



Impact Report

North Devon Festival is produced by



Major Funder



The 12th North Devon Festival...

There was one warm evening in June in the middle of the Festival, it was a Thursday, when there were three gigs running in three pubs virtually simultaneously in the heart of Barnstaple, as part of the Fringe events. The Marjorie Belles sang their little hearts out in Claytons with some of the best doo-wop/Andrews Sisters music anywhere (they got the best dresses award too); Amy Newton brought a clutch of friends to play brilliant singer-songwriter sets in Lilico's and Storm Warning lived up to their name with some deep down and dirty r'n'b in the Olive Branch. We walked from one venue to the next, pushed and heaved our way inside because it was so busy, enjoyed the music for a while and moved on to the next one. As we criss-crossed our way around Barnstaple, we found that other people were doing the same, enjoying the variety and appreciating the different music on offer. What a night. Barnstaple really lived up to its regional capital reputation. And this was only one occasion when audiences were able to move freely around the town, enjoying the wide variety of events.

And what a range. From the quiet, world-class musical skill of Polish pianist Marcin Wasilewski to the joy and exuberance of Scott Joplin's only opera, Treemonisha, which justly received a standing ovation. The class of Alan Bennett's play The History Boys to fourteen people (the maximum permitted) sitting as an audience in the kitchen of a house watching the unfolding domestic drama as part of the outstanding TheatreFest. Or the great Museum project, Movie Bus, which was part restoration and part social history, as they travelled around showing films of North Devon over the years. This project is so successful that the BBC are going to tour it round Britain next year visiting rural areas and showing relevant films in each locality, all fronted by Melvyn Bragg. Did you miss the wonderful music of Munto Valdo from the Cameroons, the prince of Sawa blues, or Wang Xiao in Fullam Restaurant playing the heart-breaking sounds of Chinese two-string fiddle, the erhu? Shame on you.

It has always been impressive that so many people get involved with the Festival, 145 organisers of community events for a start. Not only are their events exceptional and fully grounded in their localities, they raise a terrific amount of funds for charities; this year it was over £86,000.

Of course the big names were all in there: GoldCoast Oceanfest, continuing to put North Devon firmly on the map as a year-round surfing and lifestyle destination. And our open studios event, Art Trek, ranging across North Devon with over 100 participating artists, and spread over three weekends so that people could see more. And spend more. All the details and benefits of all Festival events can be found in this Impact Report, which is well worth the read.

At the end of June, the Theatres and Festival team was exhausted, but had to leap straight back into the rest of our year-round programme. Yes, we had to make some changes to the Festival this year because of the finances, but we coped. We all hope that the excitement and range of the events in the Festival will continue to bring people here in June; this year the number of visitors from outside the region was a remarkable 40,657. It's win-win as far as we are concerned. Great arts, wonderful entertainment, and a big boost for our economy. See you next year, all being well.

Alan Giddings

Chief Executive, North Devon Theatres & Festival

Alan Dodd

Programme Director, North Devon Theatres & Festival

The value of arts and culture

The North Devon Festival is a massive tourism initiative - the largest and most ambitious cultural festival in the south west. The Festival targets the shoulder season of June, extending tourism opportunities between the Easter break and summer holiday period. It couples artistic vision with community action and has demonstrable benefits in four key areas: our **Economy**, our **Culture**, our **Community** and our **Region**.

This year's Festival was arguably the most challenging in its 12 year history, set as it was against the backdrop of significant economic instability and it did not go untouched by the financial cuts. The late announcement of the reduction in support for the Festival meant that a number of community events had their financial support cut at the last minute. Many of the main Festival artists and events are booked at least a year in advance, so the impact of this central budget cut had to be absorbed in other areas. Events affected included Ilfracombe Victorian Celebration, South Molton Olde English Fayre and St. John's Fair Witheridge. In addition, we had to take the decision to cut the plan for a Festival commission relating to Yeo Valley Community Woodland.

The reputation of the Festival has built steadily over the last 12 years and it is gratifying to see that despite these last minute changes and loss of some planned events, visitor numbers were up this year. Obviously, if the funding cuts continue and visitors are disappointed, then this may not continue in the future. We have seen a trend in general attendance indicating that local people are finding it increasingly challenging to make ends meet economically, which is further supported by this year's Festival figures, which show a drop in local attendance at Festival events.

As an arts organisation, we are well practiced in rising to a challenge and are very proud of all that was achieved with the Festival this year in these difficult circumstances. Whilst we will demonstrate the positive financial impact of the Festival, cultural activity should not be measured purely in economic terms – we believe strongly in the wider benefits of the Festival and that in times of economic hardship encouraging community cohesion and improving the local quality of life are as valuable as the financial uplift that the Festival undoubtedly provides.

“What makes the North Devon Festival special? Inclusiveness: something for all tastes, a welcoming atmosphere.”

Linda Gordon, artist



How does the North Devon Festival benefit...OUR ECONOMY?

The Festival contributes in many ways to ensuring that we have a **strong and growing economy**. The primary aim of the Festival is to create a programme of activities that will promote the region and encourage visitors outside of the normal tourism season and inspire participation from within our local communities.

This year the Festival featured **215** main events, comprising over **900** activities and achieved an estimated attendance of **110,606**. The economic impact for the region is calculated using the standard tourism methodology for visitors (the Cambridge model for expenditure) and for this year is calculated at **£9,488,525**. This represents a return on investment of over **94** times the initial grant support received from North Devon Council.

110,606 participants
63% local people
37% visitors

NDF 2010
Economic Impact:
£9.5 million

North Devon Council
ROI is over 94 times
the figure invested

This year there has been an upward swing in the proportion of visitor numbers of 5% compared to last year, which could be explained by an increase in general visitors to the coast during the sustained good weather in June or a positive impact of 'staycations' during the economic downturn; however, the anecdotal evidence supports the view that many visitors are specifically choosing to come to North Devon during the Festival period. It is likely that many factors contributed to this increase but the focus should be on securing repeat visits year on year and we believe that the Festival is a key incentive in attracting returning visitors.

With the increase in popularity of experience-led holidays, the Festival can offer many opportunities for visitors to get actively involved in events and activities. In difficult economic times, the perception of 'value for money' increases and visitors want to feel that their hard-earned holiday fund has been put to good use; by providing a range of free and low-cost activities the Festival enables visitors to sample many different events and go home feeling there are more to sample next year.

As well as the much needed boost to tourism, the Festival generates other quantifiable economic benefits for the area; the Festival's local purchasing policy sees an estimated **£55k** spent locally from the core Festival budget, which together with over **£168k** spent by event organisers, means a total contribution of **£223,695** to the local economy.

Festival initiatives also help to stimulate growth for key areas, for example Barnstaple Fringe, which is specifically programmed to help encourage business in local bars and restaurants and the Art Trek Open Studio project, with an emphasis on visits rather than sales, nevertheless generated artists' sales and commissions estimated at a phenomenal **£39,295** this year.

"Festivals have been identified as important in attracting visitors to a particular place/event and have been increasingly used to promote tourism to an area"

*Festivals: Their contribution to the South East Region, 2009
SAM*

Art Trek sales:
£39,295

£223,695 spent with
local businesses

How does the North Devon Festival benefit...OUR CULTURE?

The Festival is a positive force in raising awareness of arts and culture; it has helped to build the region's profile and encourage engagement with the arts. The Festival uses programming strands to ensure the broadest possible experience of arts and cultural activity in the area. The strands this year included a brand new Discovery & Design strand, developed in partnership with local college, Petroc:

Festival at the Theatres
Visual Arts & Literature
Community & Heritage
Natural Environment
Learning & Education

Barnstaple Fringe
Music & Dance
Sports & Leisure
Comedy & Drama
Discovery & Design (new)

The reputation of the Festival is such that we are able to attract high-calibre artists to North Devon to showcase productions which would otherwise only be available in cities such as Bristol or Plymouth. This year, Theatre Royal Bath Productions presented the West Yorkshire Playhouse production of *The History Boys* which was the highlight of the Festival for many.

This principle of access to cultural activities is supported by the number of free events and activities. This year **61%** of all activities were free; more than ever before. Many events invite participation from local schools and community groups and are specifically geared towards engaging and **inspiring young people**; this year **22%** of Festival events specifically included an education element.

Festival events also provide many aspiring artists with the opportunity to develop and showcase their talent and to perform alongside more experienced artists; a number of the Barnstaple Fringe events featured support slots for up-and-coming local musicians and the Fringe Theatrefest featured **69** performances from a mix of **23** companies; some aspiring local talent and some well-established artists travelling the Fringe performance circuit.



**61% of all activities
were free**

"The North Devon Festival in Barnstaple was definitely one of our most enjoyable gigs, ever. Lovely people, lovely place. Proper relaxed atmosphere and a real intimacy in the place. We'll be back soon, I hope..."

Arun Ghosh, musician

**22% of events
included an
education element**

"My highlight has to be The History Boys – real quality theatre. When I saw it (for the second time) a man in the audience behind me stood up and bellowed "Bravo! Bravo!" I'll second that! More please"

Amanda McCormack, audience member

**4,157 artists &
performers**

How does the North Devon Festival benefit...OUR COMMUNITY?

The Festival is a key element in encouraging **strong & inclusive communities**: through its ethos of celebrating local identity, the Festival encourages involvement at all ages and levels and seeks to open up opportunities for all to experience quality, exciting and challenging activity.

Arguably, in a region with many isolated rural locations, the concepts of participation and celebration are the most important at a time when our communities are facing so many economic pressures – community cohesion plays a valuable role in protecting people from individual stresses.

The impact of the Festival could be measured solely in the positive effect on the quality of life in the region and by the levels of participation - this year the attendance from local people is estimated at **69,949** - however, there are a number of other benefits that should also be considered.

“We believe that a stronger civil society lies in the experience shared by a community and the opportunity for everyone to get involved, and that participating in the arts, crafts or cultural activities is often a first step towards greater civil engagement.”

A Manifesto for the Arts

National Campaign for the Arts

Local people are able to expand their skill-set through organising and delivering Festival events; there are **145** main event organisers, representing all kinds of organisations and interest groups, who are supported by the Festival administration team as they plan, implement and assess their own events. The membership structure also helps event organisers to network with one another, sharing best practice, pooling resources and developing mutually beneficial relationships.

**17,555
volunteer hours**

Festival events showcase the best in our communities including the commitment of hundreds of volunteers in making the events happen. This year volunteers contributed more time than ever before, clocking up a staggering **17,555** hours, the equivalent of **2,340** working days, or **6.4** years.

**£86,690 raised
for charity**

Festival events also contribute significantly to local and national charities: this year over **£86,000** was raised by events including the Devon Coast to Coast Challenge and the AONB Marathon & Half Marathon, which were both fundraising for the North Devon Hospice.

The Festival is an important tool in keeping talented people in North Devon and helping to attract new ones by ensuring opportunities for creative development for many local artists and musicians. This year the Festival also included **5** voluntary placements for young people to shadow key Festival staff during June.



How does the North Devon Festival benefit...OUR REGION?

The Festival has an extensive marketing plan, encouraging tourism and stimulating interest in the region months before the actual Festival starts in June. Our Festival website and e-marketing are used ahead of the main Festival period to generate interest and encourage visitors to plan ahead for their visit in June. This year there were over **3.6 million** hits on the Festival website during the period from 1st April – 31st July. Appendix B has full details of the marketing activity this year.

3.6m website hits

This year Festival events attracted **40,657** attendances from visitors from outside the area. The economic and social benefits to our region have already been highlighted, but there is a wider issue of how the Festival can help to increase cultural tourism whilst actively helping to preserve and promote our special natural environment.

The main Festival brochure (**55,000** copies) highlights the message that we are offering a Festival in a unique setting and that visitors have a duty to help to protect it - we encourage car-sharing, using public transport and awareness of 'green' issues through our literature and our website.

Since its introduction in 2003, the Natural Environment strand has continued to grow and this year featured more events than ever before, encouraging people to explore and understand our coast and countryside. Many other events cross over strand boundaries, reinforcing the message that our unique environment underpins every event in the Festival.

We also promote collaborations with existing organisations and actively pursue a working relationship with Exmoor National Park, the UNESCO Biosphere Foundation and the North Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Many of this year's Festival events were specifically tailored to help celebrate and promote the North Devon AONB's 50th anniversary.

"What makes the North Devon Festival special? The strong community focus and obvious pride in our lovely coast and countryside."

Linda Blanchard, North Devon AONB Manager



As part of our commitment to safeguarding the uniqueness of our region, we introduced a brand new element to the Festival this year; two Festival debates hosted by Stewart Wallace of the New Economics Foundation which bookended the Festival and incorporated a brand new blog on the Festival website, encouraging interaction between the two events.

The debates encouraged discussion on our rural situation, renewable energy options and regional distinctiveness, leading people to consider the future of our region and the role of arts in the local economy.

Festival Funding – Impact of Recession

The North Devon Festival is produced by the North Devon Theatres' Trust, a charity and not-for-profit organisation, thus income from all sources is used directly to support the events. Full details of the Festival's objectives are in Appendix D.

We receive a grant from North Devon Council and generate additional funds from advertising, sponsorship and other earned income.

The national and regional profile of the Festival has grown enormously over the past 12 years, and it has made a huge difference to June in North Devon, bringing visitors to the region by encouraging cultural tourism. Our challenge will be to maintain the quality and number of events across the region so that we continue to maintain our profile and draw to us the much needed visitor pound.

The impact of the economic downturn has already been evidenced by the cut in core support from North Devon Council and the loss of ND+ funding, which had previously supported a range of national advertising; however, the fear is that the full impact of recession will not be clear until 2011 as many of the sponsorship deals were already in place for June 2010 before the full effects of the financial downturn began to take their toll.

The future of the Festival depends upon core funding from North Devon Council, which is multiplied many times over throughout the Festival month of June for the benefit of the region, as well as income from ticketing, sponsorship and fundraising; however, all sources will be under increasing pressure:

Box office income – our potential to generate income is likely to be affected by a reduction in cultural consumption (as evidenced in the recent drop in theatre attendances and lower levels of local participation in Festival events this year). We must also consider the secondary impact from the recession on the availability of artistic product, as the number of artists and shows touring decreases due to costs.

Sponsorship & advertising – this was already a challenging area to generate income due to the limited options in our rural location. Businesses are under increasing pressure to maintain their core business and reduce their out-goings; consequently it will become even more difficult to secure adequate levels of sponsorship and advertising income.

Trusts & Foundations – this is an increasingly competitive area of fundraising as many trusts are already reporting significant reductions in the value of funds available for distribution, due to sizeable and recent reductions in the value of their investment portfolios and they are also experiencing an increase in the number of applications as more organisation find themselves needing to fundraise from other sources. Moreover, festivals and community arts are not funding areas that have any particular appeal to most of the trusts that support the arts and culture. The perception is that festivals should be able to secure enough revenue through sponsorship and advertising.

It is indisputable that the Festival will have to fight hard to secure funding in the coming years and ensure the quality and content of the programme is not compromised. The impact on North Devon of losing the Festival at this stage would be immeasurable for our **Economy**, our **Culture**, our **Community** and our **Region** and we are determined to fight to save it. We hope you are too.

We would like to thank all funders and supporters of the Festival

Major funder



Other funders



Supported by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

Business supporters

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Barnstaple Pannier Market
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The Phone Shop
The Red Barn
The Boathouse
The Old Custom House
The Milky Way
Turning Point Clinics
Tyme Restaurant
Value House
Walking on Waves
West Buckland School

Barnstaple Fringe strand sponsor



Learning & Education strand sponsor



Principal media sponsor



Community & Heritage strand sponsor



Discovery & Design strand sponsor



Supporter of children's events



Travel in the Festival sponsor



Gallery Sessions sponsor



Supporters

The Garrick
Charitable Trust



North Devon Festival

Queen's Theatre, Boutport Street, Barnstaple, North Devon EX31 1SY
Box Office: 01271 32 42 42 northdevonfestival.org

North Devon Festival is produced by **NORTH DEVON THEATRES**

Distributed by TMS Marketing and Take One Media
Brochure design by Bruce Aiken
Website designed and hosted by NetTecs

Appendix A: Summary of Results

	2010	2009	2008	2007
Number of main events	214 ¹	192	183	205
Number of venues	199	198	193	175
Number of activities	905	799	805	831
Number of artists & performers	4,157	3,587	N/A	N/A
Economic impact	£9.5m	£9.1m	£11m	£9.8m
NDF expenditure with local businesses ²	£168,702	£188,389	£197,700	£215,000
Income raised for charity	£86,690	£45,406	£254,267 ³	£54,505
Advertising and sponsorship revenue	£93,857 ⁴	£99,205	£106,624	£143,380
Additional external investment	£87,115 ⁵	£38,056	£27,400	£42,185
Total number of participants	110,606	112,084 ⁶	130,276	125,301
Participants from North Devon	69,949 (63%)	76,054 (68%)	83,509 (64%)	85,094 (68%)
Visitors to North Devon	40,657 (37%)	36,030 (32%)	46,767 (36%)	40,207 (32%)
% of activities that were free of charge	61%	57%	52%	59%
Volunteer hours	17,555	11,466	16,845	14,533
Number of main event organisers	145	145	148	149

¹ An additional 9 events were cancelled due to various issues in the run up to June.

² Excludes funds spend locally from the core Festival budget.

³ This includes a large sum for Race for Life which fell inside the Festival period in 2008.

⁴ Includes income generated directly into the Festival core budget, as well as funds generated by individual events.

⁵ £57,000 of this was for the Movie Bus project.

⁶ This includes more accurate GoldCoast Oceanfest and Ilfracombe Victorian Celebration figures provided by the organisers and obviously excludes Race for Life.

Appendix B: Marketing Activity

Advertising

- Regional and local newspapers, e.g. North Devon Journal, North Devon Gazette, Western Morning News, Tiverton Gazette, West Somerset Free Press.
- Magazines e.g. Primary Times in Devon, Cornwall and Somerset, Exeter Festival brochure, Jazzwise, That's Entertainment, North Devon Direct, What's On South West.
- Web advertising through the national Primary Times and the North Devon Gazette websites.
- Individual Festival Events' publications e.g. GoldCoast Oceanfest, Appledore Visual Arts Festival, Art Trek, Lynton and Lynmouth Music Festival, Ilfracombe Victorian Celebrations and North Devon Fringe Theatrefest programmes, Petroc's Motorsport Family Fun Day plus many other flyers and leaflets.

Editorials, Listings & Features

- Extensive coverage in a wide variety of regional & local publications such as: North Devon & Exmoor Guide, North Devon Journal, North Devon Gazette, North Devon Direct, Tarka Country Visitor, Tiverton Gazette, Muse Magazine (visual arts & culture), Western Morning News, Devon Life, and Devon Rural Voice, What's On South West, Vintage Spirit,
- Listed as one of the 'Top Ten Things to do in the South West' by The Big Issue
- Radio coverage on BBC Radio Devon
- ITV, BBC South West, Sky Sports Channels
- BBC Inside Out programme featured a documentary about the restoration of the Movie Bus which aired on 1st March 2010.
- North Devon Festival website with regular updates & subscribers' e-news
- Featured on external listings websites including eFestivals, Wildcurl, thisfestivalfeeling.com, Bideford People, Barnstaple People, Facebook, Entertainments 24,

Promotion

- 55,000, 68 page A5 Festival programmes
- North Devon Festival supplement with the North Devon Journal (35,000 distribution).
- Comprehensive tourism distribution throughout the South West
- North Devon+ publications and PR
- North Devon Council publications including North Devon Direct Magazine delivered to 40,000 homes
- Festival website, e-news and associated websites (There were 69,422 visits and 3,597,772 hits on the Festival website during the three month period from 1st April – 31st July 2010).
- 1 edition of North Devon Theatres' programmes (45,000 circulation)
- Festival lamppost banners covering event locations all over North Devon
- Festival and Barnstaple Fringe T-shirts
- 12,000 Barnstaple Fringe brochures

- Festival banners in all shapes and sizes featuring at all events
- Festival stickers and balloons
- Huge range of Festival posters
- Sponsors' hospitality, functions & press calls
- Links with South West Tourism and other tourism bodies

In Kind Marketing Support from our Sponsors

- **Stagecoach SOUTH WEST – sponsor of Travel in the Festival**
NDF posters & brochures in Stagecoach SOUTH WEST Travel Shops
NDF featured on Stagecoach Timetables
Interior poster advertising on selected Stagecoach SOUTH WEST buses
NDF in Stagecoach SOUTH WEST *Places to Go* info leaflets
NDF featured on Stagecoach SOUTH WEST website
- **Phoenix Learning & Care Ltd – sponsor of the Learning & Education strand**
Additional event support; supplied prizes for the Tag Rugby event
T Shirts designed in conjunction with the Tag Rugby event
- **PETROC – sponsor of the Discovery & Design strand**
T Shirts designed in conjunction with the Tag Rugby event
- **North Devon Gazette - sponsor of Community & Heritage strand**
Extra editorial coverage in various editions of the newspaper.
- **Barnstaple Town Centre Management - Barnstaple Fringe sponsor**
Editorial coverage in newsletters and on the website.
Pull-up banners and T Shirts
- **North Devon Journal - Principal Media Sponsor**
As detailed above, substantial support through the creation and distribution of the pull-out Festival supplement which was distributed throughout North Devon & North Cornwall.
- **Primary Times in Devon - Supporter of Children's events**
Supplemented advertising campaign: various features on the Festival appeared in their printed products and on-line.

Appendix C: Summary of Sponsorship

Barnstaple Town Centre Management	Sponsor of the Barnstaple Fringe strand
Phoenix Learning & Care Ltd	Sponsor of the Learning & Education strand
North Devon Gazette	Sponsor of the Community & Heritage strand
Petroc	Sponsor of the Discovery & Design strand
PizzaExpress	Gallery Sessions sponsor
North Devon Journal	Principal Media Sponsor
Stagecoach Devon	Sponsor of Travel in the Festival
Primary Times in Devon	Supporter of Children's Events

Appendix D: Aim and Objectives

The North Devon Festival aims to highlight the region's rich and diverse cultural life with a wide range of events reflecting the character and natural beauty of the place, benefiting local communities and businesses.

Objectives

1. Drive the economic development of North Devon in exciting new ways.
2. Highlight North Devon as an excellent destination for cultural tourism, showcasing our cultural life.
3. Preserve and promote our special natural environment.
4. Keep talented and creative people in North Devon, and attract new ones.
5. Open up opportunities for all to experience quality, exciting and challenging activity.

Appendix E: Map of Festival activity

