

## **PROJECT REPORT - BUXTON SPRING FAIR 5<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2014**

### **1. OVERVIEW**

The aim of the Buxton Spring Fair was to fill the whole of 'Main Street' with a mix of stalls and entertainment, an 'Open Day' for the town, and a showcase for everything Buxton has to offer. The project very largely achieved its aims and objectives, and in some cases surpassed them.

### **2. DETAIL OF WHAT TOOK PLACE**

#### **2.1 Extent of the Fair**

The Fair extended further this year, using both halves of the Crescent and also the Pavilion Gardens Bowling Green. This meant a better link up with activities in the Pavilion Gardens

#### **2.2 Stallholders**

In total we had 166 stallholders registered, of these 2 cancelled at the last minute and 2 failed to turn up on the day, we added 1 'rogue' trader who turned up on spec. There was a good mix of different types of stall. Around 36% were not for profit entities (the University, clubs, charities, campaign groups and so on), the majority of the others were small traders (a significant number of arts and crafts businesses, but also jewellery, furniture, sweets, food, clothing) with a handful of larger businesses (including two building companies). There were more food stalls than last year, with food vans and/or barbeques available in every area, the only complaint this year was a lack of vegetarian options. There were also three stalls selling alcohol in the Crescent. In conjunction with Chris Hill Community Sports we ran a 'Traditional Sports Day' on the bowling green. Other 'have a go' activities included two climbing walls, an artificial cave, donkey rides, BMX Bike adventure area, a mini tennis court, football, juggling and plate-spinning workshops and a canoe on a frame, as well as animal-petting and other children's activities.

#### **2.3 Entertainment**

We started with an official opening by the Buxton Town Crier, unveiling the garland on the Market Cross. There was a timetabled programme of entertainment in four separate locations (Bath Rd junction, Town Hall Front, Turner Memorial and Hardwick Street) all with sound amplification, and a good variety of music, dance, street theatre and spoken word. A total of 26 groups or individuals took part, as well as a number of buskers around the town.

#### **2.4 Shop-front Businesses**

Most of the shops in the area of the fair were open, a number of them would not have been had it not been for the Fair. Involvement was a lot better than last year - several of the Cavendish Arcade shops took stalls in the Turner Memorial area, and a few Spring Gardens shops also had stalls outside their premises. A few others had special promotions, held raffles for chosen charities or dressed up.

#### **2.5 Attendance**

Attendance is impossible to gauge, but all areas of the fair were busy. We arranged additional parking in the University Dome and at St Thomas More School (a total of around 170 extra spaces), and put out direction signs - both sites were 'choc-a-block'. In spite of this there was still a distinct shortage of parking in the town.

#### **2.7 Marshaling**

A team of 34 people were involved in marshaling the Fair on the day, and manning the Town Team tent, which was tight. Most had to be deployed in the setting up period with a minimal team during the day. We had more people lined up to help with taking down and cleaning up, but even so it was a very small team left at the end of the day, repositioning barriers and dismantling the Pump House roof set up.

#### **2.8 Issues that arose**

The Queen's Head - The Hotel had been given a Temporary Events Notice to play amplified music in their car park and alleyway, but instead attempted to set up the staging and sound systems on the pavement and roadway outside their premises, blocking the main road. Quite apart from the obvious safety implications and obstruction of the highway, this would have seriously impacted on the events planned for Bath Road. With the assistance of HPBC's Licensing officer this was resolved, and they relocated into the car park.

Illegal Traders - only one was spotted, who had come all the way from the Wirral; he was happy to pay his fee and be issued with a trading permit on the day.

First Aid Incidents - St John Ambulance treated at least one minor injury, there were no serious incidents (that we're aware of!)

Lost Children - one child was separated from his grandparents chasing bubbles, but was taken to the Methodist Church as per plan and re-united with his family quite quickly.

Police Incidents - the Police reported that there were no incidents requiring their presence.

### 3. ASSESSMENT AGAINST AGREED SUCCESS CRITERIA

The aims of the project were to:

- **consolidate the idea of 'One Main Street'**
- **advertise the existence and value of the Town Team to residents, and recruit new members**
- **promote Buxton to residents and visitors as an interesting and exciting place to be**
- **enable retailers, artists, community groups to demonstrate their offer to residents and visitors**
- **generate a positive, optimistic feeling about the town which will last beyond the day**
- **increase footfall in the whole of the town both on the day and subsequently**

We believe all of these aims were met, though as regards subsequent increased footfall in the town we can't actually know.

**Specific success criteria were:**

- **We recruit enough stalls and entertainments to fill the length of 'Main Street'.**

Achieved - while there were a few gaps (there is a long stretch of the High Street where the pavement is too narrow to do very much), the general impression was of the fair stretching from the end of Spring Gardens right through to the London Road lights. Inevitably the central area was busiest, but this was mitigated by the fact that a lot of people walked in to town from one end or the other; both Bath Road and the far end of Spring Gardens appeared to be busier than last year. The link between the Fair and the Pavilion Gardens also appeared to work well, giving the impression of a single, whole town event.

- **The mix includes traders, community groups, artists, musicians and other entertainment**

Achieved - all of these and more were present.

- **The project is delivered on time and within budget.**

Achieved - the Fair took place as planned and costs were within budget, thanks to support from the Waitrose Community Fund we generated a small surplus. Full details are included in Appendix 1.

- **The event is covered in all local media outlets, including radio and TV.**

Mostly achieved - we didn't get on the telly. However we did achieve media coverage as follows:

Pure Buxton - articles in the February and April editions, a follow up feature in the June/July edition.

Buxton Advertiser - a couple of minor articles, a two page spread the Thursday before the Fair, which included the Fair Map, and a two page spread plus front page picture on the Thursday after.

Other local press - The same photos and stories were covered by other papers in the Advertiser group.

High Peak Radio - only one interview given, in February, but included later in their 'events' bulletins.

Radio Derby - one live interview given in February, they indicated they would send people to report live from the Fair but there was no sign of this on the day.

Canalside Radio - gave us some coverage in the three weeks leading up to the Fair.

Visit Buxton Website - gave us front page coverage leading up to the event.

Pavilion Gardens - No mention on their website or leaflets, but the posters included a roundel for the Spring Fair ('whole town festival') and their Twitter feed made many mentions of it.

Facebook - the Buxton Town Team Facebook page again proved a very effective way of getting the message out. Fewer people were invited to the event by their friends this year, but general engagement is higher - when the Fair map was posted it had reached over 1,000 people in a very short time. At time of writing, the number of people who 'like' Buxton Town Team is 368 (cf 111 this time last year).

Twitter - we no longer have access to the original account, we set up a new one (@BuxSpringFair) about three weeks before the event, but managed to produce 97 tweets/retweets and attract 78 followers in that time (now increased to 101).

Instagram - a page was set up three weeks before the event, with a very effective day by day countdown using photos from last year's event. At time of writing it had acquired 58 followers.

Others - several participants and shops in the town promoted it via their own websites, Facebook pages and Twitter feeds.

- **Evaluation from attendees and participants is positive, demand for it to be an annual event**

Achieved - feedback from participants and attendees has been overwhelmingly positive. A summary of feedback forms completed by participants and shops in the area is given in Appendix 2 (separate spreadsheet), and a listing of comments posted on Facebook and emailed to us direct are given in Appendix 3. We are aware of one complaint from someone who objected to not being able to park in the Slopes car park.

- **Evaluation from established shops is positive, and they report increased footfall on the day.**

Uncertain - very few shops completed feedback forms this year.

- **At least 50 new Town Team members are signed up.**

Not achieved - 19 new members were signed up on the day, however a large number of the feedback forms indicated that participants would consider joining the town team, so we expect the final number of new members to be higher.

#### **4. FURTHER BENEFITS**

Small Trader Contacts - Our contacts list has expanded considerably, a lot of these are small traders and retail outlets who are likely to be interested in the joining the Artisan Market trials, or in a general regeneration of the regular market, or other Buxton Town Team projects.

Credibility of Buxton Town Team - The event must have enhanced the reputation of Buxton Town Team, and demonstrated again how much the community can achieve if it is willing to work together.

Sales of the Illustrated Map - This was launched at the Fair, 12 maps were sold on the day (3 of them framed) generating an additional income of £228 (this is not included as income for the Fair).

#### **5. LEARNING POINTS FOR THE FUTURE**

A full discussion on what went well and what could be done better next time is included as Appendix 4.

Key learning points are:

- Get as much as possible done early, once applications start coming in time will be short
- Whatever the deadline, people will come in later - look at reduced charge for early applications
- The layout linking with Pavilion Gardens worked well
- Road closures need to take effect earlier, more prominent notices are needed for parking suspension
- Find out if there's anything we can do to prevent road works
- We need to find even more additional visitor parking - but the signs worked well
- Better communications needed with pubs re their plans for the day
- Participating shops need a separate form, and more specific guidance
- Definitions need clarifying - avoid using 'entertainer' and 'not for profit'
- Providing electricity is a pain, we should charge more for it
- Get as much as possible set up the night before
- Stalls, shops, performers need different feedback forms

## APPENDIX 1 - COSTS

EXPENDITURE			INCOME			
	Budget	Actual		Budget	Actual	
Licences	£ 100	£ 91		Participants Fees	£ 1,500	£ 1,750
First Aid Cover	£ 450	£ 422		Parking Fees		£ 205
Insurance	£ 600	£ 455		Electricity Fees		£ 90
Insurance Add-Ons		£ 440		Insurance Add-ons		£ 440
Equipment Hire	£ 500	£ 240				
Map Leaflets	£ 450	£ 460		Waitrose Fund	£ 400	£ 487
Programme Leaflets		£ 355		General Donations		£ 25
Miscellaneous	£ 200					
Printing Expenses		£ 277	(1)			
Electrical Equipment		£ 63				
Correx Board		£ 59				
Small Gazebo		£ 40				
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 2,300</b>	<b>£ 2,902</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 1,900</b>	<b>£ 2,997</b>
Net Expenditure	£ 400			<b>Surplus</b>		<b>£ 94</b>

(1) Stationary etc - Roddie, Tina and Janet

### Other Sponsorship and Support

HPBC waived all their normal events and licensing fees, except for the Temporary Events Notices, did not charge for electricity, absorbed the loss of revenue from parking and loaned us equipment; Derbyshire County Council loaned barriers and cones; Buxton Well Dressing Festival loaned Road Closure signs and No Waiting cones; Crescent Hotel & Thermal Spa loaned us the road barriers and allowed the use of the Pump House roof (including electrical supply) for the bands; the Swan Inn and Argos also provided electrical supply points; Nash Industrial Services loaned a set of hi-viz jackets and deployed their road-sweeper around the town; Buxton Round Table loaned us two small marquees; the Methodist Church loaned us electrical cables and connections and some tables; The Green Man Gallery, St Ann's Church and the United Reformed Church loaned us tables and chairs; the University also provided meeting and work space, as well as allowing the use of their car park by the public on the day; St Thomas More School, Andy Howe Properties and the Buxton Medical Centre also allowed the use of their car parking space on the day; High Peak Carpets gave us offcuts to use in constructing cable covers; Buxton Building Supplies gave us board offcuts to make into Parking Signs; project team members and musicians from the various bands loaned equipment for the sound amplification systems.

### Assets Acquired:

The Town Team now owns a 2.4m x 2.4m pop up gazebo; additional 16A electrical leads; 30 A1 Correx boards; seven Buxton Spring Fair banners - all of which can be used for future Spring Fairs and other occasions.

## APPENDIX 2 - SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

See separate spreadsheet.

## APPENDIX 3 - COMMENTS FROM FACEBOOK AND EMAILED TO US DIRECTLY

### COMMENTS FROM THE BUXTON TOWN TEAM FACEBOOK PAGES

[Robert O'Connor](#): For crying out loud - what a great day!

[Penny Evans](#) Yup, this town was packed today!

[Caroline Small](#): Just want to say a HUGE thank you for a wonderful day, brilliantly organised

[Pavilion Gardens](#): We just wanted to say a huge thank you for organising the spring fair, from everyone here at the Pavilion Gardens! It was super busy and looks like everyone had a great time!

[Janette McSkimming](#): "Buxton Town Team did a Fab Job at the Spring Fair yesterday! It was great to see little Buxton doing it's thing in the sunshine. Great turn-out and a good time was had by all." "Fab! Well done to you all! Very enjoyable and well organised! Thanks!"

[Mischievous Pixie](#): Hi guys I had a Fab time on Monday thank you so much i really enjoyed my first fair selling my pixie wears I was also wondering if any of the other stall holders have fb pages to share or similar so i can have a look at your lovely bits seen as i didn't get chance to see a lot of you. Thanks x

[John Estruch](#): Even the bubbles enjoyed the Spring Fair

[Sarah Roberts](#): Fantastic from love\_arts we should have a summer and autumn fair

[Harley Jackson](#) Whole heap of fun I'm up for next year! X

[Elizabeth Elvin](#): you all did an amazing job, it was a fabulous day, it felt like there was a lot of community spirit around, well done again

[Christine Mellor](#) Fantastic,fun day and we loved it. If only Buxton could have a busy market town feel every week!!

[Michael Clement](#): I waited 15 years to play on that roof! Lovely afternoon, thanks to all the organisers of the Spring Fair a great day for Buxton and for El Vino & The Ragged Company x

[Karl Moss](#): Thanks to everyone that organised the Buxton Spring Fair. This was the first year I took part and I was really impressed by the turnout.The marshalls were great and gave me lots of help with erecting my gazebo and watching my stall whilst taking loo breaks lol. I made lots of new contacts and got lots of new bookings and will definately come back next year. Thanks again. Mr Bumble Childtens Entertainer

### OTHER COMMENTS SENT IN BY EMAIL

**Beccy Clitheroe** I was handed a feedback form to fill in today but never handed it back as I had to hastily pack up early after a gust of wind knocked my display of framed prints over (twice!). It was late in the day so I didn't feel like I'd missed much (in fact, I had a very good day) and wanted to say thankyou for organizing such an ambitious and successful event. I spoke to so many people today who loved what you're doing for Buxton (especially the locals). I can't remember the precise questions on the form, but I would say that the correspondence between the organisers and traders before todays event was good and that on the day everything was handled efficiently and helpfully. I would have liked some maps and programmes beforehand so I could've handed them out prior to today, maybe I should have asked for some? The Fair was definitely good for my business and I had alot of genuinely interested people on my stand....before the wind picked up (hadn't realized the market place was so exposed!)

I don't know how you reach so many people! or where you advertised (I only saw one banner on the roundabout by The Palace) My boss said a few customers in The Cavendish Arcade had commented that they had no knowledge of it before today! Although the traffic over long hill on my way home and through Whaley Bridge definitely reflected the volume of visitors to Buxton today. Thanks again for all your hard work and hope that my comments are helpful,

**Debbie Adams**: We at Good News Family Care would just like to thank you for a wonderful day on Monday. And a big thank you for all the volunteers that enabled the day to go so smoothly and with such a lovely atmosphere. Our allocated space was just great and was very thankful the weather was kind to all of us. So thank you again for a great day. Until next year!!

**Vic Filer**: I thought our Festival in Tideswell on Saturday was pretty good (which it was), but how you all managed to pull that off on Monday I've no idea Fantastic.... and congratulatuions all round

## **APPENDIX 4 - LEARNING POINTS FOR THE FUTURE**

### **Notes from the Review Meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2013.**

#### **Chosen Date**

Confirmed May Day Bank Holiday is a good choice, the most reliable bank holiday for good weather, and fits well with the 'Spring' theme, renewal, resurgence etc. Timing discussed, is 10am-4pm right? Some traders starting to pack up early, but would probably do so whatever time we set as finish.

#### **Timescale**

We started earlier, but it was still very pressured towards the end. This is inevitable as people don't commit till near the time, but there are some things we should have dealt with earlier (sponsors/supporters, scaffold access, visitor parking)

#### **The Project Team**

The original planning team was five from the Town team plus ten from the University. We co-opted an extra person to organise the Town Team tent and the student team dropped to only five, due in part to unfortunate timing of Easter. Numbers seemed about right - balance between enough to cover the work, without becoming hard to manage. We do need to be clearer in specifying who is responsible for what. Having one person with no specific responsibilities, to pick up defined tasks as required, was useful. Students confirmed they had gained from their involvement and were pleased that their contribution was recognised in our PR. Leanne will provide evaluation forms for us to complete.

#### **Road & Car Park Closures**

The applications were done efficiently and in good time. Agreed we should apply for much earlier closure next time 6am or even midnight. There was a problem with parked cars left in the area, we need to put out much more prominent closure notices on the Friday or Saturday. Also a problem with roadworks appearing in preceding week, we need to find out if there is a system for preventing this happening.

#### **Licensing etc**

Obtaining licences and other permissions was much easier this year. Having Temporary Event Notices (hence PA systems) for Bath Rd and Hardwick St was definitely worth the cost (£42). Agreement with alcohol sellers getting their own licences for a location agreed with us also worked well. Issue with Queen's Head who served notices for their own area without telling us, and then tried to set up a stage and PA system on High St. - better communication needed.

#### **Insurance**

No issues, and 44 participants chose to be added on to our policy at pass through cost. There may be a more cost effective way of doing this.

#### **Health & Safety**

Arranging First Aid provision was smoother than last year, they did have at least one minor injury to deal with. Also one lost child (quickly reunited). Agreed we need a notice in the town team tent with useful phone numbers, and detailing procedures for such eventualities. Lack of toilets mentioned again in feedback, we did investigate, the cost is prohibitive.

#### **Recruiting stall-holders**

Final numbers 167, with two late cancellations and two no-shows. Numbers almost 50% up on last year, so allocating spaces a more difficult job, but having the bulk of them in by early April did help. Discussion re deadline and late entries, agreed we should continue to allow them, but have financial incentive to book early, as well as spell out that only the first say 100 will be featured in the publicity. Further amendment needed to the form to clarify difference between trader and NFP. Suggestions that stalls are too cheap - strong feeling that cost to charities and sole traders should be minimised, valid argument for increasing cost to large businesses.

#### **Contact with shop front businesses**

Initial contact in February, followed by second round to encourage shop front extensions and stalls, but timing of Easter a real problem re engaging with them. Agreed extension of frontage needs a separate form which would only go out to those shops that can do it, explaining exactly what is allowed anyway, and what needs a trade permit from us.

#### **Stalls layout**

Extending into the Bowling Green worked well, felt continuous with Pavilion Gardens events, could possibly go slightly closer to include fountain pond and old bandstand, but no more.

Bath Rd layout much better than last year, and felt a lot busier. Possible extension to include Swan Inn car park? Maybe get them to move their wheelie bins.

Spring Gardens layout messy, inevitable if can't encroach onto roadway. Using Wye St for climbing wall worked well, had planned them in Spring Gardens, left space for two stalls instead.

Market Place good sense of place, could have fitted a few extra stalls as central island.

Some minor clashes with stalls selling same things next to each other, should we be more insistent on knowing what they will be selling when book? But no complaints (so far) from stallholders or the permanent shops.

Need to bear in mind kerbs and wheelchair access in all areas.

#### **Recruiting entertainers**

Form needs to clarify definition of entertainer, some stallholders tried to argue they were entertainers, to avoid paying £5. Possibly use term performer instead. Agreed need more precise request re what technical equipment each act needs, and exactly what form people will bring their music in to ensure we can play it. Chris will send a check list, take this question off the original booking form and get completed later.

Harder to recruit bands this year because of competition from other venues 'piggybacking'. Which is fine, if we know about it, it expands the fair at no effort for us - but venues to be approached and asked to liaise with us next year.

#### **Entertainment Venues**

Pump House Roof - All the performers loved being able to play there, on the other hand arranging access (and getting equipment up there and back down again) is expensive and a lot of effort. There will possibly be more permanent access arrangements by next year. We should look at borrowing a tele-handler. Sound levels worked well, not unduly noisy down in the Crescent or over the brow of the rise on the Slopes. Should have had a person permanently stationed at the foot of

the scaffold to prevent unauthorised access, at the very least a large notice. Noted that the flagstones are badly laid and were already cracked, this will be an issue for the Fringe as well.

Town Hall - No technical problems. Layout with music at more of an angle, or even facing market place, would have been better this year, as music not as loud. The jazz band commented that they'd have preferred a later slot - but they were a last minute replacement for the wind orchestra.

Bath Rd - More volume would have been good but was a huge improvement on last year. One issue with effects pedals producing feedback loops. Layout worked well.

Hardwick St - No technical problems. Very windy, struggling with gazebo until weights sent down there. Space was big enough but stage facing Spring Gardens, or at an angle, would have been a better layout.

### **Variety of Stalls and Events**

Far more things for children this year, good. A lot more food stalls too, and many sold out, only complaint was lack of vegetarian options. Try and recruit Crich artisan bread man next time, and persuade Bon Appetit to have stall.

### **Advertising to the Public**

Facebook used effectively, and students did great job with Twitter and Instagram.

Needed more A5 and A4 posters out and about - Easter being so late was a problem this year. Remember the caravan sites next year, and try to cover other TICs sooner, also outlying villages etc.

More big spring fair banners needed, both in fair area and on all main roads in to town.

Re leaflets, we ran out of both sorts by late morning, unable to leaflet incoming trains. Need at least 2,000 more of each next time. Bear in mind maps and programme both available on Facebook etc, people could have accessed by smartphone.

Events programme needs short description of what each act is.

Ensure Facebook, Twitter and Instagram links are on both leaflets, prominently.

Discussed having a single leaflet covering fair map and events programme; timing difficult, not everyone wants both, would have to be A3 (hard to handle), probably no cost savings anyway - agreed stick with two separate ones.

Signs needed at each venue with events programme, also need copies of events programme available at each venue.

A1 maps worked well, probably enough of them out there. Setting them out though took longer than expected, if no rain due, consider putting out the night before.

### **Trader Parking**

Parking in Crescent not good, as failed to barricade off with stalls as planned, and public walking through. Parking in Wye St also not great as thoroughfare. Some issues with Slopes parking as people didn't park where directed and then couldn't be found to move their vehicles. Consider asking people to provide vehicle registration when they book?

Lighthouse a good site, well used, though possibly one vehicle in there that shouldn't have been. Could have used St Ann's Centre and Infant School if needed.

### **Public Parking and Access**

St Thomas More very pleased, car park was full by 11:30am and they made £327; they were directing cars off Iceland roundabout who couldn't find parking, and have offered to help make more direction signs for next year.

No feedback at the time re the University Dome car park.

Community School dithered and eventually said no. Other possibilities DCC Library and Cavendish Hospital.

### **Logistics - Preparation and on the Day**

Juggling people into the times when they were available was tricky, but we did have enough people.

Setting out as much as possible the night before was a good idea, although some confusion re DCC barriers which we had intended setting out on the morning. We could have used more people here for a shorter time. If road closures from midnight of course could do properly night before - closure period can be up to 24 hours. Chalking out spaces the night before was a definite good thing, though we did fail to mark out the Slopes.

Setting out electric supplies took longer than expected, need more people on this next time. Also consider charging more for it, to deter people from asking unless really needed.

Some comments received that not enough marshals around, but most of the time they didn't have anything to do.

### **Clearing up After**

Litter picking went very quickly, main problem area was the Slopes where bins overwhelmed, ask for extra bins here next time as well as where placed this time. Relocating barriers though took a long time, and a small team, unsure if having more people would have helped.

Having the same people who put things out bring them back in would work better, some A1 posters got left and lost.

### **Feedback**

Feedback form better than last year, but still needs improvement - three separate forms (for stalls, performers and shops) would be better. Need space for general comment as well as more focussed questions.

### **Other comments**

Generally more decorations - at performance spaces, directing people along High Street - would have improved things.

People had travelled in from Manchester, Stockport, Sheffield, Chesterfield, Mansfield, Birmingham - specifically for the event. At the same time there were Buxton people surprised to find it happening. Our one rogue trader had come over from the Wirral having seen it on Google.

### **Things we didn't do**

More music up at southern end of market place would have been good, could the Methodist Church have their performances amplified outside? Could we co-opt more buskers for areas other than Spring Gardens? Noted that HPBC are developing a policy on busking which might affect things next year.

We didn't set out to have Town Team branding but were donated a dozen logoed polo shirts.

The flashmob looked promising for a while, as others were planning something, but it fell through late in the day.

Photography - Andy was videoing, we didn't formally arrange anyone doing stills but are expecting photos from a number of people. Tagging #buxtonspringfair on Instagram only works on smartphones apparently.