



# PRESTON MELA GUILD REPORT 2012

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Registered Charity: **1126763**

# Preston Mela Guild 2012 Report

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## FORWARD

We are extremely pleased and grateful for the presence and support of our chief guests who joined us for the official opening of Mela 2012: Lord & Lady Shuttleworth, Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire, The Guild Mayor of Preston and Mayoress Cllr Carl and Cllr Linda Crompton, Chairman of LCC Cllr John Shedwick and the High Sherriff of Lancashire Jeremy Gorrick.

With the current economic climate, securing funding for this year's Mela has been very challenging. We are extremely grateful to all our sponsors and grant awarding bodies for their continuous support and commitment that has helped ensure the Mela is a major focal point in Preston city's arts and cultural calendar.

The Preston Mela Trust is also grateful to the many volunteers and organisations that annually support the event by booking stalls and supporting our programme booklet. Furthermore, the Trust is indebted to those organisations and individuals who have assisted with the planning, commissioning and delivery of the event, namely:

- Tim Joel, Events Officer (Preston City Council);
- Pauline Lowe, Health & Safety Officer (Preston City Council);
- Staff from our key sponsors Community Gateway Association, Progress Housing and NHS Central Lancashire;
- Volunteers: Preston Sikh Community, Gujarat Hindu Society, Guild 2012 team and Arun Vitlani.

My sincere appreciation goes to Chris Davis from *ALISON* who has over the years supported the Mela Trust by capturing the event on DVD as part of the visual evaluation. The *ALISON* volunteer photographers also played a key part in the Mela:

- Chris Davis
- Mahendra Luhar
- Geoff Clark
- Jason Beardsworth
- Nash Rathod

We are also thankful to Jaffer Ali Hussain, regional coordinator for somewhereto\_NW for their partnership contribution to Mela 2012 and to CVS Central Lancashire for allowing the Mela Trust to use their rooms for the VIP reception at the Guildhall.

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

- Ishwer Tailor MBE, DL, Director/ Company Secretary;
- Jazz Singh, Director / Artistic Performance Lead;
- Amrat Limbachia, Director/ Treasurer;
- Nweeda Khan, Director;
- Mahendra Luhar, Director;
- Jenny Ashburner, Project Worker;
- Adeela Khan, Administrator.



## INTRODUCTION

With roots in the Indian subcontinent, the word Mela signifies 'Fair'. In rural tradition, mela's were and still are of great importance in connecting communities. In its modern usage, it is not only a South Asian, but also an intercultural festival, which incorporates art, culture, music, dance, food and heritage. Mela provides the backdrop for community cohesion bringing together people from all walks of life sharing traditions and cultural experiences.

This family oriented event provides an opportunity to share rich cultural heritage with the mainstream population. Mela provides the perfect cohesion and participation setting by creating 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 is now an 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.

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 2012 to go ahead. Each year we have worked towards making preparations for Guild 2012, by developing international and national links. The theme for the 2012 Mela was '**Mela Past & Present – Guild 2012**'.

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: infrastructure being the most costly and a must to ensure that the right equipment and services are in place so the event is safe. The second cost is the artistic and craft programme. The Mela Board endeavors to build on previous years' experiences and feedback to pull together a day full of new activities and experiences for all visitors. Our sponsors and grant making bodies are key to ensuring these two funding elements are met. The branding of some of our regular supporters such as Community Gateway Association, Progress Housing Association and NHS Central Lancashire has been integral to the programme. I believe that their association with Preston Mela portrays two significant things, these being:

- Their organisation and staff place importance on community cohesion and diversity as core to their business from leadership to grassroots level;
- The public visiting the Mela are able to see the organisations' convictions to diversity.

Prior to the event, 10,000 flyers, posters and 5,000 booklets were printed and disseminated through community centers and South Asian outlets. This was aided by a grant received by Help Direct. We are pleased with the support and coverage provided by the local media for Preston Mela both prior and post event including coverage by Lancashire's online TV Channel which can be accessed via their website <http://www.lancashireone.com/channels-detail.php?s=70&id=802&catID=25>.

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. 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.

## MELA 2012 & GUILD ACTIVITIES: PAST AND PRESENT

### The Past:

The Mela came about through the campaigning and lobbying by four individuals in 1995; Ishwer Tailor, Charu Ainscough, Cllr Bicku Patel and myself. This led to the first Mela being held in 1997. The organisation started as an advisory committee to the Council's culture and leisure services department under the leadership of County Cllr Valli Patel and Nagina Ali.

In 2004, the Mela Committee embarked on the production of a business plan with a governance structure operating and functioning as more than just an advisory committee. The organisation moved from a committee structure to the establishment of an independent charity which enabled the Mela to operate as a not for profit organisation, generating funds to develop and host the Mela event in collaboration with Preston City Council. The Mela is now a well-established event in the city's cultural calendar.

It is important to pay tribute to the following council officers who have over the years provided sterling support and expertise in events management:

- Brian Manning [sadly no longer with us]
- Petra Savage
- Norman Rapier
- Di Cummings
- Kate Plano
- Jo Dring
- Chris Selkirk
- Pauline Lowe
- Phil Walsh
- Tim Joel

We acknowledge that Guild 1992 was the catalyst for today's Mela in Preston which saw south Asian community groups and organisations across Preston come together to contribute part of their culture and tradition, as we do today in a more established manner. It is not surprising that the community activists then are also leading the Preston Mela today as we get involved with the Guild celebration; but also remembering that a number of other people took great pride in helping to organise and take part in the Guild 20 years ago.

### The Present:

The Mela Trust worked closely with Preston City Council to deliver the annual Mela event and that there was a south Asian community contribution to the Guild events of 2012. The Mela Trust helped organise contributions to three Guild 2012 week events:

- Community celebration (2<sup>nd</sup> September) with five traditional craft and henna stands showcasing South Asian arts;
- Community Procession (7<sup>th</sup> September); and
- The Torchlight Procession on the (8<sup>th</sup> September).

Preston is having a remarkable year alongside the Guild 2012. We are also celebrating Preston's '*European City of Sport*' status for 2012 and we wish the City every success in this venture. For Guild year we had a special programme that attracted major arts organizations with regional and national focus: Manisimatra, Nutkhut, Gem Arts, Rang Group and Culturapedia [Somewhereto...].

Due to days of severe rain, the Mela site on Avenham Park was waterlogged, posing a potential health and safety risk for artists, stallholders and visitors. Two days before the event, we were faced with the decision to cancel or to find an alternative venue for the Mela. Preston City Council events team and the Guildhall Team worked with the Preston Mela Trust to help relocate the event. We started to learn

that other similar events scheduled in the North West were being cancelled and after careful consideration, the Mela Board felt that the relocation logistics were manageable if we all pulled together, instead of cancelling the event, especially as this was Guild Year.

All media sources were utilised to inform the public of the change of venue and Board members took responsibility to contact all artists, workshop leaders and VIP guests of the change. The Mela had fully overtaken the Guildhall site using the shopping mall for stallholders and some workshops, whilst the main foyer was used for the community stage and workshop session. The main hall was utilised to hold the entire dance / music performances and the official opening; and other larger rooms were used to site the specialist workshops and performances. We had over 55 stalls / workshop stands to accommodate across the site. The events team, Guildhall team and Board members worked throughout Saturday night and the early hours of Sunday morning to set up.

A key sacrifice that had to be made was the loss of traditional /authentic Asian food with only one caterer willing to take part. The Mela programme was delivered as per our grant application and the response from the public was tremendous. Ensuring that the Mela programme went to schedule alongside managing workshop leads and stallholder expectations was very challenging.

The decision to change venue also meant that the Mela Board was able to salvage the full artistic programme but had to compromise on commercial stallholders / caterers resulting in cancellation costs and refunds having to be incurred.

The Mela event held at the Guildhall on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2012 (11.30am to 7.30pm) consisted of a mixture of performing arts on two stages which included international, national and local talent, 23 locally sourced craft workshops and three specialist commissioned performances/workshops (Manisiimatra, Nutkhut and Gem Arts) each working with local schools and groups to produce both visual and performing arts for the Mela.

Our project workers and Guild volunteers ensured evaluations were completed and collected from members of the public, workshop leads and stallholders. A detailed analysis is detailed in the next section of the report.

Thanks goes to Ian, Charlotte and Donna from the Cycling Project for the loan of two rickshaws to use in the community and torchlight processions and for riding these bikes. The rickshaws have been a success and that we have negotiate a long term loan for Preston City Council to use the rickshaws to take older people and people with disabilities around sections of the Guild Wheel.

## **LEARNING AND FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

As this is my last report as Chairman, I would like to highlight a number of recommendations that the Mela Board should consider as part of the learning resulting from this year's event and the change of venue; these can be summarised below:

1. **Contracts:** That future contracts and booking forms are amended to take into account any unforeseen changes in the programme/ scheduling and location. The greatest uncertainty is costs associated with infrastructure. We have been fortunate, however, to keep liabilities to a minimum with the help of Preston City Council's Events Team.

2. **Cancellation Policy:** Devise a clear cancellation policy to reduce liabilities.
3. **Programme Booklet:** Be clear with sponsors on requirements for adverts – detailing the full specification for printing.
4. **Catering:** Review catering booking form for booking fees, types of catering required and list all documents required including certificates as a prerequisite for booking.
5. **Insurance:** Consider taking out an annual public liability insurance of £10,000,000 instead of an annual events policy. Or be clear on which Board member takes responsibility for dealing with and making claims in the case of any incidents.
6. **Charity Commission:** Send a copy of the Mela report and audited accounts.
7. **Audited Accounts:** Ensure the 2012 accounts are audited and made available for new funding applications.
8. **Location of Mela:** To reduce infrastructure costs, consider relocating the Mela to the town centre as an option as this will capture Sunday shoppers. Suggested sites for use would be the main market for stalls and stands; the old fish market for catering / food outlets; Bailey Street for fun fair linking to the Flag market for stage and performances.
9. **Touring Programme:** Build on the success of the Guild 2012 and consider having aspects of Mela attached to other events in the city calendar such as the Riversway Festival etc.
10. **Review Board Membership / Structure:** Recruit more Board members with different skills to take on a wide range of roles.

Finally, I hope that Guild 2012 becomes another catalyst for the South Asian community to play an active part in Preston and in its future civic events.

**Gulab Singh MBE**  
**Chairman**

## 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, key 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.

**Nutkhut's** work draws on dance, film and performance with a comedic sensibility, producing high quality work primarily outdoors, and at times indoors when our ideas take us there. As a result, our work is unique in its accessibility, humour and joyfulness, delighting audiences across the UK and internationally.



For the first time Preston Mela Trust had the opportunity to work with NutKhut by commissioning a new piece of artistic input for Preston Mela on Sunday 24th June 2012 and Guild 2012 celebration activities.

### **Over the Garden Fence [OTGF] by Nutkhut**

Two over zealous, indulgent and competitive gardeners are tending to their suburban gardens. But gardening obsession turns into suburban nightmare.

Absorbed in mundane jobs, they find peace and relaxation in their gardens. However, both have an alternative view of what a garden should be. Organic versus Ornamental. Neighbourly niceties turns into competitiveness, nastiness and a battle, ending with both gardeners realizing that their obsessive behavior has created a huge rift and draws on the British love affair with all things flora and fauna and featured Nutkhut's eye catching Lotus Flower installation.

The show was originally pitched at Arts Council England's Decibel showcase in Manchester in the autumn of 2011. Following interest by Preston City Council, Nutkhut contributed to an ACE application.

Following the success of the application in the Spring of 2012, the show was created during April/May 2012, through a series of initial workshops, a sharing at the London Bubble Theatre, followed by a rehearsal process and final presentation at the Preston Mela.

OTGF was created with both outdoor and indoor venues in mind and due to adverse weather conditions; the Preston Mela was transferred to an indoor venue, the Guildhall. Nutkhut was allocated an independent space within the building and successfully presented 3 shows, each with full capacity attendance (100-120), of an inter-generational audience, a key feature of Mela. The show was specifically created with a Mela audience in mind – whilst not playing to cultural stereotypes or expectations, it was artistically important for the show to draw in a core Mela audience in its narrative and themes.

Since the premiere of the show the piece has been presented as part of the London 2012 Games Time Animation in Greenwich for both Olympic and Paralympics events and at the London Mela 2012. The commissioning of this work has led to future conversations and possibilities with Nutkhut and the Preston Mela working together in developing the Mela sector in the North West.

**INSERT PERFORMANCE AND LOTUS FLOWER IMAGES FROM GUILD HALL**

GemArts worked with Preston City Council to programme site-specific work and workshops as part of Preston Mela. The programme managed and delivered by GemArts was of a high standard and professionally managed across a range of traditional and contemporary art forms, produced and delivered by exemplar artists, appealing to family audiences.



### Sumit Sarkar, Visual Artist:

Sumit produced a live piece of aerosol art on 3-5m wide canvas, and incorporated his own unique take on South Asian culture, his Hindu faith and Preston. The final piece of work included a rose, which is symbolic of Lancashire, and the artwork produced will be used as site dressing for the Torchlight Procession in August/September.



*'The day went really well, lots of people seemed to enjoy it and I had several positive chats with various people, from little kids to OAPs and everyone in between. And I must say the support from the team there was really great - they were totally helpful and friendly.'* **Sumit**

### Peter Chand, Storyteller:

Family storytelling with Peter and Gorg Chand. Audiences and participants joined these British Punjabi storytellers for a fantastic journey with some incredible folktales and magical stories from the great Indian epics! The artists delivered 2 performances throughout the day and a storytelling workshop for families.

### Bombay Baja:

Bombay Baja are one of Europe's first Indian brass bands, they specialise in performing processions at festivals, Asian weddings, and other high profile events. The eight-piece brass band consists of musicians from a variety of musical backgrounds ranging from Bhangra to Jazz and Classical, they play a range of instruments including, trumpets, trombones, saxophones, dhol players and percussionists. The band performed four 40-minute sets across the Mela site during the day.

*'Despite having to change the venue at the last minute we had a great time and audiences really appreciated the band and the music and added to the festival atmosphere!'* **Shin, bandleader**



### Raj Rani, Indian Visual Art Workshops:

Raj Rani is a North East based artist, originally from Amritsar in India. She specialises in large-scale paintings and murals, and her work has been exhibited across the North of England as well as large-scale permanent pieces displayed in the Golden Temple Amritsar in Punjab, India. Raj had vast experience of delivering creative and fun visual arts workshops exploring the rich tradition and culture of the Indian subcontinent within formal and community settings, working with families and young people. Raj delivered drop in Indian arts sessions engaging participants in Indian Tissue Art and arts workshops with recycled materials. Raj will also exhibited her own artwork and artefacts from India.



### Soul City Arts – Mohammed ‘Aerosol’ Ali:



Mohammed Ali delivered Cubism – a unique style of aerosol art developed by the artist where he is painting directly onto a spinning black cube. All four sides of the cube are developed in front of a live audience. GemArts provided a brief to the artist, which instructed him to incorporate famous landmarks in Preston. The artwork produced will be used as site dressing for the Torchlight Procession or other Preston Guild Celebrations in August/September.

*‘I’m really glad you like the artwork - it took a lot of planning/design beforehand, that’s how I work - and the images you had sent my way were really helpful - as you can see much of which has been included in the design, the famous mill, the mosque, the church, and the river, as well as the rose symbol.’*

*‘I had one person say ‘your the artist??’ I asked why so surprised, and he replied ‘because you don’t see Asian artists!’ For me that response from one person is enough to say that doing the event was a success for me. If it challenged one person, then I’m happy. I had a white British support artist and I think often the assumption is that he is the lead artist, not the other way around!!’* **Mohammed**

### Srishti – Nina Rajarani Dance Creations

In keeping with Preston’s rich tradition of football and one of the oldest football clubs in the world, as well as the European Football Championship and Olympics taking place during the summer the company presented site specific work Bend It.

Overall the experience for Manisimatra of the entire relationship with the Preston Mela team, Preston City Council, schools and community groups was very positive. We would be happy as a company to work in Preston again in any format throughout the year. Our artists also had very good feedback to give regarding the school and community workshops. They commented on the engagement and positive outlook of the community as well as the enthusiasm for learning and enjoyment displayed by the young people.



Our learning points relate to the timely interaction with schools in terms of identifying and contacting schools to participate in workshops, the procession and performance. We feel that in future we would make provisional contact with schools prior to hearing that funding for the work had been confirmed, as those overtures would be productive in helping develop enhanced relationships with the schools management team.

Monitoring and Evaluation Area	Workshops in Schools	Procession	Performance on 24 <sup>th</sup> June
Attendance Figures -People participating in workshops and watching performances	320	150	350
Number of Performances and exhibition days	15 in schools + 5 community	1	1 +1 for Symbol of Joy consultation
Number of new Projects or commissions	20 new workshops in schools and community	1	1
Number of artists benefitting	6	6	7
Period of employment for artists in days	31	8	18

### School workshops

We worked in six school communities across the district and involved school pupils as well as parents, grandparents and the local community within the sessions. We conducted dance, music and visual art workshops in these six schools. All the schools participating in the Mela project were keen and enthusiastic and encouraged whole communities to work with Manisimatra.

Five of the six schools had never participated in the Mela celebrations before and enjoyed the cultural diversity of our work as much as the family learning elements. All 6 schools attended the Mela and participated in the procession and the staged dance at the finale of the performance. The schools involved were:

Strike Lane Primary School, Kennington Primary School, Eldon Primary School, Harris Primary School, Brookfield Community Primary School and Frenchwood Community Primary School.

Examples below are some of the comments we received as feedback from schools:

*'The dance and music workshops were brilliant and appreciated by all the children. We are very much looking forward to the art workshop next week'.*

*'We all had a fantastic time'.*

*'The children went home with henna tattoos and we got to watch a children's play at the end of our day in the lounge. I was truly amazed how the organisers had changed venue so quickly!'*

*'We enjoyed our school visitor and very much appreciated his dancing and demonstrations with the children. Please pass on our thanks'.*

The workshops were highly successful in developing and forging relationships between communities all around Preston given the geographical spread of schools. This in turn connected all these communities successfully with the Mela, which is a multicultural diverse community celebration.

Throughout 2012, the somewhereto\_ North West team has developed many strong partnerships with a variety of stakeholders across a range of sectors including local authorities, the third sector and most importantly youth provision. The aim behind building these partnerships has been to provide young people with opportunities to showcase their skills and talents.



One of the greatest partnerships to be formed during this time has been with Gulab Singh and the rest of the Preston Sikh Community. During 2012, somewhereto\_NW and Gulab worked closely together to provide two opportunities for young people to get involved – the first being the Big Jubilee Lunch and the second being Preston Mela.

Originally the agreed plan for Preston Mela had been that somewhereto\_ NW would have a presence on the community stage for two hours. Two weeks prior to the event, we were informed of a new national campaign that was going to be launched by somewhereto\_ national team. The idea was for a national competition, which was primarily static (i.e. young people could do it from their homes) however; there would be some areas where entry to the competition would be available in a public space. Nationally, Preston Mela was seen as one of 5 locations where young people could enter the somewhereto\_ Show Off competition and after working through some matters with Gulab, it was agreed that somewhereto\_ NW would have double the presence at the Mela.

After a week of bad weather, it was decided to move the Mela indoors to the Guild. Somewhere to\_ NW still had access to the community stage and would combine that for the Show Off national competition. The speed at which changes due to the weather were put in place was incredibly helpful due to the expected media coverage that the national team had arranged. We offered all performers who were

originally intending to perform on the community stage the opportunity to be filmed by the film crew and enter the Show Off.

### **Range of Performances / Performers:**

Somewhereto\_ is an inclusive project and works with all young people regardless of their background. For the somewhereto\_NW team this is particularly important as we work in an extremely diverse region. Both parties had agreed from the very outset that for both events a range of young people would be used and particularly for the Mela these may not all be from a South Asian background. Once again this was happily noted and somewhereto\_NW was allowed to bring young people to the Mela who had never experienced such an event before. The range of performers included singers, dancers, rappers and a magician – we had worked hard to ensure this event had representation from participants of different ethnicity, faith, gender and age. Whilst somewhereto\_NW had a programme of performers, there were two other young people who accessed the project on the day and were also given the chance to perform. The age range of young people reached our target age range with the youngest being 16 and the eldest being 25.

### **Quotes:**

Please find below a selection of quotes from young people who attended the event and shared their experience with the somewhereto\_NW team:

*“Preston Mela was a great experience and it was a great event which showed the diversity within Preston and its surrounding areas. I would love to go back and do it again. I met some great people and had an amazing time there, thumbs up to the organisers.”*

**Aeman Ali Afzal, 17, compere for somewhereto\_NW**

*“I enjoyed performing at the Guild Hall and especially the way the South Asian community around Preston supported us all. People got along and everybody seemed to enjoy the day.”*

**Teri Birtwistle, 19, singer**

*“It was a wonderful experience and I am grateful to somewhereto\_NW and the organisers of Preston Mela for giving me the opportunity to perform which has inspired me to do it again.”*

**Elliott Kohan, 23, rapper and dancer**

*“I’ve grown up watching Mela’s all over the North West especially in Blackburn where I live. It was also an ambition of mine to perform at one and finally I got the chance to follow my ambition through. I just want to say a huge thanks to the organisers of Preston Mela for doing such good work, putting on a good event but above all helping me to fulfill some of my goals.”*

**Farhan Natha, 19, dancer**

*“It was an honor to work with the Preston Mela Organising Committee. Hopefully we added value to the event; our young people certainly got a lot out of it.”*

**Robert Howell, Director of Culturapedia (delivering somewhereto\_NW)**

*“Without a doubt, this has been a fantastic partnership which I hope will continue over the coming years. The way Gulab and his team have supported somewhereto\_NW to help young people achieve their goals and ambitions has been fantastic and much appreciated. A huge thank you to you all.”*

**Jaffer Ali Hussain, regional coordinator for somewhereto\_NW.**

## WORKSHOPS

A total of 23 workshops were delivered on the day and included:

Workshop	Description	Participants
<b>Saathiyo</b>	Geometrical patterns from Gujarat using boards and chalk, participants fill each segment with colour powder on individual boards.	45
<b>Rangavalli</b>	Naturalistic freehand community floor mural giving preference to nature (birds, flowers) while using vivid outlines to express the patterns. The designs can be any shape and size, in colourful powder with heavy outlines in white sandy powder.	55
<b>Jalli Artwork</b>	A modern version of simple and unequivocally artwork created by jaali on trays using colourful powder	150
<b>Patang</b>	Traditional kites using Indian concepts and materials.	30
<b>Tarang</b>	Showcase of and participation in Indian Music to include membranous and non-membranous percussive, bowed-stringed and plucked stringed and blown air instruments where participants will learn about the instruments, play tunes, recognise the tunes and music.	200
<b>Diva Decoration</b>	Traditional decoration of clay diva/small pots using traditional and colourful materials such as Indian dori, jhaalar, sequins, pearls, glitter and stones. Encouraging reflection on the significance of diva i.e. using diva during festivals and 'light' which brings hope, enlightenment and knowledge.	60
<b>Calligraphy</b>	Showcasing the significance of Indian calligraphy. This hand-lettered inscription depicts strokes and gives 'spirit' to the drawn characters and sophisticated penmanship style using special pens, brushes and bamboo dip pens.	33
<b>Motif Pebble Painting</b>	Showcasing another dimension to painting through use of pebbles to create outline motifs/patterns.	150
<b>Canvas Graffiti</b>	Graffiti writing/lettering. Graffiti has emerged as a passionate art through writing and drawing styles. The modern day style of drawing and inscription is a way of sharing style, culture and identity.	100
<b>Personalised South Asian Artwork - Indian Jewellery Making</b>	Creation of visible pieces of traditional south Asian Jewellery. Range of personalised artwork on display, showing the exquisite patterns, symbols and letterings on ceramics, wood, glass, canvass, plates using various types of paints, beads, and diamantes. The artist's designs will orientate and embellish the creative aesthetic elements and artistic expressions of creative mind.	120

<b>South Asian Textile &amp; Costume Mini Exhibition</b>	Explanation showcase of traditional textiles and garments. Most people living in Preston who originally came from the Indian Sub-continent made the long journey to Lancashire in the 1960's to work for the textile industry. They all have their own blend of rich and vibrant culture, tradition and heritage. Today the Indian Sub-continent has become a leading producer of textiles and garments. Hence the mini exhibition will express their identities through the fabrics, which combine traditional design with ever increasing fusion of Eastern and Western styles. Visitors will receive a leaflet with the main features in the exhibition of textiles from regions of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Punjab, Shri Lanka, Kashmir complemented with a special section on wedding attire.	80
<b>Fashion Show</b>	South Asian outfit / sari draping. To complement the South Asian textiles and costumes, the fashion show will exhibit how a piece of fabric is transformed into a costume / garment. Around 15 models (from the local community) will display the costumes and jewellery, which in turn will introduce the customs and beliefs, representing the regional/country of South Asia. Visitors had the opportunity to ask questions and put on outfits such as sari etc.	Stage performance
<b>Chinese Music</b>	Showcase of traditional Chinese Music instruments (plucked and bowed) played by young Chinese children and adult. Through music visitors appreciated Chinese music and gained knowledge about Chinese culture and various festivals. A vast contrast to the usual South Asian demonstrations and workshops.	220
<b>Sitar Player</b>	Demonstration of sitar playing and all its various characteristics with stylistic variance of ragas. Visitors were able to appreciate and increase their knowledge about the sitar as an instrument and the stylist and soothing music produced by the player.	210
<b>Flash Mob</b>	Group of adults and young children practiced to perform a Bollywood dance and encouraged the audience to join in too	70
<b>Neil Art</b>	Nail art techniques and designs	55
<b>Shreya Ghodke</b>	Handy craft workshop	200
<b>Mehndi artists</b>	Six henna Stalls	665

In addition, a number of stallholders also provided free workshops and activities such as badge making, face painting, nail art, fruit smoothie bike, colouring and other craft activities.

Each workshop was asked to capture participants' comments on the day and to complete a short questionnaire answering 5 key questions:

**1. Estimate of the number of people taking part.**

The workshops, which were directly commissioned by the Preston Mela Trust, attracted approximately 2,443 participants on the day of the Mela.

**2. How has your workshop contributed to raising the awareness of south Asian heritage and culture?**

Workshop leads commented on their ability to encourage people of all ages and ethnic backgrounds to come together and enjoy activities, which promote south Asian heritage and culture. The workshops also provided an opportunity to combine south Asian and western styles and cultures.

Individuals were keen to learn more about the materials used, colour combinations, techniques and heritage behind the art and music workshops in particular.

The Chinese music workshop lead commented that the Chinese harp had over 2,000 years of history, which not many people knew. The event provided a great opportunity to introduce Asian culture to British people and allowed individuals to participate, ask questions, take photos and.

**3. How has your workshop contributed to the development of new skills and knowledge of those attending?**

The workshops encouraged active participation and individuals were exposed to various art forms, some of which they had never before seen or experienced. Participants commented that they and/or their children had greatly enjoyed the learning of new skills and knowledge of Asian heritage and art forms. Henna stalls were overwhelmed by people's interest in the heritage and culture of henna.

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

All workshop leads commented that their resources had mostly dried up by the end of the event with queues of individuals wanting to participate throughout the day.

Comments received through workshop feedback:

- *Was a fantastic experience, really well taught would defo consider taking up some more help.*
- *Beautiful – thank you so much. So lovely for our children to experience different cultures*
- *Very good idea – promotes candlelights in Hindus.*
- *Amazing, lovely way to promote Asian art, interesting... keep up the good work – my kids are enjoying themselves.*
- *Weird texture in the hands. Ashleigh, 8*
- *My daughter (3½) really enjoyed this activity and the neatness of it. Good to see the pattern developing.*
- *Our children aged 3 and 8 both loved this – we've never seen anything as beautiful made from rice! Rachel & Carl Ward*
- *Enjoyable creative experience. The bracelet my daughter made was beautiful. She looked very proud. The lady doing the activity was very friendly. Thank you*
- *Very good activity – 5\* for family fun!*
- *Beautiful and meditate instrument and playing. Very interesting and fun to participate.*
- *Fabulously beautiful so feminine – it made me feel wonderful. Thank you.*

## MELA DAY

All plans we had in place for the Mela day itself had to be changed at the last minute due to adverse weather conditions. We realise that all participating organisations were in the same circumstances and our Risk Management Plan was put into place. The Mela Committee and Council officer's emergency plans worked well and the event went off without too many hitches as participating organisations had naturally very little time to assimilate the geography of where they were allocated a space and whether that space was suitable for delivering their performance.

Regarding our involvement/delivery on the actual day of the Mela, there were three elements that we organised; the Procession; the Symbol of Joy & Glimpse into the Sleeping World and each of them was very successful and they were well supported by audiences and participants.

The procession was originally planned to take place in Avenham Park. On account of the bad weather this was re-organised via a different route; from Avenham Park to the Guild Hall. All six school and various community groups attended the procession, which made a grand entry into the Guildhall that afternoon. The procession consisted of over 150 participants including young people, parents, grandparents and teachers from the six schools Manisimatra worked with. The experience received positive feedback from participating schools and community members in spite of the last minute change of venue.

In order to capture the general public's response to the Mela, as well as to give the community a chance to express their opinions, we created "The Symbol of Joy", an installation piece that had a golden tree at the centre. We then requested community members to write their thoughts down on golden leaves made of paper and decorated the tree. The Symbol of Joy was well supported with over 130 people giving their thoughts and ideas about their lives in Preston and their wishes for the future of the borough to be hung on the tree. Our artist Sara Bevan felt that throughout the day participants had expressed how they enjoyed the opportunity to incorporate their feelings about living in Preston and about the Mela into an event that formed an important date in the calendar of Preston.

The main stage performance was a 30-minute musical theatre "A Glimpse into the Sleeping World" which was well received by audiences - comments below. Our only concerns about the performance was because of the changes of venue and timing the production was squeezed in between the pounding rhythms of Bollywood dance and music and for such a gentle production the audiences were hyped up for electronic beats and not gently unfolding theatre. We understand why this happened and support officers making those decisions but next time we will look for a quieter more family oriented space which would suit the production better. However the audience in the main seemed to enjoy the spectacle and comments included:

*'Very different and entertaining'*

*'My children thoroughly enjoyed the show but we would have loved to see it in the park'*

*'The school children's dance at the end was brilliant – they loved being on stage'*

*'Would be good to see the show on its own rather than between other more boisterous acts'.*

The only real areas where improvements could be made constructively were:

The stage management team had a difficult job and because of overruns in the programme and unscheduled sections (i.e. the 'dignitaries' speeches which did not appear on the programme and which took place just before our performance which left 150 schoolchildren waiting in the wings for another 30 minutes when they had and their families had been primed that they would be going on stage immediately. This caused real tensions, which coupled with the stage management team NOT understanding that schools groups HAD TO HAVE adults/teachers with them to manage their behaviour and access to the stage further compounded the tension in relationships backstage. One of the schools wrote to us in their feedback to say they were unhappy with the level of lighting in the main performance space (too dark for little schoolchildren to navigate in groups) and the delays to the scheduled program.

Overall, Manisimatra thoroughly enjoyed the Preston Mela project especially our work with the schools and community in and around Preston. A large body of high quality work was delivered on a tight budget. We would be delighted to come back next year; expand our work and include many more communities in the area. The Council's event team especially Tim Joel and Toni Wortley worked very closely with us to ensure that the Mela was a successful and enjoyable experience and we are thankful to them for their input and support. We would like to thank everyone for their participation, help and support and look forward to working with you again in the future.

## PICTURES

## **Preston Guild 2012 Community Event – Preston Local - Monday 3rd September**

The Preston Mela event took part at three key community based events during Guild week. On Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> September was our first contribution to raise the profile of South Asian arts and crafts. Eight activities took place in Miller Park on Lord Stanley Walk as part of the overall cultural programme of the Guild. The traditional craft stalls were a mixture of decorative Indian craft works and henna designs. All artists' input was based on audience participation. The activities ranged from rangoli, jewellery making, stone decoration, paper crafts and henna decorative design. All of the activities were performed under the banner of Preston Mela Trust. The event was extremely successful, with non – stop public involvement. All four henna artists started their craft at 12 noon and did not stop until 5.30pm. The large rangoli also proved very popular with children completing each section. In addition we displayed the artwork produced at the Mela Festival including: the work of Sumit Sarkar, Soul City Arts and Mohammed Aerosol Ali.

**INSERT IMAGES** of site, large rangoli – with kids, henna designs etc

### Community Procession Friday 7th September 2012 [Day time event]

The second Mela Trust contribution was in the community procession where it was decided that the Mela art and tradition would be best-portrayed through dance, costume and music, ensuring that the artistic input remained of a high standard. For the procession we had two Indian rickshaws on which children were in traditional costume. We then teamed up with Nutkhut to have two stilt walkers dressed as maharani's, this was followed by traditional Gujarati dancers, Dhol players and then Bhangra dancers all performing as part of the procession. Mela Board members took on the roles of marshalls and carrying the banners. We had to find alternatives to Gabhru Panjab Da Bhangra dances and Dhol Blasters who were unable to attend the event due to it being on a Friday. We are grateful to Tor Panjabian Di Bhangra dances and Dhol players from Leeds and to the local dhol players from Preston. The Mela Trust was number 2 in the procession out of 126 taking part. With the London Olympic ceremonies having both Dhol players and Bhangra dances, the Mela contributions struck accord with local people who had never experienced these arts before. Preston Mela was also chosen for a panoramic photo shoot for the Guild 2012 exhibition. The input from Mela was also screened on BBC News channel North West Tonight.

**INSERT IMAGES** : Community procession – please try to capture a bit of everything – small images are fine to capture everything

### **Torch Light Procession Saturday 8th September 2012 [Evening event]**

The final Mela Trust contribution was in the Torchlight procession. Again, Mela Trust opted to exclude a float keeping with the same theme as the community procession. The rickshaws were used again and were well decorated with LED lights and children in traditional costume also took part. We input from Jee Le Dance Crew a girl group performing Bollywood dancers in traditional costumes. PR Dholi the Preston Dhol players joined the group next followed by Nutkhut Lotus Flower Light display. Again, Mela Board members took on the marshalling and banner carrying roles. The Mela Trust was number 38 in the procession order out of 75 taking part.

**INSERT IMAGES** : Torchlight procession – please try to capture a bit of everything – small images are fine to capture everything

## Stallholders

The Preston Mela attracted 28 paying stallholders (not including catering stalls). A total of 26 stallholders were surveyed on the day to obtain feedback as to whether the event met their expectations and an estimate of the number of participants benefiting from their stall.

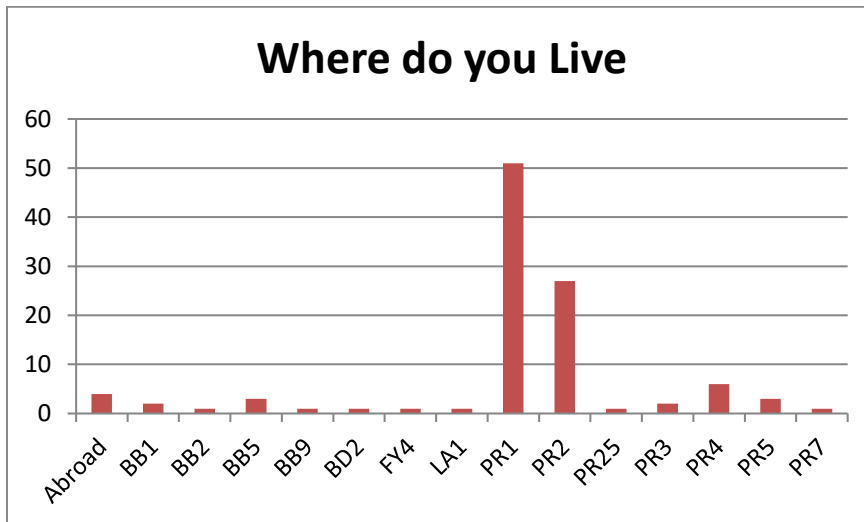
Despite the change of venue, 99% of stallholders stated the event had met (or exceeded) expectations and were pleased with the quick turnaround of venue, with the information provided to them by the Preston Mela Board and the arrangements for parking. Verbal feedback also confirmed that both Preston Mela and Guild volunteers were extremely helpful in directing people to their allocated spaces and assisting with moving and handling of equipment.

Estimates of individuals visiting individual stalls ranged from 30 to 1000.

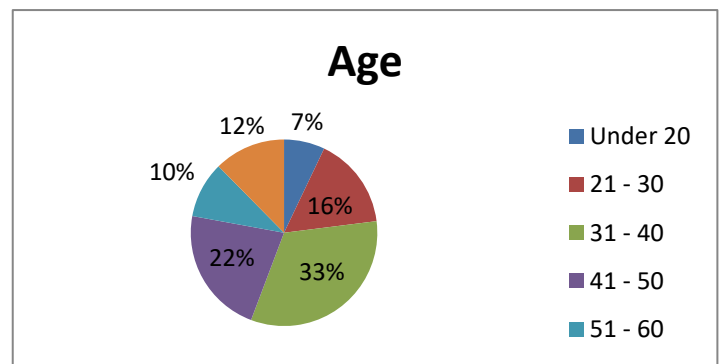
## Visitors

116 visitor evaluation forms were completed on the day. Of those interviewed, 60% had previously attended Preston Mela, 68% were female and 32% male.

The individuals surveyed mostly live in the Preston area however were also from Chorley, South Ribble, Blackburn, Hyndburn/Rossendale, Pendle, Blackpool, Fylde and Lancaster.

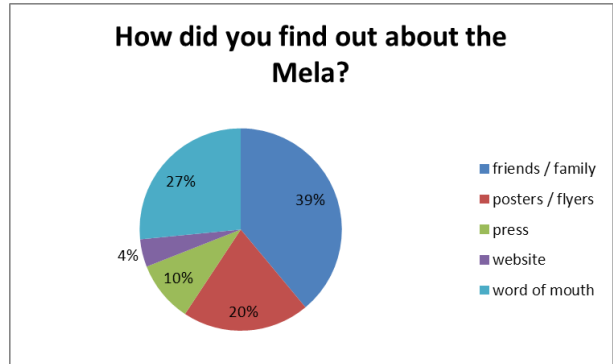


- **Travel:** 69% travelled to the event by car, 19% on foot, 10% on bicycle and 2% by train
- **Age:**
  - 7% Under 20
  - 16% were aged 21 – 30
  - 33% were 31 – 40
  - 22% aged between 41 – 50
  - 10% were 51 – 60
  - 12 surveyed were over 60



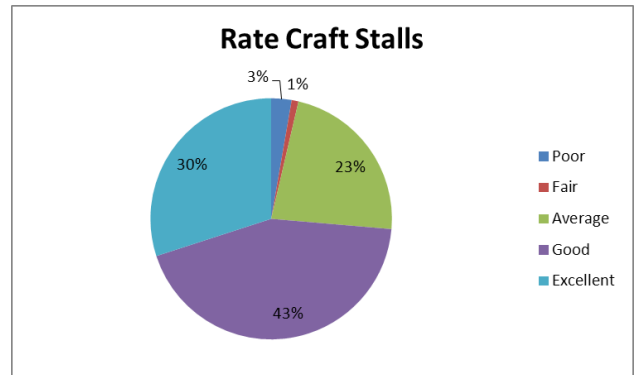
- **Ethnicity:**
  - 48% were Asian
  - 48% white British
  - 2% other
  - 1% Chinese
  - 1% black Caribbean

- **How did you find out about the Mela?**
  - Friends and family 39%
  - Word of mouth 27%
  - Posters / flyers 20%
  - Press 10%
  - Website 4%



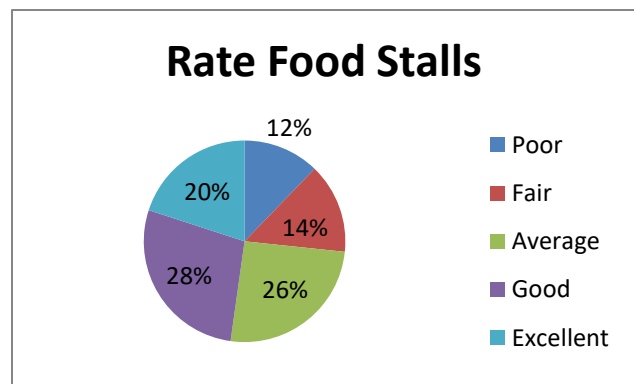
- **Rate the entertainment 1 – 5 (Poor – Excellent)**
  - 1 (Poor) 4%
  - 2 (Fair) 4%
  - 3 (Average) 17%
  - 4 (Good) 51%
  - 5 (Excellent) 24%

- **Rate the craft stalls 1 – 5 (Poor – Excellent)**
  - 1 (Poor) 3%
  - 2 (Fair) 1%
  - 3 (Average) 23%
  - 4 (Good) 43%
  - 5 (Excellent) 30%



- **Rate the Information stalls 1 – 5 (Poor – Excellent)**
  - 1 (Poor) 3%
  - 2 (Fair) 2%
  - 3 (Average) 15%
  - 4 (Good) 39%
  - 5 (Excellent) 41%

- **Rate the food stalls 1 – 5 (Poor – Excellent)**
  - 1 (Poor) 12%
  - 2 (Fair) 14%
  - 3 (Average) 26%
  - 4 (Good) 28%
  - 5 (Excellent) 20%



- **Will you be attending the Guild events in September?**
  - Yes, 82%
  - No, 18%

## SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS 2012

<b>Income</b>	
Arts Council England	<b>£40,000.00</b>
Local Gateway Grant (LCC) Lancashire Arts Development Service	<b>£5,000.00</b>
Preston City Council	<b>£8,000.00</b>
NHS Central Lancashire	<b>£5,124.00</b>
Community Gateway Association	<b>£3,500.00</b>
Progress Care Housing GROUP	<b>£2,500.00</b>
Help Direct BAME	<b>£750.00</b>
Stallholders, Catering and Programme Booklet fees	<b>£2,930.00</b>
Balance From 2011 and Guild Reserves	<b>£11,268.00</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£79,072</b>

<b>Expenditure</b>	
<b>Artistic:</b>	
<b>Mela Event June 2012</b>	
- DJ Sugar [£125]	- GHS Dances [£250]
- Jay Kumar [£500]	- Traditional Kuchipudi Dances [£250]
- Tor Panjabian Di [£550]	- Ethnal Dhol [£900]
- Somewhere To expenses [£150]	- Je Laa Dances [£50]
- AG Dolla Singer [£550]	- Bee 2 Singer [£800]
- Dream Dance Group [£250]	- Soundclash Entertainment [£250]
- Anpa Sangeet [£2,400]	- Stranger Family [£1,500]
- Hollywood to Bollwood String Quartets [£400]	
<b>*Guild week activities</b>	
- Tor Panjabian Di [£1,300]*	- Nutkhut Stilt Walkers [£720] *
- GHS Dances [£100] *	- PR Dholi [£300] for Friday*
- Je Laa Dance [£100] *	- PR Dholi [£250] for Saturday*
	<b>£11,695.00</b>
<b>Workshops:</b>	
- Manisimatra [£10,000]	- Nutkhut [£14,000]
- Gem Arts [£10,000]	- Rang Group [£3,730]
- Shreya Ghodke Handy Craft [£200]	- Henna Design & Painting (x5) [£750]
<b>*Guild week activities</b>	
- Rang Group [x4] [£475] *	- Henna Displays [x4] [£320] *
- Shreya Ghodke Handy Craft [£125]*	
	<b>£39,600.00</b>
<b>Infrastructure:</b>	
- Toilets [£75]	- Medics [£288]
- Guildhall Facilities [£10,275]	- Barriers [£400]
- Marquees cancelation fee [£3,027]	- Security [£1,341]
- Guild & other Volunteers expenses [£450]	
	<b>£12,892.00</b>

Insurance	<b>£1,225.00</b>
Publicity & Printing Mitchell & Wright	<b>£2,302.00</b>
Publicity -Marketing	<b>£600.00</b>
Publicity & Visual Evaluation - ALISON	<b>£1,243.00</b>
Sundries, VIPs hospitality, Volunteers expenses and Telephone charges	<b>£1170.00</b>
Project Workers Fees [x3]	<b>£2,600.00</b>
Guild 2012 Community Procession Bookings, Resources for decorations & Rickshaws	<b>£820.00</b>
Guild 2012 Torch Light Processions Bookings & Resources for decorations	<b>£550.00</b>
Audited Accounts – Hindocha & Co	<b>£600.00</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£75,297</b>
<b>Balance to carry Forward for Mela 2013</b>	<b>£3,775</b>

<b>Overview of Income and Expenditure</b>	
Total Income	<b>£79,072</b>
Total Expenditure	<b>£75,297</b>
Balance for Mela 2013	<b>£3,775</b>

## APPENDIX A – Messages from Dignitaries

### CHRIS INSERT PICTURES

*“2012 is a particularly significant year, being Preston Guild Year, and the year of Her Majesty The Queen’s Diamond Jubilee. How delighted and honoured my wife and I are to be invited to the Preston Mela as chief guests, for what I know to be Preston’s major cultural and community event.*

*As The Queens’ representative in Lancashire, I am more conscious than ever in this Diamond Jubilee year that The Queen is Queen of all citizens of this land, and all will join in gratitude in celebrating her 60 years of loyal and dedicated service to us all. Also, this Guild Year gives us a great opportunity to develop closer and stronger links, local, national and international, between all sections of our community. The Preston Mela will make an important contribution to that.”*

**Lord Shuttleworth KCVO, Lord-Lieutenant of Lancashire**

*“This is a tremendous highlight for me as Guild Mayor in Guild year to welcome thousands of people to the extra special Mela that is taking place right here in Preston in 2012. We have such wonderful strong and diverse communities in Preston and the Mela is a celebration of all of this and more. I am sure everyone will have a fantastic and memorable time.”*

**Councillor Carl Crompton, Preston Guild Mayor**

*“The Mela has become an important tradition in Preston and one of the most popular events of the summer festival calendar. “It reflects the city’s diverse and vibrant culture and there is extra significance this year with Preston Guild marking its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The County Council is pleased to support this event.”*

**County Councillor John Shedwick, Chairman of Lancashire County Council**

*“As Chair of Community Gateway Association (CGA) I take great pleasure and pride in our continued support of such a vibrant and colourful event as Preston Mela. The Mela is about bringing communities together and, as an organisation that is community led, CGA are honoured to be part of a celebration that reflects the diversity in the city. It is also Preston Guild this year and CGA will be celebrating this historic event that brings people across the city together to highlight how we are one big community.”*

**Rose Kinsella, Chair of Community Gateway Association**

*“We are pleased to be associated with Preston Mela Trust and the hard work this event undertakes to connect communities to services and promoting people’s wellbeing. Arts play a significant role in helping people enjoy healthier lives and aids recovery from illness.”*

**Peter Kenyon, Chairman of NHS Lancashire**

*“We are delighted to support Preston’s Mela festival and, once again, look forward to celebrating the diversity of our local communities. This year’s event holds even greater significance as it will unite more local people as part of the Preston Guild celebrations.”*

**Jacqui De-Rose, Group Chief Executive of Progress Housing Group**

*“Guild 1992 was the catalyst for today’s Mela in Preston, which saw South Asian community groups and organisations across Preston come together to promote their culture and tradition. Mela is the platform in which the South Asian heritage, art, culture and civic pride for Preston and Lancashire is showcased and contributes to community cohesion and cultural diversity.”*

**Gulab Singh MBE, Chairman Preston Mela Trust Chairman**

*“Arts Council England is proud to be supporting Preston Mela 2012 through an award from our National Lottery funded Grants for the arts programme. Alongside Preston City Council events staff, we have worked closely to support the committee to develop the artistic content, programming and participation opportunities for this year. We are pleased to see that the organising committee is working with somewhereto\_ NW who will also be presenting work on the community stages during the Preston Mela enabling young people to showcase their skills and talents.*

*This event is Lancashire’s foremost Mela, a colourful and diverse celebration of both traditional and contemporary South Asian culture and arts, for everyone to enjoy. We hope that Prestonian’s and visitors alike will enjoy the Mela in the beautiful surroundings of Avenham Park. Fingers crossed for sunshine on the day and, not least forgetting, good luck for the extra events supported by the Mela in the autumn, during this special Preston Guild Year.”*

**Angela Chappell: Relationship Manager, Arts Council England**

*“It will be good to celebrate the Mela once more on Avenham Park. Each year we come together to celebrate diversity and a sharing of energetic and varied cultural delights for the whole city to share in. From the distinctive music and dancing, the crafts and exhibitions, the family and individuals have something to feast the eyes upon. There is also the opportunity to share in hospitality and exotic food and to find out for yourself the interesting origins of eastern culture. I do hope that this year, especially as it is Guild Year, the whole city will get behind the Mela and celebrate the festival in its entirety. The space that Avenham Park provides is an enchanting backdrop for a cultural occasion. The coming together of cultures at this occasion reflects the interaction of the world and it will be good to further our relationships with neighbours and make new acquaintances and friends on Mela day.”*

**Father Timothy Lipscombe, Friends of Avenham & Miller Park**

## **APPENDIX B – Sponsors / Exhibitors Quotes**

*“On behalf of Cupcakes By Sophia we thank you for the swift thinking and relocating the event instead of cancelling the whole thing.... I have recently had this with Bradford Mela where they had to cancel due adverse weather and was very frustrating as we were looking forward to it. So we appreciate the efforts you have out into bring this into life. Thank you and look forward to working with you guys soon again.”*

**Sophia Tutum, Cupcakes by Sophia**

*“I was very sorry to miss the Mela, which I understand was very successful despite its move to the Guild Hall.”*

**Anne Garsed, Fairtrade Group**

*“My colleagues really enjoyed the event and were very complimentary about the help that they got from your staff when they were setting up.”*

**Andrea Hills, Lake District National Park**

*“I just wanted to say a massive thank you to both of you for all your hard work and support in ensuring that young people from across the North West get the recognition that they deserve. I hope you found us to be good partners and if you do have any events in future, you will think of us a key partner.”*

**Jaffer Ali Hussain, somewhereto\_ NW and Spot on Lancashire**

*“I would like to thank you for your VIP invitation to the event, in my capacity as one of the Executive leads of Chorley & South Ribble CCG. My partner Mark & I thoroughly enjoyed your kind hospitality, delicious food & the whole Mela experience. It is a great pity that the weather precluded the use of Avenham Park but you are all to be congratulated on the successful transformation of the Guildhall to an alternative venue. My tour of the many & varied stands was both entertaining & informative. Time spent at the NHS Patient Engagement stand also provided me with an invaluable opportunity to meet members of the local community, to listen to their experiences & to feedback their comments to my CCG colleagues.”*

**Dr Jane Lofthouse, NHS Central Lancashire**

*“It was a wonderful day and we couldn't have enjoyed it all more. The amount of work, followed by a complete turn-around of the venue and all that that entailed, must have been enormous and everyone deserves congratulations for the success it undoubtedly was. You provided a wonderful lunch - that alone was a triumph-and it was all simply delicious. Goodness knows how long the clearing up took but if everyone enjoyed themselves half as much as we did, you certainly had a lot of very happy people! Thank you so much for including us; we felt incredibly lucky and very privileged to have been part of it all.”*

**Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire Charles Shuttleworth & Lady Ann Shuttleworth**

*“A fantastic effort by you and your team! With kind regards and best wishes, Jeremy”*

**Jeremy Gorick, Lancashire's High Sheriff**

*“The team did an absolutely terrific job in the face of the weather and I am so pleased the event went well. As Stella has said we will make sure the staff and volunteers involved receive the praise and recognition they deserve.”*

**Lorraine Norris, Preston City Council Chief Executive**