

Agenda item number: 5a

Date of meeting: 10th December 2018

THATCHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Events Committee

Report by: Jennie Currie

Job Title: Community & Civic Manager

Subject: Review of the Thatcham Festival 2018

1 Purpose of Report

To provide details of the 2018 Thatcham Festival event organised by the Town Council which took place between 6th and 19th October 2018.

2 Background of Event

The first Thatcham Festival was held in 2001 and was called 'Thatcham Festival of the Arts'. It ran for 3 days over a weekend and included 16 events. The name has changed a couple of times and the length of the Festival has been extended over the years. Since 2013 it has been held for 14 consecutive days. The Festival has always been held in October and normally finishes before the school holiday or overlaps by one day.

The aims and objectives of the Thatcham Festival 2018 were to:

- Promote local organisations/clubs which are involved in arts and leisure
- Stimulate community involvement
- Raise the profile of the town
- Promote the town's community venues
- Ensure that the Festival is inclusive - entry has been free to the majority of events and the idea of different groups working co-operatively together to stimulate community involvement has been the underpinning objective since the first Festival was planned. Any exceptions to the free entry rule would be clearly indicated in the programme. (All 2018 events were free.)

3 Report on Event

The 2018 Festival took place over 14 days and had more than 60 events:

Organisation	Activity
2nd Thatcham Guides (rotates)	Youth Quiz
Armadillo Art Experience	Adult's art workshop & Children's art workshop
Barfield Handbell Ringers	Handbell concert
Bellywood	Bellywood Dance Class taster session

Graeme Stewart	Bird Walks - 2 at Discovery Centre, 1 at Greenham Common
CAMEO	2 open sessions
Graeme Stewart & Nick Young	History Talk - Thatcham: Finding Your Way
Heartstart Thatcham	Training session
InCantata Ladies Choir	Choral concert
Isis Sounds	Sacred Sound Bath workshop
John Froggat	Canal boats talk
Just A Sing Along	Open Choir session
KATS	Ghost Walk
Kennet School	Art Exhibition in Council Chamber
Kennet School	Festival Commemorating Unremembered Heros of WW1
Kennet Valley Dancers	Adult & Children's dance open sessions x3
MF Dance	Children's Dance Class open sessions x2
Mr Nigel Smith	An hour of silly rhymes and potty poetry
My Yoga Flow	Yoga open sessions x2
Newbury & District Table Tennis	Walk in sessions x2
Newbury Astronomical Society	Presentation and observing
Nick Young	History Talk - Thatcham and the Great War
Richard Dumelow	Tea Dance
Rock Choir Workshop	Workshop
Seated Yoga	Yoga open session
Sport in Mind	Badminton open session x2
Sport in Mind	Table Tennis open session
Steve Masters	History Talk - Anna Munro A Life Forgotten
Thames Valley Kings Wheelchair Basketball	Open session x2
Thatcham & District Philatelic Society	Stamp Fair
Thatcham & District Philatelic Society	Stamp Club Auction
Thatcham Allotment Gardening Club	Allotment Open Day
Thatcham Art Experience	Art exhibition (2 days)
Thatcham Art Experience	Tanya Patey pastels taster session
Thatcham Classic Car Show	Car Show
Thatcham Community Orchard	Little Apple Day
Thatcham Historical Society	Society Meeting: Newbury 1918
Thatcham Library	Children's Rhymetime open session x2 and Libraries Week drop in
Thatcham Photographic Club	Exhibition (2 days)
Thatcham Photographic Club	Open session - Mix & Match competition
Thatcham Rugby Football Club	Primary Schools Rugby Festival
Thatcham Tornados	Infant Schools 5-a-side Football Festival

Thatcham U3A	Open meeting
TTC Officers	Blue Plaque Unveiling
TTC Officers	Kids Messy Morning
TTC Officers	Festival Leisure & Craft Fair
TTC Officers	Britain on Film: Coast & Sea
TTC Officers	Family Cycle Treasure Hunt
TTC Officers	Festival Finale - featuring Cold Ash Brass and No Strings Attached
Watership Cantabile	"Far Away" - A Journey in Music & Song (concert)
West Berks Peace & Integration Forum	The Man Who Built Peace presentation and discussion

26 of these events required people to prebook, 11 via the organiser and the rest via Thatcham Town Council. The website Eventbrite was used along with the Council Offices as a box office. On Friday 5th and 12th October there was also a pop up box office at the weekly market where people could book tickets. The pop up box office was successful at engaging with people who had not heard of the Festival before.

Eventbrite worked very well and visitors can search the website for events and this attracted new people.

Where we have records of attendance the majority of events were well attended although the Little Apple Day event was badly affected by poor weather.

Officers have noted that there is a core group of people who return to attend Festival events each year which is good but more new people need to be engaged with too.

4 Finances

	2018	2018/19 Budget
Total income	200	200
Total expenditure[†]	3,040	4,375
Net balance	2,840	4,175

[†] Total expenditure excludes salary reallocation.

A detailed budget report is included under item 10.

Thatcham Memorial Hall and Playing Fields Foundation sponsored the production of the programme.

5 Publicity

Having reviewed the quantity of printed programmes, flyers and posters that we have previously distributed, 2,000 (rather than 3,000) full colour 24pp A5 programmes (previously only colour cover and map) and 10 A1 posters were printed.

No flyers were printed, previously these were mainly distributed via schools and instead the schools were emailed details of the event. The cost saving was £390, approximately one third of the figure spent in 2017.

The event was promoted via a paid Facebook advertisement and printed advertisements in local newspapers and magazines. Local schools were emailed about the event. Press releases were issued and posters displayed on the Town's noticeboards.

There were not quite enough programmes to meet demand, therefore it has been noted that at least 2,500 should be ordered for 2019.

6 Evaluation

Please refer to following page for public feedback. The questions asked were:

Q1. Which Festival event(s) have you attended this year?

Q2. Did you enjoy the Festival event(s) you attended this year? Yes / No

Q3. How did you hear about the Thatcham Festival 2018?

Q4. If you have come into contact with a member of Town Council staff at or regarding the Festival were you satisfied with the service provided? Yes / No

Q5. Any additional comments:

Thatcham Festival is well received with stable overall attendance figures but changes need to be made to the content to attract new visitors.

Events attended	Enjoy?	Promotion	Staff	Additional comments
5	Yes	Programme - Parish Hall	Yes	0
3	Yes	Programme - URC	Yes	Good luck for next year
4	Yes	Prior knowledge	0	0
6	Yes	Programme	Yes	I think Thatcham needs and deserves the annual Festival. It is always enjoyable.
3	Yes	Programme - U3A	Yes	Brilliant, thought provoking film with PI.
0	0	Found out this week by chance	0	Festival website does not give clear programme. No mention of Cold Ash Brass concert. It is difficult to decide whether the activities mentioned continue through the year or are just Festival events.
2	Yes	Programme	Yes	Latin inline - chance to try a new activity, acceptable volume levels. Rock Choir - volume uncomfortable for me. Opportunity to have a new singing experience. Sorry about the allotments and the weather.
1	Yes	Programme - TTC	Yes	Loved it keep it up.
1	Yes	Word of mouth	Yes	A quieter venue perhaps or an earlier time as school (OBS) lovely. Very effective.
1	Yes	Word of mouth	Yes	Really enjoyed it.
2	Yes	Newbury library	Yes	Excellent more events please.
1	Yes	TTC newsletter	0	0
1	Yes	Facebook	Yes	Great keep it up please.
1	Yes	Workshop leader	Yes	0
1	Yes	Facebook	0	Really enjoy course, great teacher :)
1	Yes	Facebook	Yes	Great fun!
1	Yes	Newbury library	0	Great painting session :)
5	Yes	Programme	Yes	Excellent workshops etc. Please do this every year and promote it around Newbury also if you don't already.
1	Yes	Workshop leader	Yes	0
1	Yes	Programme	Yes	0
1	Yes	NWN	0	0
1	Yes	Facebook	0	0
1	Yes	Facebook	0	It was amazing artwork!
5	Yes	Programme	Yes	Looking forward to next year!
6+	Yes	Prior knowledge	Yes	Alright for a newcomer but very general. Lack of support by Councillors - needs to be addressed by Mayor / Leader of Council.
3	Yes	Prior knowledge	No	I am not on Facebook, so I don't like use of Facebook and had to go out to get a printed handbook
1	Yes	Website	Yes	Fantastic Rock Choir event, please encourage more local groups to do taster sessions next year!

A little card to say how much we enjoyed the Festival. A big thank you to TTC and all

the volunteers. (Name supplied - not recognised.)