



## Report of Leeds Civic Trust

## Report to Outer West Area Committee

Date: 9<sup>th</sup> July 2010

Subject: Heritage Open Days

### Electoral Wards Affected:

Calverley & Farsley  
Farnley & Wortley  
Pudsey

Ward Members consulted  
(referred to in report)

### Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Council  
Function

Delegated Executive  
Function available for  
Call In

Delegated Executive Function  
not available for Call in Details  
set out in the report

## Executive Summary

'Celebrate Your Community' is English Heritage's open invitation to be part of Heritage Open Days either as visitors or hosts. This annual 'free-of-charge' event every September is co-ordinated in Leeds by Leeds Civic Trust with support from Leeds City Council. Whilst activities take place in many areas throughout Leeds' Metropolitan District, the Trust is keen to ensure all areas have the opportunity to be represented and would ask Members to introduce potential participants to Leeds Civic Trust and help to promote Heritage Open Days in their area. There are links with 2010 being 'Year of the Volunteer' and the 'Cultural Olympiad' being planned as part of the 2012 Olympics.

### 1.0 Purpose Of This Report

1.1 In trying to widen the focus of Heritage Open Days throughout the city, Leeds Civic Trust asks all Area Committee Members using their local knowledge to seek out potential participants, who may host one or more events in their area. This year's 4-day event takes place between Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September.

### 2.0 Background Information

2.1 Heritage Open Days gives people chance to 'get behind closed doors', perhaps visiting buildings rarely open to the public, or walking through hidden or usually forbidden areas, perhaps seeing specially mounted exhibitions or demonstrations – all for free and mostly run

by volunteers. It is part of a Europe-wide initiative, 15 years old now, with the Government's Department for Culture, Media and Sport delegating its administration to English Heritage. In Leeds, it is co-ordinated by Leeds Civic Trust with support from several City Council departments. In 2009, nationally, over 4100 properties and events were registered, attracting over 1 million visits during the 4 days. In Leeds we had 75 properties/events with an estimated 7 thousand visits.

- 2.2 Wider background. 2010 has been designated 'Year of the Volunteer' and since the majority of events are run by volunteers, Heritage Open Days is a good showcase for volunteering as well as providing opportunities for recruitment to the hosts' groups. The 'Cultural Olympiad' is being developed in the lead up to, and then to run parallel to, the 2012 Olympics Games. English Heritage is working to have Heritage Open Days as a major event within the Olympiad, it being celebratory and offering unique attractions for visitors from home and abroad. It would be good for Leeds to be well represented and 'put on a good show'.

### **3.0 Main Issues**

- 3.1 Heritage Open Days is an annual celebration of local architecture, history and culture. It can be concluded from the statistics above that there is potential in Leeds for more events and certainly more visitors. Through the Area Committees, Leeds Civic Trust is keen to publicise Heritage Open Days directly to more areas of the City and to groups within those areas. Historical societies, church and residents groups, building owners and individuals with local knowledge are examples from where people may be found to host events. Involvement is flexible within the 4 days. Any interested parties should be directed to Leeds Civic Trust – contact details above – who would be pleased to supply more information if needed. There will be publicity for Heritage Open Days during August, including, we expect, a full listing of all events in the Yorkshire Evening Post and copies of this year's leaflet will be sent to each Area Committee.

### **4.0 Implications for Council Policy and Governance**

- 4.1 Leeds City Council is already a partner in the running of Heritage Open Days. What is being asked does not add to or change any aspects of Policy or Governance.

### **5.0 Legal and Resource Implications**

- 5.1 Members should seek permission before passing on contact details to Leeds Civic Trust. Those details will in turn be passed onto English Heritage. Both databases will be used exclusively for the Heritage Open Days initiative. No resources are being asked for other than Members' time.

### **6.0 Conclusions**

- 6.1 Members should seek permission before passing on contact details to Leeds Civic Trust. Those details will in turn be passed onto English Heritage. Both databases will be used exclusively for the Heritage Open Days initiative. No resources are being asked for other than Members' time.

### **7.0 Recommendations**

- 7.1 It is recommended that Members note this report and comment on potential participants where necessary.