



Welcome to the Half-Term Report:
'Great Potential – could do better'

Grant Thornton, Head of Economic and Cultural Development

Year of Culture 2016 – WHY?

- Hands up those who think Reading is a renowned cultural destination?
- Origins in a consultation exercise linked to the development of new Culture & Heritage Strategy.
- A real sense of excitement and energy.
- Equally a realisation that loads going on but nobody knows about it – even in Reading!
- Hugely successful economy, major retail destination, massive amount of investment.
- Need a cultural offer to match status as sub-regional capital.
- Reading 2016 seen as a way of catalysing a longer term transformation and continued economic success.

Our objectives

- Raise ambition and capacity.
- Create a promotional platform.
- Celebrate and engage the town's diverse communities
- Grow audiences.
- Improve reputation & perceptions of Reading.
- Creating a place of opportunity (skills and jobs).
- Private sector engagement.

‘Place-making’

Year of Culture 2016 – HOW

- Making a (rash!) commitment.
- Securing the backing of the existing Cultural and Local Strategic Partnerships.
- Strong support and engagement with local cultural organisations and networks.
- Excellent relationship built with ACE.
- Management group established early – big involvement from Reading University.
- Re-focusing existing seed funding – Cultural Partnership small grants funding pot of £74k per annum.
- Utilising Reading UK CIC (arms-length economic development company) as procurement / employer organisation.
- Smart move! Business focused and led and not tied up with public sector bureaucracy – also manages the BID.

HOW – Continued

- Out to the ‘market’ to seek a producer /director.
- Representative selection panel.
- Appointed and developed a clever structure for delivery.
- Lots to do and ‘just in time’ delivery.

The Programme

- 12 ‘pillar’ events or projects, one for every themed month.
- Aligned grant funding to themes and ‘pillars’.
- Speaker programme.
- Branding to ‘umbrella’ both new stuff and existing local arts and culture offer.
- Start small – or at least cheap! – and build through the year.



30 January 2016
Palmer Park Stadium

Exercise Book

January: Get Fit for Culture
Reading's Year of Culture

Exercise Book is a 5km run, jog or walk, set to music created by Martyn Harry.

Take part in a world premiere at Palmer Park Stadium on 30 January at 10.15am.

Food and refreshments will be available and all runners will receive a medal to commemorate the event. Families and running groups welcome!

To sign up go to reading2016.org.uk



LOTTERY FUNDED
ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

January





February



step into reading 2050

Reading UK
2050

18-19th March 2016

#reading2050



March





April

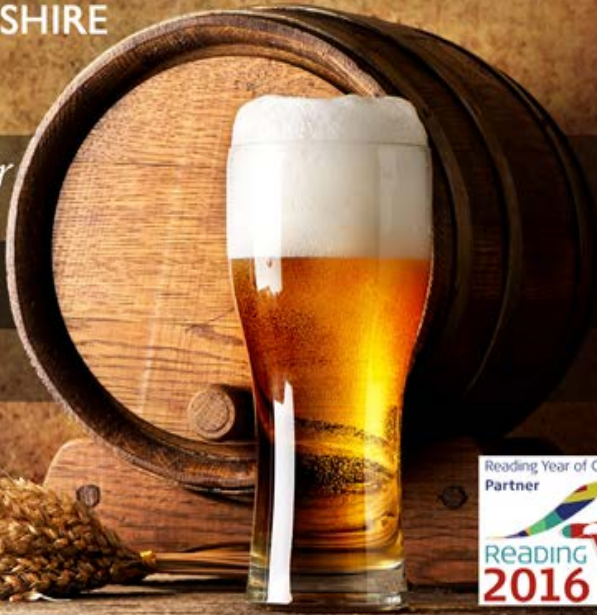


BBC RADIO BERKSHIRE

A Celebration of Beer
with Bill Buckley

READING TOWN HALL
TUESDAY 26TH APRIL - 7pm

FREE Admission
Capacity 100 - Over 18s only



May



ON TRACK

OPENS
21 MAY
2016

Reading's railways
past, present and future

Reading Museum
readingmuseum.org.uk





21 May
Reading Revealed On Foot

Two Rivers Press, Town Centre
A day of town centre walking tours exploring Reading's rich history and heritage.

28 May
A Landscape of Charms and Machines – Rising Sun Arts Centre

Broad Street
Spectacular arts and music procession in celebration of Reading's history.

19 June
Friends of Reading Abbey Summer Party

Forbury Gardens

25 June
Battle of Hastings Family Day Reading Museum / University of Reading

Town Hall Square
Family activities celebrating the 950th anniversary of the Battle of Hastings

30 July
ReMade in Reading – Real Time

Broad Street & Town Centre
Turning Reading town centre into a film set by re-making classic movies.

5 August
Dance Transport project – Reading Rep

Broad Street | Biscuit Tin
A modern dance performance telling the story of transport in Reading.

arena

Reading Town Centre's Summer programme of free arts and cultural events

Funded by Reading Business Improvement District

30/31 May & 1 June
Re-Play – Annual Day Dream Harvest

Town Centre
A mobile interactive theatre performance.

3-5 June
Eat Reading

Broad Street, Market Place, Town Hall Square
Reading's annual celebration of food & dining.

11 June
Reading Green Fest

Transition Town Reading, Town Hall Square
Fun activities, workshops and talks to celebrate everything environmental & sustainable – part of Waterfest.

16 & 17 July
Reading Fringe Festival town takeover

Broad Street
A weekend of music, theatre, magic and dance.

23 July
Samba Parade – Readipop

Broad Street
Summer samba rhythms ahead of Rio 2016.

20 August
Carnival of the World – Culture Mix

Broad Street
A celebration of Reading's diversity through music and dance, including Reading's very own Notting Hill carnival procession with RASPO steel band.

17 September
Reading Scottish Pipe Band

Broad Street
Performances at 11.00 & 14.00.

2 November
Emotional health poetry readings – Samaritans

Broad Street Mall
School poetry performances.



www.livingreading.co.uk



June



Funding in 2016

- Cultural Partnership grants - £99,000 / 48 grants.
- BID grants - £14,000 / 13 grants.
- ACE – direct to Reading Year of Culture - £96,700.
- ACE funding to Reading arts organisations in 2015/16 grew by 130% to nearly £300K.
- £54,000 private sector funding + in-kind support.

Reading 2016 in numbers

- Over 250 events to date
- £300,000 budget raised for central programme
- [2 new arts websites](#)
- 1000s of tickets sold, 1000s more engaged through free events
- 100+ articles on Get Reading
- Over 30 different venues used over the summer months alone
- 1420 tweets from @reading2016



SITELINES



August



MADE READING

September



October



October



**THE MUSEUM
OF ENGLISH
RURAL LIFE**





November



December – Festival of Lights



WARINGS
Craft bakers since 1932

GWR | Great Western Railway

W
Waterstones

BARTON WILLMORE

Reading**buses**

pba
peterbrett



electric
HAIRDRESSING



ibis
STYLES
HOTELS


FORBURY PLACE

GreenPark 

THE
ORACLE
READING

BROAD ST. MALL
READING



RYND
BAR & KITCHEN



READING UK CIC 

 **Reading**
Borough Council
Working better with you


Reading BID
Delivering a better town centre

THE OLYMPIA
BALLROOM

READING
MUSEUM
TOWN HALL 

cream design

getreading .co.uk

 **READING**

heart
97-103
more music variety

BBC RADIO BERKSHIRE

 READING COLLEGE

 University of Reading

 Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

Legacy: it's only half-time but....

- Fantastic partnerships created.
- Arts Council recognition / Shared goals.
- Culture integral to Reading's economic success.
- Development of a Cultural Education Partnership.
- Abbey Quarter project (s) – inc. Reading Prison.
- Ambition for and by Reading.
- A real 'buzz'.

To come

- Future planning.
- Delivering our Strategic Ambition.

Enjoy the next 6 months!

(and the next 14 years!!)

