

Guy Fawkes 400
Review of 5th November 2005 programme for ESAG

1. Activities of the day

Activity	Went well	Didn't go well	Learning points
Street entertainers	All happened and were well received. There were no traffic or crowd control issues. Acts which performed after the fireworks helped retain people in the city centre and lessen the people leaving at the same time.	Large crowds at Minster meant that one act had to be relocated.	Acts add to the overall feel of an event and spread the attraction around the city centre area and help crowd dispersal.
Bells, Brass and Percussion Symphony	The performance went well and was well received. The presence of the Fire Service river craft was of major benefit for the river based element. There were no traffic or crowd control issues.	Crowds didn't follow the suggested route and therefore weren't as widely spread as planned.	Pyrotechnics on the river were visible from outside the river area and some people went to the walkways believing them to be the main display.
Renaissance: Illuminating York	Incredibly popular, especially the Minster. Extensive media coverage gave York a high national profile.	Panels at the Art Gallery didn't work. Extensive media coverage attracted far higher numbers into the Minster area than planned.	Gear arrangements to the level of local, regional and national publicity planned.
Fireworks	A highly successful and safe launch.	<p>The secrecy of the site and the requirement not to suggest viewing sites meant that people did not know where best to stand.</p> <p>Despite fireworks being described as "skyline" but some people still expected to see a full display and consequently were disappointed.</p> <p>Extensive national media coverage attracted far higher numbers, especially to see the Minster than planned. In particularly crowded places, especially Duncombe Place, some people couldn't get to a place with a view of the</p>	<p>Fireworks should not in future be fired from a secret location.</p> <p>Greater clarity is needed about what people can expect to see at any event.</p> <p>A system is needed to reassess likely crowds in the light of national PR in the run up to a future event so plans can be adjusted accordingly.</p>

		<p>fireworks. Some people felt unsafe in the large crowds.</p> <p>The sheer number of people caused roads and bridges to be blocked to traffic for about 40 mins.</p>	<p>Road closures are needed at key points in the city centre if big crowds are to be handled safely.</p>
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2. Event planning

Time line	Went well	Didn't go well	Learning points
October 2004	Background work starts on what starts as a 'Festival of Light' and eventually becomes GF400. This includes consideration of firing sites.	The late start, geared to the collapse of plans for a 'tester' fireworks display on 5.11.2004, hamstrings plans to raise corporate sponsorship funding.	Start earlier on fundraising.
January 2005	Sponsorship work starts.	No funds secured, mainly because corporate funds are determined at least one year earlier.	Start earlier on fundraising.
May	Bid for £50,000 funding to the Urban Cultural Programme.	Initial bid unsuccessful, but £40,000 secured in July.	
May/June/July	Seven firework companies make site visits to discuss several options.		Better to do when level of funding known.
July	Kimbolton Fireworks selected. Firing site work has now to be geared to what is affordable – a single site rather than the triangulation planned.		
August	Discussions on firing sites lead to proposal to fire from Clifford's Tower (two options), still with the back-up of St Peter's School. After site visits on 25 th August, ESAG asked to convene to discuss our plans.		
1 st September	Steering group agrees reduced programme. Internal discussion rules out Clifford's Tower.	Much work wasted, but at least fallback has been in place since October 2004.	Get earlier clarity on what is/is not wanted.
14 th September	ESAG meeting		
15 th September onwards	Discussion starts on the issues raised by ESAG. All are resolved to the satisfaction of the event organisers following discussions/advice from consultees.	Because of various factors – the changing nature and timing of the programme, delayed risk assessments from some performers and the email discussions on some safety elements – the event manual is delayed.	The nature of an event – and its potential appeal - needs to be a significant part of the process.

1 st November	A meeting is convened by Bill Woolley in response to	With the exception of the delay to the	Event manual to be in place
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	concerns raised by the Police.	event manual and the level of stewarding at the firing site, all of the issues had been aired at, and followed up after, the ESAG meeting and, the organisers believed, resolved.	earlier. Any remaining concerns should be directed through the ESAG Chair.
3 rd November	Event Manual finalised		
5 th November	The firing site was well-managed and the firing went ahead safely and without interruption. (Additional stewards were provided, in anticipation of encroachment into the exclusion zone). Despite the massive influx of people in the city centre, there were no reported incidents requiring hospital attention. 99.9% of people behaved responsibly, even when filling the roadways at Duncombe Place, High Petergate, Museum Street and on Lendal and Ouse Bridges. Stewards at Bootham Bar and the Duncombe Place junction took safety actions to prevent conflict between vehicles and pedestrians.	Pedestrians, rather than the potential stopping drivers, blocked the highway. Because of the very high numbers, stewards were unable to manage crowd control in the Minster/Lendal bridge area effectively, although additional stewards, under the circumstances, would simply have increased the numbers. The secrecy about the firing site undoubtedly allowed the display to go ahead but increased the numbers in the city centre.	Gear arrangements to the level of local, regional and national publicity planned. Fireworks=crowds. National PR=crowds. Double the national PR=double crowd. Road closures needed to the extent of sealing off the northern end of the city centre. Firing zone to be sealed off. Or, raise enough funding to hold a staged display on the Knavesmire.