



## Carnivals in Somerset Promotion Project

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### **PRESS RELEASE**

#### **Celebrating all the fun of Somerset Illuminated Carnivals thanks to glowing National Lottery support**

The heritage, memories and traditions of Somerset's Illuminated carnival processions will be captured online thanks to an innovative new project awarded £7,500 from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The Carnivals In Somerset Promotion Project (CISPP) will broadcast online a series of six live interactive webcast events.

The illuminated processions span 410 years dating from the Gunpowder plot of 1605. In the south west of England there are about 30 illuminated carnival parades with up to 120 entries including 60 floats and around 200 masquerading entries. These parades can attract up to 150,000 spectators at any one time

Approximately bi-monthly, a carnival programme of around one-hour duration will focus on issues surrounding the historical and contemporary West Country carnival tradition from a variety of locations. These live broadcasts will use new technologies to give a fresh edge and interpretation of carnival heritage to engage carnival goers and brand-new audiences. As well as highlighting annual carnival heritage events, the webcasts and live footage will provide an invaluable insight into carnival heritage and attract new and diverse audiences to come along and experience the carnival first hand. The project will also encourage people to share their own carnival heritage; provide opportunities to contribute to the wider knowledge of carnival; and allow people to contribute their own comments and opinions for others to share and interact in online activities and through social media.

The CISPP Carnival TV live programmes will be recorded and placed online, and will be available for anyone else's archive for future use. This is an entirely new and innovative carnival project, not attempted before.

The first webcast will coincide with the beginning of the 2015 carnival season and will be followed by a sequence of live interactive broadcasts throughout and beyond the carnival season.

Chairman of CISPP, Dr Andrew Tallon said "We are very excited and proud to have been awarded our third grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund for our carnival project. This heritage media project is new to West Country carnivals and will hopefully engage existing and new audiences to the carnival tradition".

Nerys Watts, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in the South West said: "Illuminated carnival parades are still incredibly popular, and with a history spanning more than four centuries there is a lot of heritage and memories to be uncovered. Volunteers will develop skills to

enable them to use new technologies to share these stories with brand-new audiences and inspire the next generation of carnival goers.”

## **ENDS**

Notes to Editors:

### **About CISPP:**

In 2009, a new voluntary group, Carnivals in Somerset Promotion Project (CISPP), was formed. This was in response to concerns that the unique heritage of the Somerset illuminated carnivals could potentially be lost in the future unless efforts are made to encourage more people to take part in the tradition. Within the UK, large amounts of public and private finance have been made available for 'outdoor celebratory events', usually in cities and mostly on events which have relatively short histories and less of a cultural importance. Traditional Somerset carnival has been largely overlooked as a valuable community resource, although it provides training and gives the opportunity for the acquisition of a variety of skills for people of all ages on a voluntary basis. Carnival, in addition, offers an array of other economic, social and cultural benefits. CISPP's aims are to

- Promote the historical and contemporary importance of the unique West Country illuminated carnivals.
- Disseminate an interactive carnival exhibition so that communities can experience the heritage and culture of West Country illuminated carnivals.
- Create educational and entertaining DVDs to portray the carnival experience.
- Stimulate tourism through West Country illuminated carnivals.
- Develop partnerships with interested groups to ensure the future of West Country illuminated carnivals.

### **About the Heritage Lottery Fund:**

Thanks to National Lottery players, we invest money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about - from the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife. [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk) @heritagelottery

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