

**26 April 2023**

## **AGM - Executive Producer Report**

### **2023 Sales/Marketing Update**

1. Sales: current total is c. £149,700 sold, sold & reserved takes this up to £264,355 (for reference, the box office total target in 2022 was £160k). We've been very cautious in our forecasting, based on industry data around the impact of COLC on audiences.
  - a. Sales breakdown: Alfie Boe & Welsh of the West End on over 2k tickets, COTW on over 400, schools concerts / Children's Day selling well – at the same level as 2022 (c.3k), other concerts selling more slowly, but there is a concerted marketing campaign starting from next week.
  - b. Eisteddfod Maes tickets will be going on sale this week, and full competition schedules will shortly be added to our website.
2. Our new Head of Marketing, Ceri Brierley, has been working flat out with the support of the Marketing Committee. Road signs and banners are being printed and will be going up as usual. Leaflets and posters are being printed.
  - a. We have made a decision this year to focus on local marketing, with a return to leaflet drops and print ads, with support from all local tourism bodies and councils on delivering these to the surrounding areas. This is based on evidence that post-Covid, audiences are responding better to print. We have diverted budget from radio ads for this process.
  - b. We're also working with a N. Wales PR company, and you will see stories in Welsh and Shropshire press over the coming days and weeks.

### **Funding/Income**

3. ACW Lottery bid was successful and we've been awarded the full £80,000 applied for, plus £3,000 to fund performers/speakers with accessibility needs.
4. At the end of January we submitted a large three year funding bid to Event Wales (a branch of Welsh Govt) and should hear back about this soon.
5. At the end of February we also submitted a large SPF/Levelling Up bid to DCC, with support from Llangollen Town Council and DLL, to support regeneration of the Eisteddfod site and land, as well as shared community initiatives. We will hear back about this during the summer, but the competition is extremely high.
6. At the end of March we submitted a large three year funding bid for a new 'Investment Review' fund from ACW. We will receive the results of this in September.
7. We have enquiries out with several sponsors, but will have a sponsorship pack available shortly if anyone would like to share this with business contacts with a number of opportunities still available. We also have ad space in the programme book, and competition prizes still to be sponsored. Please find me if you are interested!

### **Programme/Competitions**

8. Our final solo competition applications closed at the end of March. All competitions, apart from our new songwriting category, have now closed and selections have taken place. We've had a really strong set of applications, with final numbers are roughly 30 overseas groups and 30 UK groups, final soloist numbers TBC but high numbers of applications and a good standard. We will not be running hybrid/digital competition entry options this year, but are reviewing ways in which we can have a purely digital category in the future.
  - a. Please note: we have capacity within our Community Bands, new group dance categories (both junior and senior ballet/contemporary dance) and our song writing competition which will be opening shortly.

9. Chris Dukes has planned the Peace Message which will take place as part of our schools concerts.
10. The concert programme reflects our traditions of welcoming international performers, promoting peace through shared arts and culture, crowd-pleasing acts AND not being afraid to challenge and push artistic boundaries. It is this mix which ensures we achieve strong box office as well as attracting essential funding. I will be making some short videos to tell supporters and audiences more about our evening concerts so please look out for these. Highlights: White Flower, Celebration of Nations/Flight, Guy Barker.
11. We're working hard on the Eisteddfod Maes entertainment, with three stages (NB music will stop at 8pm to avoid noise bleed into the Pavilion), for music, competitors and talks/workshops, with scaled-up attractions for children, lots of family friendly activities, but also workshops and interactive sessions for all ages, including Indian dance, drumming, crafts, yoga, art, nature walks and opportunities to contribute to creating aspects of the Weds and Thurs evening concerts. Welsh language plays an important part across the Eisteddfod, so please look out for some fun opportunities to get involved. We'll also have a series of talks and events which echo the themes explored in the evening concerts; with a Peace Lecture, Peacemaker Awards, talks around the UNESCO 10 years of Indigenous Languages, the conflict in Ukraine, and also looking at the natural world, climate change and so on.
12. The Parade returns on Thursday 6 July from 4.30pm, following the usual route, but with a massed finishing performance on the field, and free site entry for spectators.
13. We are collaborating again with the Fringe this summer, joining our dates and working on complimentary programming, with the aim of elevating the profile of both events, offering more opportunities for each organisation and benefitting the town as a whole.
14. Rumours of VIP guest visits. NB not Royals. Welsh Govt, Welsh Muslim Council, British Council, A&B Cymru.

### **Technical/Production**

15. Grounds plans are proceeding well – the site plan is just about finalised, quotes are in from canvas and furniture providers and I'll be signing those off shortly.
16. Dave Danford has been contracted to act as Production Manager, mainly responsible for handling logistics and scheduling in the Pavilion, but also available for site-based advice/support.

### **Strategic/Organisational**

17. We were delighted to welcome Sarah Ecob as our new Chair of the Board last August. Sarah has proved a fantastic asset to the Eisteddfod, working with the EP and trustees to develop new income streams, artistic introductions and government and industry partnerships.
18. Recruitment of trustees to fill spaces on the Board will take place in time for the post-Eisteddfod EGM.
19. Committees update: Alix Rawlinson joined as Volunteer Coordinator in February, with a remit to provide support and stewardship of our large volunteer base. To lead with the EP on strategic development of volunteering to ensure standardised processes of recruitment and training of new and existing volunteers, and to work with committees to ensure their core needs are met.
  - a. Nash Committee Review: following the recruitment of Alix, and given current urgent funding concerns, the Board agreed to postpone releasing the Gregory Nash report until post-2023 Eisteddfod. There is a draft report, but Gregory recommended adding the proposed improvements/changes to his existing draft in order to save on his fees. The only delay on this process is due to volume of workload and capacity to complete the document re priorities over planning and delivery the forthcoming Eisteddfod. Once the event has taken place, finishing this report, receiving approval from Gregory, and circulating to the company will be a priority.

- b. Chairs Group: this has been formed at the suggestion of a number of volunteers to replace the Delivery Committee. The idea is to have a smaller group of key people representing each committee at the meetings. This should assist with ensuring planning moves forward between meetings, and that any matters which involve cross-committee working can be raised. It has been agreed that Chairs can bring additional committee members to meetings where certain topics are to be discussed (i.e. staging). Chairs will be responsible for providing feedback to their committees and wider volunteer groups, thereby ensuring that there is a good flow of information regarding Eisteddfod planning and key Board updates.
- c. Each committee should now have an 'assigned' trustee, who will attend all meetings and act as a conduit between committees and Board, to ensure that any key issues or queries can be swiftly communicated and responded to.
- d. Regular newsletters are being sent to all volunteers, and the Chair is hosting open zoom meetings every 4-6 weeks where presentations are made by key members of staff or external stakeholders on Eisteddfod related topics, followed by open Q&A sessions where volunteers are able to initiate discussion on any topic, with the aim of providing more open lines of communication.