

Appleby Fair 2014 Evaluation Report



September 2014

Introduction

The Multi-Agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group (MASCG) has now been in existence for over six years. It was established to develop an operational plan to provide co-ordinated community leadership and not to manage the Fair.

The MASCG had an involvement in the 2008 Fair through its various partner's statutory functions but took over the responsibility for the co-ordination of community leadership and engagement of the statutory community safety and regulation roles 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 and regulation 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. However, those people coming to the Fair arrive in Cumbria days and sometimes longer before which does cause challenges for local communities prior to, during and after the Fair.

From 2008, 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 MASCG has agreed a similar approach and in 2014, 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 update information that was needed in order to continue every day to improve what actions were being taken. This was continued in 2012, 2013 and also this year. It has proved to be an effective communication forum. This year, the www.applefair.org website has been greatly improved which increased electronic feedback and Twitter and Facebook have been used again 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 2014 Fair was based on the learning and development which had taken place in successive Fairs. A number of land owners have put in place self-help schemes which worked well this year.

There has been 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 MASCG as well as the forward planning which had previously taken place. Initial feedback from all communities who attended the Fair considered in 2014 it was even safer, more enjoyable and it moved again somewhat back towards the vibrant cultural and traditional event it used to be. But in some communities prior to the Fair and during it, there was damage to boundary walls, excrement and litter was left in roadside verges and farmers' fields and horses were put in fields eating the grass without authority. All issues caused public complaint which will lead to changes being introduced next year to actively discourage such actions. There were some issues of horse owners prior to the Fair grazing their horses on land including roadside verges which the parishes did not want to see grazed. This is something along with alleged indiscriminate parking of caravans on roadside verges and footpaths that will be reviewed for 2015.

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 programmes Big Fat Gypsy Wedding and others, continues to boost the profile of the Fair and Gypsy and Traveller culture. 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 as the picture showing litter are no worse than seen at festivals and the action of Council staff and contractors to quickly clean up the areas returns the landscape to its traditional beauty.

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 2014 Fair built on the plans and learning from previous Fairs. The number of changes developed over this period included:

- 1) greater links with Lancashire, Durham and Yorkshire Police on dealing with travelling arrangements for Gypsy and Travellers to and from the Fair. Evidence of actions here was the pro-active policing which led to twenty arrests preventing what may otherwise have been a serious public order event;
- 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 and working with the communities in pre-planning;
- 4) development of permanent traffic order arrangements, flexible Traffic Regulation Orders and traffic safety provision for the horse drawn bow tops and awareness raising generally for vehicles on the roads. However, there was a degree of non-compliance with the order which caused concern to the residents in several areas;
- 5) development of the licensing charter with licensed premises to include Kirkby Stephen and during the Fair for the restaurants and takeaway establishments to have agreed closing at 11.30pm following last orders at 11.00pm which worked well;
- 6) handing over management of the market area in the town centre to the business community to manage for Friday and Sunday. This was expanded by closing and pedestrianising part of the highway;
- 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 which was used to gather information and then share perceptions, provide factual answers and improve communication generally;
- 9) daily meetings of MASCG reviewing all activity and directing continual daily improvement and additional meetings on matters that required attention;
- 10) some land owners self-help schemes introduced which worked well;
- 11) relocation of early arrivals to A685 and Appleby Golf Course from locations at Sandford which were closed for safety reasons;
- 12) attempts to get more tolerated sites were not yet successful; and
- 13) some previously occupied areas were prevented from being used this year for road safety measures. This led to other areas being used causing annoyance to the local communities.

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 then the movement away from the Fair.

The planning for 2014 commenced immediately after the assessment of the 2013 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 to causing annoyance to local residents. This causes problems for local communities,

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. This is becoming more resource intensive for the Police and the two Councils.

One of Eden District 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) operational policing and sharing of intelligence between Police forces led to one person being arrested at Appleby who was being sought by a force in the south;
- 2) RSPCA effective and balanced approach to animal welfare during the Fair through the provision of advice and appropriate action educated and informed animal owners and action was taken where necessary;
- 3) licensing arrangements continued to improve. Seven licensed premises opened as were the takeaway and restaurants providing refreshments for those people that wanted them;
- 4) 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;
- 5) the local community felt that the overall management and community engagement of the event in Appleby continued to improve and that policing and regulatory changes were likewise a measurement of success. However, there were concerns outside of Appleby as last year from Gypsy and Travellers coming early and causing concern to local residents;
- 6) the transit arrangements particularly in South Cumbria worked well and continued to improve in the build up towards the event from previous years except in Kirkby Stephen, Appleby Golf Club and on the A685 where concerns were raised;
- 7) in respect of horse grazing on land prior to the Fair which had not been intended for such use, this remains an issue that needs consideration for future years;

- 8) the operational plan worked well and the co-ordination of agencies was effective;
- 9) the Ambulance Service was very busy and the air ambulance was called out twice;
and
- 10) there are serious concerns in Kirkby Stephen and surrounding areas of anti-social behaviour and more Police presence has been demanded if Gypsy and Travellers use the areas outside of Appleby in the future.

In 2014, additional street cleansing was introduced at Kirkby Stephen on the Saturday of the Fair in order to respond to the public's request for that extra street cleaning to be undertaken.

Detailed Outcomes

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

Agency	2014	2013	2012	2011
South Lakeland District Council				
No of temporary toilets	8	8	8	8
No of skips provided	4	4	4	4
Tonnes of waste collected	8	4.18	6	6
Trading Standards				
No of counterfeit goods seized or surrendered	0	0	0	900
Value of counterfeit goods	0	0	0	£50,000
Eden District Council				
Total caravans and bow tops in Eden area	1,318	1,301	1,329	1,325
No of bow tops included in the total figure	229	178	191	191
No of outlying encampment caravans and bow tops included in total figure	296	280	286	283
No of market stalls (market fields)	234	236	249	255
No of unlicensed street traders	1	0	0	0
No of licensed street traders	6	5	5	6
Tonnes of litter removed	43	45	40	37
No of litter bins	39	39	35	39
No of temporary toilets	31	31	31	31
Cumbria Constabulary				
Arrests	28	40	28	48
Crimes	0	0	16	18
Drug Offences	5	3	9	7
Incidents	0	0	171	225
Fixed Penalty Offences	93	82	141	143
Dispersal Orders	22	0	16	0
RSPCA				
Incidents where owners of animals were given advice or assistance	147	142	196	350
Verbal warnings	6	10	38	17
Police cautions	0	0	0	0
RSPCA adult written caution	2	1	2	1
Cases reported for summons	2	2	1	1
Animals referred for vet treatment	Unknown	0	120	71
Equines put to sleep	1	1	2	0
Puppies put to sleep	0	0	0	0
Equines transported away from the Fair	6	6	14	2
Stray dogs taken in by Eden District Council	0	1	2	2
Puppies taken in by RSPCA	2	0	0	6
North West Ambulance Service				
Recorded injuries	66	103	55	89

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 2014 Fair are as follows:

Organisation	2014 (£)	2013 (£)	2012 (£)	2011 (£)	2010 (£)
Eden District Council	33,796	29,818	27,610	28,000	33,183
South Lakeland District Council	2,884	6,001	1,744	3,387	4,110
Cumbria County Council - Trading Standards	500	650	0	673	1,545
- Highways	47,349	28,500	30,000	19,980	33,000
- Other Costs	4,000	8,000	6,000	5,159	10,250
Environment Agency	1,200	1,500	2,000	1,500	1,500
Cumbria Fire and Rescue	2,325	1,055	2,192	1,224	1,326
NWAS/PCT (joint cost)	10,770	9,000	9,998	2,433	1,958
MASCG media spend (joint cost) ¹	1,230	0	1,000	1,000	2,475
Cumbria Constabulary ²	67,000	50,000	55,000	80,910	90,866
RSPCA	11,875	11,234	19,550	24,172	27,000
Total	182,929	145,758	155,095	168,438	207,423

The total cost for the 2014 Fair operation was £182,929. This shows a considerable increase this year which may not be able to be sustained for the future.

Whilst it was identified in 2011 that the issue of financing remained a key issue for the future, 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 remains a fundamental issue to be addressed by the MASCG which will be considered as part of the progress and planning for the 2015 event with the Gypsy and Traveller community in order to reduce the cost to the tax payer.

Media

The media strategy for 2014 was co-ordinated by a sub-group of all the public agencies. Their work included renewal of 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 2014 Fair was agreed by 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
- Notes of meeting in Kirkby Stephen on 16 July 2014

The agency debrief took place on 21 July 2014 and all the key public agencies were invited to participate.

There remain areas where further improvement and change for the future are highlighted. For an event which attracts circa 40,000 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 identifies actions to be taken by producing an Improvement Plan for the respective agencies for next year's event.

Conclusion

The 2014 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.