



Development/Theatre Director's Report

February 2024

Artisan Market

- The Artisan Market was on Saturday 3rd February. There were only 7 stalls this month which was disappointing, this is a mixture of miscommunication from Bescot who informed traders that the market would commence in March, and traders not wanting to trade in poor weather. February is historically quiet and there are already more people booked on in March.
- We are looking to schedule a meeting with Bescot asap to revisit our verbal agreement and to draw up a more definitive SLA.

Thursday Market

- The Thursday Market is continuing to thrive, with Bescot feeding back that the traders are extremely happy with Rugeley and the support which they are receiving from the community. Some of the stalls are already becoming established businesses in the town, with regular weekly customers choosing to shop there in preference to using our local supermarkets. Obviously more footfall at the market brings more footfall to the Town Centre, with businesses feeding back that they are busier on market days.

Theatre

- Hardware for the new kitchen area to the side of the existing bar kitchen in the theatre have now been received by Cannock. We'd like to follow up on the offer from Cllr Cooney to have her builder come and look at the knock through space from the kitchen into the cupboard. Once this has been done the work can commence.

Pantomime

- We have met with Sunshine Productions, the Pantomime Provider, who will be keeping costs the same this year as previously. They wish to make improvements to their scenery, and invest in structures which can be used year on year at the Rose. This will obviously be at their own cost. Pantomime sales were excellent this past

year, and we are waiting for show details to be able to start promotion this year's performance asap.

Theatre bookings

We currently have only 6 available weekends in the dairy for the whole of 2024, 3 of those being in August when theatre is very quiet.

The quietest time in the theatre is on a Monday and Tuesday morning and we are actively trying to fill that space with long term bookings.

A new pricing structure for the Theatre is being discussed at Full Council, which we will be able to update on for anyone who wasn't at the meeting. There has not been a price increase in the Rose for 4 years, and whilst we don't want to make the venue inaccessible to lower budgets, we do need to ensure that we are covering our costs.

Newsletter

The next edition of the newsletter is currently out for circulation to all residents.

Charter Fair

As residents have now been informed via social media, we can confirm that The Charter Fair is coming back to Hagley Field on 8th and 9th June, 2024.

Planning is well underway, and a sponsorship document is available if anyone would like to circulate it to their contacts.

Bullet points of interest:

- Track tile (matting for the area of the fair and access points) will be covered by the fee paid by the fairground.
- A meeting with 'Carvery & grill' to provide all F&B outlets for the weekend event is arranged for Thursday 8th February (snow permitting) The company have a huge variety of high quality food and beverage stalls which will bring a high end festival vibe to the event. They will manage all units, collate insurance and public liability required for those elements on our behalf, and pass them to us. They will pay us a fee (to be agreed) for the privilege of doing so.
- Sean O'Meara from CCDC Licencing attended the last meeting of the The Charter Fair Working Party and has guided us on our licencing expectations and requirements. All are achievable to be able to sell alcohol and provide entertainment over 2 days.
- Many local community groups have already been in touch wishing to take part in some way over the course of the weekend.

- The Parade will be a 'walking parade' which will be themed as 'A Nod to the Past' – allowing participants a lot of flexibility in their costumes. The Parade will now start from outside the Library on Anson Street as we have a long standing booking at The Rose Theatre, and walk through town, down Horsefair to the Island, cross over and back up to Western Springs and into Hagley Field and parade around the ring.
- We will be appealing for as much councillor support on the build up to the weekend and over the two days of the 8th and 9th as possible. This event cannot safely take place without the support of marshals and helpers.
- One local band has been secured to play on the main stage on Saturday evening.
- A letter is going out to the schools and children's community groups to invite them to be involved on the day – either in the Parade or in a presentation/performance capacity
- I have had some interest already from organisations and traders wishing to have stalls. This will be discussed in more detail at the next CF meeting, but my suggestion is that we have a certain number of free charity stall spaces, and a certain number of charged ones. Access to and from the field for traders will be at very strict, managed times on the days.

Kai's Memory Miles

This is a wonderful initiative which is being spearheaded by Cllr Cooney, supporting many of the grieving families of Rugeley who have lost relatives and friends to suicide.

This event is focusing upon the memory of Kai Harvey, a 17 year old young man who took his own life. The Harvey family are very well known in the community and they have expressed the desire to do something to commemorate Kai's life, but to also bring awareness to the growing issue of mental health, particularly in young people. Rugeley has lost many young people to suicide over the years, and we wish to support the message that there is always help and support for those who need it.

We met last week to discuss the logistics of an event which would be an opportunity for all members of the Rugeley community to become involved in to remember their own loved ones and those who have been lost.

The event will take the following format:

- On Saturday 28th September we will hold 'Kai's Memory Miles' commencing in the Mindfulness Garden, where we will have refreshments and people will be able to purchase a 'teal ribbon' (Kai's favourite colour) with a tag, where they can write remembrance messages and tie the ribbons around the route of the walk.
- The route will then pass over onto the Heritage Trail from Hagley Field and walk up to Slitting Mill and stop at The Horns. We will be asking the Horns to give us an area where less agile people could meet us for a coffee and a chat. We will then walk from the Horns, past The Hart School where Kai went to school, to The Chase Pub and do the same there, leaving teal ribbons along the route. We will then walk down Hagley

Road and down Church Street to the Chancel school, where Kai went to Primary School, and up Anson Street back into town, meeting once again at The Mindfulness Garden.

- A musician will be playing in the Mindfulness Garden, as Kai was a great musician, and will be playing his favourite songs.
- SOBS will have a stall in the garden, offering support and chats to anyone who needs them.
- As always councillors support would be much appreciated.

AOB

Any other updates will be shared verbally.