

# WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

## Report by the Director of Education & Cultural Services

Children's Services Committee: 16 August 2006

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**Subject: Their Past Your Future**

### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1** This report informs Members of the success of West Dunbartonshire Council's participation in the national *Their Past Your Future* project.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1** *Their Past Your Future* (TPYF) UK-Wide was funded by the Big Lottery Fund and led by the Imperial War Museum. *Their Past Your Future* was part of the UK-wide *Veterans Reunited* programme, which included a wide range of activity for all ages, throughout the UK, to mark the 60th anniversary of the end of WW11.

- 2.1** TPYF Scotland explores how the Second World War changed the people and the landscape of our country forever, looking at the legacy of the war and its lasting impact on towns and cities, in education and in social and health services.

- 2.2** TPYF Scotland was led by the Scottish Museums Council in partnership with the Scottish Library and Information Council, and Learning and Teaching Scotland. It incorporated a Second World War touring exhibition curated by the Imperial War Museum and it was funded by the Big Lottery Fund.

- 2.3** In 2005 the Culture Section within Education & Cultural Services successfully bid for funding toward a programme of events, focusing on home & garden, entertainment, and commemoration & celebration.

- 2.5** As one of only 6 local authorities in Scotland awarded TPYF funding, West Dunbartonshire Council successfully attracted the largest award of £48,000. In doing this West Dunbartonshire Council's application and evaluation scheme were promoted by the Scottish Museums Council nationally as examples of best practice.

### **3. TPYF Projects in West Dunbartonshire: 2005**

- 3.1** West Dunbartonshire Council's TPYF projects were developed by an organising committee of officers from Education & Cultural Services, community organisations, and independent museums. This approach ensured community input and interest at a grassroots level.

- 3.2** Clydebank Town Hall was selected to host the national launch of the touring Imperial War Museum exhibition, augmented by West Dunbartonshire Council's own exhibition on The Clydebank Blitz including a replica of a 1940s living room. The launch was attended by over 250 guests, local press and cameras from Scottish Television.
- 3.3** Throughout 2005 there was a range of exciting and innovative events running in and around West Dunbartonshire as part of the *Their Past Your Future Scotland* programme. The events looked at the impact of the war on the area, home life, entertainment and the Clydebank blitz.
- 3.4** Projects included;
- 3.4.1** *Jam Jars at the Roxy*: which transformed Clydebank Town Hall into a 1940s picture house showing World War II films such as *The Colditz Story*, *Casablanca*, and *Where Eagles Dare*. The picture house 'experience' included British Movietone newsreel footage, wartime Disney cartoons and recitals on the Town Hall's Wurlitzer organ.
- 3.4.2** *That Swing Thing*: an evening of Big Band Music in Clydebank's Town Hall featuring a live 18 piece big band and singer, evoking the era of the dance hall and music of the era.
- 3.4.3** *We'll Meet Again*: a series of 14 concerts in Day Care Centres and Nursing Homes throughout West Dunbartonshire by singers and musicians evoking the music and entertainment of the war years, including opportunities for reminiscence and conversation.
- 3.4.4** *Pixie Hats & Wet Duffels*: in conjunction with the department's Cultural Co-ordinators, this drama and reconstruction project took over a primary 6/7 for the day. Evacuating pupils and recreating a wartime regime and culture, actors played the role of teachers working with pupils to give children the experience of a wartime classroom.
- 3.5** All of the projects aimed to:-
- enhance and increase awareness of the wartime history of the area across the authority;
  - celebrate and promote the value of heritage, museums and libraries;
  - introduce pupils to the concepts of economic development, social inclusion, regeneration, lifelong learning and healthy living;
  - enhance understanding and awareness of the experience of veterans.

- 3.6 West Dunbartonshire Council's *TPYF* projects attracted well over 8000 participants between February and October 2005. Evaluation feedback showed extremely high satisfaction levels both from schools and members of the public. These figures are sure to increase following the additional funding awarded to the Council in April 2006.
- 3.7 Over 1000 school pupils visited the Clydebanks Museum during the four week period of the Imperial War Museum exhibition.
- 3.8 A 'Singers' reunion for former workers attracted four times the original expectation, with over 200 people attending.
- 3.9 The project included the commissioning of an online digital story focusing on The Clydebanks Blitz. This site tells the stories from the Clydebanks blitz including civil defence and domestic aspects.

#### **4. *TPYF* Projects in West Dunbartonshire: 2006**

- 4.1 Since the original project and building on its success, the Council has been awarded an additional £50,000 funding from the Big Lottery to extend our *TPYF* programme.
- 4.2 The additional funding, awarded in 2006 has enabled :
  - 4.2.1 the development of an online resource 'Museum Without Walls'. To be launched in September 2006, the site uses digitised artefacts from the collection, fact sheets, photos and downloads. These will form an online introduction to the WWII collections, accessible to all;
  - 4.2.2 the publication of a local history book '*A Close Community*'. Written by local writer Malcolm Lobban, this book describes experiences of the war years in the Vale of Leven;
  - 4.2.3 the production of WWII hampers, provided free of charge to every primary school in the authority, the Joint Hospital and a number of centres for the elderly. The packs contain educational fact sheets, songs sheets, DVDs, timelines, wartime recipes, and everything needed for a WWII street party;

#### **5. Personnel Issues**

- 5.1 There are no personnel issues.

#### **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1.1 There are no financial implications for the Council. Funding has been provided by the Big Lottery.

## **7. Conclusion**

- 7.1** The successful work produced by the department's Cultural Services Section and its partner organisations has recently been recognised at a national level with the awarding of a COSLA Bronze Excellence Award for Advancing Community Wellbeing.
- 7.2** Cultural staff from the department were invited to represent Scotland at the national *TPYF* Conference in Manchester in January 2006 where their presentation was selected as the best TPFY project.

## **8. Recommendations**

- i) Members are asked to note the content of this report and, in particular, the level and quality of projects and resources provided by *TPYF* funding;
- ii) Members are also asked to note the success of this initiative at a national level via the Scottish Museums Council, and the awarding of a COSLA Bronze Award for excellence.

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**Background Papers:** None

**Wards Affected:** All Wards