

Park boss finds key to unlock hidden gems

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ACOUNCIL officer has single-handedly created an online parks finder tool to help people discover Hyndburn's often hidden gems.

Parks development officer Mark Pickup developed the tool, which helps people to discover Hyndburn's parks, outdoor spaces and walkways, in his spare time.

Mark came up with the idea for the online search tool during his day-to-day work after a chat with local families in Hyndburn's parks.

"I spoke to a group of parents who were meeting up at a local play area and they had no idea about some of the best places to visit in our

borough," he said.

"The purpose of the online tool is to make sure people are aware about all the great places to explore and also create a sense of pride in just how much we have to offer here.

"It was definitely a labour of love to create. We have about 25 locations in Hyndburn that were included - many of them hidden gems - and co-ordinating this took a lot of time, but I did it as a hobby and enjoyed the process."

The website works by taking someone's postcode and converting this to a global position. A list of play area global positions are held on a spreadsheet and the two are compared to provide information about the nearest play area to the postcode and approximate distances to the play areas

and local nature reserves. People can access the tool by visiting the council website and searching 'parks' or going to www.hyndburnbc.gov.uk/parks.



● Mark Pickup, Parks Development Officer at Hyndburn council, with his parks finder tool

Take bus ride to better health

LANCASHIRE Care NHS Foundation Trust are bringing the HARRI bus to Accrington town centre on Thursday, March 17.

HARRI stands for Health Advice Recovery Resilience Information.

No appointment is needed - and people are invited to come down for a friendly chat with the team from 10am to 3pm for the free event.

Lancashire Care NHS Foundation is using the bus to reach out to communities to promote positive aspects of health



● The HARRI bus is coming to Accrington

and well-being. Onboard there will be a mixed group from within the NHS and beyond, ready to offer a wide range of information

on many issues such as Covid-19, job advice, quitting smoking, diabetes, victim support, staying active, and much more.

Black cab taxi limits scrapped

LIMITS on the numbers of black cab taxis in Hyndburn have been removed following reported shortages.

Last month we reported that Hyndburn council's cabinet were asked to approve lifting the current limit of 59 hackney carriages in its area.

Action has been taken after results of a recent four-week consultation into the issue.

Hyndburn council officers analysed survey responses from residents about difficulties in obtaining a taxi in the

borough, which they say is a nationwide issue, with a shortage of licensed vehicles throughout the country.

A council licensing officer said: "We are pleased to announce that the limit on number of hackney carriage vehicles has now been removed in Hyndburn and we are also implementing a solution to improve accessibility of taxis, particularly late at night. Over the next few months we are working with parking enforcement officers to monitor taxi ranks and ensure the

parking of private vehicles in these spaces is not preventing licensed vehicles from using these ranks to work. Those found to be parking illegally will be issued with Fixed Penalty Notices."

The council say special attention will be paid to the ranks in Accrington town centre, including the one outside the Bee's Knees and on Blackburn Road.

This action has come after feedback from hackney carriage drivers who find they often cannot station their vehicles on these ranks.

Booking such busy

THIS week has mostly been about schools and education.

We've been into so many schools for World Book Day and then International Women's Day, plus we've been in schools in Blackburn with Darwen reading a book about healthy eating, that we almost don't know who we are anymore.

Every day, it's been a different book and a different character.

Not that we're complaining. It's great fun going into schools.

Particularly at the moment as they've had such a hard time over the last two years with very few visitors.

We do a lot in schools that people don't know about.

We take inspirational characters like Frida Kahlo in to talk about art and Amelia Earhart to talk



Gayle Knight
Oswaldtwistle Civic Arts Centre and Theatre's creative director

about her life, it really helps bring history to life.

We've had some great results with our Arts Award programme with 1 Explore Arts Award pass, 11 Bronze Arts Award passes and 1 Silver Arts Award pass. Arts Award is

a nationally-recognized award which is moderated by Trinity College London. Bronze is equivalent to a low GCSE and Silver equivalent to a high pass at GCSE.

Arts Award can be done in many subjects from technical, arts and craft to drama and literature.

These awards are great for young people to work towards and we're very proud of the young people's successes.

We've also had some funding news with the awarding of just under £5,000 to train young people to run a new radio show. We're looking for a group of people between the age of 14 to 18 who want to get involved.

You're interested email maddie@civicartscentre.co.uk for more details.

Our Climate Change programme is going to be ready in May to visit local schools. If you work in

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