

TVBC News release

Four Fun Fridays celebrates ten years of free family fun this August

Families are invited to join the celebrations as Four Fun Fridays marks its tenth anniversary this August with a programme of free creative activities, performances and workshops.

Organised by Test Valley Borough Council, the much-loved summer event returns every Friday throughout August with this year's theme, Eco Explorers, encouraging children and their families to discover the incredible diversity of life on Earth and learn how they can help protect it.

Across the four Fridays, visitors can enjoy an exciting mix of free workshops, hands-on activities, live street theatre, creative crafts and family entertainment. With plenty to see and do throughout the day, families are encouraged to pack a picnic, spend time in the town centre and make the most of the summer holiday fun.

This year's programme takes families on a different Eco Explorers adventure each week. The opening event on 7 August, 'Guardians of the Planet', focuses on reducing waste and protecting habitats through recycling and reuse. The following week, 'Mini Marvels' shines a spotlight on beetles, bugs and butterflies, celebrating the important role insects play in our ecosystems. On 21 August, 'Ocean Explorers' dives beneath the waves to discover marine life and the importance of protecting our seas, before the month concludes with 'Freshwater Adventures' on 28 August, exploring river wildlife, water cycles and conservation.

Over the past ten years, Four Fun Fridays has grown into a fixture of the summer holidays thanks to the support and involvement of a wide range of local partners including Andover Museum, Andover Library, Chapel Arts Studios, Andover Trees United and Places Leisure, alongside a host of visiting performers, artists and activity providers.

On the first Friday families can enjoy 'Bin Rat' by The Last Baguette, a lively street theatre performance exploring refuse and recycling through the adventures of Bin Rat and her friends from Squeaky Clean Street Cleaners.

There will also be tote bag printing, storytelling sessions, junk modelling workshops, face painting, rhyme time, bug hotel creation, animal-inspired crafts and much more.

The celebrations continue throughout the month with a host of exciting attractions, including 'Mr Chirrup's Bug Safari' by Curious Company, 'Betty Bug and the Ugly Bug Ball' by Routine Riots, bug handling experiences with BugFest, bubble workshops and performances with Bubbles Man, and the return of the popular skateboarding workshops from Team Rubicon on 21 August.

That same day, Talking Birds will bring 'The Whale' to Andover, inviting families inside a giant metal whale for a charming theatrical adventure. The final Friday will feature 'Upstream' by Smoking Apples, a magical puppet-led story exploring river conservation and the importance of protecting our waterways.

Councillor Phil North, leader of Test Valley Borough Council, said: "It's wonderful to celebrate ten years of Four Fun Fridays and see how this event has become such a popular part of the summer holidays for local families.

"Over the past decade, thousands of children and families have enjoyed free activities, performances and creative experiences in the heart of Andover. This year's Eco Explorers theme is a fantastic way to combine fun with learning, encouraging young people to discover more about the world around them and how we can all help protect it.

"Whether you're interested in theatre, crafts, wildlife, skateboarding or simply spending time together outdoors, there's something for everyone. I would encourage families to pack a picnic, come along and make a day of it."

Four Fun Fridays takes place every Friday in August and all activities are free to attend.

For full programme details, please visit
<https://www.thinkandovertowncentre.co.uk/events>

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