



## **Evaluation of The allpay Flavours of Herefordshire Festival.**

This year the Flavours of Herefordshire Festival moved into the heart of the City of Hereford. In previous years the festival has been held on the outskirts of the City at the Racecourse and in 2011 attracted 4,500 visitors. Moving the Festival into Hereford City Centre we set ourselves a target of 20,000 visitors over the two days - which many thought optimistic. Numbers over the two day event reached 32,000 (an additional 60%), which considerably exceeded our expectations. Trade exhibitors reported their best event of the year with many selling out their 2 days' supply on the first day necessitating a return home to restock overnight Saturday evening.

An article in the Sunday Telegraph reported that one local butcher stated that he had sold more in 2 days than for a whole month and this was repeated with other traders as well.

### **Evaluation of the Festival was undertaken in many forms:**

- a. Meeting with the staff, suppliers of infrastructure, Cathedral, Music Pool, City Events Manager
- b. With Exhibitors
- c. With City Retailers
- d. With Visitors

### **The most important qualities of this year's event has been highlighted in all forms of feedback are:**

- a. Ensure that the event remains free, enabling visitors to spend money in the festival and local economy
- b. Location - a magical location which spread throughout the City Centre, all mobility accessible
- c. Good increase of marketing of the festival and the county ensuring major coverage in and around Herefordshire, neighbouring counties and targeted national areas/operators



## Feedback from Exhibitors

- a. The venue - 95% felt it was excellent
- b. Pre festival organisation - this was either declared as excellent or good
- c. Onsite organisation during the event - this was declared as excellent or good
- d. Financially how good was the festival for you - this was declared as excellent or good
- e. Sales income compared to other festivals attended this year - Excellent
- f. Sales compared with Racecourse venue - Excellent
- g. Good business contacts made – 80% reported as they had made good future contacts
- h. Other festivals required – A large vote in favour of a Christmas festival
- i. Other benefits for exhibitors attending included:
  - Increased local awareness
  - Good brand awareness
  - Increased promotion
  - Increased business opportunities
  - Gained additional business from outside of their locality
  - Approached by local business to supply products
  - Gained new clients
  - Received several internet orders since the show and was able to promote the regular Farmers Market in High Town



## Feedback from Retailers

- a. 'The footfall for the whole of Church Street was the busiest it has been for years. It more than doubled the footfall. The street was a hive of activity which these days is a rarity for Church street. All comments were positive and encouraging, the main comment being why more events like this don't happen in Hereford.'
- b. 'An excellent event, a great success which was very encouraging. A definite must for the future of Hereford. We need to be promoting Hereford and providing more positive events to stop the negative comments about the town and bring people into the town which is what the festival achieved.'
- c. 'No disadvantages (to our business). Benefits: increased business and footfall to the Hereford streets, Herefordshire on the map. Is all amazing stuff - well done!'
- d. 'The advantages where that we saw very many more customers on the Saturday than we would normally have. We opened on the Sunday (we don't normally) and although not as busy as the Saturday it was still worthwhile for us.'
- e. Many reported at least doubling their takings
- a. A few businesses felt it did not directly impact on the day, but overall was very beneficial to the City
- b. Only one business felt they were disadvantaged as their turnover was slightly down. (This businesses was located outside of the Festival site)



## Feedback from Visitors to the Festival

### Visitors to the Festival

<b>Age Range</b>	22 -35	15%
	36-60	43%
	61-75	36%
<b>Transport</b>	Car	66%
	Cycle	25%
	Public Transport	10%
<b>Length of Stay</b>	Day trip	85%
	4+ nights	13%
	2 nights	2%
<b>How did you hear about the Festival</b>	Flyer/Programme	24%
	Newspaper	19%
	Word of Mouth	16%
	Roadside signs	16%
	On line	11%
	Other	7%
	Monthly Magazine	4%
	Radio	3%
<b>Average spend with exhibitors</b>	0-£20	53%
	£21-£40	29%
	£41-£60	8%
	£61-£80	7%
	£81+	3%
<b>Average spend with retailers</b>	0-£20	34%
	£21-£40	33%
	£41-£60	22%
	£61-£80	5%
	£81+	6%



**Article by Clive Beddall OBE, international food industry consultant and former editor-in-chief of The Grocer, the world's largest food sector newspaper.**

The United Kingdom's increasingly diverse local food and drink sector was never more effectively displayed than at the allpay Flavours of Herefordshire Festival.

Yet, to an international food industry journalist like me, it was the spectacular presence of two commodities of the less tangible kind that ensured the success of the event.

I refer, of course, to pride and passion, something that, within my experience, is far too often missing from regional food festivals around these islands.

Recent years have been littered with examples of regional shows across Britain that were characterised by unimaginative exhibits and apathetic exhibitors. Result? Dismal attendance figures and missed opportunities.

And that is a pity, given that official industry research shows that more and more shoppers are nowadays seeking high quality, local food. And, significantly, despite difficult economic times, many of them say that they are prepared to pay more for it.

I have spent over four decades writing about local food, not just in the UK but on the wider international scene in places as far apart as Buenos Aires and Thailand, but I cannot recall a single foodie event has inspired me as much as last weekend's festival.

Not for Herefordians a jumble of badly presented stalls offering a sad smattering of products and manned by a group of disinterested, badly briefed, bored sales folk.

Whether it was the local producers, farmers' market stallholders, the artisan crafts folk, the entertainers or the regiments of eager customers, Hereford showed a passion for and a pride in local products that was infectious. And, by the way, I would also applaud the many helpful Hereford shopkeepers who entered into the spirit of the occasion in such an encouraging fashion.

The town centre setting was spectacular and it was a tribute to Sir Ben Gill, chair of Visit Herefordshire and his organising team, that the event attracted so many visitors. Their stated objective of blending tourism and local food was obvious to all and I predict that it is something that festival organisers in other parts of the UK will try to copy.

Yet, maintaining and developing a formula that remains attractive to the discerning shopping public, not to mention a fast evolving trading scene, can be difficult, as the festival disasters to which I referred earlier have illustrated.

I have no such fears for the allpay Flavours of Herefordshire spectacular. Last weekend's event proved that its exhibitors and organisers have the innovative talents for success when it comes to modern promotional methods.

Thus I expect shoppers to flock to the event for many years to come. I will certainly be coming back.



<b>What can be improved for future years and how this can be addressed</b>	
<b>Signage around the festival site needs improving</b>	<p>Signage needs to point to and back from all venues</p> <p>Ensure signage is not obstructed by vehicles</p> <p>Additional signage around the festival linking all venues</p>
<b>Increase the number of volunteers over the two day event</b>	<p>Recruit additional volunteers for the weekend and pre train prior to the event</p> <p>Contact local societies &amp; groups early</p> <p>Pay a small fee to volunteers</p>
<b>Refreshments for staff/volunteers/exhibitors</b>	<p>Arrange for tea and coffee to be supplied to all free of charge or donations. We already have someone interested in providing this</p>
<b>Children's entertainment to continue over two days and within close proximity</b>	<p>Look for further funding to enable</p> <p>Look at alternative venues for children's activity to take place</p> <p>Look at working with colleges to help with provision of entertainment</p>
<b>Toilets in High Town</b>	<p>Liaise with the council to ensure the toilet facilities are well maintained throughout both days of the festival</p>
<b>Shire Hall too far away from festival site, it felt disconnected.</b>	<p>Look at alternative venues for the Celebrity Theatre, ideas have already been put forward for us to explore.</p>



Benefits to the County	Benefits to the City of Hereford
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced national marketing campaign – doubling the marketing for the county</li> <li>• Increased public transport revenue. One company reported increased takings on the Ledbury-Hereford service by £1,2500</li> <li>• Promoting local food &amp; drink and bringing down food miles</li> <li>• Involvement of countywide businesses, encouraging and supporting increased economic benefits to the county</li> <li>• Showcasing the county and encouraging visitors to return to the area</li> <li>• Increasing awareness of the diversity of products &amp; businesses</li> <li>• Relationship building between producers, sellers and purchasers</li> <li>• Putting Herefordshire on the map</li> <li>• Sponsorship supporting smaller businesses/producers</li> <li>• Providing a focus and sales venue for county producers</li> <li>• Recognition through county competitions</li> <li>• Volunteering opportunities to assist at the Festival</li> <li>• Community involvement, whether participating, supporting or performing</li> <li>• National media and celebrity presence into</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A High Town clothing retailer reported 50% upturn in sales on Saturday &amp; 70% on Sunday</li> <li>• W H Smith reported £6,000 increase on takings on Saturday with similar increases on Sunday</li> <li>• Parking transactions comparison October 2011 saw £78,766 October 2012 saw £89,100</li> <li>• Bringing thousands of visitors into the city</li> <li>• Providing fun free events for the local community and visitors, as well as promoting quality local food and drink</li> <li>• Increased spend into the city, supporting city retailers</li> <li>• Feel good factor</li> <li>• Free event enabling the whole community to enjoy what Herefordshire has to offer</li> <li>• The opportunity for local retailers to showcase their businesses to a wide audience</li> <li>• Opportunity to enhance their business to increase revenue and recognition</li> <li>• Achieved great media exposure for the city</li> <li>• Showcase a stunning location in the heart of the city</li> <li>• Great opportunity for volunteers to get involved in their City</li> </ul>



<p>the county</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased activity using social media marketing leading up to and during the festival</li> <li>• Provide a great feel good factor for the whole community</li> <li>• Increased revenue through car parks and public transport</li> <li>• Increased economic benefits remaining within the county for county businesses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased revenue to Shire Hall</li> <li>• Increased business to local restaurants, cafes, hotels and guest houses</li> <li>• Awareness of what the City of Hereford has to offer</li> <li>• Businesses able to use the Festival as an opportunity to promote directly to their target market</li> <li>• It showed Hereford in a positive light</li> <li>• Platform for local entertainers and community groups</li> <li>• Actively involved many of the local retailers in the city - not just with Food &amp; Drink</li> </ul>
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