

Culture and Leisure Sub Committee

Tuesday, 1 March 2022

Present: Councillor J Cruddas (Chair)
Councillors K Barrie, G Bell, L Bell, M Hall, J Kirwin,
G Madden, J Montague, A Newman and J Shaw

In attendance: Councillors S Graham, Janet Hunter and
J O'Shea

Apologies: Councillors L Bones and C Davis

C&L23/22 Substitute Members

There were no substitute members reported.

C&L24/22 Declarations of Interest and Notification of any Dispensations Granted

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.

C&L25/22 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 19 January 2022 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

C&L26/22 Hadrian's Wall 10 Year Investment Plan

Consideration was given to a presentation by Lady Jane Gibson, the Chair of Hadrian's Wall Partnership Board, which provided an update on the 10-year investment programme for Hadrian's Wall. It was explained that the Borderlands Growth Deal had allocated £18M to invest in the Wall to achieve the vision that by 2030 Hadrian's Wall would be the most widely recognised, appealing and authentic visitor destination in the Borderlands region and the UK's leading example of heritage inspired inclusive growth.

The main focus of the investment programme had been to fill the gaps to make Hadrian's Wall a coherent, integrated visitor destination. Whilst the more rural parts of the Wall, such as Sycamore Gap, were picturesque and attracted large numbers of visitors the urban areas of the Wall, such as Wallsend, had the potential to be as important both in historical importance and as a destination in itself. The delivery of the plan required the commitment and action of various partners and stakeholders. Whilst the Hadrian's Wall Partnership Board had overall responsibility for the implementation of the programme, individual projects would be led by the various partners, either alone or in collaboration with others.

It was explained that Hadrian's Wall only attracted around 1.1M visitors each year which meant that there was ample scope for growth by tapping into the post-Covid interest in rural destinations, outdoor activities and staycations. Local residents were an important market

for the Wall and its attractions but the encouragement of external visitors to the area had a larger economic impact. It was suggested that there was a need to simplify the visitor journey to unlock the Wall's potential as a visitor attraction.

Although Segedunum was not within the Borderlands footprint it was an integral part of the Hadrian's Wall offer and had the potential to demonstrate a significant financial leverage against the Borderlands programme due to the Authority's capital investment and the eligibility to bid for Museums Estate and Development Fund and National Lottery Heritage funding.

It was **agreed** that the report and presentation be noted

C&L27/22 Hadrian 1900 Festival

Consideration was given to a presentation which outlined the plans in place to mark the 1900th anniversary of the building of Hadrian's Wall. A year-long festival starting on Hadrian's birthday on 24 January and running through to the end of the Roman Festival of Saturnalia on the 23 December had been developed. The festival aimed to engage with communities across the length of the Wall, enhance the presence of the World Heritage Site and create a local network of ambassadors to promote the World Heritage Site in future years.

It was explained that to date there had been around 270 proposals for activities designed to mark the event. A branding toolkit had been developed and the publicity undertaken had generated a significant amount of interest in Hadrian's Wall and its surroundings.

It was explained that the Wallsend Town Festival in July 2022 had been linked to the Hadrian 1900 Festival along with a number of other activities including a festival of Archaeology, a number of walking festivals and a fort-to-fort history walk between Segedunum in Wallsend and Arbeia Roman Fort in South Shields.

The festival would be used to engage with the community, develop skills and networks and attract more visitors to the Wall and its environs. Reference was made the links set up with the various cruise operators who visited the Tyne to encourage more of the passengers to visit the areas around the Wall.

Reference was also made to the plans in place to involving local residents in the festival and to broadening the appeal of the facilities around, not only the World Heritage Site but also, Wallsend and the other communities in the area.

Reference was also made to the local history of Wallsend which could be publicised to generate additional visitors to the town and its facilities.

It was **agreed** that the presentation and report be noted.

C&L28/22 Jubilee Beacons

The Sub-committee received a report and presentation which outlined some of the activities which had been planned around Hadrian's Wall to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

It was explained that the Wall had been lined up to be a special place for the celebrations over the Jubilee weekend.

Jez Light had been appointed the Beacon Master for the event and he set out the various activities which were in the process of being put in place for the celebration on the 2nd June 2022. He explained that Her Majesty's Pageant Master had granted a special dispensation for the beacons across the communities on the Wall to be lit at 10.00pm, 15 minutes after the rest of the United Kingdom in recognition of the scale and importance of Hadrian's Wall to the celebrations that night.

It was explained that a variety of different beacon events had been planned over the length of the Wall, from Copeland in the west to Segedunum and South Tyneside in the east. Many of the events were intended to be community led events rather than large scale events specifically on the Wall itself. He also explained that plans had been put in place for many of the events to be recorded and the footage stitched together to provide a film which would be used to show the Wall at its best.

It was **agreed** that the report and presentation be noted

C&L29/22 Date and Time Next Meeting

6.00pm on Tuesday 28 June 2022.