned into an article published in the current edition of the South West Museum Development newsletter. You can read the case study [here](#). This has a readership of over 1,000 museum professionals in the south west.

Work is progressing on the Rotary Club, Weston-super-Mare, exhibition scheduled for August 2021.

Memory boxes have been lent to three care homes in Weston-super-Mare and one in Clevedon. Lisa and Jane are also exploring social prescribing with Dawn Freeman of Allied Homes

Work has started collecting donations for a new entertainment themed memory box which will be used by the Blakehay theatre to enhance the customer experience in the bar.

Lisa and Jane are working with the volunteer team, facilitating the research and selection of images for a KYP exhibition at the museum during Volunteers Week, 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

### **Clara's Café**

The café will be reopening alongside the museum on 18<sup>th</sup> May. We will be offering a similar menu as we did during the period we last were able to be open. This includes hot and cold drinks, cakes and light lunches served between 11am until 3pm.

### **Learning**

Demand for hireable resources has been high since schools returned following the recent lockdown. Handling boxes have been popular and additional resources and activity boxes have been created, utilising teaching materials from bookable workshops that have been unable to run through the pandemic. This has doubled the available hire potential and ensured that support and guidance has still been available to schools.

Currently we are booking "Expert" led Covid Safe outreach sessions in schools giving an introduction to the topic and instructing teaching staff in the use of the themed resources. This offer means that classes can still enjoy a fun and hands on history experience, but in a way that maintains safe distancing. We are aiming to be able to host onsite formal learning sessions from September.

*Members requested to note this report.*

## **Heritage and Arts Committee Meeting: 13<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

*Agenda Item 8: Blakehay Theatre Management Report written by Sally Heath, Theatre Manager*

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### **Overview**

The Blakehay Theatre is currently closed in line with the National Lockdown and guidance from Central Government with the contracted staff working remotely from home.

However, we have updated our provisional re-opening of the theatre in line with the government [Spring Roadmap](#), (full details within this report.)

Theatre staff have been kept busy, with working on the [Culture Recover Fund Grant](#) and a new [5 Year Plan](#) for the theatre, (please see separate sections for full details within this report).

We are delighted that our new Events & Marketing Co-Ordinator has hit the ground running and has been working on a [Marketing Plan](#) for the theatre that aligns with both the 5-year plan and Weston-super-Mare Town Council Strategy, (please see separate sections for full details within this report).

We are continuing to work with the other services and Volunteer Supervisor on cross services projects. As well as continuing with the 'Virtual Blakehay Theatre'.

### **Award Announcements**

We have had news that we were shortlisted for this year's South West Business and Community Awards, for the '**Tourism & Leisure of the year**' Award. The theatre manager attended the virtual awards ceremony on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> April, but unfortunately we were not successful. However, from 1000 entrants we did make it to the last 4 which is an achievement for the theatre.

### **Culture Recovery Fund Progress**

In regards to the Building works at the theatre, this is being organised by the Development Officer and Deputy Town Clerk, so please see their report on this part.

Having now had confirmation from the Arts Council to extend our availability to spend the grant money until the end of June 2021, we are currently in the planning stages for the Outdoor Events.

We have been busy having meetings with several people and are in the process of pulling together a two-day event in the Old Town Quarry on 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> June 2021. Hopefully, the theatre manager will be able to give a further update verbally at the meeting.

### **5-Year Plan**

As stated in the Theatre Managers January report, we have now completed a draft 5-year plan for the theatre that will run in line with the new Town Council Strategy. This is supported by the creation of a 'Playbook' and 'Marketing Plan' so that there is a direction for the theatre over the next 5 years.

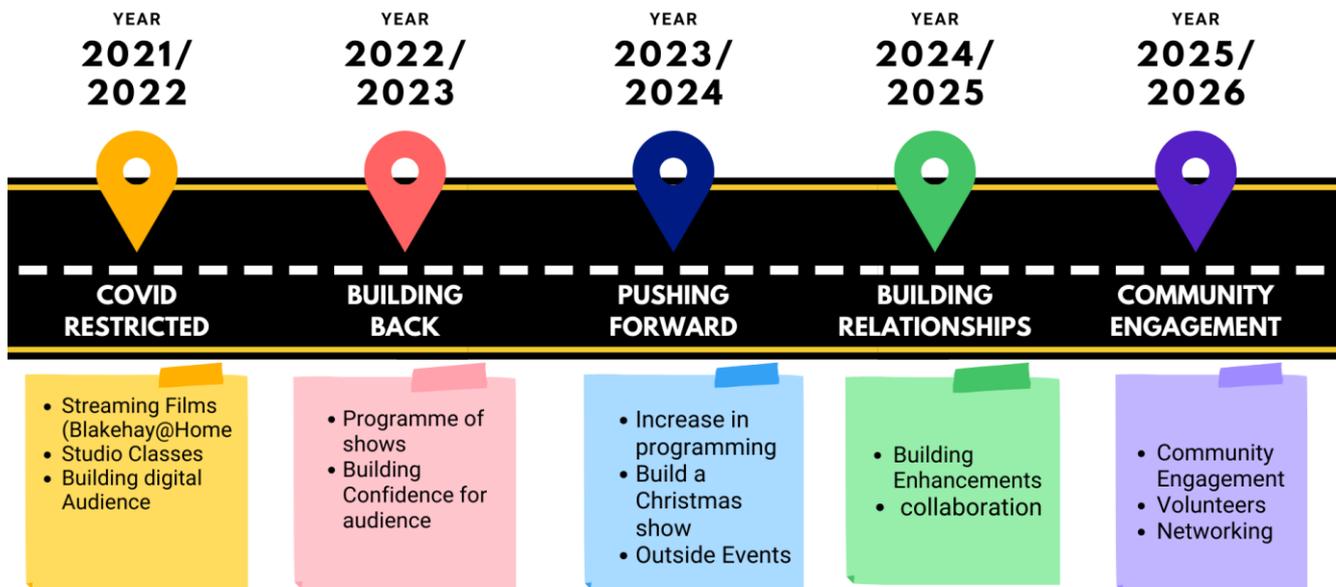
The 5-year plan is a working document with targets to be able to achieve the goals set out in the Council Strategy that can be adapted as the year's progress, and will be a tool to be able to measure the progress of the theatre.

To run alongside this, we have also produced a Playbook for the theatre. This takes all of the data from previous years at the theatre and is a working document that we can use for forecasting ticket sales and audience behaviours for the future, so that we can concentrate marketing budgets

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 and focus our advertising and programming in these areas. This also means that we can set attainable targets to be in line with other South-West organisations.

Please find below a brief overview of the 5-year plan and what we hope this will look like.

## 5 YEAR ROADMAP



### 2021/ 2022 Covid Restricted

With the uncertainty of the pandemic and how this will evolve over this year, the plan for this year is conservative and will depend on Central Government Restrictions.

We hope that the building works from the Culture Recovery Fund (CRF) grant will be completed by Autumn 2021, and we will be able to open the building back up to Community Classes.

We then hope that from Autumn 2021, we will be able to open the theatre up to live performances with an audience. This will depend on Government restrictions and financial viability of this with shows, if not we would then revert back to the original plan for streaming for the theatre.

### 2022/ 2023 Building Back

The hope that the theatre will be back open to full capacity from April 2022, this would be a building back year to enable the theatre to be back to full operation as in 2019/2020.

This will be about having a full programme of shows in the theatre, with full audiences, as well as growing the studio classes. We would need to build confidence in audiences to come back and also for hirers to be sure that the theatre is safe and stable to hire.

### 2023/ 2024 Pushing Forward

This will be about increasing our programming and then building our capacity. This would be the year to push our offering at the theatre, by building an alternative Christmas show and building our Outside events.

Collaborating with other organisations and venues to build a cultural community within Weston and the theatre being a part of this.

*2024/ 2025 Building Relationships*

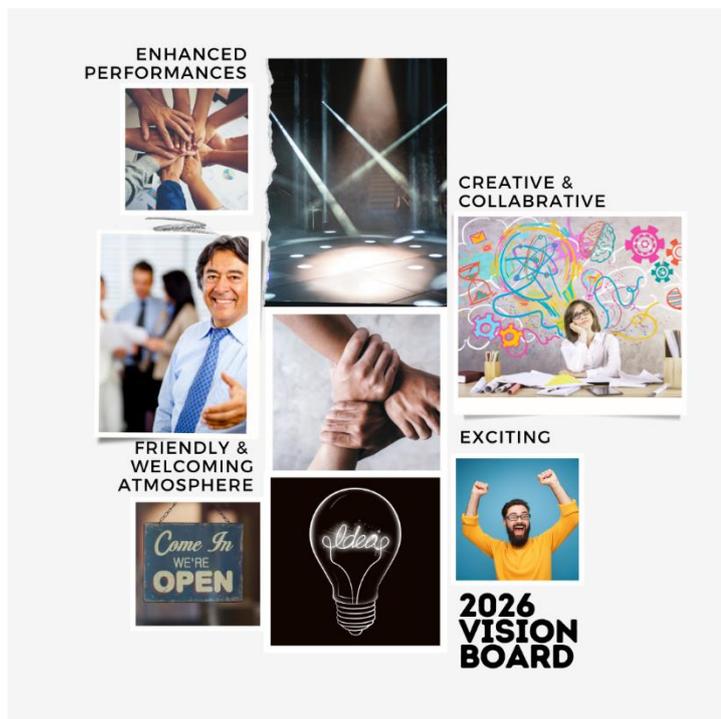
This would be about building relationships with organisations within the town and also the hopeful changes in the physical building. It would be about opening the building up and becoming friendlier. The theatre building working in a different way to be more open for the community to use.

*2025/ 2026 Community Engagement*

With the hopeful building works, this would be the opportunity to have the theatre open for the community to use. Being available for gatherings and engagement, and using the build up of Volunteers to make this a reality with a space for this to come together.

*2026 Vision*

This would hope that by 2026 we would be in a place that the theatre is;



**Marketing Plan**

The Marketing Plan has been compiled to support this 5-year plan strategy with the marketing of the theatre and the events and performances that take place, in order to grow the reach of audience and the programming offer that is supplied at the theatre.

In a recent comment on the Town Council survey “it doesn’t seem to have the identity of the Playhouse or The Reaper Events at the Tropicana or even the Theatre in the Hut. It is an asset in need of a purpose.”

The theatre has never had its own strong identity or direction in which it has developed. In 2016 the council conducted a full review of the theatre, and from this review the theatre was granted its own logo and brand colour to move away from the Town Council branding. This has developed and given the theatre its own identity from a superficial view point, but has never created its own identity as to what it stands for.

Therefore, during time in 2019/2020 the Communications officer, Theatre manager and staff at the theatre worked together to look at the programming of events, and where the theatre sits within the community and started talks with the Tobacco Factory Theatre’ in Bristol as this was identified as the template in which the direction of the theatre was naturally progressing. There were initial

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talks and meetings as to how we could work together but unfortunately due to the pandemic, this has not developed further but we hope that this relationship will continue once theatres are back up and running.

With all of this in mind we have taken the time to look at what the identity of the theatre should be and how it sits within Weston-super-Mare and how the theatre should identify moving forward. So we have taken into consideration Who lives in Weston? What is Weston? What is it trying to be? and Where does the theatre sit in the Environment of this together with our strengths and weaknesses as a venue.

Therefore, the proposed 'Branding' of the theatre would be to not 'play it safe' anymore and to have a vision going forward.

Consistency is key to both an identity and for marketing and therefore the look and feel of the theatre needs to be consistent both online and digitally as well as physically within the building and the experience that people feel.

There are 3 core values in the new identity for the theatre;

- WELCOMING
- INCLUSIVE
- FUN

So we need to identify as the theatre that will deliver 'Alternative performances' a place that you want to be seen at if you love theatre and also that students want to come too. That is relaxed, creative and welcoming venue you want to be involved with.

We have incorporated our pre-existing logos: choosing to predominantly use the white b logo and the longer/lengthened white Blakehay theatre logo. Updated the bio to what we believe to embody what the Blakehay theatre is striving to become in the next five years.

*"An intimate venue at the heart of Weston's cultural life that is more than a theatre; offering a creative and inclusive programme."*

To tie in with this bio, we believe we have found our new hashtag: #MoreThanATheatre. This will always be written as such to make it an accessible hashtag. We intend to use this hashtag to build an initial marketing campaign to build awareness of the Blakehay theatre by proving why we are indeed more than a theatre.

Our colour scheme still features our recognised purple but this will be heavily used as an accent colour. Black will provide the base and background for most of our media (digital and prints) with white text. The light grey is an option we have in our colour palette in case it is required.

The images found in the mood board at the bottom indicate the style and vibe the Blakehay theatre wishes to achieve through its imminent, essential building works and perhaps further works in the upcoming years, and we have created a poster design template for a cohesive marketing brand with a QR code to directly book tickets.

The mood board features the Blakehay Theatre logo (a lowercase 'b' in a circle) and the text 'blakehay theatre'. It includes the hashtag #MoreThanATheatre and a quote: "An intimate venue at the heart of Weston's cultural life that is more than a theatre; offering a creative and inclusive programme". Below this are four color swatches: black (#000000), purple (#800080), white (#ffffff), and grey (#d9d9d9). The 'FONTS' section lists 'Heading: Roboto' and 'Body: Barlow Semi Condensed', with examples of the text 'blakehay theatre'. The 'MOOD BOARD' section contains five images: a theatre interior, a stage performance, a brick wall with a doorway, a staircase, and a large hall.

New Poster Design

The poster for 'Living Spits Odyssey' features three characters in ancient Greek attire standing on a beach. The central figure is a woman in a yellow dress holding a large circular shield. The two men on either side are wearing helmets and carrying spears. The title 'Living Spits Odyssey' is written in a stylized, textured font. Text at the top reads 'LIVING SPITS AND KATE DIMBLEBY PRESENT'. Below the title, it says 'IN ASSOCIATION WITH TOBACCO FACTORY THEATRES'. The Blakehay Theatre logo and name are on the left. At the bottom, it says 'BOOK YOUR TICKETS NOW', 'SEPT.29 TO OCT.2 | 7.30 PM', 'WESTON-SUPER-MARE', and 'BLAKEHAYTHEATRE.CO.UK'. There is a QR code and social media icons for Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. The hashtag #MoreThanATheatre is at the bottom left.

## **Agenda Item 10: South West Heritage Trust (SWHT) Report Heritage, Arts and Culture Committee 13.05.2021**

With the departure of Michele Green (Assistant Curator) from the South West Heritage Trust, Bethan Murray (Curator of Social History, Costume and Textiles) will now be the main contact for the North Somerset and Weston Museum Collections at the South West Heritage Trust.

### **Work programme:**

#### **Conservation:**

The frame of the portrait of Ivy Millicent James is now back at the Somerset Heritage Centre. Work will be undertaken to replace the glass in the frame with low-reflect glass in preparation for the upcoming temporary exhibition about her life and work.

#### **Planned Gallery Changes:**

Work has begun to decide the feasibility of adding more of the Smyth-Piggott family portraits in to the new landing space created during recent building work to create a function room.

#### **The Living Landscape Gallery**

The Clevedon Torc will be returned to the British Museum on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May. A courier from the British Museum will be visiting to oversee the de-install with the assistance of SWHT staff. It will be returned to London by a specialist art carrier MartinSpeed.

We will plan to replace the Torc with a selection of finds from North Somerset which have been processed by the Portable Antiquities Scheme in recent years.

#### **Exhibition Development:**

The installation of *Wild Hares and Hummingbirds: The Natural History of an English Village* is now complete in preparation for launch when the museum can re-open in the week commencing 17 May.

It has been requested that a meeting be set up to discuss the future temporary exhibition programme between Sarah Cox (Exhibitions and Programme Manager), Councillor John Crockford-Hawley, Matt Hardy (Museum Visitor Services Manager), Matthew Holden (Deputy Museum Operations Manager), Sarah Pearse (Deputy Town Clerk) and Tom Newman (Culture Weston).

#### **Future Work:**

The Curator of Social History, Costume and Textiles has been working with Sophie Sanford (Customer Services Assistant) to provide images from the photography collection to help create a 2022 calendar to sell at Weston Museum.

An initial meeting was held with Anna Farthing (Arts Programme Director for University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust) to discuss the potential of an arts project at Weston Hospital. It was a very positive meeting and it is hoped more will come from the project soon.

Initial editing work by the Curator of Social History, Costume and Textiles has been completed on relevant content of the Art UK website.

Initial editing work has focused on updating venue information, including that of Weston Museum. Visitors to the website now have fuller information about which works are on display at the museum and which are cared for at the Somerset Heritage Centre.

The next step for the project will be a programme of ensuring all oil paintings in the collections are on the site, as well as any additional information which has been researched when creating both permanent and temporary displays.

## **Temporary Exhibitions:**

The Covid-19 Roadmap announced on 22 February said that museums will be able to re-open no sooner than Monday 17 May. At the time of writing plans are in place for this to be the re-opening date but this is due to be confirmed w/c 10<sup>th</sup> May. Please note that exhibition dates, as set out below, are a guide only, and if any changes are required, they will be discussed and agreed.

***Reaching for Rainbows: The Lockdown Photography of Jason Bryant***  
***This exhibition has now been taken down and will not be reinstalled.***

***Wild Hares and Hummingbirds: The Natural History of an English Village***  
***(in-house exhibition developed in partnership with Stephen Moss)***  
**2021 Slot 1: w/c 17 May 2021 to Saturday 18 September 2021**  
**Project Lead: Sarah Cox (Exhibitions and Programme Manager)**

A multi-sensory interactive exhibition for families based on the best-selling book of the same name by Stephen Moss, one of Britain's leading natural history writers, broadcasters and wildlife television producers. The exhibition brings together Stephen's celebrated nature writing with beautiful, original illustrations by the graphic artist Stephanie Cole.

The exhibition focuses on the natural history of the village of Mark in Somerset and encourages visitors to explore how it changes with the seasons and to learn about its animals and plants.

***Ivy Millicent James: Suffragette Artist (working title)***  
***(in-house exhibition)***

**2021 Slot 2: Monday 4 October 2021 – Saturday 22 January 2022**

**Project Lead: Michele Green (Assistant Curator)/Bethan Murray (Curator of Social History, Costume and Textiles)**

This exhibition will showcase the work of Weston artist Ivy Millicent James (1879-1965), a celebrated postcard artist. She made her name at the turn of the 20th century in the postcard boom that spread across Europe due to the development of mass travel and the growing popularity of summer holiday resorts. The exhibition will feature a selection of her original watercolours, postcard and Christmas card designs, sketch books and personal effects from the North Somerset Council museum collections.

**Recommendation:** Members are asked to note the report and action the meeting for the future exhibitions programme.

**Spring Roadmap**

As you will be aware from the last report, we had outlined a preliminary roadmap to re-opening the theatre.

Now that we are further down the line we have adjusted this to be in line with outcomes of the building work taking place at the theatre. This is still all very dependant on the outcomes of the governments current 'Event Pilots' that they are conducting and also the stages of the roadmap. However, this gives you an update of where we are thinking at present.

Step 1 – March – Looking into the possibility of creating another film for streaming out free of charge in April (This will depend on getting someone safely into the theatre to film) – Unfortunately this was not possible at this time, due to the ongoing Covid restrictions and availability of acts.

Step 2 – 4<sup>th</sup> May to Sept/Oct – Building Works in the theatre, Confirmation of completion dates are TBC.

Step 3 – June 2021 - Outdoor Event

Step 4 – Sept/Oct – Staff back in the building for a deep clean of the theatre, and getting the building straight and any H&S & training elements completed.

Step 5 – Sept/Oct – Open up the Studios for Community Classes to start again

Step 6 – Hold some outdoor events over the summer months whilst building work is being completed - TBC

Step 7 – End of October onwards – Theatre back open for full capacity shows

In regards to the shows that are currently booked into the theatre, either from postponed from 2020 or new shows that have booked whilst we have been closed, we will be awaiting news from the government 'Event Pilots' and roadmap announcements before confirming any bookings. However, we are in constant contact with companies to keep them up to date with any developments.

As previously stated this is all very provisional and dependant on many factors, but hopeful that this will be a reality.

*Members are requested to;*

1. Approve the direction in which the identity of the theatre is progressing.

# Agenda Item 12: Heritage Action Zones update May 2021

Heritage Action Zones – written by Cara MacMahon. Heritage Action Zones Project Officer

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## 1 Great Weston Heritage Action Zone- update report

Over five years (Sept 2017- Sept 2022), the Great Weston Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) aims to boost economic growth and keep Weston-super-Mare on the map as a great place to live and work in.

## 2 Awareness raising / engagement programme update

### 2.1 Engagement Work for next 18 months

The following projects will be funded by Historic England:

- Development of article 4 directions for stone walls and fences in Weston. (currently seeking advice on legal requirements and procedures).
- Bespoke marketing training for retailers involved with an enhancement scheme to maximise impact of the enhancement.
- Events for retailers and lettings agents to learn more about the PSiCA and the Heritage Action Zone work in Weston. Linked to Walker & Ling being the first building to be enhanced. Later in 2021
- Dissemination event- business breakfast - to detail progress on PSiCA work and gain further buy in from Retailers/ stakeholders and elected members. – Early in 2022
- Civic Society Awards for 2021/22. Date to be confirmed- to acknowledge excellence in building design in Weston.
- Chamber of Commerce Awards 2022. To celebrate and acknowledge good practice among stakeholders.
- Digital thinking- enhance awareness raising projects through digital programme of work. Further development of **Know Your place** work in 2020/21 and until March 2022. This is in tune with HE desire for us to consider use of digital technology in light of Covid-19.
- Heritage Open Days 2021: increase number of volunteers involved in Heritage Open Days and open more buildings. Showcase architecture in Weston and the Conservation Area. Including a guided walk of Weston and Theatre Orchard public events.
- Tom Sparey photographer. To capture each property engaging on a capital project within PSiCA to document build progress.
- Legacy/ celebration/ evaluation project to happen in 2022 as a final piece of engagement work within HAZ.

### 2.2 Additional funding applications- Local List development

We have applied to Historic England via their Regional Capacity Grant programme for

- Development of an adopted Local List policy and programme.

We gained £2,800 to fund the work which will be used to support the work and publication of the handbook

We aim to apply for funding for Contextual signage to link with public realm work in the next few months.

### **3. Shopfront enhancement grants scheme for Weston**

The building work on Walker & Ling is due to be completed 1<sup>st</sup> May 2021 Sam Walker is doing a great job promoting the works:

<https://www.walkerandling.co.uk/>

<https://www.facebook.com/WalkerandLing/>

We funded Rossiters Jewellers £2,500 grant to support the restoration of his shop first floor window lintels in Weston High Street.

South Parade: we are still working on design plans for 8 and 10 South Parade.

### **4. High Street Heritage Action Zone**

We have been successful in our bid for High Street Heritage Action Zone status. £1,100,000. The project formally launched in October 2020 and will run until March 2024.

The work has two main elements:

- shopfront enhancement and
- community engagement

There is a third element, that is funded through a separate grant application process – cultural engagement see 4.3 below

#### **4.1 Shop front enhancement in High Street HAZ**

Working with our architects, Allen Construction Consulting, we have commenced promotion of the shopfront enhancement scheme in the HS HAZ area. Currently the Fork n Ale pub is working with us on designs for the building as is the owner of 6 and 8 Walliscote Road.

#### **4.2 Community Engagement programme**

We have submitted a bid for funding to Historic England for engagement work totalling £70,000 to run from April 2021 to March 2024. We should have confirmation of the grant during May 2021.

There are 10 proposed projects:

- 1 Memories Shared- with NSC library service
- 2 Living Streets walks initiative- with WTC Museum
- 3 Know Your Place- with WTC Museum
- 4 Understanding our History- young people actively participating- with WTC Museum
- 5 Heritage Open Days- multiple partners
- 6 Public Realm Engagement/ ours shops our Heritage- with retailers
- 7 Volunteer development and legacy building- with VANS
- 8 Let us talk heritage- with SWHeritage Trust, Civic Society and WTC/ Museum
- 9 Training in Conservation Skills- with Architects and Colleges
- 10 Project evaluation and legacy making events

#### **4.3 Cultural Engagement programme**

Culture Weston submitted a bid to the main programme in December 2020. We have gained £119,000 for a cultural programme to commence in 2021. This will be formally launched on 12 May 2021.

# **Agenda Item 13: Culture Weston and Theatre Orchard Update**

## **Written by Tom Newman, Programme Manager**

Theatre Orchard is an arts development organisation for North Somerset, with a particular focus on access, engagement, and producing high quality cultural events that make the region a great place to live, work and visit.

Culture Weston is a program hosted by Theatre Orchard, with a focus on building an inclusive creative and cultural ecology and infrastructure. Instigating creative training pathways, growing artist employment opportunities, and enabling ambitious creative collaborations that support Weston's growth as a healthy, dynamic and prospering town where everyone's input is valued.

### **1. SUMMER EVENTS**

**WESTON PRESENTS ROOFTOP SERIES** - Theatre Orchard, has received a grant of £67,037 from the second round of the Government's £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund to help support the work of the organisation from April to June 2021. The funding will enable Theatre Orchard to run a programme of socially distanced outdoor performances in Weston-super-Mare, providing vital paid opportunities for freelancers and artists. It will showcase a diverse range of work and bring some of the South West's best theatre, dance, comedy, music and family shows to at an exciting new temporary venue on the Sovereign Centre rooftop. A community engagement programme is also planned, providing creative opportunities, both digitally and in person, for local groups including young people and families. The programme will run from 23<sup>rd</sup> June to 17<sup>th</sup> July.

**MUSIC DECLARES EMERGENCY** – targeted, ticketed (free) gig from the music industry's environmental awareness raising body, scheduled for Grove Park on 5 June. Headline act (tbc), plus local bands booked in collaboration with Loves and Britt Bar. Target audience is those who might not normally engage with environmental issues. Showcasing sustainable solutions for the music industry.

**LOVES LIVE OUTDOORS SERIES** – supporting Loves on production management and stewarding of a series of Summer gigs in Grove Park and at Birnbeck.

**WHIRLIGIG** – Planned for 11 September. Free outdoor arts festival in the Italian Gardens produced and presented by Theatre Orchard. Originally planned for July, we have moved back due to Covid-19. Programme includes nationally acclaimed companies such as Motionhouse.

**WESTON ARTS + HEALTH WEEK 2021** – Free festival of outdoor arts, digital events and creative and participatory engagement projects, targeting Weston's more vulnerable and less engaged communities. This has been postponed until 18-26 September and will focus around large scale public artwork 'In Memoriam', originally commissioned for April 2020, and listed in top 5 cultural highlights of 2020 by Darren Henley (Chair of Arts Council England - ACE). <https://memoriamartwork.com/>. Includes a collaboration with UCW, UHBW physiotherapists and internationally renowned dance company Studio Wayne Macgregor.

The is a co-production between Culture Weston and University Hospital Bristol & Weston's NHS Foundation Trust Arts and Culture Programme.

**HERITAGE OPEN DAYS** – England's largest festival of history and culture where places across the country throw open their doors for free to celebrate their heritage, community and history. Culture Weston has collaborated with North Somerset Council to successfully apply to be selected as one of 10 places to be part of the HODs New Wave Programme. This will provide funding and support to enable young people to take the lead devising, planning and delivering events around this year's theme Edible England. Theatre Orchard is also presenting three bespoke outdoor arts events with a food theme.

**21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY SUPER SHRINES** – In collaboration with NSC we have secured £119k funding from Historic England to support a 3-year programme '21st Century super Shrines' that puts local people centre stage as

change makers in the town centre. Through a process of co-creation and collaboration, local people will work with high profile national artists to create a series of contemporary, community- created shrines that celebrate the heritage, identity and ambitions of Weston’s diverse communities (“a shrine: any place or object hallowed by its history or associations”).

These ‘shrines’ may be permanent way markers that animate the environment or live arts experiences that transform hearts and minds. The brief is open, the range of creative mediums and artists diverse. Cumulatively the shrines will map a set of shared values determining a new sense of ‘worth’ in the town centre. Artists include Morag Myerscough, Chila Kumari Burman, Megan Clark-Bagnall and Tom Marshman, who will work with local artists and community producers.

The launch of this project is embargoed by Historic England until 19th May. The first ‘shrine’, a contemporary bandstand for the high street, will launch with a live arts events on 10 September and roll with programming throughout the Autumn to support the animation of the town centre.

**PARTY IN THE PARK** - community focused day of outdoor arts activities and circus events in South Ward on 4 September. Featuring some of the artists who will participate in Whirligig and building audiences between the two areas/events.

**WESTON PRESENTS** - Given the critical mass of activity planned for September we are planning to create a shared brand identity ‘Weston Presents’ through which we intend to platform a range of cultural events together to help amplify and increase PR impact for the town.

## **BEYOND WESTON**

**Ten Fun Things** - a Summer programme of outdoor performance and workshops in Portishead and Clevedon. Featuring circus, dance and theatre.

**Portishead Storyboat 700** launches on 19th June, the culmination of a yearlong programme of engagement exploring people, places and stories in Portishead, to coincide with the Church’s 700th anniversary and the reconstruction of the church tower. Funded by HLF.

## **2. ONLINE EVENTS**

**CHAPTER ONE SPEAKEASY** – Monthly speakeasy events are running digitally and feature a guest poet along with open mic slots. Audience is draw is regionally weighted but international, with an ongoing waiting list for open mic slots. April’s event, featuring Faber Prize Award winner Kim Moore, extremely well received (eg audience response “Last night’s Speakeasy chimed with my philosophy of mutual support in the Arts generally; each person has their slot; mutual support is actively encouraged and genuine pleasure shown in the light of successes gained in the outside world.”) Next date: Thursday 20 May Shagufta K Iqbal

## **3. WINTER EVENTS**

### **WINTER LIGHTS**

- (I) GLOW – lighting trail in Grove Park has been postponed until 12-14 November. Arts Council England and Weston Town Council have kindly agreed to carry over funding to 2021/22. Project is a collaboration between local artist/producer Paula Birtwistle and Culture Weston.
- (II) LULLABY – sound and illuminated artwork devised by artist Luke Jerram, specifically for young children. It will feature a community procession of decorated bikes accompanied by music. Postponed until 20/21 November.
- (III) WINDOW WANDERLAND – project that connects communities by transforming streets into art trails, through illuminated window displays. This has been postponed until 20/21 November to enable wraparound creative participation activities in South Ward and Worle.

## **4. ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME – SPECIAL PROJECTS**

**A Tonne of Feathers** – Arts Council funded project working with young people from Weston-super-Mare on a social action art project in partnership with Bristol based Creative Youth Network. The young people will work with an artist to co-create an installation in the Italian Gardens that will then tour to Bristol and Southampton. The installation will be part of a series of installations created by young people from across the South West that will be exhibited in the Italian Gardens 7<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> June.

**Let's Get Visible** – NSC Public Health funded project with the LGBTQ+ community, delivered in partnership with Weston Pride and led by Ali Brown, Arts on Prescription Director at Southmead Hospital and founder of the Department of Kindness. A 6 week arts + wellbeing course for 12 participants, resulting in an art installation that projects a communally created manifesto to the wider town. The project resulted in the establishment of the Let's Get Visible Arts Collective who we are supporting with practitioner support on a weekly basis. Currently we are also exploring funding routes to support further creative projects with the Pride community.

**It's All About You** – In collaboration with NSC looked after children services and artist Ramona Bigwood, we delivered a range of creative sessions (voice, drama, dance, spoken word and an Under 5's workshop) offered to every LAC in North Somerset. This fed into the 'It's All About You' Awards Event for LAC to celebrate their creative ambitions. There is a wish on both sides to continue the relationship and develop further projects together.

**Dance Walks** - monthly dance walks in Weston, Portishead and Clevedon kicking off in May to coincide with Mental Health Week, suitable for people of all ages and abilities.

## **5. ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME – REGULAR OFFER**

**Chapter One** – Theatre Orchard's popular creative writing group continues online sessions, every other Tuesday from 3-5pm. Led by The Write Box (Bob Walton - Creative Writing Tutor at Cardiff University, and Weston based practitioner Sue Hill). Their work has been showcased through Bristol Old Vic and Bath Spa Uni associated projects.

**Open Door** – Theatre Orchard's open access theatre group for adults runs every Thursday (currently online) from 12-2pm. All welcome and no experience necessary.

**Theatre Forum** – 3 year programme funded by Active Communities enabling communities to explore social issues that affect them through creative means. Open to anyone interested in creating community theatre performances for and about Weston. The focus for this year is HOME and work has begun with a wide, cross section of people in different capacities. Currently linking with Baytree School, Curo Housing Association and Theatre Orchard's core engagement groups.

**Theatre Orchard Youth** – following the success of its Summer and Autumn drama workshops, Theatre Orchard Youth returns with a new year programme packed with enjoyable and escapist creative experiences for all young people in North Somerset. Led by a range of accomplished practitioners who bring their expertise to specialist areas, young people aged from 5 to 16 can take to the Zoom stage and enjoy an inspirational series of singing, dancing and drama workshops. The intention is to revert to live weekly sessions the Summer term, with a limited digital offer in addition.

**Visual arts workshop programme** – a series of workshops centred around zine making with community groups in WsM. The sessions will use the arts as a platform for voices and narratives to be told, with workshops centred around storytelling and self-expression. Potential themes to explore: home, unity, hope, love, identity, freedom, activism, the future, change, representation. The sessions will be spread over a course of 3-4 months starting in May.

## **CULTURE WESTON**

**OUTCOME 1: Outstanding, accessible arts and cultural experiences for everyone**

- Working with Theatre Orchard to develop 'Weston Presents' an umbrella brand that can amplify a series of high profile events planned for September that will create an identity that presents Weston as a vibrant, diverse and exciting place to come and experience arts and culture.
- Street Arts – WTC have invested £20k in a programme of street arts activity. Culture Weston are collaborating with Upfest on a series of murals and working with local artists to support a project to enable local artists to lead a community programme in September.
- Secured £48,500 from Arts Council to enable a 7-month programme of hyper-local creativity & artistic collaboration, embedding artists into communities to co-create new, relevant and distinctive work. It will create paid opportunities for local artists & freelance creatives, enabling them to develop deeper local community connections and more sustainable longer-term collaborations.
- Secured £150,000 from Esmée Fairbairn to support a 3 year programme to create more opportunities for communities in Central Ward and South Ward to engage in creative and cultural activities and to grow the local arts ecology through new entry and progression pathways, and paid opportunities for local artists/creatives.
- Boredom Buster 2 – Publication that's distributed to NHS care settings that's packed with articles, activities and images designed to boost mood and alleviate anxiety and provides an individual, interactive kit of creative items. The publication has been produced in collaboration with University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust (UHBW) and has a 40k+ distribution. Includes contributions from leading hospitals such as Great Ormond Street, and artists including Damien Hirst and Grayson Perry. Endorsed by national NHS Director of Patient Participation.

## **OUTCOME 2: Culture is valued and at the heart of WSM's future**

- Third Culture Weston Advisory Board took place April 29<sup>th</sup>. Cllr John Crockford-Hawley attended on behalf of the HAC committee.
- Currently collaborating with Visual Arts South West and Spike Island on their visual arts sector development proposal to ACE for the WECA region. If this is successful we will secure £10k per year for 3 years into North Somerset to support a 3-year programme of talent development including a CPD programme and bursaries/commissions for artists and independent art workers to enable new activity.

## **OUTCOME 3: Nurture a thriving arts, culture and heritage sector**

- Creative industries mentoring and advice service – weekly 1-2-1 advice sessions with artists/creatives.
- Growing talent development pathways – working with Weston College to increase opportunities for work experience, industry placements and apprenticeships with arts and cultural organisations. Culture Weston is hosting 3 x Level 3 Media student placements each Friday until July 2021. *Live projects welcomed from other cultural organisations in the town.*
- Supporting creative networks – launched Creative Meet-up, a series of monthly online, drop in conversations for the local artistic and creative community, to provide an inspiring space to come together to share ideas and information.
- Creative Enterprise Courses – launched monthly sessions to support creatives and freelance practitioners, at any career stage, helping them gain the skills needed to turn their passions into paid work. Practising freelance artists facilitate workshops on marketing, money and management skills and growing yourself as a business.
- Artist profile raising – Creativity Unblocked: A series of artist features interviewing local creatives in Weston-super-Mare. The series is a spin on Creatives Unlocked, and focuses more on lockdown challenges as an artist, navigating this new climate, and hopes and dreams for Weston's future. The purpose is to promote creativity through lockdown, and encourage people to continue using art as a means of expression, therapy, and experimentation. <https://cultureweston.org.uk/journal/>

**Recommendation:** Members are asked to note the report