

NEWS



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CHARITIES TO BENEFIT FROM NEW ATTRACTION

TWO local charities are to benefit from the opening of a new tourist attraction in Sussex. The South Downs Heritage Centre, in Hassocks, is the brainchild of Jonathan Tate – part of the famous Tate family which is behind the chain of garages and car dealerships across Sussex.

Jonathan Tate operates Paradise Park in Newhaven, which is home to Planet Earth, and South Downs Nurseries in Hassocks. Both have become very popular destinations. Now he is adding the Heritage Centre and Garden to the Hassocks site to reflect his passion in acknowledging the tremendous heritage in the region.

Rather than paying an admission fee, visitors will be asked to make a donation which will be split between two good causes – the Shine Theatre Trust based in nearby Hurstpierpoint, and Burgess Hill and District Lions.

The Shine Theatre Trust runs a centre for performing arts in Sussex for all young people, including those with additional learning, mobility or social needs, to enable them to experience, produce and perform in shows of a professional standard.

Jonathan Tate's 12 year old daughter is an enthusiastic member of Shine. "The work Shine does is truly amazing", he says. "It transforms the lives of many local children, and gives a unique opportunity for more able children to work with and understand the needs of those less able than themselves."

The Trust says it is delighted to be one of the charities chosen to benefit from the donations to the new centre. "Shine and South Downs Nurseries have enjoyed a close relationship for many years and we are grateful for the continuing support", says trustee Shaughan Parish. "This is a fantastic new venture and we are very proud to have our name associated with it", she adds. "We wish Jonathan and the team all success and thank them for helping to keep Sussex history alive."

The local Lions group are in their 53rd year of raising funds to help those less fortunate than themselves. They are well known for having fun while raising money, and are organisers of the popular Burgess Hill Bike Ride. Their work benefits the young, the elderly and the sick, while supporting education and general health needs in the area as well as backing international projects.

Jonathan Tate acknowledges the work of the Burgess Hill and District Lions to create stronger community links through service to others. He says this approach is in line with his own commitment to keep high standards of integrity in the business, and to work with the communities around South Downs Nurseries. "It is therefore a natural partnership that we should support the Lions in this way", he adds.

Lion President Cliff Coxshaw says the Burgess Hill District Lions feel “privileged to have been chosen as one of the selected charities”, and he says that all the monies received will be used for local projects.

The new Heritage Centre is set to become an important tourist destination. “I want this to be a landmark celebrating the very best of the county’s heritage”, adds Jonathan Tate. “The Heritage Centre will celebrate the history of the area and showcase former trades and professions which made the region what it is.” He also hopes his new venture will become an important educational resource.

The Heritage Centre opens to the public on Saturday 5 April, following a VIP ceremony and official opening the day before by the TV presenter and football pundit Jimmy Hill who lives nearby and is a regular customer at South Downs Nurseries.

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Further media information and interview requests to Karen Sexton, Marketing Manager at South Downs Nurseries on 01273 616011 or email Karen.sexton@south-downs.co.uk.

**MEDIA are invited to the opening -
please contact Karen Sexton, above, for a ticket.**

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IMAGES – a selection may be downloaded from www.tbutlerpr.co.uk/southdowns