

LOOE

SAVES THE DAY

THU 20TH - SUN 23RD SEPTEMBER

Overwhelming public support for staging 2019 community led music festival in Looe

25 October 2018

Looe residents and businesses attending a packed public meeting in the town's Guildhall last night have given a massive thumbs up to the principle of staging a community led festival in 2019.

This year's Looe Saves the Day festival saw thousands of people flock to the town during the last week of September to take part in the event which was arranged in less than three weeks following the last minute cancellation of the original festival. Despite some slight wet weather issues, the feedback from visitors, local residents and businesses taking part was amazingly positive, with enormous praise for the atmosphere and community spirit and the range of music on offer.

Last week LSTD organisers heard that judges at this year's Cornwall Tourism Awards were giving the town a special award for its amazing achievement in organising a community led event at such short notice. This will be presented to the team at Truro Cathedral on 1 November. If that was not enough the group has just received a letter of congratulations from Her Majesty The Queen after a local resident wrote to Buckingham Palace.

With 96% of those taking part in an online survey also backing the idea of a festival next year, organisers are now looking in detail at the practicalities, including the format and timing of a future event, and how to meet the potential £200,000 costs.

Thanking people for their support, LSTD Directors Armand Toms and Edwina Hannaford, said a huge amount of work needed to be done quickly if the town wanted to stage a successful festival in September 2019.

“This year's festival was an extraordinary event, with hundreds of people and organisations giving up their time to help us stage an event in less than three weeks” said Armand Toms. **“This included the many bands which either played for free or for reduced fees.**

“We also had incredible support from Devon and Cornwall Police and Cornwall Council, who worked with us to ensure that all the health and safety arrangements were in place, from local pubs, cafes, restaurants and hotels who put on their own events, from individuals and sponsors who helped us raise the money we needed to

stage the festival at such short notice, and from the local community who came forward to act as volunteers.

“While we are certain that Looe’s amazing community spirit will still be here, organising an event next year will require the town to make some key decisions and do a huge amount of work within the next few weeks if we want to go ahead. “

The costs of staging this year’s festival were just under £70,000, with the money raised through a mixture of donations, sponsorship, fund raising events, crowdfunding, street collections and the sale of Looe Saves the Day merchandise. The true costs of replicating the event next year with some refinements are predicted at around £200,000 and the team are already working on attracting more sponsorship and looking at fund raising options, including charging for tickets.

“ People have told us that they want any future festival to be community led, and to showcase local talent as well as having headline acts and crowd pleasers” said Edwina Hannaford. **“We agree. “We also want to make sure that all sections of the community are included, young and old, and that local businesses are involved from the start so everyone can benefit.**

It is vital that any future event is financially sustainable and this may mean charging for tickets. If this does happen we are committed to ensuring that tickets prices are kept as low as possible. If we do raise more than £200,000 we can look at doing more, but we need to keep a balance between the needs of local people and visitors, and ensure that the scale of the event remains manageable and does not overload the infrastructure of the town.

“The enthusiasm of people at last night’s public meeting and the feedback we have received over the past month have shown there is strong support for staging a festival next year. We now need to harness this support and draw up a detailed business plan so we can take this forward.

“We know we have a bigger mountain to climb this time but we also know that Looe Saved the Day in less than three weeks – just imagine what we can achieve in the next 11 months”.

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