



PRESS RELEASE 30 September 2009

FEI pioneering new service for Festivals in the North East

Festivals and Events International (FEI) has won a three year contract to provide the North East England Festivals and Events Service. Funded by the regional development agency, One North East, the Service will strengthen the events and festivals sector in the North East increasing its national and international appeal.

The Service has two main roles – the first is to attract new national and international cultural and sporting events to the North East. The second is to provide practical advice on funding, planning and marketing to existing events to help them grow and attract new audiences.

FEI Director, James Waters leads an expert consortium to deliver the Service that includes Lorna Easton and Amanda Shepherd of Blue Sail the destination marketing consultancy and Zoe Bottrell of Culture Creative who will be Project Manager for the Service. Dave Roberts, MD of Roberts and Partners and one of the founding Directors of the Great North Run will provide advice on the sporting aspects of the Service whilst James, previously Associate Festival Director at Edinburgh International Festival, will focus on arts festivals and events.

The Service will be run from a new office in Alnwick, Northumberland and will be fully operational from April 2010.

Stacy Hall, Director of Communications & Tourism for One North East said:

“We are delighted to be working with the FEI Consortium in this new and imaginative approach festivals and events in the region. The experience of the team will bring real benefits to the North East and we will be working together to attract new events and develop home grown festivals to increase visitors to the area.”

This new Service will build on the firm foundations laid by Culture¹⁰ – the curated programme of high quality cultural events, initiated by NewcastleGateshead Initiative - to develop North East England’s reputation as a place known for its high quality, fun and exciting cultural events that can attract significant new and repeat visits to the region.”

James Waters, Director of FEI said:

“The North East has tremendous potential to stage festivals and events that attract visitors to the region with all the resultant economic and social benefits. It already hosts many world class events and we are very pleased to bring the experience of our team to support the sector. The UK festival scene is booming. Cities and regions across the country are investing in festivals and events to drive their social and economic agendas. The UK City of Culture initiative is just one example and, in Durham’s bid for that title, the North East has a strong contender.”

By taking this targeted and focused approach to its support for festivals and events One North East has shown real confidence in the potential for the sector, and what it takes to realise that potential. We will be working hard to ensure that confidence leads to tangible, measurable benefits.”

Ends.



Notes for Editors;

1. Festivals and Events International was set up by Nick Dodds formally Chief Executive of Brighton Dome and Festival Ltd and past Chairman of the British Arts Festivals Association and James Waters who was Associate Festival Director of Edinburgh International Festival where he helped Sir Brian McMaster create 15 editions of the Festival. The company is currently advising a number of UK and International authorities and events on how to develop festivals that meet their objectives. More information on the company can be found at www.feiu.com
2. Blue Sail is a destination consultancy specialising in tourism and the visitor economy. As experienced marketers Blue Sail provide expert advice on marketing strategy and planning, always working from a market perspective and applying the latest market intelligence. Further information can be found at www.bluesail.com
3. Culture Creative is based in the North East specialising in cultural regeneration projects from development to delivery. Culture Creative has worked directly with One North East in the past on the Festivals and Events Toolkit and currently advises them on the 2012 Pre-Games Training Camps. Further information can be found at www.culturecreative.co.uk
4. One North East is the Regional Development Agency set up in April 1999 to help the people of the North East create and sustain jobs, prosperity and a higher quality of life. The Agency is responsible to the people of the North East and to the Government. More information can be found at www.onenortheast.co.uk
5. The Regional Festivals and Events Service will be operational from 1 April 2010 and can be contacted at Garden Lodge, Greenwell Road, Alnwick, Northumberland, NE66 1HB
6. For more information or interviews contact; Nick Dodds 07790 454549.