



Cultural and Economic Services Committee

Date: 28 January 2021

Purpose of the Report: Living History – Proposal

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PROPOSAL DOCUMENT

Initial thoughts of officers.

To focus on a three-year timescale and then review again. Consistency for work would be helped by this approach as well as that for the public. By this time, it would be hoped that ongoing or legacy Covid influences will be understood.

Deliver on street engaging ‘activity’ rather than a full ‘event’

Delivering programmed activity yet not a full event style day. This still maintains a Living History Day presence within the diarised social programme for the Town.

Continue to build on recent activity

Delivery activity for the day and leave ongoing, easy to access, historic assets, e.g., Publications, and add to the digital/virtual library of historic data. This in turn feeds into providing schools with study information as well as inspiring existing and new resident’s interest in the town – ‘knowing’ about where they live.

Rationale behind the above thought process.

In 2016, a new approach was taken to delivering the event which focused on the history of local pubs. The approach led to the creation of an event legacy document in the form of the publication, ‘The Changing Face of our Pubs’. The publication can be found on the LLTC website/publication page.

<https://www.leightonlinslade-tc.gov.uk/site/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/living-history-pub-booklet-updated-Jan-21.pdf>

When delivering this approach, the event element proved overly burdensome so was not repeated. When launching the Living History Trail on the new Buzzard Trail App platform in 2019, the digital trail was complemented on the event day with actors dresses up as Trail characters who spoke in character about the legacy of their historic lives on the town.

This showed that similarly to the pub trail, the combination of associating an activity with the creation of an annual legacy document or item, could work well. Whilst this took place alongside the ‘event’ day. It could have worked as a standalone activity without the need for a larger event.

The proposal for the future approach to delivering Living History activity is to build on the combination of a targeted delivery of activity that serves to work alongside the long-term continued creation of historic information about the town, whether that be in digital or publication formats, or both.

For instance, in 2020 the Living History Day could not be delivered in event format. A targeted historic trail was created focusing on local the shops. The trail could be undertaken physically, or via social media platforms. After the delivery period, the historic information created remains as a legacy of the day and could therefore continue to be undertaken all year round. The information remains accessible to anyone who is interested in the town, its history, etc. It can be used by schools or local uniformed groups wanting to earn an appropriate badge. It would therefore be worth exploring the creation of a dedicated page on the Council's website, a library, or partnering up with the local history society, ensuring a link is established between the two organisation's web platforms.

An example of this approach is seen in the Children's Trail. An activity sheet is designed to support literacy and numeracy learning. A reading list associated with the Trail is promoted. The historic date serves to introduce social history whether that be through businesses like last year's shop trail or through sharing people's personal history like the current Living History Trail- Buzz Trails.

Overarching aims and objectives.

Aims:

Through delivery of Living History Day activity, create a library of accessible Town historic information that supports learning and understanding of the Town's social history.

Objectives:

- a. Buzzard Trails App – change the historic characters of the existing trail and/or expand to this list and trails
- b. Council website location for library of history related resources created through the delivery of Council activities and strong links to other local websites for furtherance for exploration and for ease of access
- c. Ongoing development of collaborative work with local organisations towards creation of resources and contributions to activities

DELIVERY

To deliver both physical and digital content, additional trails or updated trails will be made available to members of the public annually via the Buzzard Trails App. During a period of additional publicity around the launch of a new trail, characters from the trail will be positioned around the town highlighting the building or location featured. A theme or time period in the town's history could be selected when creating a new trail.

It is hoped a local drama or performance group would be commissioned to deliver the performances of characters from the trail. Alternatively, professional performers could be commissioned where a local performer isn't available or suitable. Videos of

performances could be taken and uploaded onto Leighton-Linlode Town Council social media and website to further promote the trails.

Following the delivery of the annual launch day, the new trail would become available for individual members of the public, schools and uniformed organisations to take part in at any time either physically or digitally. For those not able to use an app or website, a printed booklet would be made available alongside a downloadable version from the Leighton-Linlode Town Council website.

CONCLUSION

There has been a lack of focus for the event. Over recent years, Committee has increased its work for establishing access to Town history through introducing the Living History Trail. Given the legacy information created from more recent delivery approaches for this event, there appears to be a naturally emerging way forward which at this time, also recognises uncertainty for the immediate future for during and post Covid circumstance. Although not a full event style day, an opportunity to engage with an audience physically and digitally exists with a legacy opportunity.

The above can be delivered within the existing dedicated budget.