



Wimborne History Festival Ltd

Evaluation Report

For Sting in the Tale a festival of Stories

2019

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Executive Summary

From July 27 – 3 August 2019 The Wimborne event Sting in the Tale a festival of stories 2019 attracted approximately 4,000 people to over 40 events and activities.

Grants from Wimborne Minster Town Council, Wimborne BID, Corfe Mullen Parish Council, Colehill Parish Council, Waitrose Community Fund and Arts Council England plus sponsorship from Gullivers Bookshop enabled the Board to deliver storytelling to over 100 Wimborne First School children and to deliver a free one day open air event entitled 'Field of Stories' on the Town's community garden 'Willow Walk' with support from Waitrose. This event attracted circa 2,500 – 3,000 people to the town centre to take part in a range of free storytelling, crafts, music, street arts and puppet shows on 27th July. Feedback gathered on the day demonstrates the appreciation from the community for bringing them together to enjoy the arts in an open community space. Over the following week 21 further performances were delivered in 14 different town venues, some venues were given as support in kind by town partners. Deans Court also supported the Festival by assisting the Board in a fundraising event in June which helped launch the Festival for July. The Board would like to acknowledge all the help received by all the various partners and businesses in helping this year's Festival take place.

The Festival gave employment to a total of 52 paid Storytellers, Artists and Performers involved in the Festival over 10 days, 8 unpaid Storytellers donated their time along with 30 volunteers who actively took part including the 5 voluntary WHF Board of Directors, 1x

Evaluation Report: 15 August 2019 Author Tracy Whitham Sting in the Tale 2019

volunteer Graphic Designer 1 x contracted Consultant/Project Manager, 2 Sponsors (Gullivers Bookshop and Waitrose) and 7 joint partners all contributed to an amazing success for 2019. **The value of volunteer time given to make this Festival happen will be in excess of £25,000 for fundraising, planning, risk assessment, meeting time, managing the festival and events, coordinating and meeting with volunteers, graphic design time, PR, administration, leaflet and poster circulation etc. Other organisations also donated staff and volunteer time to activities within their own venues.**

Summary of research methods

Our data gathering was a combination of the following:

- Attendance at activities
- Written feedback on social media and emails
- Feedback cards handed out at the events
- Wash Up with Board of Directors (to take place on 18 September)

1. Attendance Data

Name of Performance	Venue	Attendance
By the Firelight – Dominic Kelly	Deans Court Orchard	35
2 x classes Year 2 - Martin Maudsley	Wimborne First School	100+
The Field of Stories events– open air festival	Willow Walk	Est 2500
Stand and Deliver Highwayman on trial	Wimborne Square	Est 150
The Respectables x 3 performances	Thirsty Bird, shops and High St	Est 1300
The Haunted Inn with Michael Dacre and Fall of the House with Giles Abbott	The Tipi Willow Walk	59
Storytellers Sunday Showcase	The Tipi Willow Walk	25
Mindfulness Walks x 2 sessions with Solstice Storytellers	Cannon Hill Plantation	7
The Ugly Duckling with Sea Legs Puppet Theatre	The Reef	37
The Selfish Giant with Sea Legs Puppet Theatre	The Reef	45
Jack O London with Cath Edward	Church House Wimborne	24
Folk Tales and Bug Hotels with Caroline Parrott and Taprishia	Walford Mill Crafts (cancelled due to adverse weather)	0
Love and Duty with Cath Edwards	Allendale House (EDHT)	25
6 False Starts with Caroline Baldock	Allendale House	13
The Chapel at Midnight with Mike Rogers	The Chapel Wimborne Cemetery	36
Highwaymen's Tales with Caroline Baldock	Church House	18

The Dancing Turtle	Wimborne Model Town	40
Watch the Wall my Darling with Ellie Brooks	St Huberts Church	73
Boggarts and How to Trick Them/ All the Worlds a Stage x 3 performances with Ursula Holden Gill	Priest's House Museum	27
Leaf, Root and Branch with Lisa Schneidau	Physick Garden Town Hall	24
Tangle of the Commons with Lisa Schneidau	Walford Mill Crafts	34
Little Red Riding Hood and Drama Workshop for special needs (Artz Plus activity)	Allendale Centre	25
Old MacDonald and the Three Pigs Plus with Booster Cushion Theatre	Allendale Centre	40
Saxon Tales of Gods and Myths and Monsters with Dave Tonge	Wimborne Minster Church	25
Walking in the Field of Stars with Lizzie Bryant	Cranborne Chase (AONB)	45
Medieval Tales – Dame Fortunes wheel with Dave Tonge	Canford School	16

Number of SITT Volunteers helping	
Field of Stories – set up and running the event, including 2 voluntary photographers	22
Sunday	4
Rest of Programme	6

Online data collected	
Facebook comments	27
Linkd in	1
Twitter comments	0
Press Release coverage	3 free pages in Dorset Magazine, article in the Echo re Boggarts at PHM, Photo on Viewpoint (4 Dorset?)

2. Marketing

2.1 Marketing Strategy

Our overall Marketing Strategy was to promote a community festival and to focus our limited marketing budget and resources to local advertising effort to encourage our own community and Visitors to Wimborne to support the event.

Our tactics were to focus our resources on local advertising in Wimborne, distribute booklets throughout shops in Wimborne, through partners and leaflet drop to new

housing estates in Wimborne and to distribute them to Wimborne First School children, social media. Our budget did not extend to banners this year, but the festival board were also very conscious of the environmental issues surrounding single use pvc banners. Our man power resources were extremely limited in achieving this.

2.2 Marketing Mix

- This year used a marketing mix of press releases, radio, posters, flyers, piggy back marketing where possible, website presence with our partners, Dorset Council intranet and Visit Dorset website, mail chimp newsletters, SITT website, Facebook, Twitter and local radio Interviews with Forest FM and Solent Radio. Advertising and press releases appeared in Dorset Life, Mags 4 Dorset, Dorset Echo.
- Additional marketing included 3 days distributing brochures outside Waitrose which is a key sponsor and manager of the Willow Walk site. Also during set up on Friday 26th July sparked immense interest from passers by and over 300 booklets were distributed during that day.
- Local magazines were sent Press Releases
- Dorset Council promoted the Festival through the Council Social Media.
- Also during the run up to SITT 2019 The Tourist Information had a temporary closure and staff holidays which meant our event was not being promoted to visitors over that period, this also had an effect.

2.3 PR

Some Examples online coverage:

- [/https://www.glartent.com/GB/Wimborne-Minster/213651635341610/The-Sting-in-the-Tale](https://www.glartent.com/GB/Wimborne-Minster/213651635341610/The-Sting-in-the-Tale)
- [https://issuu.com/mags4dorset/docs/01_issuu - allendale - july 2019](https://issuu.com/mags4dorset/docs/01_issuu_-_allendale_-_july_2019)
- <https://www.dorsetmagazine.co.uk/out-about/sting-in-the-tale-1-6137121>
- <https://www.mags4dorset.co.uk/viewpoint-magazine-dorset#.XVWpZj-P5D8>
- <https://www.sfs.org.uk/events/sting-tale-festival-stories>
- <https://www.primarytimes.co.uk/dorset/listings/sting-in-the-tale-festival-field-of-stories-194581>
- <https://www.staytripper.co.uk/whats-on/sting-in-the-tale-a-festival-of-stories-p3074671>
- <https://www.staytripper.co.uk/whats-on/field-of-stories-p3074691>

Due to the pressures of event management not as many press releases were sent out as we would wish.

2.4 Lessons learnt from 2019 Marketing Mix

2.4.1 Radio & Magazine editorial

We have a good relationship with Forest FM who gave us free promotion and interviews with two storytellers, Radio Wimborne mentioned us and Radio Solent gave us a free interview, the day before Field of Stories.

A very popular, well-read local paper recently closed – The Stour and Avon Magazine - which used to be distributed across Wimborne – this reliable source of promotion is still very much missed for those who are not online.

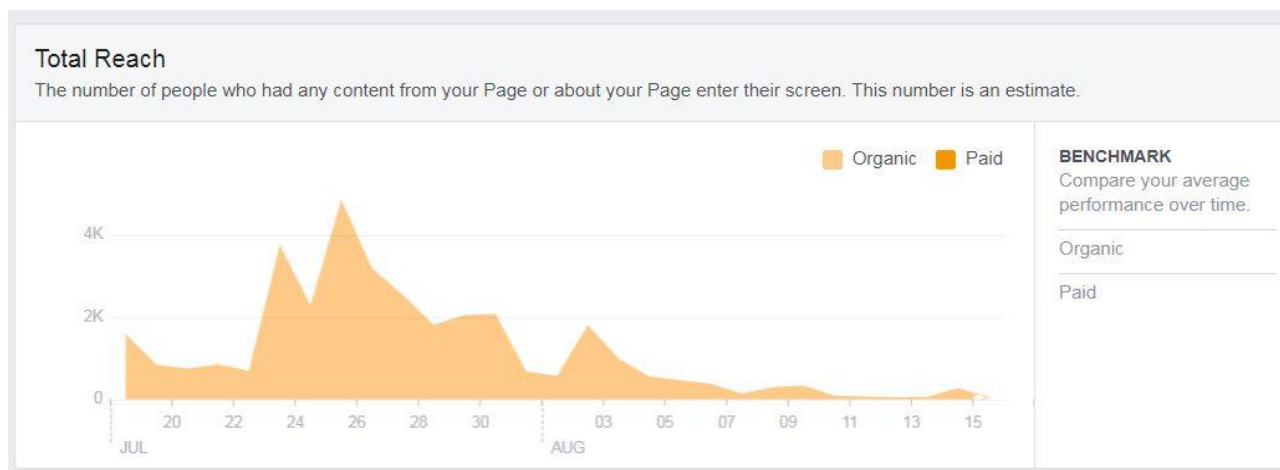
We placed an advert in a local rival paper Mags4 Dorset however this is not distributed through doors in Wimborne, and as yet does not have the same impact. Our local Wimborne Magazine did not promote the Festival, however the new Allendale News did. We advertised in Primary Times and received online advertising with that and Dorset Life covered the Sting in the Tale Festival with a free, three page feature in their July issue.

More advertising budget does need to be raised to ensure we can get more editorial presence and online presence through those local papers and through Radio Wimborne. Manpower resources is also required to coordinate radio interviews, press releases and constant news feed to maximise the various media opportunities available to us.

2.4.2 Social Media

Our Facebook engagement was good, our page has built up to 918 followers and was regularly posted and shared on Dorset Mums, Colehillians and Wimborne Views and News.

It took us a while to resurrect our Twitter account which had been dormant for 2 years so for 2019 our engagement was limited. Our biggest problem was not having enough dedicated social media time to keep it flowing. For 2021 we will look for someone to run our account specifically.



2.4.3 PR

With a small advertising budget we relied heavily on our online presence, however getting good editorial relies on placing adverts in many papers. The Wimborne BID used their networks to promote the festival with the Dorset Echo which was very helpful.

2.4.4 Piggy Back Marketing

We put events on in several local venues, some were effective in promoting the storytelling events in their venue and some weren't – it is important in the future to work with only those that can assist us to circulate event information.

Our two key funders Wimborne BID and Wimborne Minster Town Council did not promote the Festival on social media.

Piggy Back marketing has not been as effective in 2019 as in previous years this is in part due to the uncertainties surrounding GDPR.

2.4.5 Printed Programme distribution

Our appealing brochure, illustrated by a Dorset resident and recent graduate of the Arts University Bournemouth, was very well received. The publication was circulated widely around Wimborne Venues, shops and businesses.

Unfortunately the Tourist Information Centre was closed just before our event which had some impact on reaching local tourists. However brochures were put in all the hotels and B&B's locally and the major campsites surrounding Wimborne

2.5 Banners and posters

Our printed programme went over budget which meant we could not produce banners for this year's festival, however we did a big push with posters and programmes with Gullivers Bookshop sponsoring us through the sale of tickets, and distribution of programmes.

New audiences were targeted by the door to door distribution at 3 new-build housing estates in Wimborne by a Board member.

2.6 Programme



- Our strategy this year was to go back to our roots and produce our recognisable illustrated two colour, A6 brochure illustrated by a local Illustrator/Artist. It is much loved by people and identified as a Sting in the Tale brand. We were very fortunate to have free graphic design this year.
- The programme has the potential to raise us more income if we sell advertising space and/or sell them, however if we don't promote the programme but with this decision comes the risk of not reaching audiences unwilling to purchase a brochure which may affect attendance figures.

3. Sting in the Tale 2019

3.1 What we wanted to happen

- to deliver a new element to the Festival and relaunch it as a Wimborne based Festival rather than the previous East Dorset Festival.
- to introduce new audiences to the tradition of oral storytelling
- to create a wider base of creative activities to accompany Storytelling
- to continue to work with Wimborne Town partners and to nurture new relationships with businesses and venues
- to create a new community based festival entitled The Field of Stories, which would be a free town event for the community and for visitors in the Community Gardens managed by Waitrose. We also wanted to experiment by introducing street arts into the Sting in the Tale to see how it would work together and whether this could be a new direction in the future.
- to reconnect with the Storytelling community nationwide since organisational change within Sting in the Tale
- to introduce new Storytellers and build a more nationally based artistic programme and to retain quality control over the programme and to ensure our finest local Storytellers were also given opportunities to tell at the Festival .
- to begin to look at introducing more schools performance by trialling one this year
- to re-inforce our strong brand identity in our marketing by going back to our original programme design
- to introduce a new feedback format
- our audiences to come together and have fun and participate and engage with artists and artistic activity.
- to reach Family audiences, increase our appeal for disadvantaged audiences
- to run a Georgian themed thread through the programme to begin to build up the theme for Wimborne History Festival 2020 – Georgian Wimborne
- to build up a new team of volunteers to deliver the next Festival
- to raise funding through a storytelling event in June 2019

3.2 What actually happened?

We achieved all our aims, although we have yet to prove whether or not Sting has achieved recognition nationwide as a Storytelling Festival amongst the Storytelling community.

4. What took place as part of the project?

4.1 Schools Storytelling performances

We were able to fund Martin Maudsley to tell to Year 2 pupils at Wimborne First School at the end of the summer term. The teachers were very pleased with the offer and children were entranced with Martin's performance. The workshop also gave us an opportunity to hand out booklets to all the school pupils which aided our marketing campaign. This is definitely something to build on for 2021 and to target more schools with possibly craft workshops. (photo by Tom Scrase)



Output: Two Storytelling performances to over 100 children

Outcomes: Enhancing learning through oral storytelling and music, had fun, listening skills, literacy skills

4.2 Field of Stories



was an instant success, we reached the audiences we had aimed to do, our programme offered the perfect mix of festival experience from street performance with Epico the Dragon, and The Highwayman show, to promenades with the Litter Twitter Trio and The Respectables.

We had a great mix of Nationally based and local Storytellers, Puppet Shows, Children's theatre and Community Artists and Musicians providing a free programme of entertainment all day for an intergenerational audience.

There was little the Project Manager or the Directors would change creatively, there was enough 'zones' and activities to keep the audiences moving around the site and to keep families entertained all day.

The community garden was the perfect site, not far from parking, the town centre, cafes etc. It attracted attention during the set up day and brought in local people.

The Tipi's were a perfect centre piece for the Festival and created a magical storytelling space

The sun shone but not too hard and a great day was had by all and everyone was asking when next year's festival would be.

- **Output:** One day free open air community festival in Wimborne
- **Outcomes:** Social Impact Bringing the community together to enjoy the arts and participatory activities enhancing well-being of individuals and the



community. Economic impact by bringing people into the town.

- Artistic impact Introducing people of all ages to performance storytelling as a fun, vibrant and relevant art form. (photos by Tom Scrase)

4.3 Artist Commission for illustration



The brief was put out to Arts University Bournemouth (AUB), through the Arts Development Company and through our own contacts for an Artist to illustrate the programme. With Arts Council Funding we were able to offer the commission to local Portland Artist Sophie Fretwell, who also received a full page in the brochure to promote her as an Artist.

Graphic Design - Sting in the Tale were fortunate to have free Graphic design from a semi-retired Graphic Designer, this enabled us to produce this project at an affordable cost.

- **Output:** a successful commission with a new Artist was achieved and the programme was beautifully illustrated
- **Outcomes:** Promoted a new Artist/Illustrator to a wider audience, re-instated our brand identity

4.4 Signs by Create pupils from Walford Mill Crafts

Walford Mill Crafts after school arts club 'Create' set their six pupils to work at the end of term to design and produce all the signs for the Festival zones...The Boggarts Bolthole, The Dragons Den, The Dark Nook, The Sorcerers Sanctuary etc. The brief was not to use plastics of any sort – the final results were brilliant and adorned each zone of the festival on the day.



- **Output:** production of 8 original signs for the Festival, saving budget on signage
- **Outcomes:** Skills & Learning: Giving children a creative design brief and recognition for original artwork

4.5 New Commissions

- Michele O'Brien – The Respectables a town promenade for two Actors dressed as Georgians who will entertain unsuspecting high street audiences
- Ellie Brooks and Guy Hagg – Stand and Deliver a light hearted play about local Dorset Highwayman Jack Hagg
- The Litter Twitter Trio – An environmental commission to highlight waste in a fun way.

Illustrator commission as mentioned above

4.6 Fundraising Event and Launch on 1st June 2019 with Headline Act Dominic Kelly And donation by local Storyteller Ellie Brooks

Deans Court donated the Orchard at Deans Court, local VIP's were invited and tickets sold on Eventbrite and at Gullivers Bookshop who sponsored this with no charge for selling tickets.



We had 60 people attend (not all paying), volunteers came free too. We broke even on the event and it was very much enjoyed by everyone who came. The event help to bring Sting in the Tale to the attention of local influencers and businesses, with a view to working with them in future.

4.7 Sting in the Tale – partnership venues

- Sting in the Tale had two partnership events with Wimborne Model Town and Cranborne AONB who organised and ran their own events.
- The rest of the programme was creatively directed by Board Director Mike Rogers and Project Manager (PM) Rachel Limb.


5. Management

- The organisation structure is slim. During the Festival period we had 4 Directors and a Treasurer who acted as the Executive and Project Management Board. The Chairman did all the fundraising. We used a Project Manager to organise the Festival and Educational activities.
- One of the Directors led on the creative direction and lead on Showcase Sunday.
- The PM and the Chairman jointly did Social Media, programme distribution, marketing and promotion. The treasurer dealt with book keeping and budgets, and all Board Members assisted on the open air event for setting up and running of the day.
- The PM, SITT Director and Chairman jointly ran all the venue based activities throughout the week.
- Bookings were managed by our Sponsors Gullivers Bookshop and our online bookings were through Eventbrite. This worked well, all bookings through the bookshop were free of commission as part of the sponsorship.

6. Customer/Audience Feedback

6.1 Facebook Feedback

Field of Stories and venue based events

- Sarah Wise - Brilliant time! X
- Katharine Hurst - It was really great! Very much hope it will be back next year 
- Sam Carhart-Harris - Huge thank you to you who have organised and performed today, we loved it! Please repeat!
- Ellie Cake - Fantastic event - my kids absolutely loved it!!! Hope it comes back again.'
- Louise Teather - It was really wonderful thank you.
- Liesel Zarnack - A fabulous day, thank you !!!
- Openstorytellers Forum - Thank you for letting us be there.
- Sarah Lloyd Winder - A lovely day storytelling.

- Rachel Brooks - Thank you for a brilliant festival...we had a fantastic evening last night with Lizzie Bryant walking in a field of stars, and we also loved Epico the dragon and Clive Pig with his 'Senorita Catalina' story...please bring back everyone for next year!

6.2 Linkd In

- **Colin Philimore:** Extraordinary day at the Sting in the Tale Storytelling Festival on 27 July. Uno Passeggiata around the historic town of Wimborne, Dorset with Michele O'Brien as 'The Respectables'

Epico the Dragon

- Ellie Cake - They were fantastic, brilliant act
- Sarah Wise - They were fabulous!
- Rachel Brooks - This was brilliant
- Creative Clay: the dragon looked amazing

Mish Samways recommends The Sting in the Tale.

- We had a fabulous time visiting the sting in the tale on the weekend. My 7yr old and 4yr old thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Whilst we had never been to anything before, I feel we could have made more out of it. Thank you to all those who put in the effort and hard work to put this together. I really hope it comes back again next year.

Beverley Heath to The Sting in the Tale

- Watched The Respectables on Saturday morning whilst having coffee in Wimborne Square thoroughly entertaining and costumes fantastic ... well worth seeing.

Cranborne Chase AONB Event (Walking in a Field of Stars)

- Taprisha Seifert - What a lovely evening deepening into night when you led us into the magic of the stars with stories from such far-flung places as Greece, China, North America and that birthing of the earth that this photo shows ...Thank you Lizzie for opening our eyes and ears to wonder!
- Deana Burns - Thankyou Lizzie for such a Fab evening. Magical stories under the sparkling sky. Walking with torches glowing like fire flies as we pass by in the night . Melting Marshmallows on the fire such a sweet delight. Much

splendor and Enjoyment had by all that i didnt want it to end. I would so much love to go again

- Rachel Brooks - This was a brilliant evening.
- Dave Bentham - We attended this event on the recommendation of Lizzie's sister, and it was a magical evening. Mythical stories from other worldly places brought to life in the wilds of Dorset. There were also some archaeological stories concerning some of the sites we came across. It helped that the weather was perfect for us. Highly recommended if the opportunity arises again.

Medieval Stories at Canford School

- Sharon Carr - As good as ever a wordsmith.

Sting in the Tale

- Rachel Brooks - Thank you for a brilliant festival...we had a fantastic evening last night with Lizzie Bryant walking in a field of stars, and we also loved Epico the dragon and Clive Pig with his 'Senorita Catalina' story...please bring back everyone for next year!

6.3 General Feedback received by email

- Unfortunately haven't been able to take part in much, but liked the idea of the event by Waitrose (Field of Stories) and the different Sting events.
- Splendid evening, so enjoyable. This was our first visit and a real eye opener, we need more of this!! (Specific event unknown).
- It was a brilliant performance. Thanks to all the team for putting on such a great show.
- Just to say Saturday looked like it was a very successful, popular event – hope you were pleased with it & well done to all involved; fabulously well organised and everyone very friendly, helpful and storytellers were just amazing! Great day – thanks for inviting us! *Linda Nunn, Director, Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty*
- Congratulations on a fantastic opening event. We had a great time and it was so nice to be involved! *Charmaine, BOK Theatre*
- First a big thank you for inviting myself and my colleagues Jem Dick and Peter Greenaway to contribute to the festival. It was very satisfying to be able to offer a range of storytelling activities varying from workshops to performances to promenade giant puppets, putting in a plug for our 'green stories' events,

thus representing a wide range of activities from our practise. We have been involved in storytelling for many years and it is rare that we can all get an opportunity to develop our practice together. This was an ideal opportunity to work with the interactive puppets to draw in an audience for the storytelling that followed - many of whom being unaccustomed to storytelling events. I remember Sting in the Tale as being a quality festival all those years ago and was delighted to hear that it was going to be reinstated. Congratulations on such a successful day on Willow Walk. It was a superb site to attract passers by and those new to storytelling, as well as those who had come specially for the festival. There was something for everyone which included some unusual events - always a strength in a festival.

In 30 years as a professional storyteller, festival director, punter ad steward, I have never come across such an excellent team of stewards. There was so much expertise, competence, and nothing was too much trouble.

One of the festival's strong points was the way in which it made the most of the season and the distinctive venues in the town and area.

Sharon Jacksties, Storyteller and Performer



6.4 Postcard Responses Feedback Forms:

(The feedback forms were distributed at the majority of the events but not all)

What part of Sting in the Tale/Field of Stories did you enjoy most and why?

The following were simply listed on several occasions, plus the additional comments in this list and the specific comments on events outside of Field of Stories, listed at the end of the report.

- Tangle of the Commons (x4)
- Botanical Folk Tales - Leaf, Root & Branch with Lisa Schneidau (x4)
- Watch the Wall My Darling (x6)
- Epico the Dragon (x2)
- All of it
- Field of Stories
- First experience of storytelling, so the theatricalness of it
- Stand and Deliver, Highwayman on Trial

- Old MacDonald and the Three Pigs Plus
- Besides everything?! Storyfella, Beached and Polly Morris band - so reasonably priced too!
- Enjoyed both events attended
- Beached - had own headphones
- Sorcerer's Sanctuary and Loki's Story
- Dragon - cos he was cute
- Gingerbread Man and singing
- Such a 'Big' Gingerbread Man!
- Almost everything I heard, it was very engaging.
- People
- Evening telling was moving, Tales with Food - delicious!
- I enjoyed the open session on Sunday evening as it gave amateurs a chance to try their hand
- It is great that it brings new people to storytelling
- Puppets (Sea Legs Theatre)
- So far the Sunday storytelling and the Ugly Duckling (Sea Legs Theatre)
- Thought provoking and entertaining
- Epico the Dragon was epic and very humorous
- Interesting, unique stories
- Boggarts - great storyteller
- Songs, and children being encouraged to join in
- Epico the Dragon, great theatre, and Polly Morris, very musical and humorous - grandchildren were enthralled, loved the music at 12.30pm
- Dark Nook - lanterns were nice to make and take back
- Sea Legs Puppet Theatre, Field of Stories, we enjoyed it all
- Great storytelling
- Old MacDonald and the Three Pigs Plus - storyteller was brilliant with all the children, storytelling and improvisation.
- Hearing and seeing a variety of storytellers
- When he (storyteller) told the dragon story
- Saxon Tales was excellent
- Saxon Tales (attracted to event by venue - Wimborne Minster Church)
- Loved the stories, particularly Saxon Tales in the Minster
- Old MacDonald and the Three Pigs - very appropriate and entertaining
- Gingerbread Man and Dragon (Epico), Ugly Duckling (Sea Legs) lovely well produced puppet show
- The content of Cath's (Edwards) stories.
- Sir Aurelious Jones and Epico - so funny for kids and adults alike. Utterly luvey-dovey!
- Professional storytelling from Lisa Schneidau

- Saxon Tales amazing
- Sea Legs Puppets - The Ugly Duckling
- Singing
- Wild plants and trees (Leaf, Root and Branch)
- Love and Duty with Cath Edwards - loved it and the singing made it special
- Storytelling - Ellie Brooks (Watch the Wall My Darling) excellent
- Watch the Wall My Darling brilliant
- The Trial in the Square/Jack Hagg and Watch the Wall My Darling
- Corfe Mullen Church performance (Watch the Wall My Darling) was very good and entertaining
- Grandchildren loved Field of Stories
- The one where the farmer exploded (Old MacDonald?)
- So appreciated all the different venues where the festival is happening
- Leaf, Root and Branch - Very enjoyable stories in a great location
- Friendliness and simplicity
- Strange faces. Epico the Dragon - great stories, kids interested!
- Highwayman's Tales - Caroline Baldock (x2)
- Ellie Brook's story about the "Hand of Glory" - Scivvie Rules!!
- I love stories and so enjoyed Ellie Brooks (Watch the Wall My Darling)
- The stories and the settings
- Watch the Wall My Darling in the Church. Also the Twin Tips - great settings!
- I enjoyed Epico the Dragon! Also the variety of stories for all ages
- I enjoyed Sir Aurelious and Epico the Dragon because everyone was really funny.
- Epico the Dragon - the costumes were great, everyone got in to their part and it was interactive
- All of the performances were great, especially the dragon and the Gingerbread Man.
- Clay crocodiles, Gingerbread Man, Epico the Dragon and Sarah Lloyd Winder - favourite was the owl story
- We loved Epico the Dragon as it was very funny and the Dragon was fantastic. Fantastic also that it's a free event.
- Epico the Dragon, very funny and engaging for all ages.
- Ellie Brooks "The Scivvy" (Watch the Wall My Darling)
- Clay Crocodiles (Alex age 4), Beached puppet show (Erin age 9), Alex also gives The Selfish Giant (Sea Legs Puppet Theatre) 100 stars.
- All of it, it was very good.
- Sea Legs Puppet Theatre - bringing the magic to all ages.
- Stand and Deliver, Highwayman on Trial - an excellent tale and cast
- Old MacDonald and the Three Pigs.
- The venues, which added to the atmosphere of the stories. The booklet was excellent. Something for all ages.

- The Chapel at Midnight. Medieval Tales - Dame Fortune's Wheel and the Three Estates - atmosphere and good reciting.

What could be done to improve Sting in the Tale?

- Nothing (x12)
- Plus:
- Nothing! It is perfect as it is.
- Nothing, it was amazing!
- Nothing was fantastic.
- Nothing, just don't stop doing it.
- Nothing except coming back every month!

- More advertising (x7)
- Advertise the events more widely.
- Advertise events earlier in the year.
- More publicity, the Sunday storytelling was lovely and more people should enjoy it.
- More advertisement, had no idea and we live in Blandford.
- Advertise the forthcoming event with as much as 2 months notice.
- More advertising, website is difficult to follow.

- Refreshments/stalls also regularly mentioned, as follows:
- Food outlets, ? artisan
- Refreshments tent (non alcoholic).
- Tea kiosk.
- Have a hot drinks stall.
- More stalls and food stalls.
- Food and drink stalls.

Other comments and suggestions for improvement:

- All brilliant.
- It's all brilliant!
- It's very good.
- To keep getting bigger and better!
- No motorbike noise, but that is beyond Sting in the Tale's capabilities (not sure which event?).
- Perhaps link up with the Ancient Technology Centre and the CrickCrack Club.
- Make it more accessible.

- Have more and make it bigger.
- More! Great location.
- More energetic games.
- Gender equality, more female characters please.
- Bigger.
- Story rounds, better signage for events.
- Just more of this please!
- Really enjoyable.
- Poster in the Reef.
- More.
- Maybe a few more things suitable for 3 year olds? Many seemed to be for 4 or 5 plus.
- All excellent storytelling.
- No noises to distract maybe.
- Our first experience - not sure there is much more you can do. Events since last weekend have been great.
- It's brilliant already.
- It seems to improve each year - it does get better and better.
- Cushions for events where you sit on the floor.
- Better weather.
- Story in mime for deaf/hard of hearing.
- Event has grown since I last attended so am impressed with the variety and age range catered for. Can't think of any improvements, thank you for organising event.
- A bit hot in the hall (Allendale Centre).
- Mailing list so more advanced notice .
- More workshops and community events in residential homes/schools etc subject to funding.
- Curious and magical clues (advertising) around town.
- Its my first! I need to find similar in the NW where I live (in WImborne on holiday).
- Co-ordinated town-crier type walkabout.
- It is brilliant as it is - maybe more leaflets as I missed the first part of the festival, sad!!
- It just gets better and better.
- More of it.
- Go on for longer.
- More toilets. Poss (?) on for 2 days.
- More owl stories (Liked Sarah Lloyd Winder's owl story).
- It would be great to have more weekends each year!
- Repeat performance and more advertising.
- Extra dates.
- More chairs so more people can watch (relates to Beached puppet show).

- I think you do an amazing job already. Of course timetables don't always fit, but c'est la vie.
- The parts I attended needed no improvement.

Where did you hear about Sting in the Tale/Field of Stories?

- Facebook (x22)
- Family/Friends (x18) - including one person visiting from New Zealand
- Pamphlet/Leaflet/Booklet (x11)
- Library (x9) - Corfe Mullen 3, Broadstone 1, Wimborne 1
- School (x8) - most not specified but one stated Parley, 2 Wimborne First
- Website/Online (x7)
- Gullivers (Wimborne) Bookshop (x6)
- Picked up leaflet at Gulliver's Bookshop (x4)
- Storyteller/Storytelling Network (x4)
- Leaflet from Waitrose (x3)
- Society for Storytelling Website (x2)
- Been to previous Sting in the Tale events (x2)
- Picked up a brochure at Walford Mill
- Dorset Magazine
- Posters around Wimborne
- Primary Times
- Openstorytellers
- Word of Mouth (a Storytelling Club)
- By chance
- Letterbox drop
- Kingston Lacy
- Allendale House (Leaflet from)
- Allendale Centre (Leaflet from)
- Information Centre/Shop
- We didn't - we came to Wimborne Minster to see the church and the Model Town. Stumbled upon this (Field of Stories) and spent the whole day here!
- Look forward to Sting in the Tale each year, but the little booklets dotted around in libraries and cafes are a useful reminder.
- Known about event for a number of years and attended events previously
- St Hubert's Church (venue)
- Local adverts

- I remember it from years ago - word of mouth and emails
- Greyfriars Community Magazine, Ringwood
- On Mailing List
- Corfe Mullen Parish Council
- Primary Times
- Local news

How do free events such as Field of Stories (Sting in the Tale) benefit you, your family and the local community?

Comments as given:

- Good to be able to come to an event nearby.
- A feeling of community and magic.
- Every way.
- It is part of our very being. Stories are just so important, we are blessed!
- Makes you think outside the box!
- It was the first time I took my toddler children to a storytelling event and they loved it.
- Promote a community spirit where people can get informed in a fun way.
- Brings us closer to each other.
- Widening/broadening of experience.
- Keep heritage alive!
- Keeps the kids excited about stories.
- My daughter loved watching the music and now wants to learn to play the fiddle - it opens up new possibilities.
- Free events make are more widely accessible and brings people together.
- Family event for all ages.
- Free makes it easy.
- Brilliant.
- A sense of belonging, warm fuzzy feeling.
- Free of charge.
- Imaginative stimulation, environmental stimulation, escape from the humdrum, moral questions.
- Great entertainment, it links in to cultural heritage too.
- Great for the children.
- Educating us all away from a formal setting - fun and entertaining for all ages.
- Great turn out to help locals engage together.
- Magical, my children love, love, love the festival.
- Hope local talent is represented. Some good storytelling. Well done.
- Enables those who don't have much money to go, also makes it easier for me as a childminder to take the children.

- Free day out.
- Exciting for all the family.
- Learning new things/great stories.
- Enables us to experience different things.
- Gives us something to do over the summer holidays, which can get very expensive.
- Sense of community enhanced, families encouraged. Wonderful for children to get away from cartoons and technology.
- Really great to inspire and support kids in the holidays.
- Love anything getting involved with the local community, bringing it together.
- Because I like stories.
- Enriches children's experience and exposes them to cultures other than their own.
- It broadens the imagination.
- Great place to bring the children, and good to bring local places to public attention.
- Makes the performances more do-able (ie able to attend).
- Bring about a good sense of community, the kids loved it and the parents!
- Good for the children and adults alike.
- Every way!
- Social and cultural benefits - see friends, kids get to use imagination and experience theatre.
- It meets a need to hear and reflect on a story well told.
- Relaxing, realisation that some things don't change.
- Fun.
- Wonderful for my children to hear professional storytellers.
- Bringing visitors in to town, community involvement.
- Stories are soul food - they feed a part of me which is very deep. I have done some storytelling in the past.
- Great community event, so good for children.
- Educating people about stories is important in explaining our lives - and magic!
- Opportunity to 'try' something new and experience stories - an ancient skill.
- This showcases all that's best about the British summertime, so creative and original and a feeling that the whole community is taking part.
- Brings new people in to storytelling. A fun thing to do.
- Enriches my life and my family's. Brings together like minded folk so one can share and speak.
- Anything which gets children (and adults) away from PC screens!
- Lovely festival for all ages over the summer holidays.
- Lovely occasion to meet friends.
- Brilliant introduction for children - the next generation of storytellers.
- Free entertainment for families is always welcome.
- Fabulous involvement of drama for community.
- Hopefully will bring it (the community) together.

- So much family fun and education. More please!
- Would go to much more if it was free.
- Brings the community together in a largely free festival which has a great atmosphere and enhances the town.
- It is quite fun.
- Great to develop new audiences for storytelling - such an accessible art form relevant for everyone.
- Brings communities together, makes the arts accessible to all ages.
- Bring people of all ages together, supports cultural enterprise.
- They bring people together and promote creativity.
- It is so very special to us as a family, we love stories, so thank you.
- Bring people together, family time.
- I wouldn't normally travel so far for one event, but this compilation of tellings is brilliant.
- Bring communities together for mutual enjoyment.
- They are good and informative entertainment we can all enjoy together.
- Great for children
- Relaxing for me, my son was absorbed, great to listen together and share the experience.
- Good community entertainment, the social element and local historical elements.
- Brings culture to the local community, good for families as it's lacking in schools.
- Vital! I love the way it promotes language, storytelling and creativity in a fun way, lovely to see babies to elderly.
- We got to spend some outdoors family time!
- We could do more things (Crafts) as a family and it's an exciting day out!
- Its lovely to be able to do something free for a change especially in the summer holidays.
- Good local event to bring granddaughter to and do some Wimborne shopping at the same time.
- We have had a brilliant day learning about other countries folk lore and increasing our love of stories.
- Fabulous low cost day out for a single parent, thank you.
- Inspire my children.
- Information you wouldn't otherwise know.
- It is free education, inspiring work and fun for all the family.
- Stimulating summer activities for the kids.
- Great experience of theatre for kids.
- You learn a lot for free.
- Helps kids develop.
- I think events such as this, Folk Festival, heritage week, opens up exciting, interesting things to do for those on the lowest budgets.
- Committee (Community?) engagement at local events.

6.5 Event Specific Responses:

Evaluation Report: 15 August 2019 Author Tracy Whitham Sting in the Tale 2019

6.5.1 The Ugly Duckling

- Excellent!
- We like that they are interactive, fantastic how they keep the children interested.
- Enjoyed most - The puppets and the Ugly Duckling, especially the dog
- Enjoyed most - The donkey
- Flying swans were amazing
- Enjoyed most - Making animal noises and movements (think this was Sea Legs)
- Enjoyed most - The interaction with the children
- Possibly a PA System for a larger audience

6.5.2 Love & Duty (Cath Edwards)

- Really engaging - would be nice to do a Q&A session afterwards

6.5.3 Watch the Wall My Darling

- An amazing performance and insight into poetry and storytelling
- Fascinating, very different and I especially enjoyed the Q&A
- Really super evening, Ellie Brooks is a compelling and fascinating storyteller
- A good evening out for all!
- Watch the Wall My Darling - Absolutely brilliant, best storytelling/performance I've attended
- Brilliant, am 'bowled over'. Thank you.

6.5.4 Boggarts

- Need to make sure everyone can hear
- Enjoyed most - second story of Boggarts
- Enjoyed most - the bit about growing Pumpkins
- Could go about the town, not just the garden (PHM)

6.5.5 All The World's A Stage

- Enjoyed most - Ursula's action stories and the different locations

6.5.6 Tangle of the Commons

- Loved the ambience and the storytelling

- The fairies in the field; my mother used to tell my sisters and I a story every evening about we 3 girls and the fairies we met every night. Years later I asked her to write a book of her stories but she couldn't remember any.

6.5.7 Old MacDonald and the Three Pigs Plus (Booster Cushion Theatre)

- Enjoyed the participation and brilliant storyteller
- Great for the age group, something to do
- It was funny
- Good child interaction
- It was extremely enjoyable. He interacted well and took time performing. For adults and children alike.

6.5.8 Saxon Tales (Dave Tong)

- It was amazing, a tiny bit scary, but I enjoyed it (Nelson aged 7)

6.5.9 Leaf, Root and Branch (Lisa Schneidau)

- Really enjoyable storytelling. Links to mythology and plant lore of particular interest. Nice venue.

7. Volunteers

- We managed to recruit new volunteers but not enough (our plans identified we needed 40). In total we had 20 Included in that were two volunteer photographers.
- **Outputs:** 20 Volunteers assisted with various roles during the Festival
- **Outcomes:** Community engagement, committed support for Sting in the Tale, community development, providing positive and fun involvement in Wimborne life.
- **Learning:** We need to recruit a SITT management team to manage the 2021 event and the next 12 months will be dedicated to this mission.



8. Timetabling and data evaluation

Our timetabling was well organised and planned by the Project Manager. There were one or two clashes in the timetable mid-week, which made it tricky to manage with few volunteers.

The Field of Stories – the timetabling was spot on and everything worked like clockwork.

If we would change anything it would be to have another craft station, tea and coffee stall, more music and maybe another street arts installation, but there was enough activity for everyone that came.

Our feedback indicated the need to have a teas and coffees station, we had originally intended to run our own and had permission from Waitrose to do so, however we did not have access to running water or enough volunteers to manage it, so this was abandoned and we could not source a mobile tea and coffee caterer subsequently. We did run a wine bar with soft drinks, but not everyone found us. However we were within 1 minute stroll of cafes and supermarket.

Overall our feedback indicated we had a winning formula for the Sting in the Tale festival 2019.

8.1 Approach to ongoing evaluation

Handing out feedback forms went well but encouraging people to fill them out and hand them back is another thing altogether. One of our volunteers took the initiative to interview people and write down their feedback, thus increasing the amount of feedback. This should be a technique to be employed by volunteers at subsequent festivals. One thing I would like to be able to do the next time is to run an economic impact survey, to understand how our event does impact the town and what we can do to improve the relationship between local businesses and the festival.

9. What Worked well and why?

Field of Stories: Artists

- **Craft (Darrell Wakelam, Deborah Clark, Rose Perry, Wendy Dacre and Strangeface Puppets)** were immensely popular, we charged £2 for materials – this station was incredibly busy from 10 – 4 p.m. we could have accommodated another craft station. Having participatory activities was important, Face Painting was also popular all day.



- **Dark Nook** This took a while to get busy and did not take off until the afternoon, it may be where it was situated and clash of other activities, but was constantly busy all afternoon with children making shadow lanterns and 10 min show. It provided something a little different for the Festival activities and great for drop in



- **Epico the Dragon Street Art Performance** – was undoubtedly the star act of the day, every performance attracted big crowds, the mid day one being the most popular time. Feedback shows us that this money was very well spent.



- **The Respectables** – were brilliant, they promenaded around town providing entertainment to unsuspecting audiences such as those having coffee in the Thirsty Bird and other shops etc around town. This was a great way to promote the festival on Willow Walk and lead people to the event who may not have known about it. It was also a useful way of connecting with local businesses, highlighting the fun and benefits festivals can bring to the town, as well as (hopefully) encouraging businesses to get more involved in future. (Photo Tom Scrase)

- **Stand and Deliver the Highway Man Performance on the Square**– again was brilliant, it attracted a different audience being in a different part of town, people having coffee at both Cafes were treated to a free street performance. This worked very well, however the staging setup and take down was labour intensive. (Photo Tom Scrase)



- **The Litter Twitter Trio (Photo of Litter Twitter and Clive Pig by Tom Scrase)** - Were an unusual and popular festival item with three promenades/performance over the day, they were

received well, though not sure if their environmental message was very strong, but good fun to have around.

- **The Gingerbread Man with Bok Theatre –**
First performance at 10 a.m. was outdoors and was full so was a perfect one to begin the day with. The space was perfect for them outdoors however the next performance in the Tipi was a bit more restrictive in terms of space for what is quite an active performance. (Bok Theatre photo Tom Scrase)



- **Main Tipi Storytellers:** Raventales (Michael Dacre), Clive Pig, Sarah Rundle, Sarah Lloyd-Winder, Giles Abbott, Bok Theatre all attracted good audiences throughout the day and evening. **(Photo Raventales by Tom Scrase)**



- **Polly Morris Band–** was a perfect lunch time act allowing parents to stop and watch whilst children could participate in the craft activities and street performances

- **Music Box with Sharon Jacksties–** this was a great activity for the under 5's and despite fears we had programmed them so they would clash too much with other activities they did in fact find a full audience too. So finding activities for under 5's may be something we might



increase in the future.

- **StrangeFace** was a unique puppet show where each member of the audience wears headphones. This was a fantastic festival activity with 10 minute drop in shows throughout the day. Always full and the Artists were lovely to work with. They also ran a paper puppet workshop which was immensely popular.(photo Tom Scrase)



- **Headline Act Giles Abbott** We had a good audience for the evening and it was very magical sat in the Twin Tipi's at night. At times there was competition with noise from the pub, but Giles was great and the audience really enjoyed it. If we did this again it would work really well with a warm up musical act, or a storytelling event that combines music. Giles also told during the afternoon with a older children's storytelling performance of Thor and Loki which was very well attended.
- **Other Storytelling Zones during the day** included 'Loki's Lair' & The 'Sorcerers Sanctuary' where Tales of food and cunning with Sarah Rundle took place and The OpenStorytellers (a group of storytellers with special needs), ,Giles Abbott, Bok Theatre all performed storytellings throughout the day. Clive Pig ran a storytelling workshop/telling in the afternoon. Also 2 x Family storytellings in the Litter Twitter Gazebo the second performance was late in the day 4.30 p.m. and only a small audience attended it which confirms our suspicion that 10 – 4 pm. Is the correct timings for such a family event.
- **The Ugly Duckling and The Selfish Giant with Sea Legs Puppet Theatre** at The Reef Colehill – both the venue and the Puppet Theatre were excellent. We had good audiences for both, and the children and parents appreciated the quality of the show, the storytelling and puppetry.
- **Jack O'London with Cath Ewards** at Church House this was well received to a small audience.
- **Love and Duty with Cath Edwards** A good audience thanks to additional promotion from Allendale House, it was very well received.

- **The Chapel at Midnight with Mike Rogers** – This performance was donated by our Director for Sting in the Tale who told for free, the venue Wimborne Cemetery's Chapel proved to be an excellent venue for storytelling and one we hope to use again in the future. They were also happy to give the venue for free.
- **Highwaymen's Tales** with Caroline Baldock at Church House – This went very well and Caroline provided some excellent tales, we did not get as many as we had hoped for but a good event.
- **Watch the Wall my Darling with Ellie Brooks at St Huberts Church in Corfe Mullen** – this was a very well attended and successful event, the Church made a beautiful venue and worked well for this one woman show by a local Artist.
- **Leaf, Root and Branch with Lisa Schneidau** at the Physick Garden –very much appreciated by the audience, though not a huge audience, around 25, it was enough people for the size of the space.
- **Tangle of the Commons with Lisa Schneidau** at Walford Mill Crafts – quite a good audience turn out – excellent performance which worked well in the Courtyard at the Mill. Staff from the Mill helped out during the evening which was very much appreciated.
- **Little Red Riding Hood and Drama Workshop for Children with Special Needs with Booster Cushion Theatre** at the Allendale Centre – it was a small audience (deliberately limited by the Artz+ team) and the Team Leader of Artz Plus was thrilled with the performance and workshop – she reported that the children had more individual attention and children who rarely engaged did so and thoroughly enjoyed it. Although the price is prohibitive for Artz Plus they would like to look at a way of working with us again in the future to bring them back.
- **Saxon Tales – of Gods and Myths with Dave Tonge at Wimborne Minster** – A daytime performance that got a pretty good attendance, was thoroughly enjoyed with positive comments after the performance. The Minster also was a good venue.



- **Walking in the Field of Stars with Lizzie Bryant** was organised by Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and was the only event not in Wimborne. This was sold out and received very positive feedback. The only negative was that it was a bit long for some people.
- **Medieval Tales with Dave Tonge at Canford School** – Not very well attended but a very skilled Storyteller and a great one to end with. Everyone who came to the John O’Gaunts Room were impressed, so again another good venue to use for the future. This would have worked better in term time as the School would promote to the students.

10. What didn’t work well and why?

- **Storytellers Showcase Sunday**
As we had the venue for two days we wanted to make use of the Twin Tipis, so we decided to run an open mic session for local storytellers and emerging storytellers. We did not get as many Storytellers as we anticipated although 8 people did come along to fill the afternoon with wonderful stories. Our headline act for Sunday was Jason Buck – I don’t think we promoted him well enough and we failed to attract any audience. Unfortunately this event did not work for the audience or the participants.
- We did not attract much of an audience throughout the day, we have found in previous years that Sunday was always the hardest day to get an audience in Wimborne, but was worth trying something new.
- Also as we had a shortage of volunteers it meant exhausted volunteers from the day before had to give up their Sunday as well. If we were to do this again we may consider offering the use of the Tipi to another festival for example the Folk Festival who could programme in a day of music.
- **Mindfulness Walks with Soltice Storytellers** at Cannon Hill Plantation– we ran two sessions out of a possible 3 – we had a small turn out, but this is something we wanted to trial to see if there is any scope to programme a ‘mindfulness programme’ in the future. It could have benefitted by more local promotion in Colehill via the Parish Council perhaps.
- **6 False Starts from my Racing Life** with Caroline Baldock at Allendale House– A surprisingly small audience turn out for this one, maybe because it was an evening performance at a venue not known for evening performances as a rule. The Storyteller was excellent and an hour performance lasted over an hour and a half, the

audience were so involved. So it needed more marketing/promotion and maybe a different venue.

- **Boggarts and How to Trick them Trail and All the World's A Stage** with Ursula Holden Gill at the Priest's House Museum – This did not reach the numbers we had anticipated. We felt the subject matter was right so maybe a culmination of poor publicity and also perhaps it got lost against the backdrop of the PHM closing for refurbishment and the TIC being temporarily closed.

12. SITT Learning

- Staff have been involved with Sting in the Tale for 15 years so we have learnt a lot over the years. This year our learning was re-inforced that Wimborne and Sundays are not a good thing for Storytelling.
- To have more events with other arts i.e. crafts, music, drumming etc. to have a wider appeal to local audiences.
- Cheaper performances if possible. More partnership event with both sides promoting heavily to both audiences.
- We need to have a stronger relationship with Ancient Technology Centre and Crick Crack Club – first steps towards building a relationship were made this year but we need something to help us work together better.
- Reliance on external funding makes holding Sting in the Tale hard to sustain, but there is a real ceiling on what people will pay for community storytelling events.
- We either need a strong organising committee or a proper Project Manager salary for 6 months to relieve pressure on volunteers.

11.1 How much of this activity would have happened anyway, even if no project had been undertaken at all?

- None of this would have taken place and we are very pleased with the outcome of all the projects and activities and for the great programme presented by the Project Manager. SITT is one of Wimborne's Festivals and a part of the town's cultural calendar.
- It is important to the Town to have regular events on to keep footfall steady on the high street.
- Children would not have been introduced to high quality storytelling and crafts experiences with their families.

11.2 On reflection what would we do differently?

We were really happy with Sting in the Tale 2019 and in particular with the Field of Stories which is a new departure from the old model, however the old model still works well and we need to build up a wider range of Wimborne partners willing to organise their own event and bring them altogether in the programme, this helps spread the load for volunteers and cost of venue hire, but may affect ultimately affect artistic quality without external funding. The Board must will always need to keep a measured view on what is achievable given budget and manpower. For 2019 we delivered amongst one of our best festivals to date to more people.

End 19/8/2019



Illustration by Sophie Fretwell and Epico by Tom Scrase

