

STEPS TAKEN TO RE-OPEN WATERFRONT WALKWAY

- Liverpool's riverside walkway to reopen after 3 year closure for waterfront festivals this summer
- Public to get new views of new Museum of Liverpool
- On The Waterfront Festival begins this weekend – www.liverpoolonthewaterfront.co.uk

AFTER a three year hiatus, Liverpool's world famous waterfront is fully re-opening to the public in time for a huge riverside party.

The 600m stretch alongside the Mersey connecting the UNESCO World Heritage listed Pier Head to the Albert Docks has been closed to allow the construction of the new £72m Museum of Liverpool.

Now after talks between Liverpool City Council, National Museums Liverpool and Merseytravel the iconic walkway is to temporarily re-open for the two On The Waterfront spectaculars on July 16-18 and August 6-8.

The reopening, which is expected to last throughout the summer, will provide a huge boost to the festival with tens of thousands of people expected to witness dozens of spectacular events from a night-time pyrotechnic extravaganza in the Albert Dock on Friday, July 16 and a major sculpture made from 60 tonnes of sand on the Pier Head, to aerobic shows aboard a raft of Tall Ships and Pirate World Record Attempt on Sunday, July 18.

On The Waterfront, commissioned by Culture Liverpool and delivered by Walk The Plank, is a FREE festival. The first instalment will celebrate the Picasso exhibition currently on show at Tate Liverpool as well as Liverpool's maritime heritage. The second instalment in August will be a major international dance festival featuring performers from across Europe and South America.

Councillor Wendy Simon, Liverpool City Council's Cabinet Member for Culture and Tourism, said: "The temporary re-opening of the Riverside walkway is a hugely significant milestone in the renaissance of our riverside and marks one of the final steps towards creating a 21st century, world class waterfront.

"Public access along the walkway will provide a huge boost to our On The Waterfront festival and will give people the first chance to get the full experience of the new look Pier Head with the new Museum of Liverpool, which I'm sure will prove to be a huge tourist magnet."

The new Museum of Liverpool is scheduled to open in 2011 and will be the world's first national museum devoted to the history of a regional city and the largest newly built museum to open in Britain for over a century.

The multi-million pound building is also the largest European Capital of Culture legacy projects to date and the new museum will feature many objects highlighting 2008 as well as

6,000 objects that are currently in storage, including notable Liverpool features such as a carriage from the world's first overhead electric railway.

The temporary re-opening of the riverside walkway will also provide unique, close up views of the new museum which coincided with the £21m extension of the Leeds-Liverpool Canal that runs under one corner of the museum into the Albert Docks basin.

David Fleming, Director of National Museums Liverpool, said: "We are reopening the walkway for a temporary period so that people can enjoy all the fantastic events planned for the On-The-Waterfront weekends.

"It's a great opportunity for people to get closer to the new museum and have a sneak peak at what's going on, seeing the building from a different angle in its riverside location with amazing views across the Mersey. We hope it will build on the already mounting excitement for the opening in 2011, and increase anticipation of what people can expect when they are able to walk through the doors of the Museum of Liverpool."

The Pier Head re-connection of Riverside Walkway completes a 7km long trail that connects the city's northern docks to Otterspool Promenade. The fact that the public can walk its full length in a summer since 2006 has been hailed a major boost to the city's visitor economy.

Chief Executive of Merseytravel Neil Scales, said: "It's great to finally link the Albert Dock and Pier Head again. Visitors to the two Beatles story exhibitions have faced a simple but off putting detour, now we can connect Mersey Ferries, The White Feather exhibition and Fab4D with the Beatles Story, along this famous waterfront."

ENDS

For more information please telephone Mike Doran on Liverpool City Council Newscentre on 0151 225 2227 or 0780 145 3918 or go to www.liverpoolonthewaterfront.co.uk or www.liverpool.gov.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS:

Liverpool's On the Waterfront has been made possible due to funding support from the European Regional Development Fund.

FREE Weekend of live events - details:

16 to 18 July will be a show-stopping weekend of quirky live street theatre, visual spectacles, Picasso-inspired performance and Pirate palavers, starting with the night-time spectacular - 'A Wave At Picasso'. This show will reflect the world of the great artist in and on the water, using light, fire, pyrotechnics, soundscapes, music, projections, choreographed performance and a series of floating sculptural images. On July 16, Endurance - Shackleton's Antarctic Adventure opens at Merseyside Maritime Museum. The free exhibition of features 150 photographs of the 1914 exploration - an incredible tale of survival.

The ambitious and spectacular dance weekend from 6 to 8 August will showcase the very best of international outdoor dance and will be one biggest and best open air events in Europe this year. Music and strolling performances will build anticipation on Friday evening

before the large- scale spectacular kicks off with world-famous Argentinean aerial company Voala.

Culture Liverpool is a Liverpool City Council Business Unit which funds and delivers culture and events in the city and manages international relations. Its aim is to help Liverpool build on the success of '08 by creating a dynamic programme that reflects the character and creativity of the city, placing citizens at its heart. Liverpool's European Capital of Culture programme featured more than 7,000 events, 10,000 artists and over 60 world or European premieres. The year helped generate £800m boost to the regional economy, attracting 3.5million first time visitors to the city. For more information visit www.liverpool.gov.uk/culture

Walk the Plank is a creative force of artists and event engineers who specialise in weaving together visual images, fire, fireworks and music to create outdoor performance and specially-commissioned events. The company works across a variety of scales, from intimate installations to large-scale theatre designed for thousands. Through touring performances and tailored site-specific commissions, their events connect people with places, and celebrate special occasions. The company worked on both the People's Opening and the Transition (Closing) for Liverpool's Capital of Culture celebrations, and has just been commissioned to create the Opening show for Turk 2011, European Capital of Culture in Finland. www.walktheplank.co.uk

The Museum of Liverpool is currently in fit-out stage at the Pier Head. It will provide 8,000 square metres of public space across three floors, with access to over 6,000 objects that are currently in store relating to Liverpool's port, creative and sporting history, its people and global significance. It is estimated at attracting more than 750,000 visitors per year, providing a major boost to the Liverpool economy.

Merseytravel is the operating name of the Merseyside Integrated Transport Authority and Executive. Merseytravel co-ordinates public transport through partnership initiatives, with the aim of delivering a fully integrated and environmentally friendly public transport network, accessible to all.

Merseytravel owns and operates the famous Mersey Ferries and associated tourism attractions. It also owns and operates the Mersey Tunnels, providing cross river links 365 days a year. For more information contact Ian Kenyon, Head of Mersey travel's Media and Communications department on Tel: 0151 330 1151 or email ian.kenyon@bbc.co.uk

- Between 2007 and 2013 the Northwest of England will receive a total of £521 million (dependent on exchange rate) from the European Regional Development Agency (NWDA), this funding will enhance the competitiveness of the regions economy by supporting growth in employment and enterprise

Key targets for the NWOP include:

- Creating 26,700 net additional jobs by 2013
- Generating £1.17bn additional annual GVA by 2015
- Supporting a 25% reduction in addition CO2 emissions generated by the ERDF Programme

For further information please visit www.erdfnw.co.uk

