



**Biggar Little Festival**

**SC036411**

**Business Plan 2016 – 2018**

16.03.03

## Introduction

Biggar Little Festival (BLF) is a charitable organisation whose objective is to promote the advancement of the arts, education and community development within Biggar and its surrounding communities, without distinction of race, religion, gender, political or other opinions, by:

- developing Biggar and its surrounds as a community where the arts are encouraged and promoted
- encouraging links between local arts groups
- promoting exhibitions and performances
- developing opportunities for local, national and international artists to demonstrate their talents in Biggar and its surrounds
- encouraging artistic understanding and participation.

The first Festival was run in 2003

Thanks to a grant from the Clyde Valley Windfarm Community and Development Fund (CWFF) BLF was able to employ EKOS, an independent economic and social research consultancy, to undertake an evaluation of the 2015 Festival

The main findings of the EKOS report were that:

- survey respondents rated the various aspects of the Festival highly, with very good/good ratings of 99% or 100%.
- less than one in five visitors had any improvement suggestions. The more significant of these were that the Festival should be better promoted and advertised (4%), have better signage and hold more events, particularly for children and teenagers.
- local businesses rated the Festival as either very good or good, noted its importance for Biggar's cultural/arts community, (90%) reported that it had a positive impact on their sales and identified the additional footfall and trade it brought them.
- audience members rated all aspects of the Festival highly, with very/good ratings of 99% or 100% for both the range and quality of shows/activities on offer, and their enjoyment of them. A small number suggested minor improvements (see full report).
- all of the performers surveyed would like to perform at next year's Festival.
- 83% of volunteers would like to volunteer at the Festival next year.
- each pound of sponsorship money generated net additional output of £4.34 in the South Lanarkshire economy.
- there are no real issues in terms of the quality of the Festival and the visitor experience. Rather the key issue is about increasing the profile of the Festival and improved promotion.

Using these findings; the experience of the Committee; previous business plans; the Committee's own polling and taking account of the current climate of austerity the Committee identified 3 key objectives. These cover Finance, Reach and Marketing/Communication. Achievement of these will be the focus for the next 3 years 2016 -2018.

## Plan Objectives

### **Objective 1 Finance: to ensure the long term financial position of the festival**

BLF does not seek to make a profit. Objective 1 has 2 key targets

- at the end of each Festival year to have sufficient funds carried over to meet the fixed costs of next year's festival
- to have sufficient monies committed from other sources e.g. Sponsorship, Patronage, Funding bodies for the following 3 years to underpin the Festival and to enable the Trustees to take some sensible risks with new activities/performances.

This will be achieved by

1. Careful budget setting and monitoring of performance against budget. This is the responsibility of the Trustees and is the first topic on all monthly meetings
2. The development and implementation of a structured plan to increase income from Sponsors, Patrons and Funders. A Funding Sub-Group chaired by the Chairman and composed of Trustees and non-Trustees has been established for this purpose.

**Objective 2 Reach: Increase the numbers of younger people, and those from a wider geographical area, involved in the festival while maintaining the 2015 level of positive feedback**

This will be achieved by:

1. attracting the participation of entertainers from further afield, particularly those recognised at a national or international level. This may involve looking 2 years ahead rather than, as at present, having a one year horizon.
2. liaising closely with Biggar High School, Young Farmers, Biggar Theatre Work Shop and other youth oriented organisations to identify ways in which younger people can be encouraged to both participate in and attend events relevant to their cultural interests.
3. identifying where there may be 'gaps' in what we are offering
4. expanding the areas in which we publicise the Festival both geographically and in cooperation with other groups/organisations/companies (see also objective 3)

Rather than establish a Sub-Group to promote the achievement of this objective the Trustees will:

- assess the impact of any proposals on this objective on an ongoing basis
- review on a quarterly basis whether enough is being done/planned.

### **Objective 3: Improve the Marketing/Communication of the Festival.**

This will be achieved by:

1. maximising the value of data we have on on-line ticket sales and identifying what other information we need
2. seeking feedback from visitors, local businesses, performers and volunteers, formally on a 3 year basis more informally on an annual basis
3. seeking to address the perception that the focus of the Festival does not cover the north or southerly ends of the High Street
4. professionalising our press releases and introducing a news letter
5. updating/improving our website, in part to make it more mobile friendly
6. extending the geographical circulation of our flyers and Programmes and improving the circulation arrangements
7. renewing our various banners and signs
8. benchmarking with other successful festivals
9. maintaining and developing contacts with agents
10. working with local businesses, public sector tourism & economic development agencies and arts bodies to ensure that both the Festival and Biggar gain from their knowledge and experience available.

We have established a Publicity Sub-Group, chaired by a Trustee who is the Publicity Officer. Trustees and non-Trustees are members of the Committee. We are actively seeking someone with journalism experience to join the Publicity Sub-Group.

## **PROGRESS MONITORING**

Trustees meet at least monthly throughout the year to develop preparations for the Festival and monitor progress against assigned responsibilities and targets. Progress against plan will be a substantial part of the Agenda of these meetings.

Our Annual Away Day will review progress and also the continued relevance of the aspects of this plan in light of progress toward objectives, developments relating to the Festival and the previous year's financial results.

Signed on behalf of the committee:

*J Softley*

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Chair

*Barbara Duffner*

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Secretary

