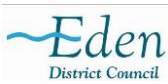


Appleby Fair 2017 Evaluation Report



September 2017

Introduction

The Multi-Agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group (MASCg) has now been in existence for over nine 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 and does 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.

Since the first Evaluation Report, year on year MASCg has agreed a similar approach and in 2017, 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 the actions being taken. This process continues and proves to be an effective communication forum.

The www.applefair.org website continues to be the main outlet for communicating public safety information about the Fair, alongside social media. This year, MASCg continued its appeal to reduce the number of early arrivals at the Fair, specifically motorised caravans and by using social media posts the numbers of early arrivals were again lower than experienced five years ago, so we thank Fairgoers for their continued support.

In 2014, MASCg agreed a three-year plan to ensure improvements to the way the Fair operated, 2017 was the final year of this plan. So MASCg can now review how it wishes to take forward any more operational improvements and evolve any changes into a plan for future Fairs.

MASCg has again encouraged land owners and Parish Councils to put in place their own measures to help reduce the impact of the Fair on rural communities. This work includes addressing where inappropriate parking has created road safety issues. Helping communities implement their own solutions reduces the cost of the Fair on public sector agencies.

In 2017, there continued to be direct engagement with the public in the build up to, during and after 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 2017 to be a quieter and safer Fair (this could be due to the wet weather over the Fair weekend).

The amount of rainfall in Appleby preceding and during the Horse Fair meant that the water level in the River Eden where horses are traditionally washed during the Fair needed to be closely monitored for animal welfare and public safety.

The RSPCA, Cumbria Police and the Environment Agency deserve particular praise for how they implemented MASCG's river level safety protocol throughout the Fair and thanks also goes to Fairgoers for heeding the advice not to enter the river when the access ramp was closed.

Appleby Fair is the biggest operational event for the RSPCA, who are supported by other animal welfare charities at the event. The work of these charities is invaluable and worthy of public support through donations via their official websites.

Cumbria Police maintained the safety of the public attending the Fair throughout the weekend. Armed officers were a reassuring presence for the public given that the dates for the Fair followed closely on from the terrorist attacks in Manchester and London.

Cumbria Police have again attracted significant praise for their community approach to addressing and balancing the differing public safety needs which surround an event such as Appleby Horse Fair.

As Chairman of the MASCG, I would 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

Appleby Fair continues to attract significant media interest as broadcasters and photographers continue to capture Gypsy and Traveller culture. Despite this increased exposure and maybe due to the wet weather the number of motorised caravans was down this year.

Appleby Fair is an opportunity to show visitors the quality of Appleby as a destination and Eden and wider Cumbria as a place to visit. All we ask the media who visit the Fair is for balanced coverage and to respect local residents, Gypsies and Travellers and visitors who all share their views about this unique events through the post Fair evaluation process.

Hopefully, this report reflects everyone's views and the subsequent improvement plan for next year will help make the event safer for all concerned.

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

Background Information

The 2017 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, Yorkshire and other Police Forces 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 stopping some bare knuckle fights, 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) requests were made to encourage people to come to the Fair when it started rather than early and there were fewer early arrivals caravans than in 2015;
- 6) 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;
- 7) handing over management of the market area in Appleby town centre to the business community to manage for Friday and Sunday. This was expanded by closing and pedestrianising part of the highway;
- 8) development of the use of Twitter and Facebook as a means and method of communication;
- 9) daily meeting of community representatives from the resident and travelling communities for Kirkby Stephen before the Fair, and in Appleby during it which was used to gather information and then share perceptions, provide factual answers and improve communication generally;
- 10) daily meetings of MASCG reviewing all activity and directing continual daily improvement and additional meetings on matters that required attention;
- 11) some land owners self-help schemes introduced which worked well.

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. Movement into the Fair fields went well and there was no traffic jam in Appleby at peak morning commuter time.

The planning for 2017 commenced immediately after the assessment of the 2016 event was completed.

Partner agencies in liaison with Parish Councils spend the year organising the provision of sites and facilities at some of the more popular locations for the travellers for the period before they are allowed on to Fair Hill. Although most travellers take up these provided facilities some go elsewhere and this can cause annoyance to local residents.

This can cause problems for local communities and farmers, 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 and as resources reduce this may not be able to be continued in the long-term.

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) the RSPCA's 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. The RSPCA carried out valuable work clearing the River Eden of debris to enable the traditional horse washing to take place safely. They also provide advice and monitoring of river levels during the wet weather to ensure animal safety. A review of the river safety level used to determine when the river ramp used for horse washing should be closed will be undertaken as part of the post Fair evaluation process. The level of support the RSPCA and other animal welfare charities provide at Appleby Fair is of course dependent on public donations to support their work;
- 2) licensing arrangements continued to improve. For next year's Fair all licensed premises should be encouraged to sign up to the Voluntary Licensing Charter and use plastic glasses in their establishments to improve safety. Ensuring SIA door supervisor staff are well briefed about any specific arrangements for a licensed premises such as outdoor drinking area perimeters is a part of the evaluation process for this year. Over twenty licensed premises (Appleby and Kirkby Stephen area) opened as well as takeaways and restaurants providing refreshments for those people that wanted them;

- 3) 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 high standard;
- 4) 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. Aspects to address for next year are how the public disperse away from The Sands area of Appleby once the road closure finishes at 6pm, in order to avoid horses being taken to the Royal Oak rather than returned safely to Fair Hill and other encampments. Residents of the Mill Hill area of Appleby, continue to express concerns about accessing their homes during the Fair by vehicle due to the amount of people attracted to the Royal Oak. Some concerns continue to be expressed outside of Appleby as in previous years about Gypsies and Travellers arriving early and causing concern to local residents in some areas even though there had been reduced numbers of early arrivals in 2015, 2016 and 2017;
- 5) the transit arrangements particularly in South Cumbria worked well and continued to improve in the build up towards the event from previous years. In Eden District, concerns were expressed by users of the Community Gym at Tyne Willows (Alston), that Gypsies and Travellers using the temporary encampment there blocked access to the Gym and its car park. This created difficulties for local residents who use this popular facility. This is a private car park on private land, so a solution will need to be discussed with the landowner/s. At Melmerby, local residents have expressed concerns about motorised caravans arriving early and damaging the village green. From next year, bowtops may only be welcome in the Melmerby area and this may result in a displacement of Gypsies and Travellers to other areas. MASCG representatives will need to work with the local community to address these concerns and communicate any changes to stopping place provision in the Melmerby area to Gypsies and Travellers ahead of next year's Fair. Eden District Council will look to put measures in place for next year's Fair to address Gypsies and Travellers in bowtops camping on a play area in Kirkby Stephen (facility on Council owned land) which created concerns for local residents and required a clean-up of the area so it be enjoyed again by local children. Similar concerns were expressed by residents of Great Asby about play facilities there. Communications need developing to discourage the small minority of Gypsies and Travellers who are abusing these community/children's play facilities and whose anti-social behaviour reflects badly on the Horse Fair's reputation.
- 6) the operational plan worked well and the co-ordination of agencies was effective;
- 7) the street cleansing operation was praised for keeping the town centre of Appleby as clean as possible throughout the duration of the Fair. Feedback shows that an adequate number of litter bins are provided, but can more be done to encourage/educate fairgoers to use them or take their litter home with them;

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

Agency	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
South Lakeland District Council								
No of temporary toilets	7	7	7	8	8	8	8	5
No of skips provided	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	0
Tonnes of waste collected	5	5.94	5.5	8	4.18	6	6	0
Eden District Council								
Total caravans and bow tops in Eden area	991	1,103	1,297	1,318	1,301	1,329	1,325	1,394
No of bow tops included in the total figure	176	153	202	229	178	191	191	0
No of outlying encampment caravans and bow tops included in total figure	269	281	262	296	280	286	283	329
No of market stalls (market fields)	243	276	241	234	236	249	255	211
No of unlicensed street traders	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
No of licensed street traders	6	6	6	6	5	5	6	0
Tonnes of waste removed including litter	25	33	29	43	45	40	37	24
No of skips provided	2	3	3	3	3	3	4	5
No of litter bins	43	41	41	39	39	35	39	36
No of temporary toilets	57	31	31	31	31	31	31	30
Cumbria Constabulary								
Arrests	17	10	11	28	40	28	48	60
Crimes	12	11	24	9	0	16	18	19
Drug Offences	1	1	1	5	3	9	7	23
Incidents	76	65	61	61	0	171	225	182
Fixed Penalty Offences	18	30	71	93	82	141	0	88
Dispersal Orders	4	77	8	22	0	16	0	0

Agency	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
RSPCA								
Incidents where owners of animals were given advice or assistance	168	274	151	147	142	196	350	311
Verbal warnings	12	13	10	6	10	38	17	23
Police cautions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
RSPCA adult written caution	0	0	0	2	1	2	1	1
Cases reported for summons	1	2	4	2	2	1	1	3
Animals referred for vet treatment	Unknown	0	0	0	0	120	71	60
Equines put to sleep	1	0	2	1	1	2	0	3
Puppies put to sleep	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Equines transported away from the Fair	8	6	9	6	6	14	2	6
Stray dogs taken in by Eden District Council	0	1	2	0	1	2	2	2
Puppies taken in by RSPCA	1	0	0	2	0	0	6	3
North West Ambulance Service								
Recorded injuries	42	96	59	66	103	55	89	53

Financial Information

The external 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 external costs for the 2017 Fair are as follows:

Organisation	2017 (£)	2016 (£)	2015 (£)	2014 (£)	2013 (£)	2012 (£)	2011 (£)	2010 (£)
Eden District Council	30,134	26,756	27,835	33,796	29,818	27,610	28,000	33,183
South Lakeland District Council	2,430	2,390	2,551	2,884	6,001	1,744	3,387	4,110
Cumbria County Council								
- Highways	62,488	46,513	69,607	47,349	28,500	30,000	19,980	33,000
- Other Costs ¹	0	0	0	4,000	8,000	6,000	5,159	10,250
Environment Agency	2,100	1,200	1,500	1,200	1,500	2,000	1,500	1,500
Cumbria Fire and Rescue	1,238	814	858	2,325	1,055	2,192	1,224	1,326
NWAS/PCT (joint cost)	16,000	14,159	9,925	10,770	9,000	9,998	2,433	1,958
MASCG media spend (joint cost) ²	1,500	1,200	1,230	1,230	0	1,000	1,000	2,475
Cumbria Constabulary ³	78,440	74,400	65,600	67,000	50,000	55,000	80,910	90,866
RSPCA	35,760	14,479	12,740	11,875	11,234	19,550	24,172	27,000
Total	230,090	181,911	191,846	182,929	145,758	155,095	168,438	207,423

The total external cost for the 2017 Fair operation was £230,090 and internal costs on top shows a considerable increase this year which will 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 in the past 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 2018 Fair with the Gypsy and Traveller community in order to reduce the cost to the Tax Payer.

¹ These costs are now incorporated under Highways

² Costs previously included in individual agency budget

³ Change in accounting for costs

Media

The media strategy for 2017 was co-ordinated by a sub-group of all the public agencies. Their work included updating of the website, co-ordinating media messages, targeted campaign messages, responding to individual incidents using Facebook and Twitter.

Evaluation Process

The evaluation process for the 2017 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

The agency debrief took place on Monday 17 July 2017 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 2017 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.