



MAYOR'S BLOG

August 2024

Saturday 31 August – End of Summer Festival

Leigh Road Recreation Ground

This was a fantastic event organised by Dream Events Empire, there was a party atmosphere throughout the day with performances from the bandstand to entertain us. The event was essentially a market with a backdrop of music and entertainment.

There was a fun fair, food outlets, craft stalls, face painting, and games. We were entertained by music from a DJ, Soul Purpose from Thornden School, So Sound Choir and Centre stage Youth Theatre Productions. All were fantastic.

Dream Events Empire have once again managed to put on a first class event, they are certainly putting Eastleigh on the map.

Sunday 18 August 2024 – Russells Equestrian Centre 50th Anniversary Celebration

Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress

It was a great pleasure to visit one of our local Riding Stables which was celebrating its 50th Anniversary.

We were warmly greeted by Carol Boulton the founder in 1974, and the present proprietor with her daughter, Verity Tidmarsh. Their dedication to the Riding Centre is nothing short of inspiring. Carol kindly accompanied us on a tour of the facilities, starting with the stables where it was immediately clear how much care and attention are given to the horses.

The Epona Trust is based at Russells Equestrian Centre. They are a non-profit making organisation which specialises in the rescue and rehabilitation of horses and ponies from difficult and challenging backgrounds. Part of the rehabilitation process for Epona horses and ponies includes working with groups of adults and children with additional needs. We were shown the Epona Trust Wellness Garden, a space of calm where old and young can experience close contact with the horses and ponies. It was amazing to see and meet many of the staff and volunteers, all necessary to carry out the hard work of running the Centre. Wonderful also was the number of people who approached Carol to remind her of years gone by when they had been taught by her. There was a celebratory anniversary cake which I had the honour of cutting.

We moved on to the Kiddies' Corner where the youngest visitors were having the time of their lives, riding the 'hobby horses' provided, attempting the jumps and even taking part in a spot of welly throwing! It stood out during the visit that there is a clear emphasis on the well-being of both riders and horses. The school's inclusive approach ensures that riders with additional needs are not only welcomed but are given the support they need to enjoy the riding experience fully. This was borne out by the conversation I had with a parent of a child with additional needs.

Congratulations to Russells on their 50 years of success and it was an honour to witness firsthand the positive impact it continues to have on our community. My heartfelt thanks go out to Carol and Verity, and everyone at the school for their warm welcome and for the incredible work they do. Here's to many more years of success and happiness to both riders and horses alike.

Friday 3 August – Sister Act by Centrestage Youth Theatre Productions

The Point

Now we all know just how good the CYTP are, but I have been to many London West End productions and this performance was better than some of them. The energy from the performers was palpable. They acted, sang and danced amazingly. The dancers were perfectly choreographed and executed despite the temperature being blisteringly hot. The cast just stuck to their task and delivered a truly magnificent performance of Sister Act.

I honestly forgot that this was a junior cast. The confidence of the performers is well earned, they are absolutely brilliant. If you have a chance to see one of the CYTP performance you really need to go, in fact you can see them at the Mayor's Charity Concert, they will be one of the acts performing for you on November 9th at the Thornden Theatre, tickets are on sale now.