

Investment Proposals invited

11-19 March 2023

SEVERN ESTUARY

W.E. Irish Culture Fest

West of England celebrates
the Irish diaspora



This is why W.E. Irish...

... Believe

In the transformative power of celebrating Irish culture to heal, to enlighten and to foster unity.

... Embrace

The life affirming changes we create within and beyond our community.

... Evolve

Society's views towards Irish culture, Irish people, those of Irish descent and their contribution to the region and the UK.

... Honour

All who came before us and whose sacrifices made it possible for us to flourish and thrive within the region.



St Patrick's Day, on 17th March, is celebrated world-wide by the Irish diaspora. In 2023 W.E. Irish will turn Bristol and the region green for St Patrick.

OUR MISSION

To share with people Irish culture and tradition, beyond the stereotypes. To make people aware of what Irish people, past and present, have contributed to the West of England;

To promote diversity in Bristol and to share learnings from the Irish immigrants' stories, to benefit those now arriving in our City of Sanctuary;

To benefit the local economy, recognising that, where there are established St Patrick's Day Parades, local economies earn £millions.

Even though there are over 17,000 Irish people in the West of England, there are no community centres where the Irish diaspora can meet and celebrate our heritage and culture. The festival aims to bring the sizeable Irish community in the West of England together and to develop a sense of pride in our heritage.

Celebrating Irish culture

What is it?

W.E. IRISH Culture Fest is a celebration of Irish culture and heritage, which builds to a grand St Patrick's Day Parade on Sunday 19th March 2023.

During the Culture Fest, there will be a Fringe Festival with music, dancing, a comedy craic-house, an Irish film festival, and a programme of talks on contemporary Irish history and shared experiences with black and ethnic minorities. There will also be sports and food events.

Irish pride

The West of England, and Bristol in particular, is home to many thousands of Irish immigrants. Many who came here in the post-war era - who built our roads and staffed our hospitals - are quietly living out their lives, but do not enjoy a real sense of Irish identity or community. These immigrants could not wear their identity with pride, as they were demeaned and subjugated by the 'No blacks, no dogs, no Irish' attitude that welcomed them. Subsequent waves of immigrants, who came in the time of the 'Troubles', worried that they were tainted with a terrorist connection and, therefore, did not highlight their nationality or heritage. It is only with the most recent wave of immigrants – post Irish boy-bands, Riverdance and Ryanair weekends to Temple Bar in Dublin! – that we Irish feel safe and proud to shout out about our culture and heritage.

This festival will provide an opportunity to those Irish who have served the City and the region, to share their culture with pride.

There are 4 Irish dancing schools in the region, all of which compete nationally and all of which will take part in our St. Patrick's Day Parade

A Crock O' Gold

When Dublin's St Patrick's Day parade was cancelled due to Covid, Dublin City Council announced that it lost £73 million in income. While the W.E. IRISH CultureFest is a lot smaller in its ambition for 2023, there is no reason why it cannot bring in a 'crock o' gold' for the West of England region.

A festival in March is just the boost that the economy needs.

In a time when many artists are still struggling post-Covid, we aim to offer work to Fringe performers and to artists to create floats and costumes for the Parade.

Our aim for 2023 is to have 10,000 attend the Parade and a full programme of Fringe events every night of the festival.

Bring under-represented groups together

A focus of this festival will be to bring together people of Irish/black dual-heritage. There are many similarities and cross-overs which have never had the opportunity to be revealed. The festival will also present opportunities for the Irish diaspora to share their experiences with more recent immigrants facing a hostile environment.



Campaign Goals

The newly-formed W.E. Irish CIC (Community Interest Company) has big plans for the Irish Culture Fest in 2023, building on the successes of the Irish in Bristol St Patrick's Day parades of the recent past.

In 2023, the festival will run from 11 - 19 March, with an entertaining, informative and educational programme consisting of the following elements.

St. Patrick's Day Parade - through Bristol on 19th March
20 plus floats • 6 Dance schools performing • Several bands • Street performers
Representation from all diverse communities across the region

Film Fest

Showcasing Irish film-makers and actors • Screening throughout the region
Subsidised film screenings and events

Fringe Fest

A multi venue celebration of Irish Culture • Comedy • Poetry • Literature
Dance • Music

Ideas Fest

Debates and talks on Irish culture, heritage and ideas

Education

Events and activities focusing on enhancing society's views on Irish people's contribution to the region



Sponsorship Opportunities

Our total fundraising ambition for the 2023 parade is to raise £120,000, through a combination of corporate sponsorship and grants.

We realise that different organisations and individuals will have varied aims for their sponsorship, so we have tiered our 'ask' into three areas; however, we are willing to discuss each package with each sponsor. Sponsors may choose to promote specific areas of the Culture Fest, for example, the Parade or the entertainment Fringe or education events.

Tier 1 – Main sponsor for the W.E. Irish Culture Fest: £25,000 to £50,000

Benefits of this package:

- Main Sponsor/s – with a maximum of two;
- Sponsor branding on all communications;
- One float in the St Patrick's Day Parade to promote your organisation (designed professionally);
- Full-page advert in printed and digital Festival Fringe programme;
- Incorporated mention on any event merchandising & tickets;
- One year of featured advertising on our website;
- 100 tickets to various events throughout the festival;
- Special guests invite to the Lord Mayor's Mansion House for a 'shindig' in March.

Tier 2 – Major sponsor for the W.E. Irish Culture Fest: £5,000 to £25,000

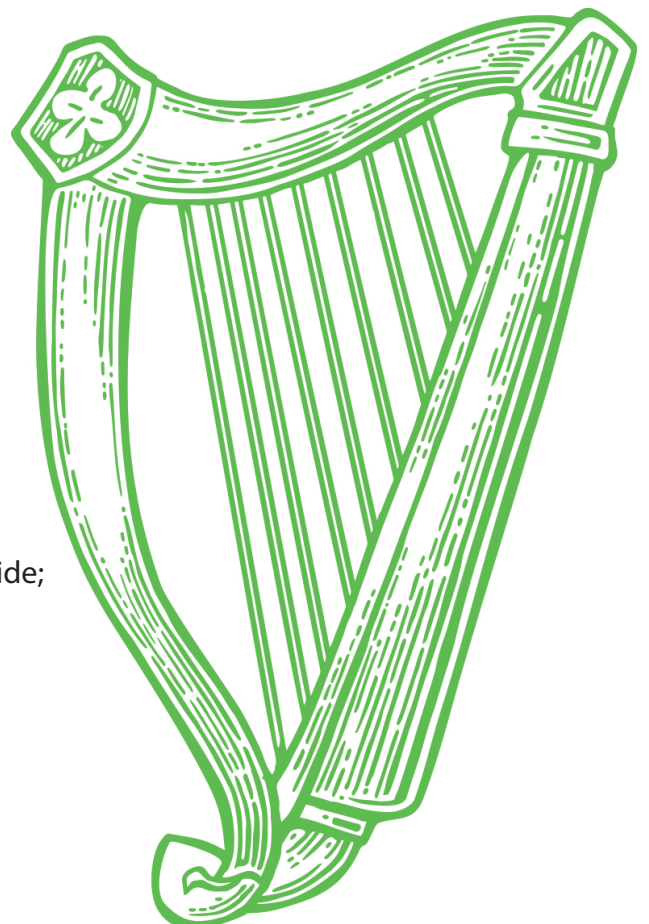
Benefits of this package:

- Listed as support sponsor;
- Listed on PR/marketing/social media;
- Half-page advert in our printed and digital festival guide;
- Whole year of advertising on our website;
- 50 tickets to various events throughout the festival;
- Option to take part in the St Patrick's Day Parade.

Tier 3 – Sponsor for the W.E. Irish Culture Fest: £1,000 to £5,000

Benefits of this tier:

- Listed as supporter;
- Listed on marketing/social media;
- Quarter-page advert in our printed and digital festival guide;
- Whole year of advertising on our website;
- 20 tickets to various events throughout the festival.



History of W.E. Irish

Amelia Dunford Hon President writes about the history of the Irish in Bristol



“On a Spring evening in 1989, in St. Patrick’s Church Hall, Redfield, Bristol there was a good turnout of Bristol-based Irish people who were there to find out what was “going on” and to learn more from the organisers of their intentions to bring the Irish community together.

With the knowledge that The Federation of Irish Societies (now Irish in Britain) was going to be a supportive arm, it was decided to form a Bristol Irish Society – a non-sectarian and non-politically aligned organisation.

The aims and objectives were to improve the welfare, education and social life of the Irish in Bristol and surrounding area; it was to be a focus for events to bring the community together to celebrate their heritage.

A committee was formed and within a few months, a launch was held at The Council House in the presence of representatives of The Irish Embassy, Lord Mayor of Bristol and other civic dignitaries.

A setback occurred in 1990s when a horrendous hate crime occurred. Two men, armed with baseball bats, forced their way into an Irish language lesson and attached our Treasurer. The men were sentenced, but it led to a closure of our premises.

After more than three decades of growth and many successful events, the Bristol Irish Society has decided to widen its reach and is now known as W.E. Irish (West of England Irish).

We are excited to share with you what we have planned for 2023”.

Is mise le meas

Amelia Dunford Hon President



For 2023, we aim to route our parade through the iconic centre of Bristol and attract 5,000 spectators



Paul Kelly
CEO and Chairperson
of the W.E. Irish CIC

As we know, where the Irish diaspora reaches, it brings positive contributions. The West of England

is a prime example. In our region, Irish citizens and their descendants have contributed to all areas of life; working in the private and state sector, as entrepreneurs, in sport and, especially, in hospitality.

We envisage that this cultural festival will be a great opportunity to showcase and celebrate what often gets overlooked, that is what the Irish have done and are doing within the West of England.

We would really appreciate your support in this endeavour. Go raibh míle maith agat (A thousand thanks to you).



Paula O'Rourke
The Rt Hon
Lord Mayor of Bristol

I have the privilege of being Bristol's Lord Mayor for the municipal year 2022 -23. Each Lord

Mayor has a 'cause' or organisation that they focus their energies on during their Lord Mayor year.

As an Irish woman, I have chosen to promote and develop the work done by the Irish in Bristol over the years.

In 2023, we aim to have a full week-long CultureFest which will benefit the economy, but also bring some joy to the City after what we believe will be a long hard winter.

We are proud to share our literary and cultural heritage with the people of the West of England and am personally looking forward to enjoying a full and engaging programme of fringe events, culminating in a joyous and celebratory St Patrick's Day Parade.

We aim to bring under-represented groups together

A focus of this festival will be to bring together the people of Irish/Multi cultural heritage. There are many similarities between us which have never had the opportunity to be revealed.

The festival will also present opportunities for the Irish diaspora to share their experiences with more recent immigrants facing a hostile environment.



Partnerships

W.E Irish work in partnership with local, national and international businesses, and with public organisations. We are seeking support for our plans to develop a fringe festival which will be an economic boost for the region, while also having a 'levelling up' effect on sections of society that have been too long ignored.

We need support to:

- Fund the St Patrick's Day Parade;
- Support for our education programme;
- Help with paying local artists and crafts people;
- Promotion and marketing.

Get in touch to find out more and read on to find out more about W.E. IRISH partnerships. Details on the back page.

Previous business partners include:

B&A Group, PMG, McCarthy Marland, Bristol City Centre Business Improvement District, EMDEC Construction Limited & Cotswold Homes.

Becoming a sponsor

Bespoke opportunities

As well as sponsorship opportunities we are able to tailor sponsorship packages to suit your needs and make the most of the marketing opportunities available. Please get in touch to discuss how we can help.

Sounds great, how can I get involved?

Email us on: hello@weirish.org

Visit our website: www.weirish.org

FESTIVAL ORGANISORS

W.E. Irish CIC is a not-for-profit company recently established. It is formed from the membership of the Irish in Bristol and St Patrick's Day Committee. Its directors are:

Paul Kelly, CEO

Kathleen Nash, CFO

Amelia Dunford, CCO

Paula O'Rourke, COO

Leighton de Burca, CMO

Supported by a 12 strong leadership team.

