

IncludFEST 2021

14th & 15th August



Evaluation Report



T!NARTS

What is IncludFEST?

IncludFEST is a free, inclusive and fully accessible outdoor arts festival for Deaf and disabled children and young people.

The festival took place on Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th August 2021 at Ushaw Historic House, Chapel and Gardens, Durham.

Sunday 15th suffered due to bad weather and for those who were not able to attend, home activity packs were posted. The activities were influenced by performances that were programmed for the day.

Over the course of IncludFEST 2021, we welcomed thirty-three family groups. In line with COVID-19 guidance at the time, audience members were invited to attend in bubbles of up to 6 people and were hosted in their own private gazebo to ensure the event was COVID secure.

IncludFEST brought together 24 Artists and Performers who delivered a performance which included live music, dance, story-telling and street theatre.

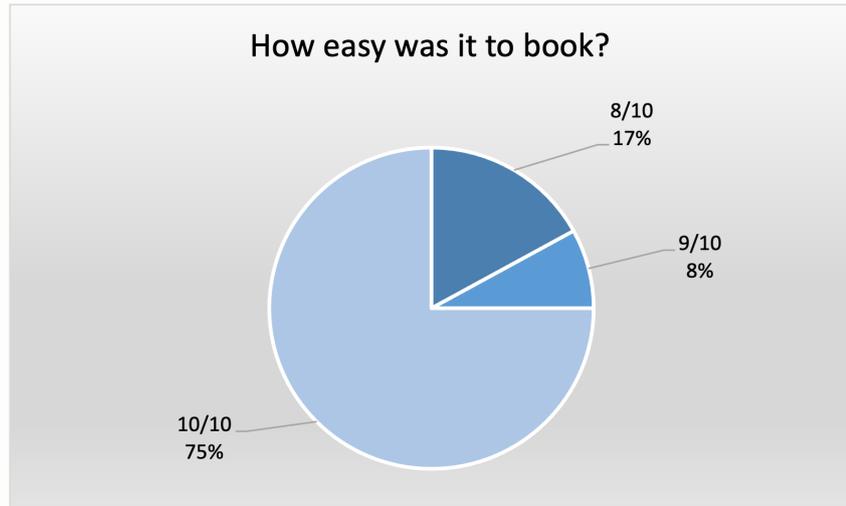
Following the event we asked all those who attended including artists, providers, performers and stewards to complete online surveys as part of our evaluation process. This report shares the findings.



Audience's Pre-event Experience

In the IncludFEST guide, which we distributed ahead of the event, audience members reported that they found the following information most useful:

- IncludFEST Programme
- Information on what to Bring
- A Sensory Guide
- Transport and Parking Information



Access provision includes **British Sign Language** interpretation and **Mobiloo** (a mobile changing places facility)

Your event hosts are the fantastic **Shabang Inclusive Learning** alongside the wonderful **Ruben Reuter**, also known as Finn McLaine from CBBC's 'The Dumping Ground'.

Hosts

Music
Katie Doherty
 Award winning songwriter Katie Doherty performs songs to lift your hearts, raise your voices and join in with. "Real life has rarely sounded as good." - NARK Magazine

Dance
Payal Ramchandani
 The Tree Hugger: This storytelling performance in the Indian classical style of Kuchipudi explores the idea of togetherness but also depicts reverence and humility regarding our place in nature.

Storytelling
Elena Joy Miller - Star Bright Arts
 The Mystery of Surviv on Sea: Be part of Sam and Jimmy's amazing adventure, where the roll of the dice decides which story path they take!

Theatre
Bell and Bullock Street Theatre Co.
 The Doves of Hope & Glory: Jet-setters Monty and Minty will perform dazzling diabolo skills. Their finale features two brave (toy) doves being fired from a cannon into a net!

Dance
TIN Arts' Inclusive Youth Dance Co. - D+
 Inspired by the courageous journey of one of the dancers, D+ share a dance that is close to their hearts. This piece explores determination and true friendship.

@includfest

Funded by: Produced by: Supported by:

IncludFEST Programme



Sensory Guide: IncludFEST

A guide to the sounds of IncludFEST

A DJ playing Live music

A singer with a piano

Music played through speakers

A 'toy' cannon with a soft 'BANG!'

People shaking or banging hand-held instruments

Applause

A clock that chimes every 15 minutes

Sensory Guide



An example of the Parking Pass we supplied alongside Transport and Parking information:



IncludFEST Parking Pass

Saturday 14th August, 12pm Performance

A red rectangular graphic containing two analog clock faces and two white text boxes. The top clock shows 11:30, with the time '11:30' displayed in green on a black background below it. To the right of this clock is a white box with the text 'Arrival time: 11.30am'. The bottom clock shows 1:30, with the time '1:30' displayed in green on a black background below it. To the right of this clock is a white box with the text 'Departure time by 1.30pm'.

Audiences were also asked 'was there anything that we did that particularly helped you to access the festival?'. Below are notable comments:

"Parking permit and ushers were excellent, so nice to see TIN staff and volunteers on the way in and out."

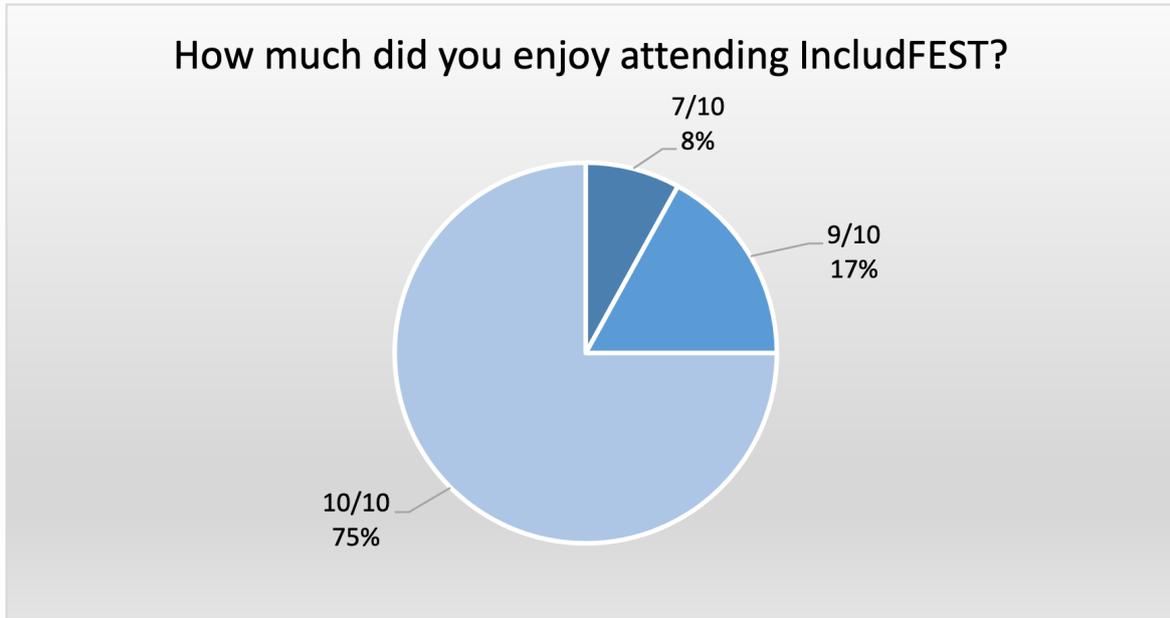
"Guides along the path to explain what will happen/where event is etc."

"Sharing information beforehand, my children had a really good idea of what to expect."

"Clear visibility of stewards - from the guide provided we knew to look for purple hi vis."

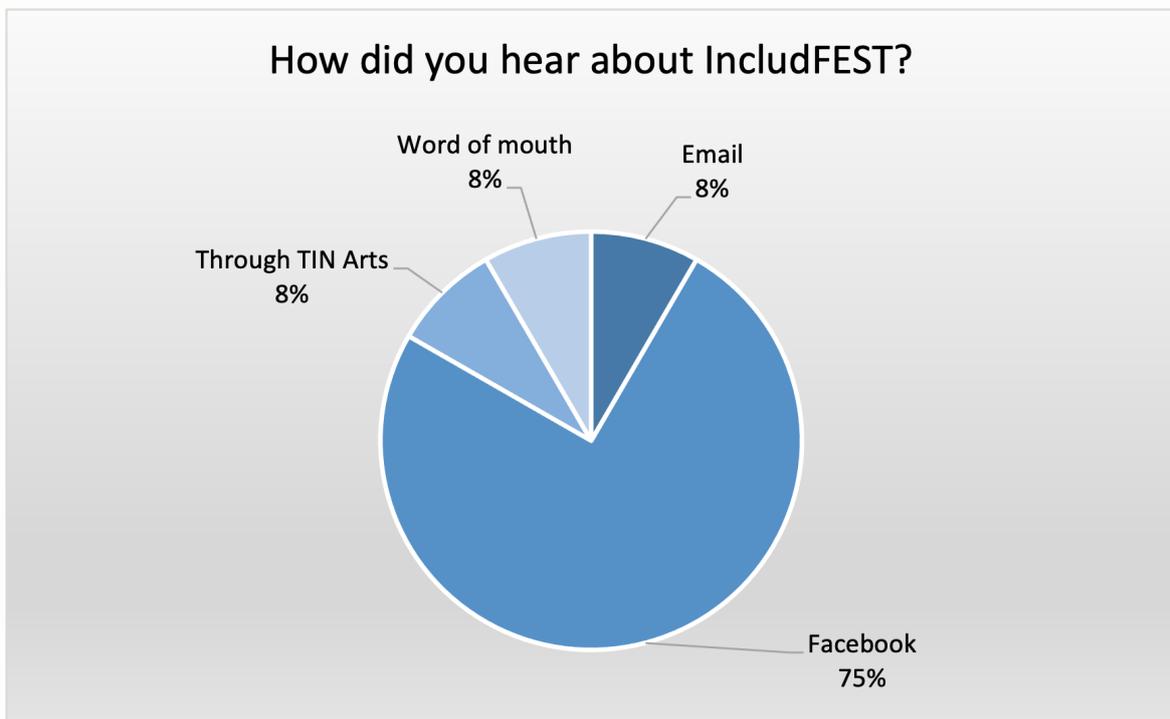


Audience's Overall Experience of IncludFEST



100% of people stated that their experience 'was better than [they] expected.'

100% of people stated that they would attend IncludFEST again the future.



The most popular reasons as to why an audience member attended IncludFEST in 2021 were:

- It was advertised as 'inclusive and accessible'
- Free of charge



We asked attendees whether they liked the new gazebo layout which was introduced for 2021, and if so, why. They said:

"Yes definitely. Enjoyed and viewed all acts from one place. If James got upset, I could calm him without upsetting other families."

"I think the gazebos were very appropriate after lock down to aid social distancing. I think the gazebos maybe useful for some families in the future who find noise, people scary."

"Gazebos were a unique nice touch and facility. We felt safe and happy family time."

"Gave our kids clear limits on where to be, and knew it was an hour which I think helped them with any anxiety or concerns about how they felt about being at a new event. In less "covidy" times gazebos would be nice, even without the side panel separations."



We asked the audience (and in particular the young people) how coming to IncludFEST made them feel. The most popular responses were:

- 100% happy
- 83% entertained
- 75% like I want to come and watch the performances again



When asked whether there is anything else TIN should know, one audience member provided this notable response:

"Just a huge thank you to all concerned. Finding appropriate activities for children with hidden disabilities is challenging.

We loved every part of the experience, from the welcome at the car park by the stewards, from Gertie who admired our rosettes at the first gazebo, to meeting Akari and getting a "shout out" from the DJ as we walked past to go in and on the way out, to the clear friendly directions from more stewards.

Performance space so lovely and acts themselves in turns hilarious, entertaining, spellbinding and moving. Daughter (8) thrilled to meet Ruben and enjoyed moving and dancing, and even son (11) said after a few minutes of it starting that it was much better than he expected!

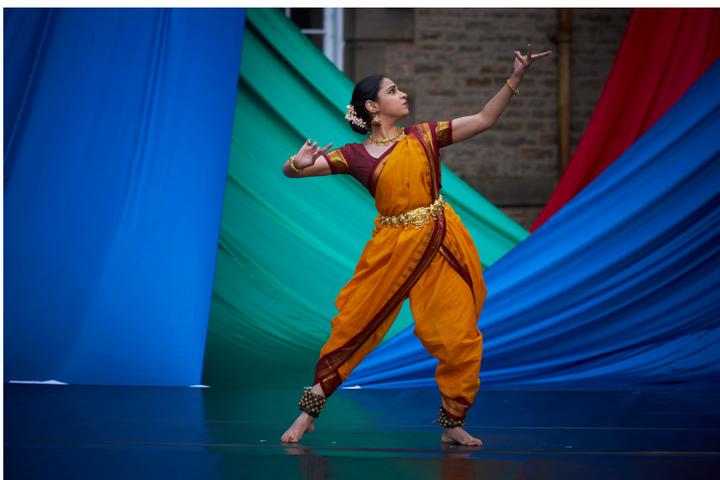
Husband and I could relax and enjoy it too knowing the kids were safe and that we wouldn't have to worry about aspects of the childrens' "behaviour" due to their disability (FASD) bothering anyone around is. Beautiful setting for it too, we were already Ushaw pass holders so lovely to visit there again."



Provider's Experience of IncludFEST

In the lead up to the festival, the providers commented on the following information being most helpful/positive:

- All information given, what Tin expected me to create, for back ground and colour bunting was very clear. **It was good to have a zoom call to meet everybody involved.** On the day everything was very clear and well organised. E-mails contain always the right amount of information.
- **The information regarding the schedule and timeline for the rehearsal and the performance was extremely clear.** Communication with the team was easy and very helpful in understanding my role and the overall process. **The team was very responsive at all times.**
- Excellent communication and **clearly defined roles.** Team meetings so I knew who else would be there on the day.

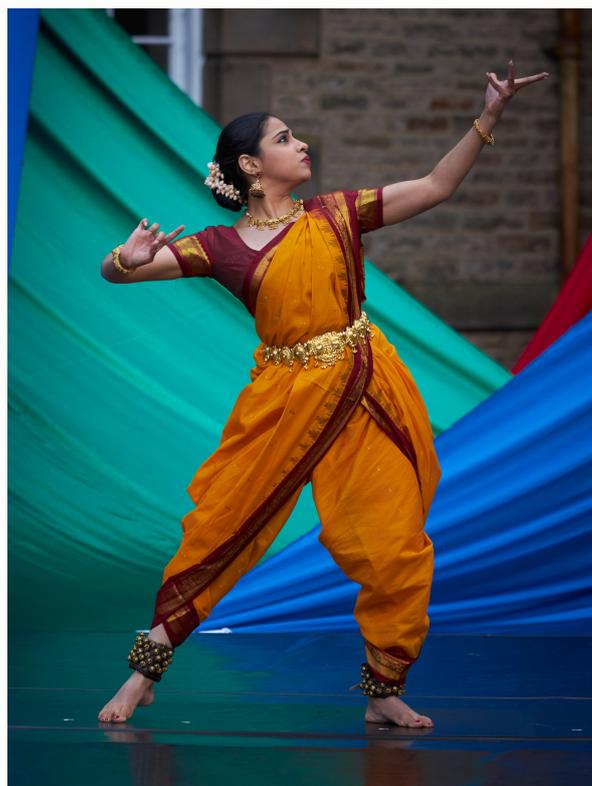


When asked about their personal experience of the festival (both good and bad), the following notable comments were submitted:

"A great experience all round for me. I liked the site, thought it was well used and could see plenty of room for further development.

The centrepiece show was a healthy entertaining mix that was engaging throughout. I liked the amount of participation that was built in too. I've found over the years that audiences love that.

Staff were helpful in all areas, good positive bunch right through from planning stage to delivery. Gate staff/stewards outside were all keen to help and very professional. Staff/workers/performers inside and in the courtyard were focused on delivering a quality entertaining show in a fun and safe way."



"It's been a privilege to be a part of IncludFest this year. It was wonderful to see audiences enjoy and partake in that celebration through art.

It's heart warming to see TIN arts work tirelessly to make art more inclusive and enable audiences to feel welcomed for a performance.

I really hope TIN arts continues with its amazing work, standing firm on the principles of inclusivity and diversity."

When asked about how IncludFEST responded to the issue of Covid-19 and keeping everyone safe:

"Safety seemed built into the event rather than bolted on. I thought the format worked with the current pandemic climate and integrated that into delivering a great fun and high quality experience. I liked the colour coded bubble groups and personal space concept and heard many comment on liking it when the audience came out of the show. I described the gazebos as private booths/royal boxes/vip areas as part of my compere speel when folks came into the event and everyone seemed to really like the idea. The format may have limited the time folks spent on site but it seemed to deliver a great fun meaningful artistic experience."

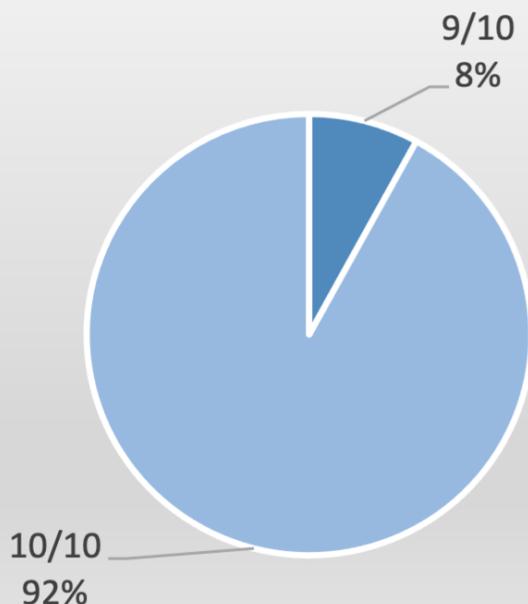
"I think the format works very well and could be employed for future events easily. I think it could go some way to helping those who don't like a crowd at any time attend a festival such as this. The format could, perhaps, be set up for one day of a two day festival or set up separately as part of a larger festival to get best of both worlds."

"I thought it was an innovative way of responding to the pandemic. The gazebo viewing spaces were great- the families seemed to look happy with their rosette and colour area. I really wanted the kids to come up and dance with us - so was sad to seem them not allowed (but obviously this is covid and not you guys)."

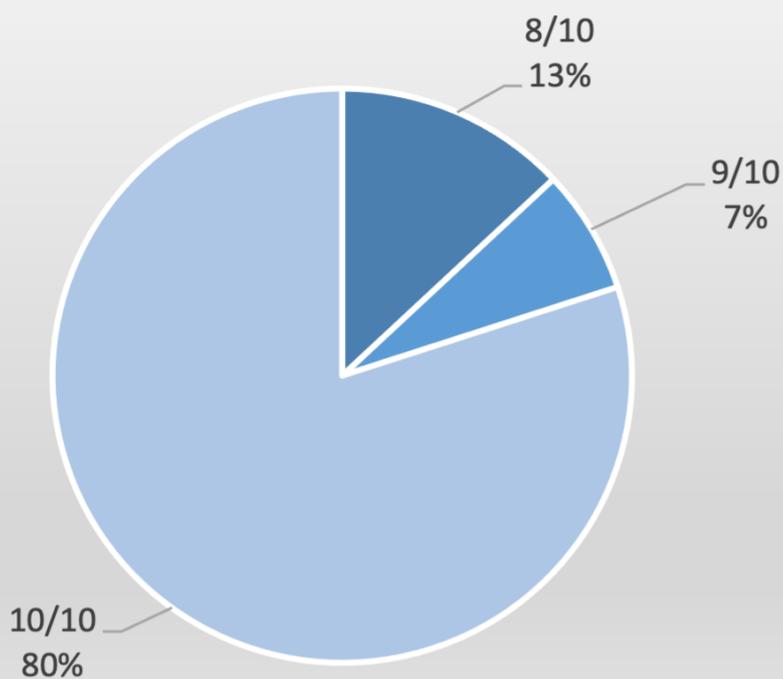
"The whole festival was top notch. Well planned, promoted and delivered. As I'm filling in this very form, I know reflection and feedback is also being valued which is a real positive thing often overlooked. Hopefully Ushaw are forward thinking and have the right staff in place to develop things there as an accessible and multi use venue, lots of potential. There are obviously many things that could be done but in the context of our time there, one practical thing would be rigging eyes in the courtyard for a temporary stretch cover of a performance area. On a wider point, I thought the festival/show was almost demanding to be toured. I'm sure it's something you've considered. I see IncludFEST as an exemplar event that lots of regions/bodies/authorities/folks would gain/learn a lot from. A pleasure to be involved again."

Overall Experience in terms of Covid-19

How safe did Audience Memembrs feel when attending IncludFEST in terms of Covid-19?



How safe did Providers and Stewards feel when they attended IncludFEST in terms of Covid-19?



Notable measures captured through evaluation that contributed towards the providers and stewards feeling safe:

- Being outdoors for the performances
- Audiences attending in groups and not mixing with other people
- Information that TIN Arts shared beforehand about staying covid-19 safe
- IncludFEST team not making physical contact and keeping their distance
- PPE (sanitiser, wipes, clean bin bag) provided
- IncludFEST team wearing masks when indoors
- Lateral flow testing as part of attending
- Colour coding throughout to help team recognise audience rather than collecting tickets
- Not sharing equipment where possible
- Stage being a set distance from audience groups

The most significant 3 measures for providers and stewards:

- Being outdoors for the performances
- Lateral flow testing as part of attending
- Audiences attending in groups and not mixing with other people

The most significant 3 measures for audience members:

- Being outdoors for the performances
- Use of individual gazebos for groups attending
- Colour coding throughout (from parking through to your gazebo) to help with directions and our team 'recognising' groups on arrival



Recommendations & Wider Learning

The following key areas came through the evaluation strongly and will a) be embedded in future IncludFEST events and b) are offered for consideration at other outdoor arts events / festivals.

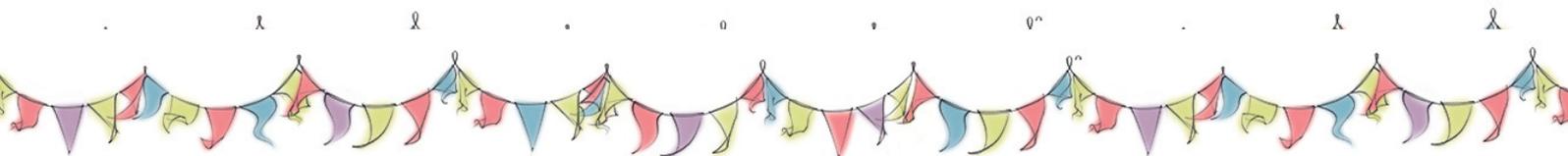
- Clear accessible information being provided ahead of the event/festival (Page 3) including Programme and A Sensory Guide.
- A sensory guide is an additional and extremely useful piece of information to make available.
- Key messaging included in promotional material flagging up 'inclusive and accessible' alongside placement of information about access on websites and other media platforms.
- Being able to create discreet spaces for certain audience groups resulted in many attending who would not ordinarily attend largely based on anxiety about how others would respond to their child/young person.
- Creating opportunities for those attending to share information about their needs before attending and an active dialogue taking place in order to meet needs or manage expectations
- Providing a named person as lead contact as well as pictures of staff on site who will meet and greet attendees
- As part of IncludFEST 2021 we have asked those attending if they would be happy to be involved in the planning of IF2022 as well as other events / festivals if invited. 12 families agreed to be contacted in future.
- Future IF events need to be resourced at equivalent to 2021 levels to maintain levels of access and inclusion alongside covid security for 2022 and future years.



2022 and beyond

Moving forwards TIN Arts (producers of IncludFEST) will seek to undertake the following:

- Confirm resource required and secure in order to be able to programme IncludFEST for summer 2022 by no later than end of February 2022 including confirmation of venue, dates and format.
- Explore how resource can be identified and secured to expand IncludFEST to include:
 - smaller intimate performances for children and young people with disabilities in line with 2021 format alongside,
 - larger 'open' IncludFEST for disabled and non-disabled children, young people and families to attend and experience a range of activities including walkabout theatre, static shows and participatory workshops.
- Identify potential opportunities / partners to enable IncludFEST to move around County Durham and occur on multiple occasions within 2022 either as discreet events or as part of larger events.
- Pro-actively share key access and inclusion recommendations drawn from IncludFEST 2021 with event organisers from across the North East and make ourselves available where appropriate to support the adoption and embedding of the recommendations.



Thank you!

TIN Arts would like to say a huge thank you all who were involved in and helped ensure that IncludFEST 2021 was a great success!

We are really grateful for all your help and support, despite additional pressures resulting from Covid-19.

Thanks go to:

Katie Doherty, Payal Ramchandani, Shabang!, Elena Joy Miller, Bell and Bullock, D+, Greener Lavelle, Des Basterfield, Gem Arts.

North East Medical Services, Mobiloo, Graeme Nixon, Michael Morgan, Melissa Chan, Marc Jones.

Ushaw Historic House, Chapel, and Gardens.

All volunteers and stewards.

TIN Arts team.

Images contained in this report - Credit: Ian Paine

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