

Cabinet

18 March 2020

Durham County Council Festivals & Events Programme 2020/21



Report of Corporate Management Team

Geoff Paul, Interim Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services

Councillor Joy Allen, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Transformation, Culture and Tourism

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide.

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of this report is to confirm details of the 2020/21 festivals and events programme, and to obtain agreement for the allocation of funding to the programme.

Executive Summary

- 2 Festivals and events have an important role to play in delivering the corporate approach to culture-led regeneration as they help place and position County Durham positively, whilst at the same time supporting skills and health by engaging more people in culture and sport, attracting investment and extending engagement in community life and volunteering.
- 3 The county is becoming increasingly known, nationally and internationally, for its arts and cultural offer. Events have played a significant role in this perception change, in particular the biennial Lumiere Durham, high profile exhibitions at The Bowes Museum, and international cricket at Durham County Cricket Club; supported by the extensive annual programme of exhibitions, events and festivals across the county.
- 4 The successful Year of Culture 2019 saw the compounding effect of sustained investment in cultural activity both through the County Council and wider partners. The year of activities, festivals, events and anniversaries saw increased consumption of culture, arts and heritage

tourism experiences by visitors and residents, raising awareness of the offer and providing a cultural legacy to be enjoyed by residents and visitors long after 2019.

- 5 In 2020, the Council, Visit County Durham and cultural partners are once again looking at a programme of activity across the year. 'Year of Cathedrals, Year of Pilgrimage 2020' is a national theme that is being celebrated in the county as Durham's Year of Pilgrimage #Pilgrimage2020. Part of the celebrations will see the launch of new walking trails across the region, which tell the fascinating stories of the region's Northern Saints.
- 6 The programme proposed is for DCC's annual programme of festivals for 2020/21, which continues to demonstrate the Authority's commitment to culture-led regeneration.

Recommendation(s)

- 7 Cabinet is recommended to:
 - (a) approve the proposed allocation of budget for the 2020/21 Annual Programme and Investment and Development programme of events, noting the decision to enhance DCC funding to this area of work from within service budgets;
 - (b) approve the proposed changes to the programme;
 - (c) note the draft forward plan for potential signature events or support requests.

Note the wider cultural festivals and events offer form other partner organisations which DCC support and promote.



Background

DCC Calendar of Festivals and Events 2020/21

- 8 The DCC festivals and events programme has three elements which ensure that a balanced programme exists, whilst also exploring new opportunities. The three elements are as follows:
- 9 The Annual Programme - this programme element endeavours to represent a core offer which residents and visitors are familiar with. The list is gradually refreshed and developed over time to modernise or meet new priorities.
- 10 The Investment and Development Programme - this programme element enables the Authority to support events by direct delivery or with funding, in order to research opportunities, develop infrastructure and/or build resilience of new events. This support enables new ideas to flourish and encourages other partners to take the lead in culture-led regeneration.
- 11 Signature Events - this programme element enables the Authority to deliver very large scale events, which normally have high risks and costs, and so need to demonstrate significant beneficial impact for County Durham. These signature events/festivals are of a scale that funding is unachievable from ongoing revenue resources, and for which corporate funding from outside cash limits will be requested, should the Council be minded to support an event/festival. Examples of such events would include Lumiere.
- 12 In addition to this framework of corporate events (largely driven by economic impact), there is also a great number of smaller scale, one-off or ad-hoc events throughout the year, which increasingly demand the support of the Festivals & Events team. Some of these are Culture and Sport led, whilst others are demand-led from both internal departments and wider community partners.
- 13 It is essential to note that there are many highly visible community events which the Council supports through staff time and infrastructure such as war remembrance occasions and Pride.
- 14 For 2019/20, the DCC revenue events budget for the Annual programme and Investment and Development programme was £431,500. This was bolstered by additional grants and matched funding.
- 15 Of note, is that the team coordinates three key Arts Council England funded festivals (BRASS, Durham Book Festival and Lumiere). The Authority receives funding for these events as a National Portfolio

Organisation (NPO) to create a 'cultural festivals' offer in Durham. The Authority utilises some of its festivals revenue funding to match this Arts Council England funding for the annual BRASS and Book Festivals, whilst Lumiere is classified as a biennial signature event, which has to date been matched by a signature funding request to the Council.

- 16 The current round of NPO funding runs for four years, meaning these three key festivals will now receive ACE support until March 2022.
- 17 In line with this funding, in July 2018, DCC's Cabinet agreed support for Lumiere for the 2019 and 2021 iterations.
- 18 To allow earlier date setting and development to occur, it was previously agreed that the events in the annual programme are assumed to have, in principle, support each year, without the need for formal approval. This doesn't however negate the need for evaluation and financial reconciliation to take place each year, to confirm each event's continued place in the programme.
- 19 This enables successful events to be planned with confidence in advance, but equally, enables advance warnings to remove elements of the programme where events have struggled to meet their outcomes, and offers the opportunity for advance communications and reputational planning.
- 20 Festivals & Events Evaluation: In order to plan the calendar each year, it is important to review the previous year's success and areas for improvement. To this end, there is a robust evaluation model in place for the key events, which enables a range of indicators to be consistently applied across all events. This enables results to inform future decisions and planning. These evaluations use common performance measures to shape both artistic, educational and audience development objectives.
- 21 The key events in the Annual Programme also have a three tiered evaluation consisting of a formal evaluation (as detailed above); an internal debrief to capture problems and operational issues; and a budget review on how each event or festival performed against financial targets.
- 22 Economic Benefits: the festivals and events programme has direct financial benefits for the county. Several events are designed to bring visitors into towns, villages and the City, and as a result, visitors spend in the local economy on food and drink, travel, accommodation and with other local businesses.
- 23 By example, in 2019, BRASS saw a visitor spend of £613,965 across the 10 day event. In addition, contracts totalling £111,415 were spent

with County Durham suppliers, and we received press coverage worth £226,029. Using industry standard calculations, based on DCC's investment of £115,000, the return on investment (ROI) for the event was £827%.

- 24 While the impact of each individual event differs, this is typical of the kind of impact the festivals and events programme has for the County.
- 25 The latest figures available from Visit County Durham (VCD) show the economic impact of tourism increased in County Durham in 2018, despite national challenges to the sector.
- 26 Despite these challenges, visitor spend in County Durham in 2018 was £913.8 million, an increase of 1.4 per cent from the previous year. And in Durham City, visitor spend went up by 3.1 per cent.
- 27 Whilst the number of visitors to the county was the same as 2017, the number of people staying for one or more night increased by 4.2 per cent. In Durham City, the number of overnight visitors increased by 5.2 per cent, and in the Vale of Durham the average number of nights visitors stayed was up by 5.6 per cent.
- 28 The total number of people employed in tourism in 2018 was 11,998 – an increase of 2.7 per cent.
- 29 This continued success in the face of such challenges can be attributed to several factors. Once again, the Council, its partners and other groups and organisations delivered a strong events programme, including new additions such as the North Pennines Stargazing Festival. The opening of Auckland Tower also prompted an increase in visitors to Bishop Auckland.
- 30 Festivals and events remain key demand drivers for the visitor economy providing reasons to visit and reasons to visit now.
- 31 Towns & Villages: Our community arts and library staff are working with the Towns and Villages programme to develop additional community led engagement and participatory activity linked to the festivals and events programme. This activity will align with Towns and Villages priority areas, with 2020 programme planned for Willington and Bishop Auckland and discussions regarding future events in Easington and Stanley underway.
- 32 Environmental Sustainability: Consideration is now being given across the whole festivals and events programme, to making all events more environmentally sustainable.

- 33 This approach has already begun for the two food festivals, which has included a focus on reducing single-use plastics, trying to achieve greater 'locality' of traders, consideration of the most sustainable sources of power, and introduction of effective recycling processes.
- 34 For 2020, the Food Festivals have adopted Environmental & Sustainability guidance for all traders, with preference given to those who adopt best-practice.
- 35 It is hoped that this approach can be rolled out to other festivals, and a separate report will be brought to REAL Management Team on this subject
- 36 The attached Appendix 2 illustrates the proposed Annual Calendar of Events.
- 37 Overall, for 2020/21, the proposal is for the level of financial support for the Annual Programme and Investment & Development events to be reallocated and events running will see an increase by £38,500, this being met from existing budgets. The split of this increased investment is as follows:
- (a) the Annual Calendar of events totals £439,500 including all costs for evaluation;
 - (b) the Investment and Development fund totals £30,000.



The total estimated cost of the programme for 2020/21 is:

DCC Festival and Events Funding	£399,500
Other DCC support	£23,000
<u>External Funding</u>	<u>£930,000</u>
Total	£1,352,500

Community and Wellbeing

- 37 The festival and events programme enables residents and visitors to County Durham to engage with an exciting and diverse range of arts, creative and physical activity opportunities throughout the year.
- 38 The community arts team and Ways to Wellbeing programme have worked with partners to develop a county wide community engagement programme linked to events including Lumiere, Brass, Book Festival, Bishop Auckland Food Festival and Durham City Run.
- 39 Building on work undertaken to date, the emerging Wellbeing & Partnerships team within DCC Culture Sport & Tourism is working across festivals and events with the community arts team to extend the reach and scale of community engagement, specifically targeting our most vulnerable communities and those currently furthest away from engagement.
- 40 Two key areas of focus within this work will be to further extend the reach of Book Festival and to work with families across County Durham within our Join In community physical activity programme to link into and extend the reach of the Families on Track event within the Durham City Run Festival.



Annual Calendar

- 41 The following events remain a key part of the festival and events calendar, demonstrating strong engagement and growing audiences: Bishop Auckland Food Festival, Durham Regatta, Tour of the Reservoir, the Miners' Gala, Durham City Run, BRASS, IncludFEST, Durham Book Festival and TakeOff Festival.
- 42 Brass and Durham Book Festival support high levels of community engagement with Brass delivering a large-scale education programme which in 2019 engaged with 15,622 school pupils in the weeks leading up to and during the festival, an increase of over 1,200 participants from 2018.
- 43 DBF: The Big Read in 2019 was *Brooklyn* by Colm Tóibín. As part of the Festival, 3,000 copies of the book were distributed across Durham, to schools, libraries, prisons and businesses, as well as to university staff and students. Reading and writing workshops with community groups were also delivered as part of this programme.
- 44 The Little Read in 2019 provided 850 copies of the book *Perfectly Norman* to every primary school in County Durham, along with teaching resources. In addition, The Little Read featured craft and song-writing workshops with children in Blackhall, Coundon Grange, Greenhills, Pelton and Tow Law. Songs developed by the children were then performed at the Gala Theatre.
- 45 A number of changes have been proposed for the remaining events in the programme, as detailed below. It should also be noted that the

annual events involve a strong commitment of staff capacity and skills, as well as direct cash resource and marketing capacity, and alternative ways of working to maximise value will continue to be explored.

- 46 Durham's Year of Pilgrimage will be the overarching theme to promote the annual calendar of events and festivals; using the programme as a marketing hook, and events and festivals as a reason to make a 'pilgrimage'.
- 47 The annual designation and Northern Saints Trails development will also encourage greater collaboration and creativity amongst the tourism and cultural sectors in order to harness the opportunities of the theme; broadening the experience for residents and visitors.
- 48 The Northern Saints Trails project is a tourism product development initiative to position and market North East England as The Crossroads of British Christianity through the development of six long distance walking trails based on existing ancient pilgrimage routes. The Northern Saints Trails will be launched in Spring 2020, but the theme and additional routes will continue to develop well into the next decade. The project is coordinated and largely funded by Visit County Durham in partnership and with some match funding from Destination Management Organisations, Local Authorities, attractions, Diocese, landscape partnerships, visitor accommodation providers and places to stay, eat and drink. The project will drive economic benefits to both rural and urban communities throughout the region.
- 49 The Trails portray the region's Saints and their stories, set against a backdrop of the very best of the region's attractions, landscapes, places to eat and drink and visitor accommodation. The Trails are rooted in the region's considerable Christian heritage but walking and pilgrimage appeal to those of other faiths or those who are not religious. Motivations to walk the trails will vary from relaxation, personal spirituality, a walking challenge, the chance to get back to nature and discover stunning landscapes, health and wellbeing, family activities or to uncover the region's fascinating history.
- 50 In 2019, the Durham City Run event extended the one-day 5K/10K race into a whole weekend of activity, including technical talks, visiting speakers (including Paula Radcliffe and Sir Roger Bannister's family), and the premiere of a new family running event called Families on Track. The success of this has meant this format will be repeated and developed for 2020.
- 51 In 2019 DCC children and families' team, *Join In*, and the community physical activity team worked with event organisers and supported 6 families who would not typically have taken part to participate in

Families on Track. Feedback from participating families was that the event was 'brilliant' and they are hoping to continue running and book places this year.

- 52 In 2020 DCC community teams are again working with organisers and have programmes in place to support individuals and families to begin and continue running and to have opportunities to take part in a number of events across the festival.
- 53 Sporting activity is also represented through the annual Durham Adventure Festival, which takes place at the Gala Theatre. A three-day festival celebrating all that's great about adventure and the outdoors, the profile of the event continues to grow, and includes world class film makers, athletes, and adventurers gathering to share their experiences and love for adventure and exploration.



Proposed additions to the Annual Programme

- 54 Seaham Food Festival - in 2018, it was agreed to support this event with funds from the Investment & Development programme, payable in decreasing amounts over a three year period, to help the event become established.
- 55 The intention was to build on the success of Bishop Auckland Food Festival by creating a new sister event, enabling us to use the successful model we have developed to bring benefits to another part of the County, and use economies of scale to bring financial benefits.

- 56 Despite atrocious weather forcing one day of the two-day event to be cancelled, the festival still saw over 15,000 attending, indicating there was a demand for this event, providing as it does, a large scale high profile event in the east of the County.
- 57 The intention had been to provide additional seed fund this year to help the event develop, but as a result of the success of the first year, and the positive press coverage received, it is proposed to now include this event in the Annual Programme, with sufficient funding to deliver it to its potential on an ongoing basis. The proposed allocation of funds will be £51,500 which includes a full event evaluation.



Changes to Annual Programme Funding

- 58 The annual programme has not seen festival resources increase for many years. It is recognised that inflationary and other factors mean the cost of event delivery has increased without a matched increase in funds.
- 59 For this reason, it is proposed to give certain events an uplift in-line with the actual costs of delivery. These will be as follows:
- (a) Miners' Gala - an increase of £10,000 to £20,000 to cover increases in traffic management costs, Hostile Vehicle Mitigation provision, and land testing costs;
 - (b) BRASS - an increase of £5,000 to £120,000 to cover increasing infrastructure and artist costs;

- (c) Bishop Auckland Food Festival - an increase of £5,000 to £60,000 to cover increasing infrastructure costs;
- (d) TakeOff Festival - our agreement is to provide £16,000 of direct funding, plus £7,000 support for marketing. It is proposed that these marketing costs should be covered from the Festivals budget, as currently this is a budget pressure borne by the Gala Theatre.

Proposed review of the Annual Programme

- 60 After seven years of funding, the Tour Series Cycle Race is not providing the profile and economic impact we require.
- 61 DCC's cash investment in the Tour Series over the seven year period has been in the region of £560,000. In addition, we have also been required to cover additional event costs.
- 62 Over the period of support, the event has not attracted spectator numbers proportionate to the amount invested. Over recent years, changes have been made to the event (eg. changing from midweek to a weekend) in the hope that the event would to grow and develop, which has not materialised.
- 63 A DCC evaluation of spectator numbers attending the 2019 event, estimated only 1,200 people attending at the peak of the event. This contrasts with all other events in the DCC Annual Festivals & Events programme showing an increase across the same period.
- 64 With the event costing DCC around £80,000 per annum, the Tour Series is one of the highest cost-per-head events in the DCC Annual Programme, costing around £65 per attender. By contrast, in 2019, the cost-per-head to DCC of Bishop Auckland Food Festival was around £1.90 per attender.
- 65 It is recommended that the Tour Series be removed from the festivals programme and the money is reinvested into other events.

Investment & Development Programme

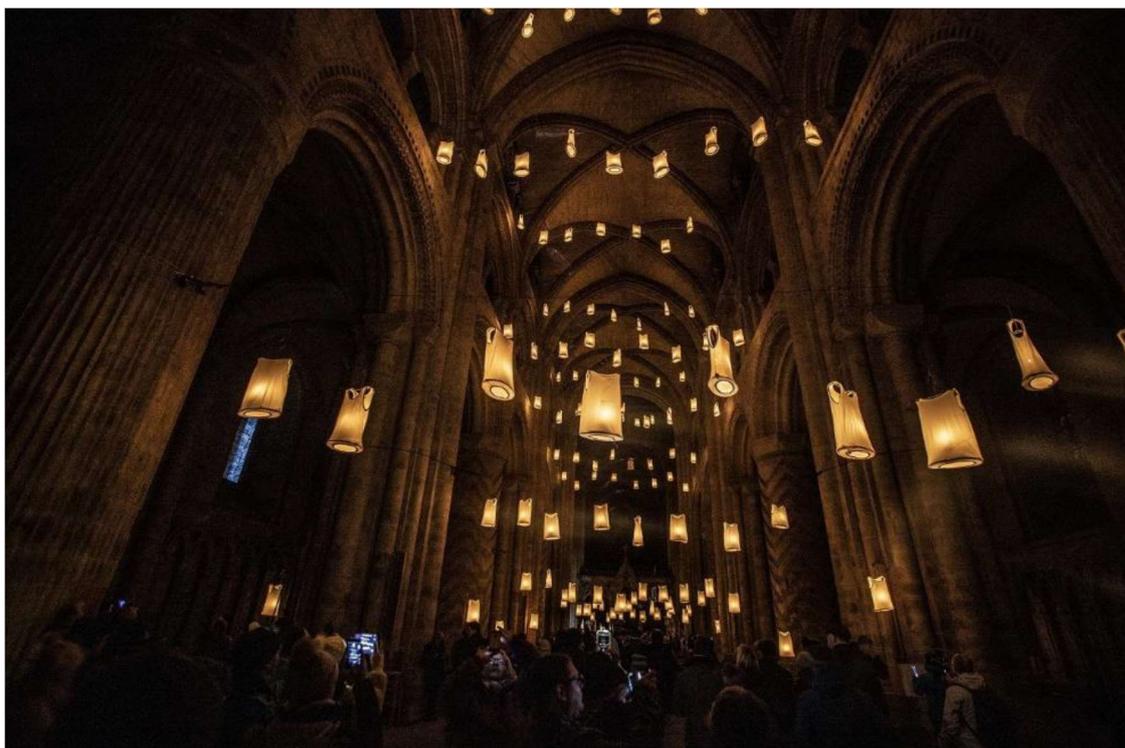
- 66 This area of the events calendar is always competitive, as partners request support for the establishment and development of new events. With limited funds, the same events cannot be supported every year, as that would prevent opportunity and growth of wider ideas.
- 67 The competitive nature of this funding stream means that some events do not propose as well as others and not all events can be supported

every year. Conversely, some events prove successful and become self-sustaining, removing the need for further funding.

- 68 In recent years we have supported: Northern Writes: Defiant Voices - a festival and cultural education programme, inspired by the work of Tommy Armstrong; the Tübingen 50th Anniversary Celebrations; the Norman Cornish Centenary celebrations; Durham Adventure Festival; and Durham Vocal Festival.
- 69 Requests for support come in throughout the year, so it is proposed to hold £30,000 for allocation to such requests as required. The portfolio holder will sign off all awards up to £10,000.

Signature Events Programme

- 70 A forward plan of emerging potential Signature Events has been attached in Appendix 3 in order to highlight potential corporate funding requests for 2020-2022. Reports will be brought on a case by case basis for these requests.
- 71 NPO applications for funding (which support BRASS, Durham Book Festival and Lumiere 2022-2026) will open for submissions in October 2020. A task and finish group will be established to support development and submission of the application (anticipated deadline Spring 2021).
- 72 Gospels: DCC is working with partners Durham Cathedral and Durham University and have submitted an EOI to host the Gospels in 2023. North East hosts are submitting applications to NECP for a final decision from the British Library expected late spring 2020. Potential programme and funding envelope will be developed in late 2020 should the bid be successful.
- 73 Should the Gospels return in 2023, the partnership of Durham County Council, Durham University and Durham Cathedral will work with partners across the North East to present a truly regional celebration. Key commissions, community engagement, digital content and a high profile exhibition on Palace Green will draw locals and tourist to the region, with Durham as the hub.
- 74 S&DR 2025; DCC is working with Darlington Borough Council and Stockton Borough Council to deliver activity as part of the 200 year celebration of the railway in 2025. Work is commencing on programme strands, with DCC working closely with Locomotion in Shildon to define the Durham cultural offer which will be delivered as part of the wider programme alongside the Heritage Action Zone.



Conclusion

- 75 The above outlines the Annual Programme and indicates a fund to support Investment & Development requests throughout 2020/21 and proposes some suggested amendments and budget reallocation.
- 76 An emerging forward plan for signature event proposals has also been included which will rely upon separate reports and funding requests.
- 77 A joint corporate communications schedule will be aligned to the festival and events calendar for 2020/21.
- 78 Should the decision be made to approve the recommendations within the report, the reallocation of the £38,000 would be met from existing service budgets following decision to not deliver the Tour Series cycling race.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Not applicable.

Finance

£38,000 is required to deliver the increased cost of the annual programme of activities however this can be covered within existing budgets with the removal of Tour Series from the programme.

Consultation

Not applicable.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Festivals and events are reviewed to ensure equity of access to opportunity

Climate Change

As highlighted within the report, there is an ambition to make all events more environmentally sustainable and in 2020, BAFF and SFF have adopted Environmental & Sustainability guidance for all traders, with preference given to those who adopt best-practice.

Human Rights

Not applicable.

Crime and Disorder

Not applicable.

Staffing

Not applicable.

Accommodation

Not applicable.

Risk

Failure to consider these proposals will result in delayed planning for the 2020/21 programme of events, with potential for decreased revenue and reputational damage.

Procurement

Not applicable.

Appendix 2: Annual Programme

Event	Month	Organiser	Culture & Sport Cost	Other DCC Funds	Other External Funds	Total	Comments
Bishop Auckland Food Festival	April	DCC	£60,000	£5,000	c£75,000	£140,000	This two-day event attracts around 30,000 people, and boosts the local economy. A new programming partnership for 2018 proved very successful, and there are as such, there are plans to continue to develop the event further. There will be a full independent evaluation commissioned by DCC for this festival included in this funding.
Durham Regatta	June	Regatta Committee	£2,000	£8,000	c£50,000	£60,000	One of the longest running sporting events in the county, dating back to 1834, DCC supports the event by providing some welfare facilities and assistance. There is no DCC evaluation required for this event.
Seaham Food Festival	June	DCC	£51,500	£10,000	c£60,000	£121,500	A two-day event on Durham's Heritage Coast, designed to encourage visitor numbers and boost the local economy. There are plans to build and develop the festival over the coming years. A full independent evaluation commissioned by DCC for this festival included in this funding.
Cycling - Tour of the Reservoir	July	Tyne Valley Cycle Club	£10,000	£0	c£40,000	£50,000	Part of the British Cycling calendar, the race takes place on the roads around Derwent Water, half in County Durham and half in Northumberland. This DCC funding requires an economic evaluation to be provided by the event provider.

	Miners' Gala	July	DMA	£20,000	£0	£100,000+	£120,000+	Organised by the Durham Miners Association (DMA) with support from the Culture & Sport team, this is one of the County's largest events and also one of its longest running. There is no DCC evaluation required for this event.
	BRASS	July	DCC	£120,000	£0	c£250,000	£370,000	Building on Durham's strength in brass-playing, the festival features international artists, new collaborations and contemporary brass playing; plus an extensive outreach and education programme across the County. This is one of DCC's festivals supported by significant Arts Council England funding. There will be a full independent evaluation commissioned by DCC for this festival, included in this funding.
	Durham City Run (10K/5K)	July	Events of the North	£25,000	£0	Not known	Not known	A Durham City-based 5K and 10K mid-week Summer road run, which encourages more people into being active, and boosts mid-week visitors to the City. The evaluation for this event will be requested from the event provider, and include both economic and social indicators.
	IncludFEST	July	TIN Arts	£10,000	£0	Not known	Not known	An inclusive outdoor arts festival created and run by TIN Arts, which aims to widen access to the arts for disabled children, young people and their families. The evaluation for this event will be requested from the events provider and include both economic and social indicators.
	Durham Book Festival	October	DCC/NWN	£78,000	£0	c£260,000	£338,000	An annual celebration of the written and spoken word, the event is growing in stature and is increasingly attracting national attention. New Writing North has a contract to produce the festival. The event cost includes funds for an independent evaluation to be completed, and paid for by New Writing North. Includes a £3000 contribution for a festival intern.

	TakeOff Festival	October	Theatre Hullabaloo	£23,000	£0	c£95,000	£118,000	A festival of theatre for children and young people attracting theatre companies from across the world to perform in the region. The evaluation for this event will be requested from the event provider and include both economic and social indicators.
	Total			£399,500				

Appendix 3: Signature Events

Signature Programme	Event	Organiser	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Comments
	Gospels Return	Durham Cathedral/Durham Uni/ Durham County Council				Durham University themed exhibition and events with opportunities to collaborate. Initial support agreed, and wider approvals being sought.
	Tour de Yorkshire	DCC/Go Yorkshire				Opportunities to host the start of one of the days of the Tour de Yorkshire from Teesdale. This brings worldwide TV coverage, visitor and spectator opportunities.
	Stockton & Darlington 2025 Bi-Centenary	DCC & wider partners				There is currently an emerging partnership between Stockton, Darlington and Durham to celebrate the 200 year anniversary of the railway. This includes opportunities to seek World Heritage status and wider festival opportunities. Initial seed funding is required to support the programme development.
	Lumiere	DCC / Artichoke				Bi-annual event commissioned by DCC and produced by Artichoke. This is an Arts Council NPO part funded event and approvals for the 2021 event has been confirmed.