

Summary of notes from eat:festival 'Wash-Up' meeting on 29 October 2024 & recommendations to discuss at CETP on 14 November 2024

Attendees: Cllr Kim Power, Cllr Karen Drake, Cllr Ian Wallis, Cllr Steve James and Cllr Catherine Doody

Cllr Campbell Ritchie and Cllr Gavin Grant couldn't attend but gave feedback

Summary of feedback:

We would definitely like to hold another/regular food & drink festivals. It was popular with residents and visitors. Feedback from retailers was mixed in terms of trading but overall positive, with requests to be included in the promotional activity. Festival organisation was good, although eat closed a road we asked them not to.

Research should be carried out with retailers and hospitality to see whether a festival on a Saturday, Sunday or Bank Holiday Monday works for them and why.

We agreed we don't have the resources to organise a food & drink festival ourselves (with either local suppliers or others). We would like to review other potential food & drink festival suppliers before committing to another date with eat: festivals.

The good weather was a major factor in the event's success, but of course it is not guaranteed, especially in mid-October. We should consider holding it in warmer months. WOMAD's announcement means the last weekend of July is now a possibility. Another date discussed was the last weekend of May (which includes a bank holiday Monday) to revitalise St Aldhelm's Fayre, although May 2025 may be an ambitious target for research and planning with an alternative supplier and may not be an option with eat: festivals. We should explore with eat: festivals and potentially other suppliers whether alternative dates earlier in the year will work.

We discussed the lack of 'local' stalls and agreed this isn't a huge issue as long as we aren't promoting it as local. We're aware there are many reasons which 'stop' local suppliers from committing to stalls, with several who wanted to see how this inaugural event went.

If we agree to another food & drink festival with an external partner, we need to be happy we can commit to the project management/partner management/due diligence/agreeing ground rules resource which is required for something on this scale and identify where this will come from.

There were discussions about expanding our current farmers market into something more frequent and with more stalls, although it should be noted that many stall holders have other commitments at larger markets.

eat: festivals have suggested 30 August as a 2025 date and their price is £2500 (£1500 in 2024). This is already carnival weekend, and the general view is we would prefer a separate date/event.

Car parking was an issue and needs more consideration.

Proposal for CETP

- To agree we'd like to hold another festival in 2025
- To set up a working party to review two other food & drink festival suppliers, evaluate where our management resource will come from and set a date
- Explore with eat:festivals and potentially other suppliers whether alternative dates earlier in the year will work
- To ask MTT to liaise with HUB for their feedback on days

Cllr Lesley Crawford-Price