

<b>Committee(s):</b> Community and Health Committee	<b>Date:</b> 15 December 2020
<b>Subject:</b> Chairs update	<b>Wards Affected:</b> All
<b>Report of:</b> Kim Anderson, Partnership, Leisure and Funding Manager	<b>Public</b>
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### **Christmas events**

The Community events this year have been delivered virtually and Lighting Up Brentwood was no exception. An hour of pre-recorded entertainment culminated in the switch on the Christmas lights in Brentwood and Shenfield. A number of local organisations took part to record their own activities which was then put together to produce the programme of activities. The sponsors of the Christmas trees also took part to support the event.

In addition to the virtual event the Nutcracker Trail was also launched on the 3 December in Brentwood, Shenfield and Ingatestone for families to follow with a chance to win a Nintendo Switch. All the Nutcrackers have been sponsored by local businesses and the hope is that it will encourage footfall to the three High Streets.

### **Community Support Network**

Weekly meetings are taking place with the Community Support Network. The requests for support are generally reducing, as have the number of volunteers with people returning to work. A couple of the Community Help hubs are looking at longer term support. Doddinghurst support hub are looking at joining up with Deal Tree Health Centre and the local schools to provide a wellbeing focus to support the local community. It has been identified that there is still a need for telephone befriending services especially for the elderly. Lighthouse Furniture project has seen a very high demand in the last few weeks both in donation and sales of furniture.

There is a watching brief with the group on any rise in referrals with expectation that demand for support is likely to increase in the run up to Christmas.

### **Festive Can in the Van**

The Festive Can in the Van initiative took place on 4 December which was supported by Brentwood Borough Council staff, Council for Voluntary Services and a team a team of volunteers collected 59 red boxes full of donations. These will support local foodbank, Daily Bread Café and Manna Meals.

### **Community Trailer**

The Community Trailer funded through the Health and Wellbeing Board has been branded and a programme of community engagement is being developed with local organisations and the Community Safety Partnership.

### **Brentwood Leisure Trust and Brentwood Centre re-opening**

As Members will be aware the Brentwood Centre has gone into liquidation and the insolvency practitioner was formally appointed on 6 November.

The Council re-opened the Centre to the public on 5 December which will be part of phased re-opening of the Brentwood Centre.

To get the Centre re-opened, new staff have been appointed, including some staff from Brentwood Leisure Trust, new signage, branding and a new booking system has been installed. In the background to this Health and Safety, compliance and COVID requirements have been assessed to identify the parts of the building that we can open safely to the public. The COVID requirements will also limit the number of people for any activities which need to be observed.

The Centre will initially operate on reduced hours with this first phase to ensure that it can operate sustainably and then start to extend the opening times along with the recruitment for additional staff. As such the opening sees the main swimming pool, the International Hall and the 3G pitch open to the public. The International Hall is home to a temporary gym and group exercise area.

### **Mass vaccination Centre**

The International Hall is also being used as a mass vaccination venue for approximately 12-13 weeks. It is expected that the facility will be able to deal with up to 40 people per hour. This is expected to be open to the public from 14 December by appointment only from their own GPs.

### **King George's Playing Fields**

Works are due to commence on the King George's Playing Fields development this winter for the new pavilion, splash pad and outdoor adventure play and it is expected that it will be a 14month build. The splash pad will be one of the first phases for completion and is due to be open to the public for Summer 2021.

### **Play Area Strategy**

The Junior phase of King George's Playing Fields play area design has been agreed and the works are due to start this winter. The second phase of the Hutton Recreation consultation has been completed with over 180 responses. These will inform the final design and once agreed these will be shared with members. Works on this play area are due to start this winter and be completed by Spring 2021.

### **Football Hub Development**

The Football Hub development has helped inform the wider Brentwood Centre master planning process to ensure that all options have been considered for the site including Brentwood Town Football Hub requirements.

### **Grow Your Own**

There are 100 people participating in the Grow Your Own initiative across Brentwood. The project has been commissioned by the Council to support the health and wellbeing of our most vulnerable residents. Participants have received free home growing packs and are supporting one another through peer groups, with the opportunity of gaining some qualifications to support re-employment. Those taking part have mental health illnesses, are carers, have physical or learning disabilities and are in receipt of income benefits. A legacy project has developed with the sea cadets who will be taking part in a seed swap project. A local school is taking part with vulnerable pupils and one of our sheltered housing schemes is joining as a small group. We are looking to see how we can continue to develop the appetite for

the project. Thanks to local voluntary groups who have supported the delivery and storage of the packs.

### **Let's Create Art Packs**

The Council has received a grant of £1000 from the Royal Opera House Bridge which has been match funded by Countryside and Usborne books to create 200 free arts resource packs for children and young people to increase access to creative learning opportunities. The packs will be stuffed with fantastic arts and crafts materials for children to make their own decorations or cards for Christmas and older recipients will benefit from high quality art pencils, pens, sketch books and paints. Thanks to Usborne, each child will receive an arts activity or history book. Let's Create is the Arts Council England's current strategy to provide equal access to high quality creative learning opportunities for all. Children and young people receiving the packs will be referred by local community hubs and children's services, and will be either a young carer, from a low-income or single-parent family, or have a long-term health condition. Packs will be distributed in December, in time for Christmas.