

# Development/Theatre Director's Report



## March 2024

### Artisan Market

- The Artisan Market was on Saturday 2nd March. The Market is always quiet during the winter months but this month was busier, which was great. For reference – market stalls are always a little thin on the ground until the weather improves as stall holders are reticent to stand in the poor weather for hours with only a few sales. Hopefully we will see the number of stalls continuing to rise.
- As I flagged to councillors by email, surprisingly, Hednesford TC have decided to reintroduce their street market and have moved it to the same day as us, the first Saturday in the month, rather than the last. This is frustrating and will potentially cause us issues with numbers. When we set up the Artisan Market we deliberately chose the first Saturday so that we didn't clash with Hednesford.
- We are considering whether it may be prudent to open up the Artisan Market to become a general market, like we have on a Thursday. We would still keep the Artisan Traders, and keep them in the area of Market Square, slightly separate, but potentially open it up to the traders who also come on a Thursday. The community is desperate for a general Saturday market and this would be an opportunity to test once a month and would be a good gauge for Bescot to see if it would be worth their while holding a regular Saturday market.

**Councillors to discuss whether we look to turn the Artisan Market into a general market.**

### Thursday Market

As with the Artisan Market, the number of stalls has been quieter during winter months, but are now rising with stall holders returning to work. (Most stall holders take their holidays during the winter months.) As the number of stall holders continues to rise, the market will spread further through the town.

### Theatre

All of the equipment for the pizza kitchen has now been collected from Cannock. We are chasing quotes to have the hatch from the bar kitchen knocked through and should hopefully have those quotes in time for this meeting.

### Pantomime

Laurie has had huge success with selling the pantomime daytime shows to the local schools, with many booking immediately last week. A sell out is expected.

## Theatre bookings

We have commenced implementing the new pricing structure for the theatre to all new bookers and we are notifying existing users of the price increase with their invoices. We have had no negative feedback so far.

## Charter Fair

Bullet points of interest:

- The committee have agreed to use Carvery & Grill to supply all F&B at the Fair, with the exemption of 2 x burger vans supplied by Stokes Fairground and 2 x Ice Cream Vans provided by Steve's Super Whips, our local ice cream man. This keeps all health and safety, insurance, and logistics management for each vendor under the responsibility of one company.
- Carvery & Grill will pay us a fee of £20% of their total income over both days.
- Many local community groups have already been in touch wishing to take part in some way over the course of the weekend.
- We will be offering 30 spaces free of charge for Charity Stalls over the weekend. The stall holders will provide all of their own 'kit' and be able to park their cars behind their stalls. They will have a window of time available on the Saturday evening to safely remove their vehicles with supervision. Those that are not removed during that timeframe will have to stay in situ until either the end of the evening at 10.15pm of the following day.
- We will be offering 30 pitches for sale to commercial businesses with a daily rate of £40 per stall, £60 if they wish to come for both days. All the same applies as above – with stall holders providing all of their own 'kit' and removing vehicles at allotted times.
- We will be appealing for as much councillor support on the build up to the weekend and over the two days of the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> as possible. This event cannot safely take place without the support of marshals and helpers. **However, with the loss of several key councillors and the restriction of paying Council Officers Family members to work – there WILL be a requirement to hire casual labour to work the event.**
- One local band has been secured to play on the main stage on Saturday evening, with a second up and coming national band, currently getting airtime on Radio 1, awaiting confirmation.
- A letter has gone out to our Primary schools inviting them to be involved at the event – either in the Parade or to join in an Inter-School Sports Day Competition on the Sunday.
- As always councillor support would be much appreciated and will in fact be essential unless we are going to pay for people to undertake the roles previously done by staff family members.

## **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 28<sup>th</sup> 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 .

## **AOB**

Any other updates will be shared verbally.

Sam Bird – February 2024

Development and Theatre Director