



CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL - MEDIA BRIEFING

Welcome – this document outlines a variety of Questions & Answers to update you with basic information about Shropshire's first ever Children's Festival.

Should you require other answers please feel free to contact either **John Harris** or **Stephen Derges** on the links provided on the main website and we'll get back to you.

First up – When? Where? and Why?

The inaugural Bridgnorth Children's Festival was held over the Saturday and Sunday of the August Bank Holiday in 2006 and it is hoped the event will become an annual event.

In 2007 the Festival will be again held over the **August Bank Holiday** on **Saturday 25th August 2006** and **Sunday 26th August** from 11.00am to 5.00 on the Saturday extending to around 7.30pm on the Sunday with a pig roast and entertainment to round the whole event off.

Oldbury Wells School, Bridgnorth is the home of the Festival which will make full use of school buildings and the extensive playing fields offered by the venue. Castlefields School, which shares the venue, have also offered use of their facilities during the Festival.

A huge '**tented village**' will house the Festival with an extensive range of open air areas providing the chance to get some sun – we're always optimistic! The activities are hosted in a number '**zones**' including 'chill out' areas for the young and young at heart to get their breath back before moving on to the next activity.

Market Research amongst the young people of the area identified loads of activities that they wanted to do but couldn't because of cost, opportunity or travelling.

This Festival puts a number of these together in one place over a weekend when many families will be on holiday.

We recognised that for many families August Bank Holiday is a time of stress and hassle often involving travelling great distances for expensive entertainment. We wanted to offer a safe, inexpensive alternative this year which, along the way, will, provide children and their families with loads of happy memories to share for years to come.

Ever wanted to see grannie on a bouncy castle? Try this Festival!

Who exactly is the Festival aimed at?

It's a **young people's** and **children's festival**, but along with children and young people come families, guardians and other relatives – we want to see them all and are putting on events which will entertain anyone with young people in their family.

It's a Festival which is aimed at anyone who's local, and in Bridgnorth 'local' means anyone who's visiting too!

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Just what is on offer?

The Festival website – www.childrens-festival.co.uk – contains full details and is updated regularly but a few key activities provide a flavour of the breadth of attractions over the two days:

Entertainment Zones:

- **Singers, dancers, bands, magicians, storytellers, puppeteers, balloon makers** all organised by **Harley Entertainments** – led by international acclaimed performer and street theatre legend, **Steve Harley**
- Go absolutely bonkers with Bridgnorth's very own **Disco Daddy**

Sports & Leisure Zones:

- Coaching, challenges, competitions
- In 2006 we had Boys and Girls **Football Coaching** with **Wolverhampton Wanderers FC.**, **Rugby** skills with the **Bridgnorth All Blacks**, skateboarding and BMXing, tennis and Disk Golf. This year we're aiming to extend the range on offer

Arts Zones:

- Get gunged up with glue, plastered in paint or just transfixed by textiles – demonstrations and 'hands-on' fun in our **arts workshops**

Food & Gaming Zones:

- Chill out with a great range of food and drink – world cuisine, healthy eating through to burgers from the barbeque – take your pick
- A mega **computer game link up**

Fun Zones:

- Giant games, bouncy castles and activities for all – look at the website for details

Toddlers Zones:

- **Ball pools, soft play, toys and entertainment** for the very young
- Please note – we do not offer childcare or crèche facilities. The Festival is a family event and parents/guardians are encouraged to remain with their children at all times

Community Zones:

- Information, displays and involvement from a range of community groups
- Meet the **Fire & Rescue, Community Police** and other **Emergency Services**

Every donation – large or small – is put straight into the Festival

Sounds pricey- what's it going to cost?

Admission is **entirely free** and we've agreed contracts with vendors selling food on site that costs will be kept at a level which is affordable to families.

It will be necessary to pay for some on-site activities but we aim to keep the costs as low as possible.

Is this a Council event?

No, although local Councils have been generous with their support and time.

The Festival is being managed and organised through '**Bridgnorth Children's Festival Limited**' – a **company limited by guarantee** and a **registered charity**. The Festival operates on a '**not for profit**' basis.

The organising team is working with community volunteers and local businesses for the benefit of people in Bridgnorth area.

How is the Festival being funded?

We seek grant funding from national and regional bodies and have had some success in this area. In again we are grateful for the support of the local business community and local people either in the form of one off donations, time or equipment. Every donation – large or small – is put straight into the Festival.

Numerous businesses and local organisations have supported us and as and when more come on line they will be publicised on the website.

A number of benefits are available to companies sponsoring the Festival and more information can be obtained from the man in charge of the purse-strings – **Mark Anderson**.

Individuals wishing to help fund the Festival can do so by setting up a Standing Order or a one-off donation. Downloadable forms are available on the website and 'Gift Aid' elections can be made allowing us to reclaim 28p for every pound donated.

We are in negotiation with a range of other companies and will continue with this to the last minute to ensure that the Festival is as successful as it can be.

A 'warts 'n all' **2006 Festival Evaluation Report** is available on the website which includes details of financing and Financial Accounts are available on request to interested parties.

What sort of media profile has the Festival had so far?

The Festival has been featured on **Radio Shropshire** and **Beacon Radio**. Regular coverage of our public events and progress has been featured in the **Shropshire Star** and **Bridgnorth Journal** plus other local media organisations.

As artistes and events are finalised we are aiming for an increased media profile and hope that local media professionals are able to recognise the Festival as an important community/business success story for this area.

Who else is involved?

We have currently two Festival Patrons with the same name!!

Chris Davies – is an International athlete who has represented Great Britain at the World Cross Country championships and who made the 5000m final at the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Australia. Chris has been busy promoting the Festival amongst international athletes around the world.

Christine Davies MBE – has served the cause of children for many years and she now advises the Government on children's issues. She will be ensuring that the Festival is publicised in the national corridors of power.

What's still to be done then?

We'll always need volunteers. The local community has been great to date but we're sure that there are many more who want to be involved if even for only a short period. We are required to run CRB checks on people working closely with young people but there are loads of jobs to do which do not require this process. Please see the website for details. Other updates will be provided regularly through the website.

What opportunities are open to media professionals?

We believe that the Festival will be a community success story and are keen to promote it throughout the summer.

Organisers are available for interview by telephone or in person so please contact them direct.

We will continue to publish topic specific media releases throughout the summer.

Photograph opportunities will be available throughout the Festival and at various fund raising events leading up to this.

Who do I get in touch with?

If you'd like more information about the Festival please contact the following:

Contact	Position	Telephone	Email
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