

Chippenham River Festival (ChAP Projects) July 20th saw fifth Chippenham River Festival take place in Monkton Park in wonderful weather. This year the Festival was earlier than usual and for only one day, the last of a series of events in the park during July. There was a very busy programme of events to squeeze into the day.

The Festival was launched (literally) by a grand flotilla of dozens of craft plying from the Sailing Club to the Town Bridge. This included rowing fours and pairs, canoes, kayaks, rafts, Katakans, launches, sailing boats, and dinghies. At their arrival at the Town Bridge, local DJ Andy Henly formally declared the Festival open, and the remainder of the programme got under way.

This year, there was more than ever for the public - especially the younger generation - to try out on Chippenham's Avon. The Chippenham Sailing and Canoeing Club offered Katakans tasters as well as canoeing and this was complemented by the Wiltshire Scullers who offered their rowing trainer boats to children as young as ten. Fishing coaching and raft building workshops were also on offer, as were the River Trips by the Canal Trust, and many events were over-subscribed. The museum's new River Exhibition and related activities recorded an amazing total of 500 children who participated.

The Big Swim had a record number of entries, organised by Sarah Lewis of the Outdoor Swimming Society and was followed by a large entry for The Kids Width. Smiling faces all round told the tale of the sheer enjoyment that the event engendered.

On land there was the usual mix of entertainment and relaxation. The great music from the Original Sax Quartet and the Bob Jones' "4+1" band helped those in the beer tent to 'drink the pub dry'!

Festival Director John Clark said, "This River Festival will be my last as director and I was delighted that it was in many ways the best so far. The Clubs do a wonderful job but there is a lot to do for the co-ordinating team, for example in terms of event planning, publicity and financial planning. If good people in these areas can step forward, I am sure the Chippenham River Festival will carry on stronger than ever." A video record of the day is available.

JSA Arts & Culture Chapter Wiltshire Council has tasked Community Area Partnerships with the compilation of the new chapter, which will identify the cultural assets of the community area, describe the audience for culture, identify the scale and variety of clubs, groups and events which exist, and describe priorities for future development. Work undertaken, by the project co-ordinator, so far, has included the collection of evidence and data about the cultural assets of the Chippenham area, and about the cultural opportunities which exist in Chippenham and the rural communities. The next stage of the work will include consultation with a broad group of people, to ensure that what is written accurately reflects the local area, and represents the diversity of the cultural sector.

H & SC The team is continuing in its review of hospital discharge procedures.

River Bank Project Our monthly sessions continue and the summer weather has meant weeds have become a major target for attention in Monkton Park! We welcome all volunteers on the last Saturday morning of each month.

Rural Champion The champion is continuing to maintain good communications with the rural communities, to coordinate shared issues and concerns, and to facilitate and assist with projects.