

# INFORMATION NOTE

## SPOT ON RURAL TOURING



### **What is Spot On?**

Spot On is Lancashire's rural touring network. The network consists of teams of volunteers (280 at last count) who promote and host high quality professional arts events in their local village halls, churches and schools (approx. 45 venues). It is also running a development project with the county's libraries. It is in its 21st year.

Volunteers are often professionals, such as teachers or lecturers, as well as retired farmers, or parents who seek to bring quality performances into their community. They share the same passion of wanting to give everyone the chance for a good night out on their doorstep as well as getting involved; and like a theatre, an audience can choose to see dance, music, theatre, storytelling and children's shows. We promote about 60 shows a year in villages across Lancashire, from Arkholme to Aughton and from the coast to the moors.

### **Who manages Spot On?**

Spot On is managed by Culturapedia, an independent arts management company based in Blackburn. It is part of a consortium with Lancashire County Council, and Chester West and Cheshire Council who run Cheshire Rural Arts. Our official title is the Cheshire Lancashire Touring Partnership. Spot On receives investment in partnership with Cheshire Rural Touring Arts from Arts Council England North, Lancashire County Council and districts.

Spot On is one of 27 similar projects across the UK. Each one is slightly different in style, but they all work by allowing communities to select and host live theatre (and music, dance, puppetry, literature, comedy and film!). However, the model of rural touring is distinctive and brings its own rewards and challenges. Spot On is a member of a national organisation, the National Rural Touring Forum (NRTF), which advocates for and supports rural touring.

### **Spot On in Fylde**

In the past we have received support from Fylde District Council to work with communities in Kirkham, Newton, and Staining. A change in council staff, loss of investment, combined with community changes has seen our presence diminished in the area in recent years. There was no demand from any quarter. A new partnership with the Lowther and support from them to encourage rural communities to come forwards means we feel confident we can re-commit to the district and encourage rural communities in Fylde to be more involved.

We have recently run a couple of events in the area via our libraries programme with successful activity in Lytham, St Annes, and Kirkham Prison.

However, our rural development in Fylde will be conditional on district financial support coming to the network to support the funded programme. On average this is about £600 per annum per district. This resource helps Spot On offer a guarantee against artists costs to small communities, enabling them to host the work on their doorstep

Other benefits are improved wellbeing, use of volunteers, and social capital in the form of a lively community programme for local residents provided locally.

### **FURTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE FROM**

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