



www.nottinghamstpatricksfestival.org.uk

To

Irish Community of Nottinghamshire and East Midlands

Re: Funds and Volunteers – The future of the Nottingham St Patrick's Day Festival & Parade

We, the committee, informed you last year that the Annual Nottingham St Patrick's Day Festival & Parade was at a critical stage and there were some doubts as to whether it would be held or not. We appealed for additional funds and volunteers. The bad news is that despite this appeal income still continued to fall depleting the reserve funds but thankfully we had enough reserves to fund the 2015 Festival. Further good news is that from the appeal, we did receive some additional voluntary support for 2015 only and as a result we held, what I hope you will agree, was a most enjoyable 16th Festival and Parade headed by the enthusiastic support from our wonderful friends and civic representatives from County Donegal.

The current situation now for the 2016 Festival & Parade is that the Finance and funds as well as the numbers of volunteers for planning the Festival and Parade is again not good.

This state has occurred for 2 main reasons

- 1) A serious reduction in grants and sponsorship funding continues with the result that current funds (£17k) now fails to cover current forecasted expenditure of £25K for a smaller different style Parade – named the Community Parade.
- 2) The urgent need for new volunteers to share a new vision and regeneration of the Festival/Parade cannot be understated. Such individuals will be made most welcome and we hope will be prepared to accept a handover of positions of responsibility to organise the Festival. At the end of last years Festival several long serving volunteers retired and have not been replaced and currently they are a number of long term volunteers still on the Committee who will retire in 2016 as well. 17 years is a long time and whilst its been enjoyable it really is time to have fresh faces, energy and ideas for the Festival & Parade. All these long term volunteers would be delighted to know that this legacy would continue for years to come with the wonderful spirit of the Nottingham St Patrick's Day Festival & Parade.



Bishop of Nottingham



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha Agus Trádála Na hÉireann
(Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland)



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Lets provide you some facts-

Last year the cost of the Festival was over £33,000 with an decreased income of £17,000. This situation left a significant shortfall which was only covered by prudent management of the reserve fund. A significant part of this Festival cost was payments for regulatory Health and Safety Management and Equipment which totalled £11,000. In the early days of the Festival there were no such regulatory requirements or costs but we're in a different world now and everyone's safety and the management of the Parade and Square assembly are of the highest importance so everyone can enjoy the day.

Because of the critical state of funds, there is a now a need to be very prudent and reduce costs significantly so we have had to re-assess the whole Festival and its format. We have therefore the following proposals for the 2016 Nottingham St Patrick's Celebrations.

- Replace the Grand Parade from the Forest with a Community Parade (est. cost £25k) which would assemble on Thurland Street and march into the Square as before. However, unless we immediately receive significant additional funds (£9k +) then even this option may not be an option and we'll need to review the Parade again.
- Provide more variety of stalls and activities in the Market Square instead of within the Parade.
- Feature an Irish Pipe band in the smaller Community Parade (all walking and with no vehicles).
- Since it's a Community day – as it was in the first parade in the year 2000, all Community groups will be invited once again to participate and be provided the opportunity to showcase their talents, however, it will be at their own expense. There will be no payment for expenses, as in previous years. Whatever funds are available will be used to cover the school projects as well as for the headline band that entertain us each year.

As you can see, substantial additional funds are still needed for these proposals. This is a call to action to everyone to consider providing sponsorship, maybe become a benefactor, join the Festival 100 Club or make a donation through a new public funding initiative on Golden Giving (more details to be published later). Whatever means of funding you may choose please let us know by contacting us. Your generosity as always would be appreciated. If there are people who would like



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to organise community/social events like plays, dances, GAA Football matches, sky dives, etc., all to raise funds for the Nottingham St Patrick's Day Festival/Parade then we would be delighted to hear from you. As stated before current funds have depleted considerably and the option to have the Grand Parade is no longer viable leaving a new option of a Community Parade, which still requires £9k to be raised immediately. If more substantial funds (£15K) were suddenly and amazingly raised, we would be delighted and then the Grand Parade option maybe re-considered. However, we would still require additional volunteers as well. We need to make decisions now with the head and not the heart.

Lastly, we (the current Committee) ask everyone to consider volunteering and get involved in some way with the organisation of the 2016 Festival & Parade – when Kilkenny leads the Parade. New Volunteers are required to facilitate this process of change and enable a smooth handover of responsibility to enable future Nottingham St Patrick's Day Festival & Parade to be considered.

If there are no significant increase in funds or new committee members then regreftfully the 2016 Nottingham St Patrick's day Festival and Parade will be in a critical/pivotal position and most probably be the last one and this will be after 17 years of Celebrating our Irish culture and traditions in Nottingham. Almost 2 generations have been born and grown up in this period and its a time when they, their parents and all in the Nottingham Irish community can feel proud to be Irish.

This report is not intended to be doom or gloom its really just a presentation of the facts, something which we are sure the majority of people are not aware of. £1100 was raised last week by a successful Raffle to provide funds so it can be done, but the existing committee are no longer able to continue raising funds as well as preparing for the Festival, that responsibility to raise funds must now be accepted by the whole Irish community in Nottinghamshire.

This year for the 2016 Festival & Parade we need Your Support as detailed above!!!
If you can assist then

Please feel free to Contact us by

email info@nottinghamstpatricksfestival.org.uk

our website www.nottinghamstpatricksfestival.org.uk,

or the Facebook page – [Nottingham St Patrick's day Festival and Parade](#)



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