



# Preston Mela 2011

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## evaluation report




Preston's Premier Cultural Diversity & Community Cohesion Event for the Whole Family



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With the current economic climate it has been a very difficult and challenging time to secure funding for this year's Mela. We are extremely grateful to all our sponsors and grant bodies for the continuous priceless support and commitments that make the Mela event a major focal point in Preston City's Arts and Cultural calendar.

We are further grateful to all our VIP guests for their time, support and commitment to Preston Mela.

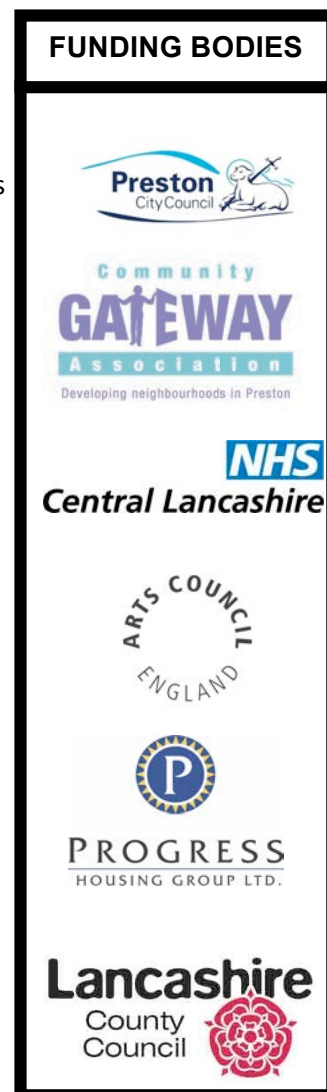
The Preston Mela Trust is indebted to many organisations and individuals who have assisted with the planning, commissioning and delivery of the event and I would like to acknowledge their contributions:



- **Pauline Lowe**, Health & Safety Officer (Preston City Council).
- **Tim Joel**, Events Officer (Preston City Council).
- **Chris Selkirk**, Festival & Events Officer (Preston City Council).
- **Jenny Ashburner**, Project Worker Evaluation.
- **Adeela Khan**, Project Worker Events Support.
- **Staff** from our key sponsors Community Gateway Association, Progress Housing and NHS Central Lancashire
- **Volunteers:** Preston Sikh Community, Gujarat Hindu Society, Guild 2012 and Arun Vithlani.
- **Workshops Facilitators:** Rang Group, Shreya Ghodke and Henna Paintings.
- **Chris Davis** –ALISON Project.
- **Lancashire Constabulary**

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to my Board members, who have worked so hard during the year to ensure the event was a success:

- **Amrat Limbachia**, Director/ Treasurer
- **Charu Ainscough OBE**, Director/Governance Lead
- **Ishwer Tailor MBE**, Director/ Company Secretary
- **Jazz Singh**, Director / Artistic Performance Lead
- **Nweeda Khan**, Co-opted Director
- **Mahendra Luhar** Co-opted Director



**Gulab Singh MBE**  
Chairman

## INTRODUCTION

With roots in the Indian subcontinent, the word Mela signifies 'Fair'. In rural tradition, Melas were and still are of great importance. In its modern usage, it is not only a South Asian, but an intercultural festival which incorporates art, culture, music, dance, food and heritage. Mela provides the back drop for community cohesion bring together people from all walks of life in a fusion of sharing traditional and cultural experiences in a family oriented event and to have fun.



Preston Mela 2011 took place on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> June at Avenham Park from 12 noon until 8:00pm. Now in its 14<sup>th</sup> year, the event attracted over 10,000 visitors and retained its family friendly mix of South Asian entertainment, crafts activities, funfair rides, food and information stalls.

The event proved an opportunity not to be missed, to share rich cultural heritage with the mainstream population. It offered a break for bridge building and community building in a family orientated setting, by sharing arts and culture. Mela provides the perfect setting to promote and create an opportunity where communities and people of all ages can come together to have fun and learn.

Year on year, this unique, colourful and free event is brought together by volunteers aiming to promote meaningful integration and interaction between the diverse groups within Preston. The Preston Mela now a established major event in Preston city's cultural calendar. This annual programme strives to provide quality interaction between different groups through traditional music, art, dance, food and crafts and an opportunity for service providers from both the public sector and voluntary organisations in Preston to showcase their services.

Each year we have work towards making preparations for Guild 2012, by developing international links. The Mela Trust was due to host a cultural exchange programme with other UK Melas and almost secured international acts such as Siddhi Dhamal Dance Group from Gujarat India to perform in Preston and at the Mela. This could not happen due to visa restrictions on the artist travelling to the UK. We will work harder and in a timely manner to ensure this relation of international links continues and in particular during Guild Year.



The theme for the 2011 Mela was 'Volunteering' in line with the Coalition Government's vision for the Big Society. We also teamed up with Community Gateway Association and Help Direct to promote volunteering as an important aspect of looking after each other and our Community.

We are pleased that for the second year, Preston Mela was filmed and by the TV channel, Lancashire One who provided coverage on the event which can be accessed via their website <http://www.lancashireone.com/channels-detail.php?s=70&id=381&catID=17>. The video coverage included interviews with the Mayor of Preston, Cllr Roberta Cartwright.

Year on year Preston Mela Trust must ensure funding is in place in order for the event to be showcased, which is not an easy task. Despite the difficulties faced by many organisations in light of the current economic climate, we were able to secure enough funding and resources to enable Mela 2011 to go ahead. Preston Mela is a self financing event which is not for profit. Once again, we are indebted to our sponsors and funding bodies. There are two major expenditures for Mela to be held, these falls into the following categories. Infrastructure being the most costly and is must to ensure that the right equipment and services are in place so the event is safe to all to participate and those that attend. The second cost is the artistic and craft programme. The Mela Board endeavours to build on pervious years experiences and feed back to pull together a day full of new activities and experience for all visitors; to learn something new and have enjoyment. Our sponsors and grant making bodies are key to ensuring that these two funding elements are met. Some of our regular and most loyal supports such as Community Gateway Association, Progress Housing Association and NHS Central Lancashire branding has been integral to the Preston Mela programme. I believe that their association with Preston Mela portrays two significant things, these being;



- That their organisation and staff place importance to community cohesion and diversity as core to their business from the leadership to grass root level.
- The public visiting the Mela are able to see these organisations convictions to diversity.



Community Radio to have the voix pox had ensure that we have captured people's views and comments of the Mela and will help us to shape future events; some of these comments will feature in this report.

Prior to the event, 5,000 flyers, posters and 2,500 booklets were printed and disseminated through community centres and South Asian outlets. We are pleased with the support and coverage provided by the local media for Preston Mela both prior and post event. More awareness work needs to be undertaken with the media so that the reporting is more reflective of the broad contributions of different groups in Preston. We are grateful to Help Direct for the grant support on our promotional aspects. Our collaboration with Preston FM

From the stallholder, workshop and visitor evaluations, we are also able to record participants' views which are captured in the evaluation section of the report.

This report provides documented evidence of the event and details of the programme of activities linked to this year's event.

On behalf of the Preston Mela Trust, I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to Preston Mela past, present and in the future!



On a personal note the Guild 2012 Mela will be my last involvement and association with the Trust. We will work towards having a new chairman for 2013 and beyond.

## EVALUATION

Evaluation is a very important aspect of any piece of work. Preston Mela Trust places significant importance on evaluation to measure how successful the event was; what’s the learning, how to improve the event and finally accountability.

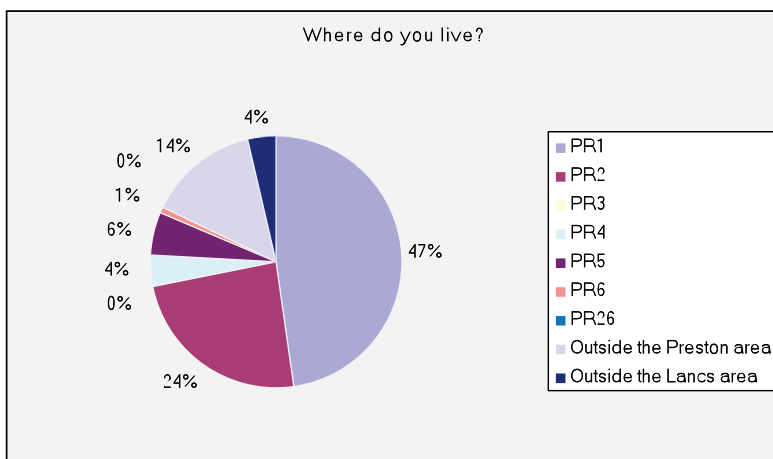
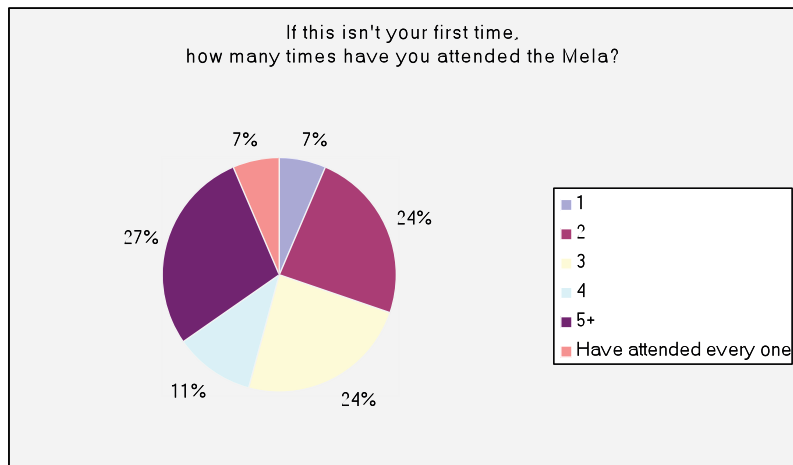


This year we had three different evaluation forms that were implemented, aimed at visitors, stallholders and workshop facilitators. In addition we had a Vaux pox recording booth was set up to capture people’s views and the ALISON project [Community Media Productions] captured the event on video. A copy of this recording will accompany this report to all our key sponsors and grant aid bodies. The evaluation forms were built on from last year and facilitated by two paid project workers in order to capture and evidence both the spirit and outcomes of the event.

### 1. Visitors Evaluation

A total of 108 visitors completed short evaluation questionnaires as outlined in Appendix A. The evaluation was carried out by Guild 2012 Volunteers on the day.

From those surveyed, 54% were male and 46% female. A total of 66% of individuals stated that they had previously attended the event in Preston. . The Mela Trust are pleased that such a large percentage of people have attended the event repeatedly: 27% on 5 or more occasions, 24% on 2 or three occasions.



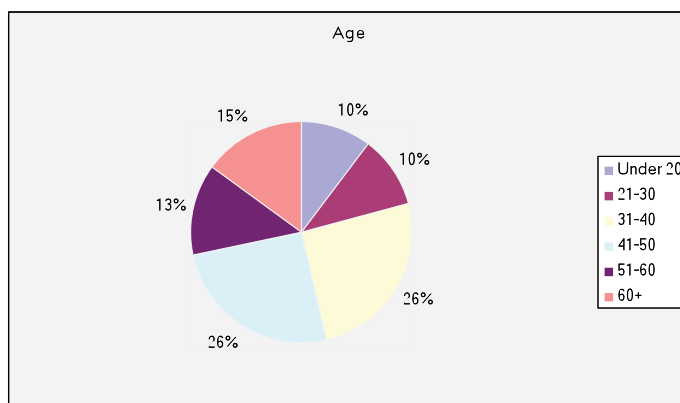
The Mela prides itself on the vast array of individuals who travel from across Lancashire to attend the event. This year, again, people attended from Preston and beyond.

A total of 37% stated that they had travelled to the event on foot, 52% by car and 8% by bus.

Those surveyed were from a range of different ethnic backgrounds; 46% Asian, 45% White, 1% afro-

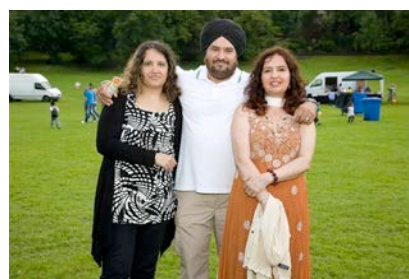
Caribbean, 1% black Caribbean, 1% Chinese and 6.5% ‘other’.

The age distribution is shown in the table below.



Most individuals found out about the Preston Mela through their family/friends (36%) and word of mouth (31%). Further methods of awareness were:

- posters/flyers accounted 14%
- press 11%
- website 5%
- local radio 3%



When asked to rate the layout, entertainment and the range of craft and information stalls, these were the responses received:

	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
<b>General layout</b>	2%	1%	8%	45%	44%
<b>Entertainment</b>	2%	7%	21%	38%	33%
<b>Range of craft stalls</b>	0%	5%	24%	36%	35%
<b>Range of information stands</b>	2%	6%	12%	42%	39%

## 2. Stallholders Evaluation

There were a total of 71 stallholders at the event providing information and advice relating to local and national services, trade stalls and a number of food outlets. The stalls were allocated within the indoor marquees and allocated around the periphery of the Avenham Park Mela event. These included:

Al Firdous Sweets  
 Apollo 2000  
 Balloon Stall  
 Community Gateway Association  
 (*Sponsor*)  
 Discover Alcohol and Drugs  
 Donut Man  
 Fashion & Knitwear  
 Firefly Photography Ltd

Fostering Solutions  
 Fun Fair  
 Great Places Housing Group  
 Guide Dogs for the Blind Association  
 Gwalmandi (Catering)  
 Harris Museum & Art Gallery  
 Lancashire Constabulary  
 Lazeez Sweets  
 National Childbirth Trust

Noor Fashions Ltd  
 Orvia Group Ltd  
 Preston Fair Trade Association  
 Preston & Western Lancashire Racial  
 Equality  
 Council  
 Preston City Council (*Sponsor*)  
 Preston Domestic Violence Services  
 Preston Samaritans

Progress Housing Group (*Sponsor*)  
 Pukar Disability Resource Centre  
 Red Cherry (Catering)  
 RK Sweets (Catering)  
 Rotary Club of Preston Guild  
 The Curry Cabin  
 Tubzee Ice Cream  
 University of Cumbria

Due to the regular through put of the public in the exhibition marquee, the following stallholders were present and asked to complete a short evaluation questionnaire as outlined in Appendix B. We ensured that the responses reflected the wide range of contributors.

Aaiyna Jewels  
 Azme Alishan  
 Desi Connection  
 Don't Delay Accident Claims  
 GHS Catering  
 Help Direct  
 Islamic Relief Agency  
 Lake District National Park Authority  
 Lancashire Adult Learning,  
 Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service  
 Lancashire Wildlife Trust  
 LCC Cultural Services (*Sponsor*)  
 Ministry Among Asians in Preston  
 Museum of Lancashire  
 NHS Cancer Screening (*Sponsor*)  
 NHS Change4Life

NHS Health Checks  
 NHS Stop Smoking  
 NHS Vacc & Imm  
 NHS Hepatitis B  
 Preston & District Diabetes UK Voluntary  
 Group  
 Preston Guild 2012  
 Preston FM  
 Real Collection Ltd  
 Rotary Club of Preston Guild Simras  
 Spicy King Kebab (Catering)  
 Stoneygate Childrens Centre  
 'Stuff' productions  
 Topsy Turvy Tees  
 Toyland  
 University of Central Lancashire

The stalls completing the evaluation all fitted under the following categories of provision:

- Information / advice
- Trade
- Other (e.g. food stalls)

Key contributions to the Mela event included:

Promotion of:

- Community cohesion
- Cultural heritage
- Cultural understanding
- Learning and development of new skills
- Advice and signposting
- Recruitment and participation
- Sale of goods
- Other



Estimates of the number of individuals accessing the stalls ranged from 40 to approximately 1000.

Most of the contributors completing the evaluations reported that the event went and that the layout within the marquee was much more conducive for people to interactive.

Overall feedback received was overwhelming with **94%** of the 31 stalls surveyed stating they would attend the event in 2012; the remaining 6% were unsure.



### 3. Workshop Evaluation

These workshops were strategically placed around the venue to ensure maximum impact of the interactive sessions with the public. There were a total of 11 commissioned workshops at the Mela, with some additional activity being provided by other stall holders and key sponsors.



Feedback from all workshops was positive. The Rang Group, craft based workshops received a lot of interest from school staff wishing to transfer the skills and techniques they had learned during the day to the school's core curriculum. Parents too showed a great interest and there was a lot of excitement about the activity.

The table below captures an overview of the activities. The overall participation was approximately 910 from the craft based workshops and in addition, the five henna workshops had 655 contacts.

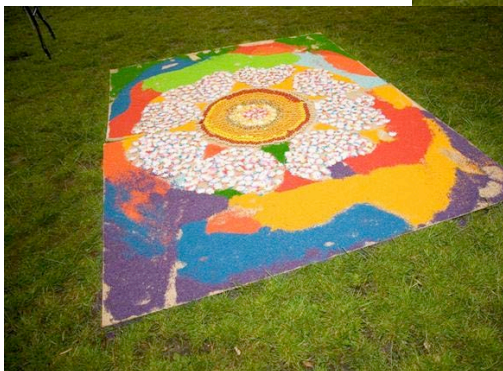


**Table 1: Workshop Activity**

Workshop	Organisation	Activities Provided	Cohesion	Cultural	Traditional arts	Services	New skills	Other	How was your stall received?	Estimate of Visitors
Henna 1		Mendhi (Henna) Designs		X	x				Good	150
Henna 2		Mendhi (Henna) Designs		X	x				Excellent	140-150
Henna 3		Mendhi (Henna) Designs		X	x				Very Good	150-155
Henna 4		Mendhi (Henna) Designs		X	x				Very Good	100
Henna 5		Mendhi (Henna) Designs		X	x				Good	100
Rangavali	Rang Group	Community Rangoli large design on 20 x 20 board where mainly children but also adults participated to fill each segment with vibrant colours of rice paper flower, rafiya cups and other materials..	x	X	x	x			School staff / teachers enquired about use of products and how they can transfer the learning in school settings choosing colours dexterity, patterns and shapes. Very enthusiastic and greatly satisfied with their and their children's participation.	100 adults and children
Tarang-Music	Rang Group	South asian music workshops on tablex and harmonica		X	x		x		Very well – many people registered for the workshops	Over 300 came over to us and over 60 people took part
Rangoli Sathiyo	Rang Group	Sathiyo. Participants draw dots and complete the symmetrical patterns by drawing straight / curved lines then fill each segment with colour rangoli powder.	x	x	x	x			Teachers from schools / colleges and parents wanted to teach their children to choose colours, eye detail, use of fingers, steadiness, all needed for school's core curriculum. Parents were excited for their children and encouraging those that were reluctant. Once they were shown 'how to' they enjoyed it and was fun for them.	Approximately 80
Alpona	Rang Group	Specially designed 'jaalis' used to create beautiful coloured patterns on plate. Participants experimented on varioud combination of colours and layers of powders.	x	x	x	x			Fun, lots of photography by parents of their children's work. Lot of enthusiasm and excitement of a new activity. Schools/teachers participants, parents all wanted to buy the jaalis.	Approximately 120

Patang-Kite making	Rang Group	Indian kite making. Children learned to make kites and were given this and an authentic Indian kite and real Indian thread all free of charge.	x	x	x	x	x	Excitement. Children / parents flew kites outside!	Approximately 60
Handy Craft	Shreya Ghodke	Candle holders out of waste plastic cups, book marks, paper holders and wall hangings			x		x	The response was fantastic, people were eager to learn the items.	200 to 250 people

Following on from the evaluation and feedback received, the Mela Trust will next year endeavour to allocate a larger working area for workshop activity due to demand and the space needed to fully involve individuals in activities. All workshops were keen to attend the Mela next year and already have ideas on what improvements could be made to upscale the activity.



## 4. Voicebox Consultation



The Voicebox consultation was carried out by 'Your Prescap', a community arts organisation based in Preston. Participatory creative techniques were used to support the development of skills and confidence as well as to address a wide range of issues within the communities they work with.

Your Prescap's community radio project – Your Preston FM – was engaged by the Preston Mela to collect audio at the 2011 festival to solicit evaluation information from those attending the event. The consultation made use of the community radio station's "Voicebox" – a portable day-glo tent equipped with recording equipment which is used to provide a private place for people to express their views on a particular topic – as well as recordings taken by volunteer community reporters at the event.

### Consultation method

Members of the public visiting the Mela were invited to contribute to audio recordings – encouraged and facilitated by members of the community radio staff and volunteer team. The recordings took place inside the Voicebox and also out and about around the event.

Questions were posted inside the Voicebox and used by reporters at other points to set participants thinking. The majority of individuals taking part were assisted by being interviewed by a member of the roaming Your Preston FM team to ensure fuller responses, and because the nature and layout of the event meant that a single static point for collecting thoughts from the public would have limited the responses received.

The questions posed were:

- What have you enjoyed most at the Mela today?
- What have you taken part in at the Mela today?
- How do you think the Mela could be improved?
- Tell us about the people you've met here today.
- What have you learnt by coming to the Mela?
- Why do you think Mela is an important event for Preston?



Response levels were good, with 42 recordings taken. These comments have been transcribed and are appended to a full report. For the purpose of this evaluation report however, only a selection have been used. A copy of the full report is available on request.



### Key themes

Whilst the full responses give the best picture of the people taking part, the following common themes are apparent from the results of the activity.

- Most people were very positive about the event – they had enjoyed attending the Mela and were glad to have come.
- The range of people taking part was perceived as a good aspect of the event. Most people appreciated the Mela as an event for everyone – bringing different south Asian communities

together as well as involving people from the wider Preston community.

- Stalls and performances were both popular aspects of the event, mentioned by several people.
- A significant number of respondents (and certainly more than last year) were attending Preston Mela for the first time and all of these were positive about the event. A few had attended Melas in other places in the past and compared the Preston event favourably to others in their experience.
- There were very few negative comments or suggestions for improvement. One person mentioned that promotion could have been better, whilst one mentioned the rain in the late part of the afternoon.



#### Quotes taken from the transcripts below:

1. Taken from the interview with the Mayor of Preston:

**[What does Mela mean to you as Major of Preston?]** The fact that this is the 14th, it speaks for itself. It's just so wonderful because so many different traditions get together and perform and do all the wonderful things and it encourages so many other people to come along.



It's a splendid do and it really has to be encouraged and particularly with the Guild next year coming up. The organizers at the Mela really have to be congratulated, they've just got the whole mix absolutely bob on haven't they. This is what we have to make sure we're working towards, making sure that enough people are fired up to come and support.

2. I'm excited to be in the town that's got such a strong heritage and has got such a diverse culture. I come from a mixed background, Asian and English, so to see that heritage is here in Preston makes me be excited about being half Asian.
3. It's not an individual festival that only Punjabi's or any Muslim people have it's a festival for everybody.
4. An event like this, you can see how many people are here and it's in Preston all together as one, you won't often see and it's also bringing the surrounding areas, Blackburn, Accrington, places like Manchester people come down as well. So it's a good event, definitely one of the best events Preston has, brings everything together, a lot of things free of charge, you don't have to pay to get in and things like that, definitely look out for it every year.
5. Everybody is doing a wonderful job, they should keep up the hard work and hopefully next year they could do something a to promote it a bit more better I think, because this year, a lot of us didn't know the artists who we're coming to Preston Mela.



6. From Preston. I come with my children here, enjoy it, good. My English is very like, listening is, slow. All together, all of it is good, very nice thing. The band is good. All together children ride, stall, DJ music, enjoy.

7. It reinforces that there's different cultures and a bit of exposure to other things that are as good I think. It just shows Preston's very diverse and it's got a lot of different cultures and it benefits the place really.



8. Oh definitely, I'd come back again. It's like a multicultural event, they've got acts on stage from all over and people from all over and people have come to see it, it's a good day out. Hopefully we will be here next year.

9. Culturally, anything that brings people together with music and entertainments fantastic. People from different areas of the country come here as well which is great, they come down to the Mela specifically because it's a great community event. It's about the family, it's a great atmosphere, the songs and the music and the whole atmosphere is really good.



## SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS for 2011

<b>Income</b>	
Arts Council England	<b>£5,656.00</b>
Local Gateway Grant (LCC) Lancashire Arts Development Service	<b>£2,800.00</b>
Preston City Council	<b>£8,000.00</b>
Community Gateway Association	<b>£5,000.00</b>
Help Direct BAME	<b>£750.00</b>
NHS Central Lancashire	<b>£5,000.00</b>
Progress Care Housing	<b>£2,500.00</b>
Catering fees	<b>£2,710.00</b>
Stallholder fees	<b>£2,880.00</b>
Fun Fair	<b>£400.00</b>
Balance From 2010	<b>£430.00</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£36,126</b>

<b>Expenditure</b>	
<b>Artistic:</b>	
- DJ Sugar	- GHS Dances
- Bollywood Dancers	- Arabic Dancers
Chinese Dragons	- Masti Dancers
- Echoes Int- Bollywood Band	- PR Dholi players
- Deshi Nach	- Nasir Khan (Singer)
- Thor Punjabi Dances	- Gary Sandhu (Singer)
- Panjabi by Nature	- Dolfen & Pam Ahir
- Mumzy Stranger / Junai Kaden	
	<b>£7,545.00</b>
<b>Workshops:</b>	
- Alpona (Rang Group)	
- Patang (Rang Group)	
- Rangavalli (Rang Group)	
- Saathiyo (Rang Group)	
- Tarang (Rang Group)	
- Shreya Ghodke Handy Craft	
- Henna Design & Painting (x5)	
	<b>£1,950.00</b>
<b>Infrastructure:</b>	
- Fire extinguishers [£150]	- Radios [£253.80]
- Toilets [£636]	- Medics [£576]
- Stages & pa systems [£8,160]	- Barriers [£1,117.60]
- Marquees [£4,488]	- Generators [£2,583.76]
- Security [£3,313.80]	- PPL Licence Entertainment
	<b>£21,278.96</b>
Insurance	<b>£1,224.30</b>
Publicity & Marketing	<b>£1,150.00</b>
Sundries, VIPs hospitality, Volunteers expenses and Telephone charges	<b>£990.00</b>
Project Management	<b>£1,500.00</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£35,638.26</b>
<b>Balance to carry Forward</b>	<b>487.74</b>

## Appendix A

### VISITOR EVALUATION FORM

**In order to build on the success of this event, we would be grateful if you would take a moment to complete the questionnaire below.**

**1. Is this the first time you have attended the Preston Mela?** Yes  No  if no \_\_\_\_\_ years

**2. Where do you live?**

UK Resident  
(postcode): \_\_\_\_\_

Overseas  
(country): \_\_\_\_\_

**Gender:**

Male:

Female:

**Age:**

Under 20

21-30

31-40

41-50

51-60

60+

**Ethnicity:**

Asian

Afro-Caribbean

Black Caribbean

Chinese

White British

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**3. How did you travel to the event today?**

Car  Train  Bus  Bicycle  On foot  Motorcycle

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**4. How did you find out about the Preston Mela?**

Press  Posters/flyers  Friends/ family  Website  Local Radio

Word of Mouth

**Please rate the following (Circle):-**

**5. General layout** (Poor) 1 2 3 4 5 (Excellent)

**6. Entertainment** 1 2 3 4 5

**7. Range of craft stalls** 1 2 3 4 5

**8. Range of information stands** 1 2 3 4 5

**9. Further Comments**

**10. If you would like to be sent details about Preston Mela 2012 please include your email address**

Thank you for your valuable feedback!!

## Appendix B

### STALLHOLDER EVALUATION FORM

**In order to build on the success of this event, we would be grateful if you would take a moment to complete the questionnaire below.**

#### **CONTACT DETAILS**

Organisation Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Telephone/ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **1. What activities or service did your stall provide at the Preston Mela?**

Information/Advice

Trade stall

Other

#### **2. What do you feel were the key contributions of your stall to the Preston Mela?**

Promotion of community cohesion

cultural heritage

cultural understanding

Learning and development of new skills

Advice and Signposting

Recruitment & Participation

Sale of Goods

Other

---

#### **3. Did the event meet your expectations?**

#### **4. Please provide an estimate of the overall number of participants who benefited from your stall**

#### **5. Will you be applying for a stall at Preston Mela in the Guild year 24 June 2012?**

Yes

No

## Appendix C

### WORKSHOP EVALUATION FORM

**In order to build on the success of this event, we would be grateful if you would take a moment to complete the questionnaire below.**

#### CONTACT DETAILS

Organisation Name:

Stall Name:

Contact Name:

Contact Telephone/ Email:

**1. What activities/ craft sessions did you provide at the Preston Mela?**

**2. Which categories best describe your contribution?**

- Promotion of: - community cohesion
- cultural heritage
- understanding of traditional arts
- your company and services

Learning and development of new skills

Other

**3. How was your session received by visitors?**

**4. Please provide an estimate of the overall number of participants who benefited from your stall**

**5. Any suggestions to the Preston Mela Trust regarding layout of marquee stalls?**

**6. Will you be willing to take part in the Preston Mela Guild Year event on the 24 June 2012?**

Yes  No

**6a If yes will this be a repeat of this year activity or something different**

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**Thank you!**

**PRESTON MELA 2011**

**Report Compiled July 2011 by:**

**Gulab Singh MBE, Chairman**

**Jenny Ashburner, Project Worker**

***Registered Charity Number 1126763***