

CowParade Northern Ireland 2012 – Summary Paper

Introduction:

CowParade brings life size fibre-glass reinforced cows to the streets of a host region, where decorated by local artists they are placed on display for public viewing over a festival period (usually 3 months).

CowParade is the world's largest and most successful public art exhibition, having taken place in over 50 cities globally since its conception in the late 1990s. In Europe and the UK, most successful parades include London, Edinburgh, Manchester, Prague, Madrid, Stockholm and Brussels. Each event is unique and methods of hosting are at the discretion of the event organisers.

CowParade is more than simply an arts festival. It's also a tourist initiative, an attraction, a tried and tested footfall and revenue driver to the host region. Its quirky nature guarantees huge levels of media exposure to the host region, to individual cows, artists and sponsors, on a local, national and international scale.

A charity auction at the end of the event raises money for chosen charity partners, and all contributing artists are paid a fee.

Asitis Consulting:

Asitis Consulting have secured the license to bring CowParade to Northern Ireland in 2012. Asitis is a Belfast based leading communications agency specialising in public relations, public affairs, advertising, marketing and events.

We have been granted the license to operate CowParade as a public arts festival in Northern Ireland 2012, due to our communications experience and our event management expertise. Of particular note, Rachel Hart who is managing logistics on the project previously worked on CowParade London 2012 in a logistics management role.

Background to CowParade Northern Ireland:

During negotiations with the licensee (CowParade Holdings U.S.), it became apparent that the potential of CowParade as an event had already been recognised in various Council boroughs of Northern Ireland. Plans had already been proposed to host the event in Belfast (Belfast City Council), Ards (Ards Borough Council) and Banbridge (Banbridge Borough Council). Whilst we are not aware if any of these went to committee, we do know having discussed the plans with each party, that whilst the plans were

advanced and exciting, the financial implications of managing the entire event were simply not feasible for a public sector organisation. For example, for Belfast City Council to run the Parade it would have required funding in excess of £300,000. Ards Borough Council were also looking in the region of £200,000.

With Asitis Consulting hosting CowParade, the event is being run to a different business model and Councils are being invited to participate on a smaller scale sponsorship level.

CowParade Business Model overview:

The entire event is funded through private/public sector sponsorship of the individual cows. There is no set ratio for this breakdown, each event is unique, but there is always a substantial element of public funding required.

Packages are devised offering sponsorship of individual cows through to herds. A small artisan food producer with a dairy connection, for example, might be interested in taking on an individual cow. A larger corporate company might take on a herd of cows and position them in different areas relevant to their business interests.

Entire event production costs are funded through the sponsorship of cows.
Event production costs include:

- Purchase of steel reinforced fibre-glass life size cows
- Shipping, transportation and logistics costs
- Artists' fees for decoration of cow.
- Location planning, liaison and securing cow in position on cement bases.
- Sponsor listing and details on plaque, and in official publication
- Insurance and repair where required
- Surrounding media exposure (through event management PR and Marketing channels)
- Marketing and design costs for official event (website, advertising etc).
- All event labour costs.

The event will not make a surplus.

Charity partners are responsible for organising and marketing the charity auction that takes place at the conclusion of the public display. All proceeds then go to their projects of choice (apart from 20% which currently goes to CowParade Holdings in the US towards event costs. Please note this is under negotiation with a view to them taking a reduced percentage of proceeds).

CowParade Northern Ireland – summary of plans:

CowParade Northern Ireland is hoping to achieve sponsorship in the region of 270 cows. This would make it one of the largest to date, and the largest in Europe. We are looking to make it the most community inclusive to date, by encouraging collaborations between corporate sponsors and communities wherever possible.

CowParade Northern Ireland is of particular interest to CowParade Holdings in the US (the licensor) in that it will be the first to take place in a post-conflict region. This offers a refreshing and unique element to the parade which can be demonstrated by the decoration of the cows and the positioning of the cows. We envisage there being huge media exposure given this. For example, we want to host the world's first Peace Line Cow, we are intent on working with cross-community groups on decoration of cows and have already had positive conversations with groups keen to participate – for example, the Inner East Network in Belfast East.

CowParade Northern Ireland will also be the first to date to take place across an entire region. We have chosen to operate CowParade on a nationwide scale for two key reasons. In order to achieve the required levels of sponsorship to fund an event of this scale, we believe we need to be targeting sponsorship from across the region rather than one specific area. In order to make the sponsorship proposal as attractive as possible, we also feel we need to achieve the widest possible audience, both in terms of stay-at-home footfall visitors, and visitors from further afield through media exposure – local, national and international. Secondly, 2012 is a significant year for tourism in Northern Ireland with several signature projects reaching completion. We do not see CowParade as being a competitor to these other initiatives, but as a cohesive accessory. Later case studies will demonstrate how sponsorship of cows significantly helps to drive footfall and revenue for existing attractions.

Timings of CowParade Northern Ireland 2012:

September 2012:

A media announcement will be made that CowParade will be coming to Northern Ireland in 2012. This will act as the launch to the sponsorship drive.

Autumn 2012:

Throughout the autumn of 2012 we will be working alongside our designated sponsorship sales team towards our target of 270 cows. Sponsorship targets have been broken down by sector, size and region.

The autumn will also see a Call to Artists being issued through media channels and through the event website. This will encourage artists to submit designs for cows.

A sponsor can choose a submitted design or work with an artist of their choice to their own brief. Whilst a logo can't be replicated on to the body of the cow, many sponsors find innovative ways to convey their brand colours / symbols / messages through creative decoration of their cow. The attached presentation "Rogues Gallery" provides some examples.

April / March 2012:

The blank cows will be ordered early 2012 to arrive at the end of April / beginning of March. A two month painting period will then commence. Artists can either transport their cow to their studio space, or work in a communal painting space which can be

accessed by the public. We are working to secure locations throughout the region (to be determined by number of cows and locations) which may be used as painting spaces. These same spaces then act as the sometimes required “Cow Hospitals” for the duration of the event. In Derry-Londonderry we have had initial conversations about taking over a space in Ebrington Barracks for the painting period. We would use media channels to try to encourage residents and those from further afield to watch the painting taking place on designated occasions. In Manchester, the CowParade Hospital proved to be the most popular attraction, bringing in over 40,000 visitors to watch the cows being patched up.

May 2012:

CowParade Northern Ireland will launch officially at The Balmoral Show 2012. Alongside the obvious agricultural synergy, it offers an opportunity for additional media exposure. On the Friday we will have all painted cows en masse in the Paddock for an official launch and prize giving ceremony.

June, July, August 2012:

The official CowParade will take place over the three month summer period June, July, August (exact dates to be confirmed).

Cows will be positioned in various places, dependant on agreement with its sponsor. Wherever possible we will identify “Cow Trails” grouping together cows in one region to offer half-day and day trips, and walking trails in urban centres. We are speaking to Tour Guide companies in relation to devising specific “Cow Tours” to maximise the three month display period.

In developing their plans for CowParade, Ards Borough Council identified their proposed “Cow Trail”, circumnavigating Strangford Lough, with locations for 30 cows identified. We will be working with each participating council to identify best possible locations for cows based on anticipated footfall, and also ensuring a community-wide spread.

The cows are put into position by being secured onto specially constructed cement bases for security purposes. A brass plaque details the cows name, the sponsor and the artist.

Once in place the cows remain there for the three month viewing period. If there is a requirement to move cows during this time, for example, to take to a relevant festival for a weekend, then to be returned, this is something that is achievable, but with additional logistical expense.

At the end of August the CowParade will conclude with a closing festival. We are keen for Derry City to host this, given the launch event is taking place in Belfast.

September / October 2012:

The charity partners will host the CowParade auction at which a number of cows will be auctioned off. Please note, sponsorship packages vary from individual cow sponsorship (for the three month period) to packages which include cows that the sponsor may keep. These cows are not auctioned. We are also keen to ensure that cows that have been

painted through community project collaborations are left in their communities as a legacy of the work involved.

CowParade Northern Ireland – Supporting Partners

Over the past 18 months we have gained the support of numerous bodies, including:

Charity Partners:

The chosen Charity Partners for CowParade Northern Ireland are DePaul Ireland and Barnardos. Funds raised must be used on Northern Ireland specific projects that focus on child/youth issues.

Barnardos are looking to raise money for their Dr B's project – a restaurant in Belfast that trains special needs and disadvantaged youngsters, many of whom go on to work in professional kitchens throughout Ireland and the UK.

DePaul Ireland have recently taken over the Foyle Haven project in Derry-Londonderry and will put funding raised towards a project helping young people in the city

DCAL:

A briefing presentation was made to Culture Minister, Caral Ni Chuilin, who supports the project and is keen to participate in launch announcements. She was particularly interested in, and encouraging of, the community element to the parade.

DETI:

A briefing presentation was made to Noel Cornick, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Industry, who was supportive of the project and was happy to pursue with The Minister. Whilst we hope to have their support for the official launch at The Balmoral Show, DETI would not be in the position to publicly endorse the project at the present time due to the conflict of interests with the NITB Events Funding application (see below).

NITB:

Further to several meetings with the Northern Ireland Tourist Board Events Team, we will be applying for funding from the 2012 events fund, due to launch 6th September, 2011. Funds will be applied for to boost our marketing budget prior to the spring launch, and also to cover internal labour costs on this event.

Arts Council Northern Ireland:

A briefing presentation was made to **Arts Council of NI** chief executive **Roisin McDonagh** with a view to linking in to their Re-imaging project. Ongoing discussions are taking place with a view to potential funding streams being made available for community groups to access, who wish to take part in CowParade. The Arts Council are fully supportive of CowParade as a concept.

Arts & Business Northern Ireland:

Ongoing discussions are taking place with Arts & Business Northern Ireland, further to initial discussions with Director Mary Trainor. We are keen to utilise the help of Arts & Business to maximise the potential for commerce and cultural collaborations.

Media Partners:

A tender was put out for media partners for the event. We are excited to be working with a unique collaboration between The Irish News and The Newsletter. With their regional publications (including The Derry Sentinel) they anticipate a readership in the region of 500,000 for the official CowParade supplement. This will be produced to be distributed at the launch, and from various outlets throughout the summer.

Northern Ireland Councils:

Discussions are underway with several regional councils with a view to their participation in CowParade. These include, Ards, Banbridge, Down, North Down, Craigavon, Newry, Fermanagh and Newtownabbey. We are in the process of briefing all other councils.

Benefits:

There are huge benefits to the community and host region from participating in CowParade. In evaluating the potential benefits of bringing CowParade to Northern Ireland we studied over 20 previous events thoroughly, to determine impact and return on investment.

Case Studies:**Chicago CowParade 1999:**

Whilst we do not envisage CowParade Northern Ireland being on a scale anywhere near Chicago in terms of size, revenue generated and footfall, it is a great example of the huge popularity of the life-size fibre glass painted cows. With over 400 cows on the streets of Chicago, on street corners, in parks, in shopping centres, theatres, art galleries, restaurants and bars, anywhere you least expected to see a cow you could guarantee there would be one. The event gained huge US wide media exposure with coverage including Good Morning America, The Oprah Winfrey Show, CBS This Morning, The Today Show, People Magazine, USA Today, The WSJ and the New York Times. A post evaluation report estimated that the cows were viewed by over 10 million people, and had an economic impact of over US\$200 million through visitor spend. Mayor Daley has described it as “the most successful public art event in the City’s history”.

Edinburgh CowParade 2006:

Edinburgh CowParade took place in the spring/early summer of 2006. The Council were looking to fill gap in their events calendar prior to annual Edinburgh Festival. 120 cows took to the streets of the City to great effect. Visitor figures to the city increased by 15%

across this period, in contrast to the same period the previous year. There were no other unique events taking place at the time.

Attractions that hosted cows on site – for example The Botanic Gardens, and the National Museum, reported an average visitor increase for the duration of CowParade of 24% against the same period the previous year. Of particular note, these two attractions both claimed to have no other exhibition or event of note that would be competing in bringing in these numbers, and both reference many visitors specifically asking for the location of the cows and claiming they had never visited that attraction previously. Corporate sponsorship was high on this event. Retailers who hosted cows on site, either inside or outside their premises, reported an average 28% increase in revenue over the three month duration. The city retail industry as a whole saw a 5% increase in revenue during this period, on the same period the previous year.

Margaret River CowParade 2010:

Margaret River is a remote community over two hours drive south of Perth in Western Australia. With a population of just 16,000, the area had seen a rapid decline in their agricultural industry over the past twenty years. Looking towards tourism an identified revenue driver, the Tourist bodies worked alongside local vineyards to establish the area as a wine region / tourist destination along the model of Napa Valley in California. After much initial scepticism from the Council, it was agreed to bring CowParade to Margaret River in 2010.

This was the first CowParade to take place across a rural region rather than in an urban setting. Over the duration of the event in excess of 65,000 official “CowParade Margaret River Tour Trail” brochures were sold.

Participating vineyards reported an increase in revenue of 27% and have since reported a strong legacy in footfall increase with a continued visitor increase since the event of 11%. The event went on to win the Gold Award for “Best Tourism Initiative” at the Western Australian Tourism Awards.

We have looked closely at both Edinburgh and Margaret River events as we believe it provides us with a strong overview of how to make the event a success when operated in both urban and rural areas.

Northern Ireland – anticipated visitor numbers and revenue

Anticipated Visitor Numbers CowParade Northern Ireland 2012

Our projected visitor and revenue figures have been independently audited by FGS McClure Watters on behalf of NITB.

Key Statistics:

- Moderate projected visitors for Cow Parade anticipated being in region of 100,000 visitors.
- Figures arrived at through evaluation of previous CowParade events, similar public arts events and current visitor numbers for Northern Ireland wide attractions
- Projected ‘total direct economic impact’ of £1.4 million
- Revenue calculated on identified average daily spend

Rationale:

- We have studied closely footfall figures for over 20 CowParade events globally. Of particular relevance to our planning were the events that took place in Edinburgh and Manchester as these successfully combined community arts projects with educational projects and specific tourist trails to increase footfall.
- Off the back of the success of Manchester CowParade, several award-winning events have been hosted in UK cities with great success. These include RhinoMania in Chester and Superlambananas for Liverpool European City of Culture. Each has been based on the CowParade model with similar CSR programmes and Sponsorship programmes, and a Charity Auction at the end. These have formed particularly useful case-studies.
- By positioning of cows on specific “CowTrails”, in our case along established NITB tourist trails, we are maximising potential visitor numbers.
- We are proposing linking in with existing tourist attractions and signature projects to enhance visitor experience to those attractions, and to increase footfall throughout the region as a whole
- The aim is for CowParade to act a cohesive tourist trail, taking visitors from one area to another
- We are not claiming that visitor numbers for attractions will be specific to cowparade, but we are confident, based on previous events visitor figures, that we will attract an increase of a minimum of 11.9% to each attraction that hosts cows. The average for Edinburgh was actually 24%, as outlined below

Potential Visitor Numbers – CowParade 2012 when linked in to existing attractions:
 (We are looking to have a cow presence in all of the Top 10 attractions listed below, and will be approaching other participating attractions detailed as part of our ongoing sponsorship programme)

Top 10 participating tourist attractions visited 2009 (excluding Country Parks / Gardens)					
		No's 2009	11.90%	24.00%	26%
1	Giants Causeway Visitor Centre	714,612	85,039	171,507	185,799
2	Oxford Island National Nature Reserve	324,947	38,669	77,987	84,486
3	Belfast Zoological Gardens	304,085	36,186	72,980	79,062
4	Titanic's Dock and Pump House	261,200	31,083	62,688	67,912
5	W5	251,268	29,901	60,304	65,330
6	Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge	239,299	28,477	57,432	62,218
7	Derry Walls	225,765	26,866	54,184	58,699
8	Portstewart Strand	188,480	22,429	45,235	49,005
9	Ulster Folk and Transport Museum	169,628	20,186	40,711	44,103
10	Ulster American Folk Park	154,471	18,382	37,073	40,162
	Sub-Total:		337,217	680,101	736,777
	Anticipated Unique CP visitors:		77,819	156,946	170,025

All NI Country Park Attractions				
	No's 2009	11.90%	24.00%	26%
	3,244,912	386,145	778,779	843,677
All Participating NI Gardens				
	No's 2009	11.90%	24.00%	26%
	905,107	107,708	217,226	235,328

All Participating NI Historic Properties				
	No's 2009	11.90%	24.00%	26%
	1,209,589	143,941	290,301	314,493
All Participating Museums/Art Galleries				
	No's 2009	11.90%	24.00%	26%
	889,182	105,813	213,404	231,187
All Participating Visitor Heritage Centres				
	No's 2009	11.90%	24.00%	26%
	1,742,983	207,415	418,316	453,176
All Participating Wildlife, Zoo and Nature Reserves				
	No's 2009	11.90%	24.00%	26%
	962,756	114,568	231,061	250,317
Participating Workplace Attractions				
	No's 2009	11.90%	24.00%	26%
	13,868	1,650	3,328	3,606
Other Participating Attractions (e.g. Marble Arch Caves, Armagh Observatory, W5)				
	No's 2009	11.90%	24.00%	26%
	696,799	82,919	167,232	181,168
Section 2: Sub-Total:		1,150,158	2,319,647	2,512,951
Section 2: Total Anticipated Unique CP visitors:		265,421	535,303	579,912

*Royal Botanic Gardens Visitor Increase with CowParade Edinburgh 2006

***National Galleries Visitor Increase with CowParade Edinburgh 2006

**24% average visitor increase in CowParade exhibits linked directly to existing Tourist Attractions - Edinburgh 2006

Anticipated Unique CP Visitors based on annual visitors divided by 52 weeks, multiplied by 12 week duration

Notes:

Figures taken from audited NITB visitor figures for 2009.

The key column on this excel sheet is the 24% - which is taken from the average increase in visitor numbers to existing tourist attractions in Edinburgh, whilst CowParade took place.

To work out our CowParade figures we have taken this average increase, divided by 52 (weeks of year) and multiplied by 12 (proposed duration of our event).

As our sponsorship programme nears completion we will be able to give precise predictions based on known locations of cows. We are targeting an even split between existing "attractions" and corporate sponsor locations. We are also trying to ensure an even spread throughout the region.

Please also bear in mind that these figures exclude a summer weighting which would up the figures further.