

Dear John,

Even in this highly difficult and challenging year, the Steyning & District Community Partnership - Visitor & Tourism Group - are working hard to repeat the annual Steyning & District Food & Drink Festival. This year is being organised in a slightly different manner to fit in with social distancing and other directives. Special offers from the shops will be available from 5th September and at the moment we expect events to run from 19th September – both completing on 3rd October with the Farmers Market. We have cut events to 2 weeks instead of the usual four, because with our indoor events bound to be hit by the social distance scenario, we are concentrating on outdoor & online events, but feel it is better to contain these into a shorter timeframe. Our offers will continue, as usual for the 4 weeks, giving our businesses as long a time as possible to attract customers to their premises. As you will know the Festival is an outstanding date in the district calendar, where our aim is to promote our district; attract as many new faces to our area as possible - bringing valuable business to our traders - together with bringing enjoyment to our residents. However, as one of the only events to be run this year, we also have another major aim: to bring some cheer to what has been a distressing time and also to give an even bigger economic boost to all businesses within our area.

The Festival is run by volunteers with the fantastic support of the “foodie” outlets in our district, who come up with both events to be held during the month, and special offers for the Festival duration. Because of Steyning’s outstanding business support, our Festival grows each year. The October Farmers Market will close the event with live cooking demos, music, sloe gin tastings, the Halloween pumpkin weigh and special stall offers. Each year the Festival also receives a superb widespread of press coverage together with what is becoming more and more important, great Social Media coverage. The latter is headed up by one of the Festival Committee, who dedicates a vast amount of her time making sure Facebook and Twitter operates successfully. All good economic news for Steyning.

Of course, all this promotion/advertising is expensive, plus we also need to produce/purchase promotional literature/materials to give additional exposure to the event and, of course, print our all important Festival Guide. Posters on stakes, are erected in areas further away from the immediate district and set alongside many road junctions etc. These have proved very successful, and although expensive broadens the horizon of Steyning’s exposure. We also pay for advertising on Facebook & Twitter, which again is ultra successful, but yet another essential expense, if we are to keep promoting the Festival in a professional manner.

This is our ninth Festival, but as for our first years, our reserves remain low and as we continue to grow we expect to take hits from the need for additional/replacement banners, posters, window clingers, etc., etc. as well as expenses listed above. Last year we received funding from LEADER to re-design our Food & Drink Festival website, which has now given us a site that is attractive, professional and extremely website friendly.

Our request, as in years gone past, is to ask if Steyning Parish Council could consider helping us by awarding us a grant. We have no official accounts, but have approximately £1291.28 in hand from last year, which will quickly disappear as we start to purchase items. Expense sheet attached. Please note that as a one off last year, HDC gave us £1000 to pay for printing the guide. This will not be forthcoming this year, as it was only given as a “sweetener” in 2019, as they decided, very late in the day, to withdraw from being involved in local F & D festivals.

Obviously we would appreciate any funding that the Parish Council felt they could offer. We know that your top limit is usually £200, but if for some reason this funding level has increased for 2020, as

much as possible would be really welcome 😊 The £250 you very kindly gave to us last year, was really very, very much appreciated.

Reina