

Appleby Fair 2012 Evaluation Report



September 2012

Introduction

The Multi-Agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group (MASCg) has now been in existence for over four years. It was established to develop an operational plan to provide co-ordinated community leadership.

The MASCg had an involvement in the 2008 Fair but took over the responsibility for the co-ordination of community leadership of Appleby Fair from July 2008. The 2009 Fair was the first under the co-ordination of the group. However, it should be noted that while MASCg had overall control of community leadership issues, it did not have direct responsibilities for the Fair itself which is a gathering of people from the Gypsy and Traveller communities with visitors and tourists coming to witness it.

From 2008, the MASCg produced an evaluation report of the way the Fair had operated and developed. From that an improvement plan was produced to inform the work to be carried out in preparing for and servicing future Fairs.

The 2008 evaluation report was developed from feedback from all agencies, visitors, Gypsy and Travellers, traders and local businesses and aimed to reflect as many views as possible.

Since that first Evaluation Report, year on year the MASCg has agreed a similar approach and in 2012, the Evaluation Report has been developed from consultation with all groups involved in the Fair. This has included representatives from the resident and business community. As an innovation in 2011, daily meetings took place with the community representatives from the residents, businesses and Gypsy and Travellers to continue to update information that was needed in order to continue every day to improve what actions were being taken. This was continued in 2012. Over the last three years, the www.applefair.org website has been used which increased electronic feedback and this year Twitter and Facebook have been used with the latter reaching upwards of 5,000 followers to exchange information with.

The MASCg, after it was established, agreed a three-year plan to ensure improvements to the way the Fair operated and we are now in our second phase. The 2012 Fair was based on the learning and development which had taken place.

The major changes to the operation of the 2011 Fair were developed and progressed in 2012. This was a deliberate objective to engage the public from all communities more in the deliberations up to and including the Fair. This included daily meetings with the communities and also the way the agencies were operating in an effective and co-ordinated way through the control of daily meetings of the MASCg as well as the forward planning which had previously taken place. Initial feedback from all communities who attended the Fair considered in 2012 it was even safer, more enjoyable and it moved again somewhat back towards the vibrant cultural and traditional event it used to be. However, more work is still needed in this area if that is continuing to be the driving direction in which the Fair wants to be for the future. There were some issues of horse owners prior to the Fair grazing their horses on land which the parishes did not want to see grazed. This is something to be reviewed for 2013.

As Chairman of the MASCg, I should like to thank all of the agencies, individuals and groups who were involved in the planning and delivery of the operational plan and also those who took time to feed into the evaluation process.

The interest in the Fair generally, through the successful television programme Big Fat Gypsy Wedding, continues to boost the profile of the Fair and Gypsy and Traveller culture. One implication of that was interest in the Fair increased again in 2012. Not only did the Fair have more visitors but more television companies wanted to do recordings prior to and during the Fair with media and academic studies being carried out during the Fair itself. Hopefully when those images appear on national and international television, the quality of Appleby as a place and Eden and Cumbria as destinations to visit for tourism and the Fair itself will be attractions which more people would wish to enjoy as the months and years unfold.

Hopefully, this report reflects everyone's views and the subsequent improvement plan for next year and beyond and will provide the basis for more improvement over that period.

Robin Hooper
Chair of Multi-Agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group

Background Information

The 2012 Fair built on the plans and learning from previous Fairs. The number of changes introduced in 2011 was developed further in 2012 including:

- 1) greater links with Lancashire, Durham and Yorkshire police on dealing with travelling arrangements for Gypsy and Travellers to and from the Fair.
- 2) greater links with Craven District Council and the Teesdale Residents' & Travellers' Forum over travelling arrangements of Gypsy and Travellers to and from the Fair.
- 3) visits to other parts of the North of England to meet community groups and Gypsy and Traveller sites to discuss arrangements going to and at this Fair.
- 4) development of permanent traffic order arrangements and traffic safety provision for the horse drawn bow tops and awareness raising generally for vehicles on the roads.
- 5) development of the licensing charter with licensed premises and during the Fair for the restaurants and takeaway establishments to have agreed closing at 11.30pm following last orders at 11.00pm.
- 6) handing over management of the market area in the town centre to the business community to manage.
- 7) development of the use of Twitter and Facebook as a means and method of communication.
- 8) daily meeting of community representatives from the resident and travelling communities.
- 9) daily meetings of MASCG reviewing all activity and directing continual daily improvement and additional meetings on matters that required attention.

These initiatives were supported with a co-ordinated media strategy to ensure that all groups were aware of the changes that were taking place and to ensure a smooth a transition as possible.

The Fair has four distinct stages commencing with the year long planning, supervision of travellers encampments prior to the Fair weekend, the six day main event and the ongoing clean up.

The planning for 2013 commences immediately after the assessment of this year's event is completed.

Although all partner agencies spend the year organising the provision of sites and facilities for the travellers for the period (often up to three weeks) before they are allowed on the Fair Hill site and most travellers take up these provided facilities some go where they want. eg the occupation of the hay meadow at Melmerby. This causes problems for farmers and house holders and MASCG is obliged to make daily tours of the sites and verges to monitor the numbers and deal with any issues which arise.

One of the Council's main tasks during the Fair is the monitoring of food outlets ranging from ice cream vans to burger and kebab stalls and Eden District Council's Environmental Health Officers inspect all food outlets. Once satisfied that a food stall meets hygiene standards a sticker is issued. Sometimes it takes more than one visit before this is issued. Officers thoroughly examine the operator's cleanliness, cooking techniques, food storage arrangements and hand washing facilities.

Any food trader wishing to operate on the market fields is required to apply for a permit from the landowner prior to arrival. The Council's Environmental Health Officers see all

applications before a permit to access the field is issued. Officers check with the home authority of any new traders to make sure their business is appropriately registered and also obtain further information as appropriate, regarding the type of food to be sold and associated arrangements for food safety, prior to any permit being issued. All traders are provided with information as to the food safety standards expected at the fair prior to their arrival.

Outcome

The operational plan had a number of agreed outcomes for each agency with the overall aim being for the Fair to be:

- 1) a better controlled and managed environment to allow people to feel safe and enjoy the event;
- 2) to reduce the impact upon the local area/community to allow people to go about their every day lives; and
- 3) to reduce the number of arrests and formal interventions by the RSPCA and other agencies.

Whilst it is difficult to be precise on the measurement on some outcomes, the level of arrests and interventions are expressly known and are contained later in the report.

Feedback showed that:

- 1) Licensing arrangements continued to be a great improvement over the 2010 Fair even though some pubs did close on the Saturday evening due to lack of electricity, pumps stopping working or health and safety issues. All of these were dealt with so they could open again on the Sunday. Seven licensed premises opened as were the takeaway and restaurants providing refreshments for those people that wanted them.
- 2) The Gypsy and Traveller community felt the policing arrangements and overall management of the Fair were proportionate to the event and that the general environment of the event was of a very high standard.
- 3) The local community felt that the overall management and community engagement of the event continued to improve and that policing and regulatory changes were likewise a measurement of success.
- 4) The transit arrangements particularly in South Cumbria worked well and continued to improve in the build up towards the event from previous years.
- 5) In respect of horse grazing on land prior to the Fair which had not been intended for such use, this was an issue that needed consideration for future years.
- 6) The operational plan worked well and the co-ordination of agencies was effective.

Detailed Outcomes

Each agency identified specific outcomes and the key points are as follows:

Agency	2012	2011	2010	2009
South Lakeland District Council				
No of temporary toilets	8	8	5	5
No of skips provided	4	4	-	-
Tonnes of waste collected	6	6	-	-
Trading Standards				
Counterfeit traders removed	0	4	5	-
No of counterfeit goods seized or surrendered	0	900	2,400	-
Value of counterfeit goods	0	£50,000	£270,000	-
Eden District Council				
Total caravans and bow tops in Eden area	1,329	1,325	1,394	1,499
No of bow tops included in the total figure	191	191	-	-
No of outlying encampment caravans and bow tops included in total figure	286	283	329	-
No of market stalls (market fields)	249	255	211	210
No of unlicensed street traders	0	0	0	0
No of licensed street traders	5	6	-	-
Tonnes of litter removed	40	37	24	39
No of litter bins	35	39	36	38
No of temporary toilets	31	31	30	30
Cumbria Constabulary				
Arrests	28	48	60	106
Crimes	16	18	19	54
Drug Offences	9	7	23	5
Incidents	171	225	182	244
Fixed Penalty Offences	141	143	88	150
Dispersal Orders	16	-	-	-
RSPCA				
Incidents where owners of animals were given advice or assistance	196	350	311	-
Verbal warnings	38	17	23	25
Police cautions	0	0	2	-
RSPCA adult written caution	2	1	1	-
Cases reported for summons	1	1	3	-
Animals referred for vet treatment	120	71	60	-
Equines put to sleep	2	0	3	-
Puppies put to sleep	0	0	1	-
Equines transported away from the Fair	14	2	6	-
Stray dogs taken in by Eden District Council	2	2	2	-
Puppies taken in by RSPCA	0	6	3	-
Ambulance Service/PCT				
Recorded injuries	55	89	53	-

Financial Information

The costs of the various activities undertaken as part of the operational plan have been met by the relevant agency. A number of services were provided in partnership.

The breakdown of costs for the 2012 Fair are as follows:

Organisation	2012 (£)	2011 (£)	2010 (£)	2009 (£)
Eden District Council	27,610.26	28,000	33,183	30,600
South Lakeland District Council	1,744	3,387	4,110	-
Cumbria County Council - Trading Standards	-	673	1,545	10,686
- Highways	30,000	19,980	33,000	5,000
- Other Costs	6,000	5,159	10,250	27,500
Environment Agency	2,000	1,500	1,500	1,500
Cumbria Fire and Rescue	2,192.80	1,224	1,326	2,410
NWAS/PCT (joint cost)	9,998.50	2,433	1,958	2,000
HMRC	-	-	210	1,850
MASCG media spend (joint cost) ¹	1,000	1,000	2,475	-
Cumbria Constabulary ²	55,000	80,910	90,866	260,288
RSPCA	19,550	24,172	27,000	40,000
Total	155,095.56	168,438	207,423	381,834

The total cost for the 2012 Fair operation was £155,095.56. This shows a considerable year-on-year decline of costs since 2009.

Whilst it was identified in 2011 that the issue of financing remained a key issue for 2012 and subsequent years, various ideas were considered during the year but little achievement had been reached in identifying ways and means of raising income to assist in meeting the costs. This is a fundamental issue to be addressed by the MASCG which will be considered as part of the progress and planning for the 2013 event with the Gypsy and Traveller community in order to reduce the cost to the tax payer. In attendance at the 2012 Fair were organisations which may be able to help in this regard and feedback from them will be sought.

Media

The media strategy for 2012 was co-ordinated by a sub-group of all the public agencies. Their work included updating the website, co-ordinating media messages, targeted campaign messages, responding to individual incidents using Facebook and Twitter.

¹ Costs previously included in individual agency budget

² Change in accounting for costs

Evaluation Process

The evaluation process for the 2012 Fair was agreed by the MASCG and the process agreed would follow for a period of up to three months post the event and would include:

- Undertaking a detailed public agency debrief
- Receiving feedback from Gypsy and Traveller community
- Holding a public meeting at Appleby for local residents and community groups
- Meeting of the Community Action Group
- Analysing individual correspondence to agencies to capture key issues
- Analysing feedback from Appleby TIC related to visitor and some residents comments
- Holding meetings with individual Parish Councils and others who had experienced issues to be addressed
- Meetings with the trade and business communities involved with the Fair
- Producing an analysis of the outcomes of the sessions for consideration
- General letters and correspondence

The agency debrief took place on 25 June 2012 and all the key public agencies were invited to participate.

A detailed analysis of the feedback follows in this Evaluation Report. From that, it will be noted that the majority of feedback reflects major improvements on previous years. There are areas where further improvement and change for the future are highlighted. For an event which attracts circa 50,000 people which is not organised, its success is measured by the community impact and responses from all the communities involved. All of the views submitted are treated seriously and where appropriate action is taken.

Improvement Plan

Following completion of the Evaluation Report, MASCG produced an Improvement Plan and plan of action for the respective agencies to seek support for next year.

Conclusion

The 2012 Appleby Fair continued the implementation of a change process begun in 2008.

The success of joint working, the co-operation of the local community and the support of the Gypsy and Traveller community all show that the event can be further improved to enable it to become even better for everyone involved.