

Meeting Date: 14<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Public/Private\*: Public

**Culture, Heritage & Leisure Portfolio Holder's Report –**

Title:

**Councillor Stephen Higgs**

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**TOURISM / DISCOVER CARLISLE**

Tickets for City of Lights are on sale now at the Tourist Information Centre. The event will be held over three nights, 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> October. The event will consist of two sound and light experiences, the first at Carlisle Cathedral, followed by a second at Carlisle Castle. The Destination Manager is also working with Cumbria CC to light key historic buildings in the City. Carlisle has featured in a 4-page spread in Coach Tours UK magazine this summer. The Destination Management Team has also secured a visit from renowned travel blogger and influencer, Pelumi Nubi, as well as directly promoting Carlisle to 17 tour operators through England's Historic Cities. The International Market was held over the August Bank Holiday Weekend, attracting lots of visitors to the City Centre. There has been a good take up for the 'Restarting Communities Fund'. The Destination Management Team is working with applicants to bring their projects to fruition. These include improvements to public realm and outdoor spaces and family events throughout the district.

**CARLISLE STATION, CITADELS AND VICTORIAN HEALTH SUITE (TURKISH BATHS)**

Excellent progress continues to be made with the development and delivery of the 2 Borderlands projects: Carlisle Station Gateway and The Citadels. These two heritage-led regeneration schemes which will revitalise the historically important southern area of the city centre and secure the sustainable long-term future of locally and nationally significant listed buildings. The Pools and the Victorian Health Suite (which includes the Turkish Baths) form an important element of the Station Gateway Project. The City Council maintains the position that the Victorian Health Suite is an important listed building and part of Carlisle's heritage - and therefore, will be protected.

**UNCOVERING ROMAN CARLISLE**

The Uncovering Roman Carlisle Project, which recently received a £99,900 National Lottery Heritage Fund grant is an 18-month programme of community archaeological investigation, exhibitions, and engagement exploring Carlisle's Roman remains. The project will include a 28-day community excavation of a Roman bathhouse - starting on

Tuesday, 31<sup>st</sup> August. More than 150 volunteers have already signed up to take part in the excavation.

### **TULLIE HOUSE**

Tullie House has had a busy summer, with an increase in visitors, new galleries opening and community engagement continuing at pace. The long-awaited Costume Collection at Tullie House opened on 15th July, with outstanding visitor feedback. The galleries were also referenced in our annual Visit England Assessment and contributed to the Museum achieving 90% - our highest ever score and one that qualifies us for 'Gold' standard. The assessor wrote: *"The new Costume Collection display was a highlight of the visit; the content, presentation and interpretation combined to create two excellent galleries."* Our holiday programme of family craft activities, storytelling and activities in our Secret Garden has been enjoyed by over 1,000 people, all delivered in a socially-distanced, Covid safe setting. Tullie House's community engagement programme is slowly building back up following successive lockdowns. The Thriving Communities project delivered in partnership with Carlisle City Council, Cumbria Wildlife Trust, Prism Arts, Susie Tate Projects and Carlisle Healthcare is also progressing well.

### **CUMBRIA'S MUSEUM OF MILITARY LIFE**

Visitor figures for the Museum were extremely good in July and are looking even better for August. We are seeing visitors from outside the County coming to the Museum. We were pleased to receive an award of £98,700 from the Heritage Fund which will enable us to build our sustainability and make us more resilient in the future. We will be looking at digital engagement, income generation and retail as part of this funding.

### **BITTS PARK CULTURAL AND CREATIVE COURTYARD**

Carlisle Tribe is now open with a successful launch week at the end of August with the provision of new catering and retail spaces plus new public toilets for Bitts Park. The businesses on site are:

- **The Tasty Greek** – authentic Greek street food and drinks, originating from the different islands of Greece
- **Beirut Bites** – Lebanese Street Food. Andrei is an experienced chef, and this will be his first solo venture
- **Pokey Parlour** – Ice Cream and Coffee for dogs and humans
- **Bella Tacos** – Tacos with a Cumbrian Twist, including vegan and veggie options
- **Sissy That Print** – Emma does digital art, prints and stickers, including commissions and custom made products
- **Love Dough** – Artisan Pizza, stonebaked, that will blow your tastebuds
- **Tribe Bar** – House Bar - serving beverages all day long

### **OLD FIRE STATION**

Now that the new operator has been confirmed, an ambitious and exciting events programme is taking shape. For up-to-date information on events, please visit:

<https://www.oldfirestation.carlisle.city/whatson.html>

### **EVENTS LIST TO FOLLOW**