

## Swale Fusion Festival 2017

### AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY – Public Feedback



#### **Public comments and feedback collected through participatory artists led community activity:**

- This is much better than some of the other arty things I've seen in the High Street (funfair etc).
- This is something different.
- It's nice to be surprised by this kind of entertainment randomly but we did miss the fireworks as didn't see the leaflet in time.
- Everything here is normally very 'adult-focused' so it's great to have family-friendly things children like too.
- I'm really being inspired by the performances and the badge-making activity. It's great just being in the street and everyone can take part and do it – adults and children. Great we didn't have to pay for it either! Anyone can do it!
- Love seeing the performers bringing life to the street. It feels good seeing people come together.

- Makes a difference to the town! Great to have things for the children to do and learn new skills while getting inspired.
- Sittingbourne is a bit of a dead spot between Medway and Faversham – you get lots more happening in those places so it's great to see things happening here for a change!
- This is great! A larger version of this with a greater variety of performers would be great in the future. Canterbury has an international festival for families with lots of different performers and street acts, things we haven't seen before.
- This sort of festival raises the atmosphere.
- Super badge making activity! I've never made badges before so I liked making them for the first time!
- I like it!
- Better than the event last year. More performers, unique + different.
- Please expand quantity of performers to make more of an event for a longer time. Something similar to Bing festival in Canterbury.
- Badge making is the best! Awesome idea. Thank you.
- Really fun and interesting event. Would like to see more of similar with community spirit as the theme.
- Brilliant! This helps to promote tolerance in society through fun activity. Communities coming together to celebrate!
- Good quality of entertainment – fore works were the best I have seen in Sittingbourne.
- Love the event and the market – we always come for that so it was a great surprise to have street entertainment too. Could have been more posters to tell us about it happening / coming to town as we missed the fireworks + lanterns. More of this again please!
- Good to have arts & crafts activities on the street. Would like more of this type of thing + face painters.
- Fabulous street entertainment.
- Great to see singing, dancing + market in town at the same time. Great concept that brings different people in the town.
- Keep it going! This brings happiness to the town. There's a lot of local business – independent ones and we should showcase them more at this kind of events. We've been here a year and love it!
- It's a bit bland here normally but this brings people together and gets them out. There's a lot here to do and see.
- Makes a change in Sittngbourne town centre.
- Costumes are great. The event brings people out and the music gives a spring in your step. Great to have activities for the kids to join in.
- We like these activities as it's fun for the children and it encourages us to come into the town.
- Something very different than usual in Sittingbourne.
- Good as usual. Love the different dancers + cultures blending together.
- More activities similar to those in Milton Creek would be great.
- Loved the dancing.
- Sittingbourne needs more arts & crafts for all ages.
- Could the event become a tool to get people more involved in their community?

- My favourite thing was the police cars.
- Sittingbourne needs more affordable arts opportunities for children – street activities is a great way to get young people involved.
- Very creative street entertainment. More quantity and variety for future please.
- It would be great to make your own festival jewellery next time please!
- Interesting programme of performances and activities. I teach children arts so it would be great to get somehow involved in this in the future.
- Lovely ladies at badge making activity! First time I made a badge but really enjoyed it and had good advice.
- Awesome!
- This is just so much fun!
- I love the dancing acts!

### **Artists' observations & comments:**

- The public engagement / festival badge making activity stand had a steady flow of audience participation at the different locations along the High Street throughout the event. Estimated 150-200 individual participants engaged in the visual arts activity.
- Mostly family groups with younger children up to the age of 12 – participants engaged in the activity and feedback conversations an average of 15 mins at the stand.
- In general very positive feedback from public of all ages about the festival and the difference it makes to otherwise 'bland' town centre. People were very happy to share feedback and spend time to have a 1:1 conversation with artists to tell their views about the event and cultural provision in general in Sittingbourne.
- Badge making activity had a very positive reaction from the public and proved to be an effective tool to pull in the crowds and engage participants of all ages in designing and making their own festival inspired pieces. Participants loved to be able to make and take home their own little 'festival souvenirs'.
- There were quite a few generic comments about 'Sittingbourne is dead' and 'needs this type of activity to breathe some life into the town'.
- Majority of participants seemed to be local residents who usually come for Saturday shopping / day out in Sittingbourne.
- Really friendly atmosphere throughout the event and the informality of the festival seemed to have a very positive impact on the audience.
- Discussions with the public seem to suggest that the Swale Fusion Festival programme was just at the right level in terms of engaging with the public while providing food for thought for future arts led events and expectation of artistic interventions.

