

Committee: Community & Leisure
Date: 25 May 2004
Agenda Item No: 4
Title: Results of Survey of Leisure Centre Users and Non-Users
Author: Sarah McLagan (01799) 510560
David Toombs (01799) 510559

Summary

- 1 This report provides the Committee with details of the survey that has been conducted of users and non-users of the districts' Leisure Centres. It provides details of the results of the survey sent to users of the Great Dunmow Leisure Centre and recommends that the survey responses be noted and that an Action Plan to address the key issues raised in the survey be reported to the next meeting of this Committee.

Background

- 2 At the last meeting of this Committee, Members were informed that Officers were to carry out a survey of Leisure Centre Users and Non-Users. Copies of the surveys were sent to all Members for information. Over 3,000 User surveys were posted and handed to Leisure Centre members and casual attendees. 400 Non-User surveys were posted to residents.
- 3 Leisure Connection has provided a choice of three prizes - a months free membership or free swimming for a month or a beauty treatment.

Survey Methodology

- 4 The surveys were developed using a recognised and tested format. Drafts were circulated to Council staff to seek advice and feedback on phraseology and layout. Ideally, to ensure the credibility of the survey, a return of at least 3% is sought.
- 5 It was intended that Leisure Connection would provide membership information to enable the surveys to be sent direct to leisure centre users. This occurred with members of the Great Dunmow Leisure Centre. However, due to technical problems arising from work being carried out by BT at the Lord Butler Fitness & Leisure Centre and delays in postal deliveries in the Stansted area, surveys to members of these two Leisure Centres have only recently been made available. Consequently, the return-by date had to be extended and officers consider that there are still a number of responses still to be received from the users of these centres. In addition, these delays have had a knock-on effect on the time available to collate the Non-User surveys.

- 6 For this meeting it has been possible to provide the Committee with the results of the Great Dunmow Leisure Centre survey. Officers will provide the Committee with a full set of the results of the users of Lord Butler and Mountfitchet Romeera Leisure Centres and the Non-Users by post within the next 4 – 6 weeks. In addition, all of the results will be made available on the Council's website.
- 7 The table below gives details of the number of surveys involved in the exercise to date -

	No. Surveys Sent Out	No. Surveys Returned	Percentage Return
USER SURVEYS			
Great Dunmow	850	240	28.2%
Lord Butler	2,000 +	60	3%
Mountfitchet Romeera	535	60	11.21%
NON-USER SURVEYS			
Mailed out	400	70	17.5%

Results of the Surveys

- 8 The attached appendix is in two parts – the first provides a summary of the detailed results of the Great Dunmow Leisure Centre survey. It also gives the key comments made by respondents. The second part is the detailed results from which the summary has been drawn.

Issues to be Addressed

- 9 The key results, issues and suggestions raised in these responses, and in those made by members of the other Leisure Centres and the Non-Users, need to be addressed in a measured and realistic way to ensure they lead to improved services. Many of them cannot be addressed by the Council alone and will need to be considered in detail and in conjunction with Leisure Connection and other appropriate parties.
- 10 It is proposed that, once all of the surveys have been received and analysed, an Action Plan is developed over the next few months in conjunction with Leisure Connection. This will provide a clear set of objectives to be met, the responsibility for doing so and the service improvements that will result. The Action Plan will be reported to the next meeting of this Committee. For some of the issues/opportunities, it may be necessary to request that the Committee considers resourcing the Actions to enable them to be addressed.
- 11 Clearly, it is not possible to totally predict the issues that might be raised in the other survey results, although it is anticipated that these will be of a similar nature to those raised by Great Dunmow Leisure Centre members. It is

suggested that Members should contact the Leisure Manager with any specific issues that they wish to raise about the results that they receive for the other two Leisure Centres and non-users. This information will be fed into the discussions that will be held with Leisure Connection and other relevant parties during the summer recess.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1 The attached results of the Great Dunmow Leisure Centre survey is noted
- 2 Members contact the Leisure Manager direct with any issues or comments about the outstanding survey results
- 3 An Action Plan to address the key issues raised by the surveys be reported to the next meeting of this Committee.

Background Papers: Survey and database of responses from Users and Non-Users of Leisure Centres

Committee: Community and Leisure
Date: 25 May 2004
Agenda Item: 5
Title: Blue Plaques
Author: Ian Orton (01799) 510 402

Summary

- 1 This report recommends that the Council supports the concept of erecting Blue Plaques to celebrate great figures who have lived in Uttlesford over the years. The report also recommends that English Heritage consider a request from the Council to erect Blue Plaques for Dick Turpin and Henry Winstanley

Background

- 2 Over the last 140 years nearly 800 Blue Plaques have been erected in London celebrating great figures from the past and the buildings in which they worked or lived. These people who lived or stayed in the city were as different as Sir Winston Churchill and Jimi Hendrix. Blue Plaques are internationally renowned symbols and will form part of the tourism strategy for the district.
- 3 Blue Plaques are administered by English Heritage who now wish to extend the concept from London into the East of England. Authorities, individuals and organizations are now able to suggest to English Heritage figures and buildings which could be commemorated by a Blue Plaque.
- 4 The criteria surrounding Blue Plaques is quite strict:
 - Nominated figures must have been dead for 20 years or be more than 100 years old
 - Plaques can only be erected on the actual building inhabited by the nominated figure, not the site where the building once stood
 - Buildings marked with plaques must be visible from the public highway
- 5 Nominated figures must also meet one or more of the following:
 - Be considered eminent by a majority of members of their profession or calling
 - Have made an important contribution to human welfare
 - Be recognizable to the well – informed passer by
 - Deserve national recognition
 - Have resided in a locality for a significant period in time or importance within their life and work
- 6 English Heritage usually take 2 to 5 years to consider a request for Blue Plaques and if agreed Blue Plaques are then erected by the Council at a cost

around £500 each. But they are a tourist attraction and would form part of the process of enhancing tourism within Uttlesford.

- 7 Uttlesford is rich in figures that meet the above criteria. The report recommends that Blue Plaques are considered for Dick Turpin (1706 – 1739) and Henry Winstanley (1644 – 1703). Two very different men Turpin born at Hempstead a romantic criminal who led a short but exciting life and Winstanley born in Saffron Walden constructed the first Eddystone Lighthouse and as a result was responsible for saving the lives of many sailors. Biographical details of both Dick Turpin and Henry Winstanley are attached to the report. The buildings where Turpin and Winstanley were born still exist and if the recommendations within the report are agreed discussions with the owners of the buildings will commence.

RECOMMENDED:

- (1) That the Council support the concept of Blue Plaques
- (2) That the names of Dick Turpin and Henry Winstanley are forwarded to English Heritage by 10 August, 2004 to be considered for Blue Plaques.
- (3) That Members receive an annual report on Blue Plaques when additional names for Blue Plaques will be considered.

Henry Winstanley (1644 – 1703)

Henry Winstanley was born in Saffron Walden Essex and started his career as an engraver. He obtained some notoriety for the peculiar mechanical contrivances that filled his house at Littlebury, and was the proprietor of 'Winstanley's Waterworks' on Piccadilly. What made his name, however, was the building of the first Eddystone Lighthouse.

By 1696 he owned a small fleet of ships. Upon hearing that he had lost two on the treacherous Eddystone Rocks, fourteen miles off the Plymouth coast, he decided that there should be a lighthouse there, and determined to construct one himself. It took six hours for his men to row out there and attack the rocks with pickaxes and another six to row back. If they were lucky the weather was calm enough to let them get on the rock: it took five months just to dig the foundation holes. While working on the rock in 1697, he was captured by a French privateer. However, the rocks were wrecking so many ships - including French vessels - that Louis XIV set him free and returned him home weighed down with expensive gifts.

On 14th November 1698, the lighthouse was completed. Winstanley climbed up to the lantern and lit a dozen tallow candles. In Plymouth there was pandemonium as fishermen came in with the astonishing news that Eddystone was showing a light: people flocked out on the Hoe with telescopes. For the maritime community the news brought popular acclaim and rejoicing. However, a number of critics claimed that the lighthouse would never survive the winter. Winstanley grew tired of the carping and boasted publicly that his one crowning wish in life was to be in his lighthouse during the greatest storm in history. In November 1703 his wish came true with two weeks of severe gales. Ships arriving from the Atlantic arrived days early, but no vessel could leave so every harbour and estuary was completely full. 25th November brought a lull, and the next morning Winstanley went out to the lighthouse with his maintenance crew to carry out repairs before the winter. The worst storm England had ever seen began at around midnight. Daniel Defoe, who travelled the country afterwards assessing the damage, reported that men and animals were lifted off their feet and carried for yards through the air and that lead roofs were ripped from one hundred churches. 15 000 sheep were drowned in floods near Bristol, 400 windmills were blown over and 800 houses were completely destroyed. The ships, crowded into their anchorages, were blown into one another and onto the rocks, drowning 8 000 sailors in one night. Winstanley's wish was mercilessly granted; he was in his lighthouse during the greatest storm in history. By daybreak the following morning there was no sign that the lighthouse had ever existed, except for a few bent pieces of rusty iron sprouting from the rock.

Dick Turpin (1706 – 1739)

The legendary Highwayman was born in 1706 in Hempstead Essex and met his end in York after a career of theft, smuggling, highway robbery, terror and murder. An apprentice butcher he fell into a life of crime and joined the Essex Gang which raided isolated farmhouses across the Home Counties, terrorising, robbing and torturing the occupants.

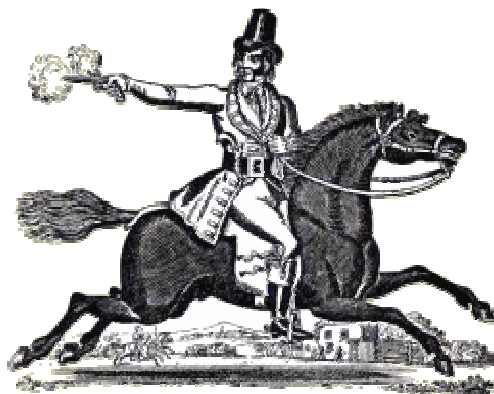
King George offered a reward of £50 for the capture of Turpin and his gang, which was eventually doubled after a vicious attack on the family of a rich farmer.

Turpin who had now joined forces with 'Captain' John King a well known highwayman, shot and killed a gamekeeper who tracked him to their hideaway in Epping forest and he then fled north to escape arrest.

He made his home in York and financed a fancy life-style under the name of John Palmer, by stealing horses and cattle. The end came unexpectedly when Turpin, returning from a hunt meeting with some local toffs, shot the landlords rooster. The subsequent enquires into his bizarre behavior, unearthed his source of wealth and he was held in custody in York Castle.

He wrote to his brother begging for help, but the brother too mean to pay the postage, had the letter returned. Somehow Turpin's former schoolmaster saw the letter and identified the handwriting. He was then asked to travel to York and identified John Palmer as the notorious Richard Turpin.

On 19th April 1739 Turpin was hanged at Tyburn on York's Knavesmire.



Committee: Community & Leisure
Date: 25 May 2004
Agenda Item No: 6
Title: Forward Programme for the Year
Author: Sarah McLagan (01799) 510560

Summary

- 1 This report provides Members with details of the known reports that are to come before this Committee during the year. It recommends that the Committee note the programme and advise of any further reports that it would wish to receive.

Background

- 2 The Quality of Life Plan requires each Committee to consider, at the beginning of the new Committee year, a forward programme of the reports that it requires to come before it during the year.
- 3 Officers have drafted a programme which includes the corporate reports that are required to come before the Committee e.g. budgets, and those that the Committee should consider as part of its role in over-seeing the work that falls within its remit. However, it is difficult to be clear about the programming of some reports, in particular those associated with this year’s Best Value Reviews and certain Quality of Life projects, and these will need to be added when the work programmes are clear.

Forward Programme

	Tuesday 7 September
7.00pm	Presentation by Thaxted Festival
1	Leisure Centre Survey - Action Plan
2	Thaxted Guildhall
3	Contributions (Support) Grant Scheme
4	Museum Development - Resource Centre Progress Report
5	Budget Report, including requirement for Resources to fund consultants to develop Leisure & Cultural Strategy – 2006 - 2010
6	Budgetary Control
7	Draft Capital Programme

	Tuesday 2 November
6.30pm	Presentation by Leisure Connection (Annual Event)
1	Minutes of Community Achievement Award Task Group
2	Budget Report
3	Budgetary Control
4	Capital Programme
	Tuesday 4 January 2005
1	Museum Development - Resource Centre Progress Report and draft Forward Plan
2	Budget Report
3	Budgetary Control
	Tuesday 1 March 2005
1	Leisure Centre Concession Card Review
2	Service Plan
3	Budgetary Control

RECOMMENDED that the above programme be noted and Members advise of any further reports to be added to it.

Background Papers: None

