



Outline Proposal

18 Hours is a local employer and non-profit event company producing several community festivals across Rother and Hastings (including St Leonards Festival, Streets of Battle & Bexhill, Journeys Festival of Dance, Hastings Storytelling Festival). In January 2022 we worked with Rother DC to produce a centrepiece light festival for Bexhill: Bexhill After Dark. The event saw thousands flock to Bexhill in mid-winter to see a programme that responded to RDC's objectives to encourage audiences to the high street. This included a sophisticated video projection installation that focused on ten Bexhill shopkeepers providing legacy for the town. The Welcome Back Fund (just under £16k) and other local support enabled £60k leverage for the town from Arts Council England (see budget).

Our proposal is to work with Bexhill Town Council as a lead partner to develop an annual one-day light festival based in and around the town centre. This would bring in the best quality performances to engage residents and provide never seen opportunities in Bexhill on Sea. We will create a Southeast Lights Network with three other regional light festivals with who we would co-commission new work and share good practice; another opportunity to raise the profile of the town.

The plan with Bexhill Town Council would be to work in partnership to help deliver the Town Council's objectives. Bexhill After Dark can include community programmes to work with local young people, seniors, or businesses tailored to meet local priorities. For example, we can offer skills development in event management areas of production for local target groups to increase employability (we have delivered similar programmes successfully before). We would continue to bring involvement of local schools and colleges (Bexhill College and DV8).

If a successful partnership with Bexhill Town Council can be achieved, we plan to develop a sustained large scale annual programme each January. Based on our experiences of Bexhill After Dark in 2022, we know that this event can not only support high streets by bringing people to the town in the off-season, but also bring the community of Bexhill together to celebrate the town and its local talent in an event that presents Bexhill as a creative, vibrant town with a deep-seated sense of civic pride.





Budget 2022 (as example of costs for Bexhill After Dark)

INCOME	£
Rother DC: Welcome Back Fund	15,838
Other public funding	2,320
Private/sponsorship	5,280
Arts Council England	59,726
Cash total	£ 83,164
EXPENDITURE	
£	
Artists	45,416
Accessibility	1,680
Festival Committee 'Go See' Rochester Light Festival	575
Marketing & developing audiences	1,666
Overheads including site, infrastructure, creative production	33,827
Cash total	£ 83,164
In kind support	53,600
FINAL TOTAL	£136,764





Request for support from Bexhill Town Council

Bexhill After Dark has potential meet a multitude of objectives, ranging from community engagement, employability skills development, through to economic development and placemaking. To that end, we are asking Bexhill Town Council for financial support for £15,000.

Activities to support some of Bexhill Town Council's potential objectives

- Employability
- Working with young people (Bexhill College, DV8 College, young skaters)
- Skills Development & mentoring for event producers
- Working with seniors to enable engagement with this underserved group
- Continuing to develop relationship and engagement with mobility scooter users
- Increasing footfall for evening economy in Bexhill town centre

£15,000

