



New Year, New Start Meeting January 9th 2024 7:30 pm Rock Mill Centre

Attending: Helen Wright, Annie Hallam, Hannah Kitson, Abi Williams, Jo Allan, Nikki Duguid, Alex Bond, Andrea Joseph, David Lowther

Apologies: Patty Doran, Melody Slinn, Cath Finn, Toby Hardwick, Alison Vasey, Lyn Bannister

Discussions

The basis of the festival is the community programme of events, generated by local community groups and individuals, local venues such as Spring Bank Arts Centre, the art galleries and the theatre. In addition, the festival has organised some events to offer a wider, more inclusive opportunity for the community to get involved. The festival has also organised fundraising events throughout the year as well as during the festival.

Current situation is that recruitment for a new Festival Co-ordinator is ongoing and it's hoped that the new person will be able to start in February/March and enable some handover and transition time. Helen emphasised the need for a small group of supportive volunteers who are happy to meet on a regular basis and work with the co-ordinator to help deliver all the elements of the festival.

It was acknowledged that the last year was a difficult one and that communication to inform people about the changing circumstances would have helped to keep them on board. It was also suggested that the future Co-ordinator should have greater support from the directors this year to enable a smoother transition.

The need for volunteer co-ordinating and volunteer support for events was emphasised. There are opportunities to ask companies to offer volunteer support- Nikki mentioned her employers enable their staff to offer volunteering days.

Handlebards- is it happening this year? Offers of support – (Andrea)

ACTION Helen to check with Lyn- done- Lyn is leading on this

Event Ideas

Not having a Lantern Parade offers space and opportunity for new ideas for festival events which were brought forwards by the group:

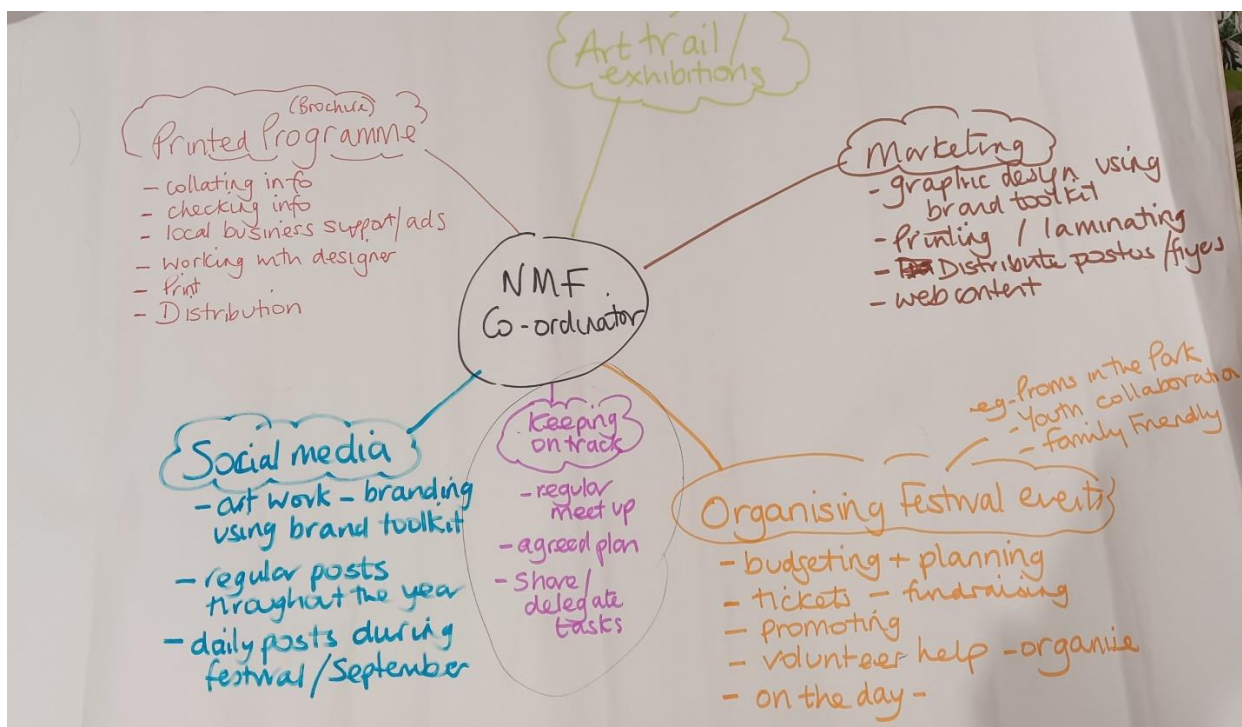
- Jumble Trail (Abi)
- Poetry event, open mic- High Lea Hall or local pub could be possible venues?
Contacts offered to follow up (Abi)
- Link with Dark Peak Radio – possible opportunities for young people to get involved (Abi)

- Music event- musician (Fraser Anderson) plus local talent (Annie) Alex mentioned Spring Bank Arts may be able to find dates for a festival event although they have a pretty full calendar already.
- Proms in the Park (Annie)
- Light installation/projection- possibly High Lea Park, plus vendors/traders, involve local artists in creating illustrations, suggest speak to Rob at Torr Vale Mill (David)
- Antiques Fair -last Sunday of the festival plus a Christmas one (Nikki),
- Art Trail and exhibitions, Open Arts for the festival (Jo and Andrea) to speak to Alison Vasey
- A Choirs Festival- like a brass band contest but with choirs- happens across the UK and Europe. Lots of choirs in and around New Mills. An idea to consider for the future, not for this year (Annie)
- Cath Finn couldn't join the meeting but has talked about bringing elements of the Youth Matters August FamFest into the September festival. This could include a showcase of artwork and performance (maybe in town centre venue?) plus small lanterns made to create a mini lantern parade with BBQ at Low Leighton, reaching out to New Mills families who have not traditionally connected with the festival before.

ACTION: The group will scope out their ideas, talk to people, keep in touch and meet again in February to update.

ACTION: Helen will get the call-out for event submissions set up in January.

Helen shared a list of tasks which she thinks, from the experience of 2023, are needed to make the festival happen:



The Festival Co-ordinator will need to lead on most of these elements but will come back to the group for support, which could be help with proof reading, finding other contacts with specific skills to offer, more general event or leafleting support. Hannah (NMVC) and Helen are meeting to discuss any specific roles which will be needed. Social media and graphic design are key skills needed. Alex has done a lot of the social media before and is putting together a 'how to' list so that he can helpfully handover to others at the right time.

Annie suggested that Compliance and Volunteer Co-ordinating are also two important roles which support the festival.

Fundraising

Does this need people to be working on? Helen updated on applications planned- Foundation Derbyshire for printed brochure costs, HPBC/Enterprise Alliance for flags, Arts Council for Co-ordinator fees ongoing, supplemented by events throughout the year and during the festival where possible. Co-ordinator to lead on?

ACTION Helen to check with Lyn on gigs and Duck Race

The group agreed they are happy to meet on a monthly basis with the Festival Co-ordinator on the second Tuesday of the month, 7:30pm at the Rock Mill Centre. The meeting was finished by 9pm so suggest a 7:30-9pm timeframe for future monthly meetings.

All agreed to join a WhatsApp group to keep in touch. **ACTION Helen to set up**

Meeting dates 2024:

February 13th

March 12th

April 9th

May 14th

June 11th

July 9th

August 13th

September 9th

October 8th

November 12th

December 10th

These dates are pencilled in and maybe subject to change once the new Festival Co-ordinator has settled in.