

case study

Springwatch Festival 2007

As part of its national Breathing Places campaign, launched in spring 2007, the BBC selected Peterborough as one of its 15 Breathing Places cities across the UK. Peterborough City Council then commissioned Athene Communications to organise Peterborough's Springwatch festival in 2007. The aim of the festival was to inspire visitors to take simple actions for wildlife by providing opportunities for people to encounter wildlife close-up, try a range of activities and enjoy a great family day out.

Athene's Approach

Athene appointed a full-time project manager to co-ordinate the festival with these objectives:

1. To ensure a well-organised, trouble free event with an attendance of over 10,000 people.
2. To deliver a cost neutral event through commercial sponsorship and grant funding from other bodies
3. To ensure a wide range of activities on the day supporting Peterborough's ambition to be the environment capital of the UK
4. To engage a wide range of communities in the planning of the event and on the day itself to support the city's community cohesion agenda
5. To position the event firmly within the context of the wider programme of events across the spring and early summer and to ensure a clear 'partnership approach'.

To achieve those objectives, Athene's project manager co-ordinated a partnership team, bringing together public, private and voluntary sector organisations to deliver a comprehensive project plan.

Key tasks were:

1. To ensure a wide-range of events and attractions to inspire people of all ages and communities
2. To make full health, safety and security arrangements
3. To publicise the event to attract a diverse range of audiences
4. To manage the interests of all the partner organisations involved
5. To secure commercial sponsorship and ensure that the

project was delivered within agreed budgets

6. To ensure the festival contributed to Peterborough's wider community cohesion agenda

Results

The BBC Springwatch festival was held at Central Park in Peterborough on 10 June attracting over 12,000 visitors of many different communities and age ranges. It offered a variety of events including stands and stalls from the RSPB, Natural England, the Wildlife Trusts and Peterborough City Council as well as a small music festival and full catering facilities.

Activities and displays were located throughout Central Park and well as being invited to 'Do One Thing' for wildlife, over 1,000 people signed up to support Peterborough's aspiration to become the UK's environment capital by pledging to reduce their impact on the environment. The festival received extensive positive coverage across national, regional and local TV, radio and print media press.

Nick Hammond, Director of the Wildlife Trusts of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and Peterborough said, 'It was the most ethnically and socially diverse conservation event that I have ever been to. A brilliant way to bring wildlife to the people.'

Caroline Parsons, Head of Communications at Peterborough City Council commented, 'The Springwatch Festival was a resounding success and a great way to launch Peterborough's Year of Action. I was so pleased with the project management of the Festival that I asked Athene to continue working with Peterborough City Council to run the Year of Action campaign.'