

Report Purpose:

To update committee on progress and work associated with local service delivery.

Author:

Town Clerk, Assistant Town Clerk, Town Centre Manager and Events Officer.

6.1 Events update

Do Something Summer – July/August 2023

Every Wednesday for the six weeks of the Summer holidays MTC hosted a different free activity in the Town Centre. Despite the changeable weather all the sessions were well attended with people queueing up to take part at the 11am start-time. We took feedback via paper/online forms and in person and the reaction was overwhelmingly positive with a strong desire to see the programme return next year. Working with organisations across town we also advertised other free activities at the Grosvenor Shopping Centre, The Library and the Silk Museum with our new strategy of bollard displays and school book-bag leafleting. The Silk Museum in particular noticed an up-tick in visitors who had not previously been to the museum or attended their sessions. In addition to the activities for each of the events (except for the very rainy Chalk Art day) we set up the MTC deckchairs and Giant Deckchair in the Market Square and invited Granelli's to come and trade in the town centre – this initiative too proved very popular and created a busy and social atmosphere at the heart of the town.

Macclesfield Heritage Open Day – Saturday 9th September

Heritage Open Days is a national programme organised by the National Trust which traditionally takes place over two weeks in September. We previously entered into discussion with the Silk Museum about how to best maximise the impact of Heritage Open Days and decided to attempt to co-ordinate organisations across town to unite into one singular Macclesfield Heritage Open Day – with everyone hosting their activities on the same day to create a Fringe-festival type event. Eight organisations agreed to participate and once again we created a flyer to let people know about all the different activities which were taking place; these were distributed to the organisations taking part as well as being given out at the Do Something Summer events and the Mayor's Charity Bingo Night.

The day ended up being particularly warm and sunny for the time of year so we set up the deckchairs in the market place and had some live music to entertain the crowds. The inside of the Town Hall was extremely busy with visitors to the Rediscover Macclesfield fair (a collection of groups, charities and societies advertising for new member and volunteers), the Made in Macc market took over the Assembly Room and reported a very successful day for their local, Macc-based

traders, and there was a lot of interest in the *Macclesfield: Echoes of the Past* exhibition in the board room; a historical photographic art project.

Other organisations taking part reported a busy day with a high number of new visitors coming specifically for the HOD activities.

Nature Needs You and Eco Summit– Saturday 7th October

Nature Needs You returned to West Park this October and was joined by the Eco-Summit, led by Councillor Thompson for a bright and breezy day. Our new pitch close to the skate-park proved even more popular than last year and the area was full of families enjoying our usual mix of story-telling, face-painting, crafting, learning and creepy-crawlies!

Spooky Saturday - 28th October

Our Halloween event was extremely well attended and we had amazing feedback both on the day and via our feedback forms. Lots of people mentioned that the pumpkin trail had helped them find shops they didn't know about and the traders noted a busy day, with lots of them dressing up and giving out treats for the people on the trail. Ecto-1 proved very popular and helped us bring in a different audience, beyond family groups with children. We printed 300 trail maps and only had 5 left at the end of the day!

Armistice and Remembrance – 11th and 12th November

This year Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday fell over the weekend so we held our brief Armistice ceremony outside the Town Hall on the Saturday and the full Service on the Sunday, attended by current and former Councillors, Alderman and various local dignitaries.

Step into Christmas - Saturday 25th November

Yet to take place at time of writing. This year the event will open with Macclesfield Youth Brass Band under the Christmas tree from 11am, the event was then opened by the mayor and this was followed by our afternoon of music on the Silk FM stage, programmed this year by Party in the Pews. We've got a variety of walk-about entertainment taking place over the day with magicians, jugglers and stilt-walkers. Art Space will be running festive craft workshops for two different age groups (older and younger), a mulled wine stand will be run by local business R&G's Beer Vault and the church yard will host a light installation by the Travelling Light Circus from 2pm, as dusk starts to settle. All this plus the various craft markets taking place around town and of course, the Mayor has kindly allowed Santa to run his grotto out of the Mayor's Parlour for the afternoon.

We would like to thank the Town Councillors for all of their support, help and attendance at recent events.

Upcoming

Advent Trail – From December 1st, the theme this year is snowmen. It's a fairly easy theme that can be interpreted however the shops/business choose to do it – minimal effort, or full blown giant snowman!

Combined with the Advent Trail, the Town Council hope to work with Cinemac to have one or two free showings of the Snowman.

Christmas Tree Festival – We are working with Roe-Naissance this year on the annual Christ Church Christmas Tree Festival. Groups and organisations from all over Macclesfield have decorated trees which will be on display for the public to come and see every Thurs/Fri/Sat/Sunday from 1st-22nd December.

Tree of Light – Thursday 7th December

We're hoping that the weather will be kind enough this year to allow us to host this event outside as we have in previous years. Readings will be taken by the Mayor, local funeral directors and celebrants and the service will be led by Reverend Stephens from St. Michaels. The choir's of All Hallows and St Albans school will lead the carols.

Twilight Market – Thursday 14th December

Our rebranded late night shopping event will centre around the market place with the heated giant tipi filled with fairy lights and seating surrounded by local food and drink vendors and stalls from the Made in Macc market.

Looking Ahead: 2024

MACCPOW! 2024

2024 will see the return of Macclesfield's home-grown comic-art festival. The festival has the potential to bring high numbers of visitors to the town from all over the UK by offering a high-value, specialist interest event that people are willing to travel for. It also offers a large number of free activities over the weekend, in-keeping with free-event goals. In order to keep those elements free and expand the event in line with it's current success the festival is requesting additional funding.

ACTION: Funding for Macc Pow! Comic art festival – see attached report 6.1

2024 cont...

As we look ahead to next year we're keen to continue adding new events to the calendar whilst seeing the return of popular projects, such as Do Something Summer.

Lunar New Year falls on **February 10th** this time so we'll be celebrating that once again with the ArtSpace Zodiac Parade and events down at Park Green. This also means that the Macclesfield Lantern Parade will shift to **January 20th**, starting slightly earlier in the day due to the earlier sunset which hopefully will mean an increase in footfall for the shops at the end of the day.

Plans are underway to host a new Macclesfield Parade and Art Festival in Spring/Summer, planning is still in the very early stages but we hope to host a mix of art, music and live theatre in the town centre, potentially combined with a local street food market.

6.2 Floral displays

The floral displays in and around the town have received several comments from delighted residents and visitors. In particular the wild flowering has been very well received. This year the areas wild flowered were:

- Pexhill Rd
- Queens Ave
- Sainsburys
- Section behind the bus station

The Britain in Bloom judges visited 9th August 2023, for the day.

We visited the wildflower meadows and walked through the town centre as well as visiting the following community projects.

- Macc Leisure Centre with the work by Macc Wild Network
- St Albans School
- St Peters Church with helpers from the Rossendale Trust
- Grow Macclesfield Community Allotment
- Space 4 Autism
- Silk Museum Garden

It was a great day where we were able to show the wonderful blooms, environmental projects and the communities that are involved.

The award ceremony took place 19th Oct 2023, and we are thrilled to report the Town won 3 golds!

- Ian Curtis Pocket Park
- Upper Marketplace Retail Area
- Overall, for the Town and the Community.

An event is being organised to thank all those involved and will be open to new groups that might wish to become involved.

6.3 Public toilets

The toilets in the Indoor Market are complete and open! They include a fully accessible changing places toilet and baby changing facilities.

6.4 Festoons

The replacement festoons for Church Street have now been installed.

6.5 Barnaby

The reports from Artspace and Barnaby are attached for the Barnaby parade/festival.

Next year Barnaby have informed us they will not be doing a full festival, therefore as in the events report, a summer parade/ mini festival on a Saturday will be planned for June 2024.

END OF REPORT