



#Getting Back Outdoors

Meeting notes: Festivals

Online session 19/06/20

[Leonardslee Illuminated](#): Robin Morley, Co-director

Description: 1.2-mile illuminated Winter Walk; a ticketed one-way trail for all the family, taking place over 8 evenings, with up to 17,000 attendees

Set up the 'Outdoor Events Safety Research Group' and meet fortnightly to look at the feasibility and logistics of making this a viable and Covid safe event for December 2020.

Research team:

Robin Morley, Simon Teesdale, Co-directors

Dr Chris Cocking, School of Health Sciences, University of Brighton

Dave Burden and Dan Lake, Production Managers

Phil Burton and Ann Marie, Select security

- Important to understand and work within current government guidelines for public activity outside, even though evidence is limited.
- Already using the new model shopping experience of adhering to a one-way flow
- Messaging the audience in advance and throughout the trail is crucial in ensuring a safe event under Covid19 – “we will be using ‘we speak’ to engender a collective audience safe behaviour”
- Considering household bubbles, 2metres plus apart, artworks positioned appropriately along the trail to avoid crowding and pinch points
- Public confidence in event safety is paramount to enable a joyful and positive experience for all and ensure advance ticket sales

Significantly, most at risk are artists, creatives, production and event management crew working onsite for 2-3 weeks. Measures being put in place to ensure the safest possible work environment.

- Pre-testing all staff for Covid19
- Daily temperature and health monitoring
- Specific working bubbles
- Contingency for replacing workers who may become ill and have to self-isolate.
- Plenty of Handwashing/sanitation facilities
- Face covering when indoors
- Sanitation of all equipment or 72-hour cold storage.
- Advance Covid safety training for all artists and event personnel

- Careful safety planning for medical first aid, lost person and child, event stop and evacuation, and emergency services.
- A Covid specific event management risk assessment

This summary of key findings is not official safety guidance but can be used as indicators for own work practice.

Research to be completed in July and then tested out as action research at the event in December.

Festival of Thrift: Stella Hall, Director

Description: Annual festival in the North East focussed on sustainability and up-cycling, usual attendance 35,000

The budget this year is at 25% due to lack of funding from ACE and Tees Valley, no sponsorship or earned income. That along with restrictions due to Covid brings this year's festival into people's homes via an online presence, with an additional focus on the hyperlocal; identifying a specific neighbourhood in Redcar which will benefit the most from having a physical festival presence on its doorstep.

- Exploring ideas with artists who would have participated in the festival pre-Covid.
- Relying very strongly on amateur colleagues, audiences and friends,
- Locally there has been a positive uptake of cycling, walking and going into nature, but lots of folk also go to local sites spreading rubbish wherever they are. Artist Diane Watson has been commissioned to create flowers from that rubbish, a 1000 of which will bloom all over Redcar and Cleveland during the festival weekend.
- A downloadable activities pack is being produced leading up to the festival, encouraging audiences to 'Thrift Your Place' – download decorations; download costumes; download dance steps; make your own flowers, learn some cookery.
- Various artists and makers will participate in the online festival weekend.

The Hyperlocal

- Looking to harness the creativity and connectivity that has been flourishing during lockdown and work with people on their doorsteps.
- Exploring the idea of a physical festival presence in a neighbourhood which the local council has identified. Unknown people, unknown streets – a bit of a risk, given the amount of time it takes to get people on side and involved, but feasible with the support of the community development officer who knows the area and the people.
- Hoping to bring some of the usual festival activities to the area, as well as exploring suggestions from the community.
- The Mouthful Quartet are working with 25 local singers and will produce a festival anthem for an online concert, also to be distributed to the community as a downloadable version as well as hard copies via local foodbanks.

- The need to be flexible and adaptable and find new ways of working locally and online
- Looking at local heroes, such as musician Dylan Cartlidge to come along, encouraging people that this is their local festival, just for them, in their street.
- Filming of activities to be included as part of the online festival.
- Thinking about what structures e.g. marquees to take to an area, and the flow in and out those structures, measuring the number of people that can go into a space at one time.
- The people and the artists are the core of the festival and finding the best ways to connect them is the key.
- Constantly keeping abreast of guidance
- Importantly holding the whole thing together, a key figure that represents the festival in some way. Paulus will be there online but also out and about in the neighbourhood.
- Gathering to share food, a festival tradition, so finding socially distanced / different ways to dine together.
- Looking at the possibility of donations, this is still a national festival after all.

[GDIF 2020 Reimagined](#): Bradley Hemmings, Director

Description: a programme of uplifting installations and outdoor arts presented locally on people's doorsteps, celebrating local places and togetherness following a summer of isolation.

- Looking more specifically at durational work that can be seen over several days in order to manage the audience's experience safely.
- Also looking at the hyperlocal, a programme of work called 'On Your Doorstep' developed and worked through with local participants.
- Work from UK touring artists in locations such as a basketball court, residential streets, and doorsteps.
- Also looking at wide open spaces that can be utilised with specific strategies in place.
- The spirit of lockdown creativity has given rise to a new co-creational approach for GDIF,
- Involved with Woolwich Common Community Centre, a local authority hub distributing food to vulnerable people. The weekly banter and cultural exchange, whilst packing boxes, has led to the idea of 'Weaving Together' as a metaphor running across the whole of the GDIF programme, encouraging people to celebrate the spirit of resilience during these very tough times.
- Still very committed to working with international artists and partners and hoping with the easing of quarantine that some sort of international programme will happen this year.
- Have brought a consultant in to work across the whole of the festival on Covid19 risk management, recognising the difficulties not only of facilitating audiences safely, but facilitating artists to be able to make work.

- Lindsey Butcher from Gravity and Levity is committing her dance company to going into quarantine for two weeks prior to the festival in order the performance goes ahead.
- It is important for all producers and festivals to strengthen their connections and relationships with their local authorities, to keep abreast of public entertainment licencing and to understand what is happening with local people amongst other things.