

Feedback on the 2015/16 Events Programme

Residents Weekend £2,000

Residents weekend took place 27th – 29th March in Gloucester City Centre. The aim of this event is to encourage the citizens of Gloucester to shop and spend time in their city, by offering discounts if they have a residents' card. MGL coordinate a range of offers from local businesses, provide entertainment in the city centre gate streets over the weekend and heavily promote the offers through various hard copies, posters, bollard boards, through the Citizen, and online using Facebook (over 10,000 people subscribe to it), newsletters, twitter and the City of Gloucester website.

The weekend was very popular with footfall in the city reported to have increased by up to 20% in Kings Walk and Eastgate Shopping centres

Tall Ships Festival - £25,000

The 5th Tall Ships festival took place on 23rd – 25th May in Gloucester Docks. In order to guarantee the sustainability of the event it was decided to charge a minimal amount to the public. The event was a huge success, and the paying element of the event worked well. 120,000 visited the event during the three days and it was very highly praised by visitors and received wide TV, Press and Social Media coverage. Hotel occupancy in the city over this period was over 90%

Sea Shanty Festival / Stone Carving Festival - £1,000

In addition to the Tall Ships Festival, two fringe festivals took place at the same time. The Sea Shanty festival was organised by two local sea shanty performers, using the Falmouth shanty festival as a model. The festival operated along the same lines as the Blues Festival. Local venues were assisted to put on shanty performances, and Kings Square was used as the main stage point for the city. The event proved to be very popular and achieved the aim of increasing dwell time in the city centre and also continued the atmosphere of the Tall ships festival throughout the city centre. MGL supported the shanty organisers financially through the tall ships budget and also the city centre economy budget. Kings Walk also sponsored the activities and main stage performance in Kings Square.

The Stone Carving Festival returned for the 3rd time and was held at Llanthony Priory, supported by Llanthony Trust and the Tall Ships festival. The festival extends the footprint of the main festival and features stone carvers from across the country creating stone carving based on a different theme each year.

The scheduling of these two events with the Tall Ships Festival along with working with Gloucester City Centre Community Partnership and other partners in the city led to the Tall Ships having a significant impact across the whole city from Kings Square to Llanthony Priory.

Gloucester International Rhythm and Blues - £2,000

Marketing Gloucester (MGL) worked on the promotion of the Blues Festival with specialist Blues promoter, Tim Porter, who also worked on booking acts into the City. The event closed on the Sunday at Café Rene's outdoor stage which as ever was well attended. The Blues Festival was more of a regional event with visitors coming mostly from the South West and South Midlands. Eight festival venues were included this year including the outside stage at Greyfriars. The £2,000 is spent on employing Tim Porter and marketing materials for the festival. The actual bands are paid for by the venues themselves.

Summer Festival – Gloucester Park - £50,000

The two week Summer Festival was launched to coincide with the summer holidays and began this year with the Rugby in the Park event.

This event was organised by MGL with support from the RFU. A day of rugby coaching and rugby themed activities was programmed. The day was well received and well attended considering that it was the first year. It was part of the Festival of Rugby events that took place as part of the Rugby World Cup. It is the aim to continue and develop this event to become an annual part of the summer events in the park – targeting a different audience from the food festival that takes place in Gloucester Quays at the same time.

Gloucester Carnival was held on the second weekend and processed from Westgate Street Carpark to Gloucester Park, with trophies awarded at the end. The Carnival Committee also helped to bring in external funding to support the Carnival this year. This allowed many more community groups to be involved as well as a samba band who added a lively element to the procession. This has worked well and includes organisations such as Artshape, GDance, Global Arts in Education (GAINE) as well as keen individuals. The number of entrants to the carnival in 2015 rose to 30 from 20 in 2014. A large arts council/heritage bid is being worked on currently to further develop the carnival for 2016.

The traditional Family Day was led by One Church and built on their successful FunFest originally held at Robinswood Hill. This meant GCC were able to support the event with infrastructure, but the activities were led by a third party. The event was a great success and we hope to include it in the programme for future years. The event takes place on the same day as the 10K race, organised by Davies and Partners, and both events link in very well together.

The Firework Finale officially marked the close of the Summer Festival. Thankfully, the weather was dry, so around 7,000 people were able to enjoy the stunning display by Titanium Fireworks, the same company used to light up the sky at the London Eye fireworks.

Paint Jam - £5,000

Due to the Rugby World Cup taking place, it was not possible to organise a full Paint Jam event similar to the one held in 2014. However, smaller Paint Jam projects were

supported by MGL organised by Hype Street Art to produce art work across the city in the run up to the Rugby World Cup. The dance element delivered by MSB also proved successful.

Retro Festival £3,000

This new festival organised by Cllr Colin Organ and supported by MGL, aimed to increase footfall in the city centre during August Bank Holiday. The event themed each gate street in a different era complete with vintage vehicles. Footfall figures show an increase of 21% and anecdotally a number of traders in Westgate Street claimed that this was their best weekend up to the Rugby World Cup.

Gloucester History Festival/ Heritage Open Days/Gloucester Day - £6,500 (+£11,000 carried over)

2015 saw the 5th Gloucester History Festival, organised by MGL. The festival started with Gloucester Day, organised by Alan Myatt, the Town Crier,

This event was more popular than ever with stalls lining the city centre streets to complement the large parade. The day was extended this year with the Rugby World Cup Ball Pass that took place after the 2nd parade in the afternoon. A rugby ball was passed through the gate streets by members of the public leading from Southgate Street down to the Cathedral green, where it was kicked over rugby posts by the City MP and caught by the Leader of the Council to the sound of the Cathedral Choir singing World in Union.

The two weeks that followed were filled with historic talks, guided tours and the Heritage Open Days programme. The festival was attended by an estimated 5,000 people and continues to grow in popularity, attracting many visitors into the city for the duration of the event. The event this year cost £17,500 and attracted much higher ticket sales and sponsorship

Rugby World Cup Events (£25,000 from Events Budget)

As the lead partner to England 2015, the City Council were responsible for delivering all aspects of the RWC as a "Host City". A final report covering all aspects of the RWC is due to be presented to Cabinet in March.

MGL were responsible for organising the volunteers, trophy tour, fanzone in Gloucester Docks, and the city centre entertainment and cultural events during the RWC this year. The fanzone was a huge success popular with visitors and locals. Over 50,000 people visited the fanzone while it was open between 18th Sept – 11th Oct.

MGL submitted an Arts Council bid to provide themed city centre cultural events during the festival period. The bid was successful and we were awarded a total of £85,000. This was supplemented by £9,000 of sponsorship from EDF Energy. The 6 week entertainment programme featured large scale events in Kings Square, the fanzone and Gloucester Cathedral. They were very well received and full feedback report and suggestions for the future is currently being written by an independent

party. In addition to this, the Rugby World Cup organisers also requested that entertainment was programmed along the walking route between the stadium and the fanzone on match days. Bands, street entertainers, buskers and street art were all programmed to add atmosphere in the city centre and this was popular with residents and visitors alike and helped contribute to Gloucester being awarded the accolade of the second best atmosphere, topped only by the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff.

Scrumpty Sculpture Trail (externally funded)

The sculpture trail was developed using other cities as a model to attract visitors to the city between August and October, and to encourage people to walk around the entire city to places that they may not usually visit and to assist city centre businesses by increasing footfall past their premises.

The trail launched on 1st August and was successful in these aims. Approximately 400,000 interactions took place with the trail, with 100,000 official maps being distributed, with another approx. 50,000 distributed through the local press and 51,000 absolute unique visitors to the Scrumpty Website.

£72,000 sponsorship was raised to pay for this trail and MGL plan to have another trail in a future year to be agreed.

Round Table Fireworks - £2,000

The Round Table firework event at Gloucester Docks has evolved into a great event for the City. Although numbers have sometimes been dictated by the weather the event has the potential to draw in very large crowds. The Round Table charity has over the years developed the expertise and marshalling infrastructure to deliver a very professional paid entry event and has raised significant funds for local charities.

A modest sponsorship contribution was made and as in previous years the Council made arrangements with the organisers for parking and firework launching sites.

Style Festival - £15,000

This festival is organised by Gloucestershire Media/Local World and is supported financially by GCC as one of the main sponsors. The event is currently being considered and discussed for 2016.

Christmas 2015 - £10,000

The Christmas Light switch-on took place on the 15th November to the theme of "The Nutcracker". The procession by 6 local primary schools looked spectacular in both the Gate Streets and in the Cathedral. This was supported by a street market organised by Gloucester City Centre Community Partnership. Local people lined the streets to get a view of the procession and the switching on of the lights. It is estimated that this event now attracts 10,000 people.

Feedback on footfall for the event was provided by Kings Walk which indicated that there was a modest increase in footfall compared with last years' lantern procession and a 25% increase in footfall compared with the same day on the previous weekend

The tree of light event took place on Thursday 3rd December, organised by Gloucester Rotary Club, this event was hampered by bad weather this year but featured performances from local community groups and the lights were switched on by local celebrity Emma Samms.

Three Choirs Festival £5,000 (£15,000 over three years)

The Three Choirs Festival was held in Worcester last year and returns to Gloucester in 2016. A budget of £5,000 is set aside each year to build a pot of £15000 to be spent when Gloucester hosts the festival.

Cityfest £4,000

Costs associated with providing infrastructure for event but no direct grant is given.

Armed Forces Day £2,000

An annual contribution to cover the Armed Forces Day parade and activities held in the city to celebrate that day.

Tree of Light £500

Support in kind and infrastructure

Other City Events

It would not be appropriate to discuss events in the City, without making reference to some of the other events that took place outside of the main City Council funding programme.

Gloucester Quays had a strong 2015 events programme, attracting thousands of people from all over the country to their events from the Garden Party at Easter welcoming 70,000 visitors, to the Food Festival in July attracting over 100,000 people and most recently the Victorian Christmas Market and Festive Fayre attracting in the region of 150,000 visitors. It must be noted that initially, the Quays events were run with the support of MGL officers and Guildhall operational staff and their equipment was used in the delivery of the events. It is positive to see this support helped to pave the way to a nationally successful and respected set of events.

Many other events are organised in communities, often on council-owned land like Robinswood Hill (various events), Plock Court (including the Sportbeat Festival) and King George V Playing Field (Hucclecote Show).