



Introduction

The seed for the Skellig Coast Dark Sky Festival came from the success of a series of monthly online talks on astronomy and the Kerry Dark Sky Reserve which the LIVE Project have been running for over 10 months in collaboration with Steve Lynott of Kerry Dark Sky Tourism and John Flannery of the Irish Astronomical Society. As well as astronomy and star guides, special guests were invited each month to talk about other aspects of life in a Dark Sky Reserve –nocturnal wildlife such as bats and Manx shearwaters, astroarchaeology, effects of light pollution and more.

Our overall goal for the talks and for the idea of the festival was to promote the unique landscape of the Kerry International Dark Sky Reserve, to encourage ownership and pride from locals in its maintenance and development, as well as promoting it as a unique destination of natural and cultural heritage. A dark sky themed festival was an opportunity to further engage local people living within the Reserve while also providing a calendar highlight which can be used to promote the reserve to tourists in the quieter shoulder seasons.

The motivation for the festival was to promote collaborative working – the combined effort that would bring together the LIVE Project, local astronomy groups, schools, business, and the wider community that live within the Kerry International Dark Sky Reserve – showcasing the collective value of natural heritage when communities work together to take pride, preserve, and share knowledge.

The LIVE Project team felt this seed festival had the potential to showcase aspects relating to the principles of the project in general: supporting a community to manage its own heritage, helping conserve its resources and traditions, co-working and co-marketing, collective decision making and creating an economically viable cultural festival in the shoulder season.



Increase in visitor numbers outside of the peak season



Increase in the length of stay and average spend of visitors



Greater awareness of and engagement with local natural and cultural heritage



New knowledge and skills relating to natural and cultural heritage; digital marketing; co-promotion



Festival Planning

To gauge support for a dark sky themed festival, the LIVE Project carried out a preliminary survey which was widely shared through their networks, social media channels and emails asking the local community a number of questions related to involvement, support, planning and development of a festival. Following this survey, a first public meeting was held online in December 2021, and the collective decision was made to run the festival in March 2022. From January onwards, weekly meetings took place with a newly formed volunteer steering committee to help organise the festival and make each aspect of the decision-making process open and transparent. This committee consisted of local organisations, businesses, groups, and individuals from across the Iveragh peninsula.

A number of key decisions were made at these weekly meetings, including where exactly the festival should take place. The Kerry International Dark Sky Reserve covers a large area of the peninsula, approximately 700sq km, and for this inaugural year it would not have been possible to cover such a wide area. A collective decision was made to create a rotating festival – it would be based in a different location of the reserve each year, to maximize the economic value to the whole of the community. For the 2022 festival, it was decided that Caherdaniel and Ballinskelligs would be the two main festival event locations as both have active astronomy groups with experience of running dark sky themed events. Valentia was also chosen as there were two venues there suitable for suggested events, and the Valentia Island Development Company (VIDCO) were supporting the festival. Before the Covid19 pandemic, the Skellig CRI/UCC Introduction to Astronomy ACE course was run on Valentia Island.

As the Kerry International Dark Sky Reserve overlaps with a large area of the Uíbh Rathach Gaeltacht area, feedback from both the initial survey and the festival committee showed that there was a need and desire for some Irish Language events in the festival programme. Festival committee members Comhchoiste Uíbh Ráthaigh, Cathair Saibhin le Gaeilge and Brí Uíbh Ráthaigh were hugely supportive of this festival and with their help and expertise we were able to include some astronomy events as Gaeilge, as well as promoting the festival by creating a bilingual programme and social media graphics. It certainly helped that the festival was planned for the tail end of Seachtain na Gaeilge – an annual nationwide event to promote Gaeilge.

The LIVE Project consists of a small team of experienced event organisers and leaders, so a decision was taken to fully support this festival by taking on the bulk of the organisation. LIVE already had numerous aspects in place to easily support the festival - this includes a website, in-house website maintenance, graphic design, experience with booking platforms and event marketing, as well as an active network locally and nationally through its social media platforms. Other collective decision making that took place at the weekly meetings included the name of the festival, logos, events, and locations.

Pre-Event (Insurance/Risk Assessment etc.)

Due to the short lead in time and the newness of the festival committee, it was not possible to apply for funding from tourism and arts departments to cover expenses such as insurance. Where event leaders did not have their own insurance and public liability; The LIVE Project was able to provide cover through UCC. It was agreed at the committee meetings that this was the best way to proceed for the inaugural festival but would not be the process for future festivals. The LIVE Project also carried out risk assessments for several events where needed.



Event Marketing and Booking

With input from the committee, the LIVE Team developed and carried out the booking and marketing for the festival. This included setting up and running individual social media accounts for the festival, creating a dedicated page on the LIVE Project website, and booking facilities using Eventbrite for 11 of the 17 events. Over 60 graphics were created in total for all these different platforms, including bilingual festival programme and social media posts.

A marketing plan was put in place, once the details of the festival and all the various accounts were created:

- Social media accounts were created on three platforms - Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. All of these performed very well locally but with social media spending could have improved performance nationally and potentially drawn more travelling attendees.
- Social media graphics were created for each event and shared widely across the channels.
- A bilingual festival programme was available in digital and printed formats. PDF versions were available for download from the website, and printed posters were put up in local communities particularly targeting locations where the events were taking place.
- Press Releases were sent to the Kerry press and Kerry radio ahead of the event. Kerry's Eye picked it up and ran a piece a few weeks before the festival and the Kerryman published a piece the week after.

While our lead in time was very short and the marketing team over stretched, the festival did surprisingly well on social media with a huge interest from not just the local community, but across Ireland and the astronomy and Dark Sky community internationally. There is definitely interest and an appetite for this festival.

See Appendix figure 1 for the full social media breakdown

Booking System

Due to lockdown restrictions, we had come to value the ease of use of online free booking systems for managing attendees. The LIVE Project has found from running several outdoor events that 15 people is the optimal number per guide when speaking outside without the use of aids such as mics. So, it was decided that even though lockdown restrictions had eased, people were still somewhat nervous of large crowds, so events needed to have maximum number of attendees in ratio with the number of event leaders in order to facilitate the speaker's reach and everyone's comfort and safety. On the webpage we created a card for each event, highlighting the procedure e.g., booking required/no booking required etc., and linked to the booking platform. For most events we used Eventbrite, for suppliers with their own booking system e.g., Aquaterra, Sea Synergy, we linked to their websites and booking systems. Using a booking system had several advantages and disadvantages, which are listed in the Appendix.

See Appendix Figure 2 for the breakdown of the advantages and disadvantages of using Eventbrite

Skellig Coast Dark Sky Festival Breakdown

There were 17 events in total for the 2022 Skellig Coast Dark Sky Festival, most were well attended with higher numbers turning out than expected. Some unfortunately had a low turn-up rate or low bookings. It was however a good mix of day and nighttime and family.

All the evening events, stargazing, nocturnal wildlife, proved to be the most popular and although we scheduled events carefully so that most events didn't overlap, there would have been large enough audience enough crowds to host events simultaneously in different places.

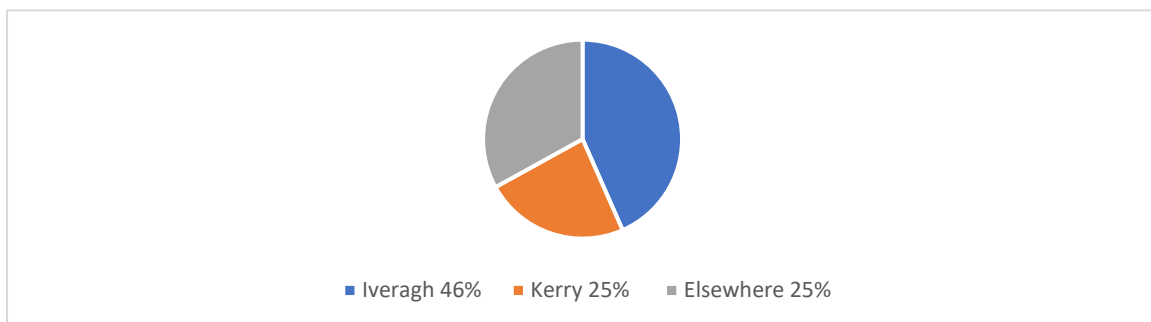
While there were some kinks and glitches, overall, it proved to be a highly successful weekend event, with most of the feedback we received from attendees, businesses, and local residents very positive and fully supportive of the festival and its potential.

See Appendix Tables 1,2 and Figure 3 for the breakdown of festival events, locations, attendees, etc.

Post-Festival Surveys

After the festival we created and sent feedback surveys to attendees and did a callout on social media. These surveys will help us greatly in gauging which were the most popular events and accessing the impact of the festival to the community economically, and to gather ideas for future festivals. Findings from the attendee survey are detailed below.

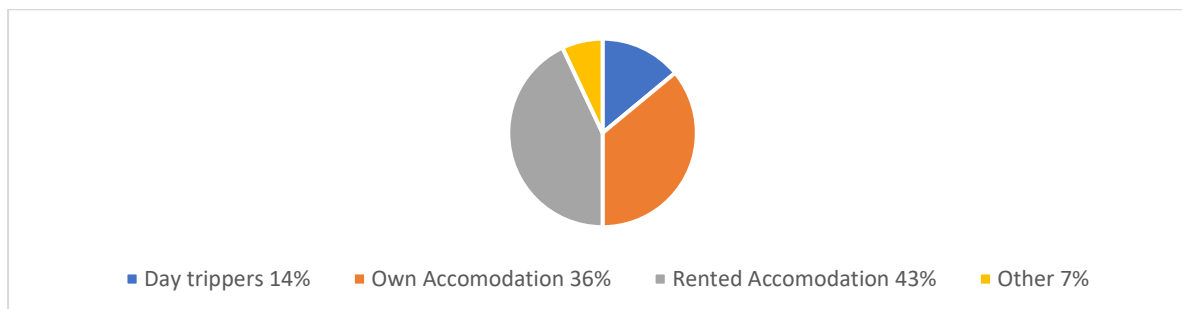
Visitor Breakdown



From our attendee survey we gathered the following:

- Nearly half the attendees were resident on the Iveragh peninsula. From this we can gather that the community are behind the festival and are interested in learning more about their own local natural and cultural heritage
- A quarter of the attendees travelled from outside of Iveragh but from across Kerry, which helped us increase awareness of the Kerry Dark Sky Reserve as a destination across the county.
- A quarter of attendees travelled from elsewhere, which included Dublin, Meath and as far as Down – this indicates great interest from the valuable domestic market. Creating a weekend event that can succeed in the festival-heavy domestic market will increase the resilience of the festival in the face of further lockdowns or fickle foreign markets.

Accommodation



From our attendee survey we gathered the following:

- Nearly half the attendees who travelled to attend stayed in rented accommodation, which was surely a welcome boost to the local economy in the shoulder season.
- More than a quarter of attendees stayed in their own accommodation – this includes own holiday home, campervan, etc. While it doesn't add as much to the economy this would mean local shops, food providers and other businesses could have benefitted from this festival.
- Less than a quarter of attendees either stayed in their own accommodation or in other forms, such as staying with friends and families. Again, possibly benefitting local businesses such as food providers, taxis, and other businesses.

Organiser and Event Leader Surveys

We also sent a feedback survey to our organisers and event leaders as their feedback about the festival will be vital to developing, funding, and creating a better festival in 2023. Their responses are below.

General thoughts:

- Majority shared on personal, business and community social media pages
- Majority shared word of mouth
- Exploit local media – newspapers and radio more, so more locals know what is going on.
- Most are happy to be part of next year's festival – as committee or event organiser/leader
- Majority thought it brought good numbers to the area, and brought locals together – attendees were keen, and there is lots of potential for future growth.
- To secure funding for Fáilte Ireland support, you need bed night estimates., it would be good to record these, but also to seek other areas of potential festival funding, collaboration, and support.

Specific notes for the Future:

- Set festival date earlier to get a good run in – organising and marketing
- Keep it simple and then it doesn't eat up people's lives and time and therefore more likely to be sustainable.
- Maybe a mini-Planetarium for the children to learn about the stars

See Appendix Table 3 for the breakdown of survey comments from attendees and organisers.

General overview of the Skellig Coast Dark Sky Festival and future planning

Event Planning

- Deadlines – there needs to be strict deadlines for event content to be received (see next point).
- Events - Leaders need to be give a detailed account of their event including location, map, duration, description, parking, correct spelling of local placenames, etc well in advance of the festival. This can then be used for the festival programme and marketing. A template was created for this purpose, which can be reused for future events.
- Parking can be an issue – events where parking might be tight need to be strict about numbers of attendees and have plenty of stewards to help organise on the day.
- Get more local businesses involved – they can sell tickets, promote events, create themed packages, share on their own networks, websites, and social media.

Set up and Stewarding

- It would be highly advisable to create ‘festival ambassadors’ prior to the festival so local businesses can give out as much correct information as possible about events.
- Festival Office – depending on the size and location of the festival, there may be need to organise a festival office, made of up volunteers who can answer any enquiries in person or online.
- Help with setting up and stewarding is essential for each event and should not be left solely to the Event Leader. The LIVE Project team were available at most of the events but further thought needs to go into this for future festivals e.g., volunteer team to be assigned to each event and/or area.
- At each event there needs to be a highly visible event organiser with details and/or registration table with registration list and information for attendees, this will help manage bookings, cancellations, and no-shows. – particularly at night-time and open events with larger numbers turning up than booked.
- Some events didn’t start on time due to late arrivals; this has a knock-on effect for other events or activities planned e.g., transport between events and locations

Extras, Products, Tools needed

- Electric tealights and candles were used to highlight walking routes on uneven surfaces. The low lighting did not affect night vision and highlighted trip hazards e.g., rabbit burrows in the dunes. These will need to be budgeted for and could be re-used for different events.
- With outdoor events, or events with crowds it is vital to have some amplification system so the leaders can be easily heard. Again, needs to be budgeted for purchase or rental.
- Laser Pointers work well for outdoor stargazing talks. Event Leaders who used them provided their own.
- High Viz clothing and red torches – essential for all organisers, volunteers, and event leaders to have highly visible clothing and a red torch each for nighttime events.
- It would be good to have a map of places/ things to visit at your own leisure during the daytime as well e.g., archaeology nearby, walk the planets etc.



Ticket Sales/Pricing

- Charging for events was difficult because there was no mechanism to accept payments. Most of the festival events were free to attendees. Payment for event leaders came from sponsorship from the LIVE Project and Údaras na Gaeltachta. For future festivals it may be necessary to charge for more events and to create a mechanism for accepting payments.
- Events that are free are more likely to have cancellations and no-shows. This happened at several of the festival events. Charging a small fee could negate this. One caveat being that as well as cancellations and no-shows we did see a number of people turning up without having booked. In most instances this balanced out however it could be a cause for concern in the future if we have limited capacity for certain events.
- Most of the ticket sales were through the booking platform Eventbrite – to facilitate the local community and improve access to those who prefer not to use online platforms, it is vital to provide virtual and physical tickets.

Irish Language Events

- Without the support of the local Irish Language Officers, Aedín Ni Bhrian, Áine Uí Bheoláin and Victor Bayda, it would not have been possible to organise events as Gaeilge. Their support and enthusiasm for the festival was greatly appreciated. All the events as Gaeilge were very well attended and feedback showed they really enjoyed the opportunity to attend and would love to see events in Irish continue as a core element of the festival.
 - There is a need to have a budget for translation and have translators in place well before the festival. Extra time needs to be given to the programme planning in order to facilitate translation.
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Conclusion and recommendations

Overall, the festival was very successful considering the short lead-in time. Most attendees, which included locals and visitors, enjoyed the festival, and attended multiple events. We feel that there is huge potential for this festival nationally and internationally (National Geographic recently published [this article](#) regarding Dark Sky Tourism), but the key to its success was local interest and support.

2023 festival recommendations

- Set the festival date as early as possible. On advice from Steve Lynott and John Flannery about best times to host the festival, the moon phase is critical as the new moon is the best time for stargazing. The nearest weekend to new moon in March 2023 is 17/19th St Patricks Weekend, which is already a busy time in the area. The other possible dates are 17th - 19th of February and 21st - 23rd of April.
- Create an organising committee –preferably with each community/area represented
- Create subgroups to work on events, funding, deadline dates, translation, social media
- Create a festival promotion pack – collection of the best photos, videos, and quotes from the 2022 festival
- Create a festival pack to use for organising the 2023 festival to include some of the following:



- Templates for event listings and risk assessment forms
- A list of potential local event leaders and potential visiting guests
- A list of potential funders, such as Fáilte Ireland and the Arts Council with deadline dates for applications
- A list of potential sponsors
- A list of communities that would like to be involved in 2023
- A list of venues and facilities
- Start planning a website including the cost of design and maintenance
- Keep the social media accounts active throughout the year either through volunteers or paid individuals/company.

APPENDIX

Figure 1: Social Media Breakdown

Facebook

- *Reach*- 12,827
- *Page Likes*- 423
- *Engagement on posts*- 976
- *Most Popular Post* - Initial 'Save the Date' reached 12,827 people
- Programme post reached 9,100 people

Instagram

- *Page Likes*- 283
- *Most Popular Post* - Map of the Dark Sky Reserve

Twitter

- *Page likes*- 112
- *Most popular tweet* - Programme Tweet- 40 like ands 20 retweets



Website stats

Reports > Top Blog Posts

Top Blog Posts

See which posts had the most views.

Time period: Jan 1 - Dec 12, 2021

Report Actions ▾

About This Report



 Bar Chart  Table

Advanced View

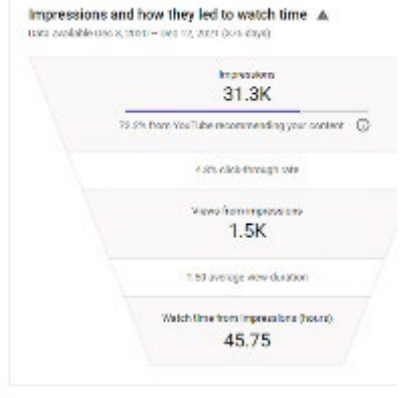
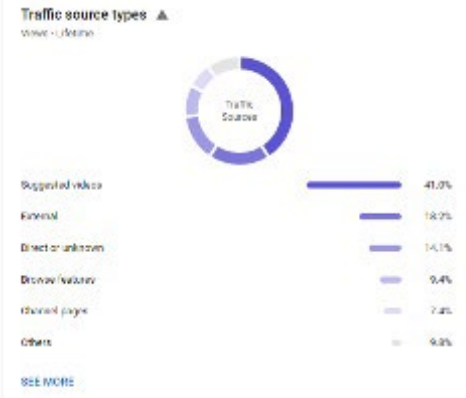
Select a time period Select columns

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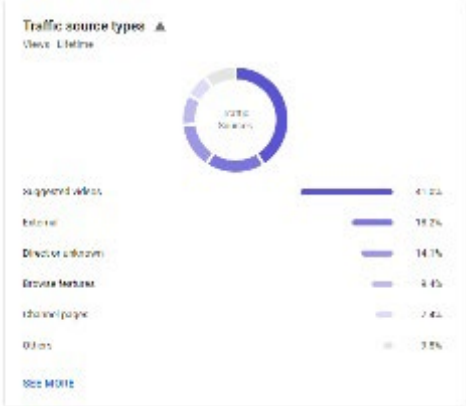
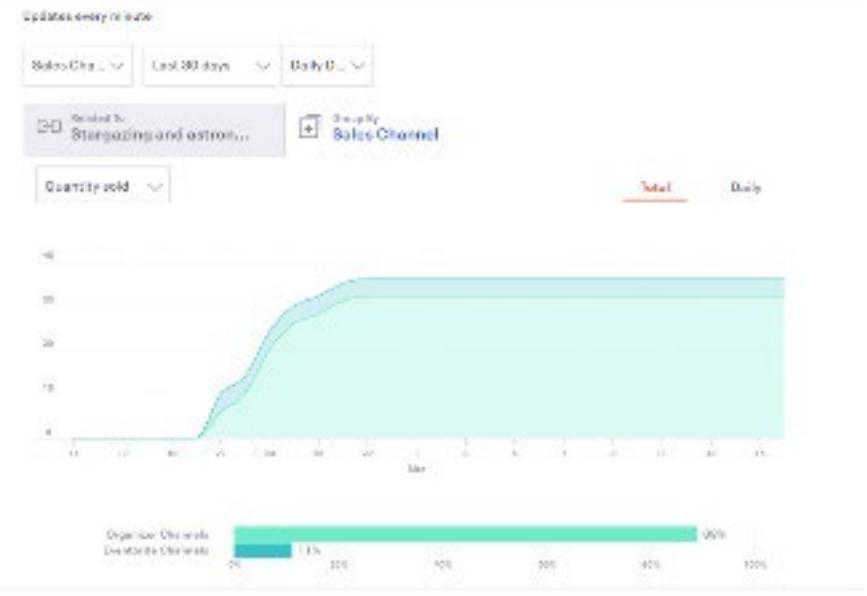
	Post Title	Publish Date	Post Views	Unique Visitors	Comments	Likes
	Kerry International Dark Sky Reserve	May 31, 2021	587	365	0	0
	Discover Iveragh for Heritage Week 2021	Aug 06, 2021	337	201	0	0
	My common lizard story	Apr 15, 2021	230	162	0	0



Eventbrite stats

Analytics

See where your sales are coming from, in real time.



Facebook

Skellig Coast Dark Sky Festival

4th - 6th March 2022

[Edit](#)

Skellig Coast Dark Sky Festival
Create @username · Festival

[Edit WhatsApp](#)



Instagram

Skellig Coast Dark Sky Festival

11 posts | 285 followers | 3 following

Skellig Coast Dark Sky Fest
Details of the individual events and booking information can be found at www.sodarkskyfest.com

Followed by: [sodarkskyfest](#), [sodarkskyfest](#), [sodarkskyfest](#), [sodarkskyfest](#), [sodarkskyfest](#), [sodarkskyfest](#), [sodarkskyfest](#)

Posts:

- Many Thanks Mile Buiochas
- Observers Guide to Stargazing
- Astrophotography



Twitter

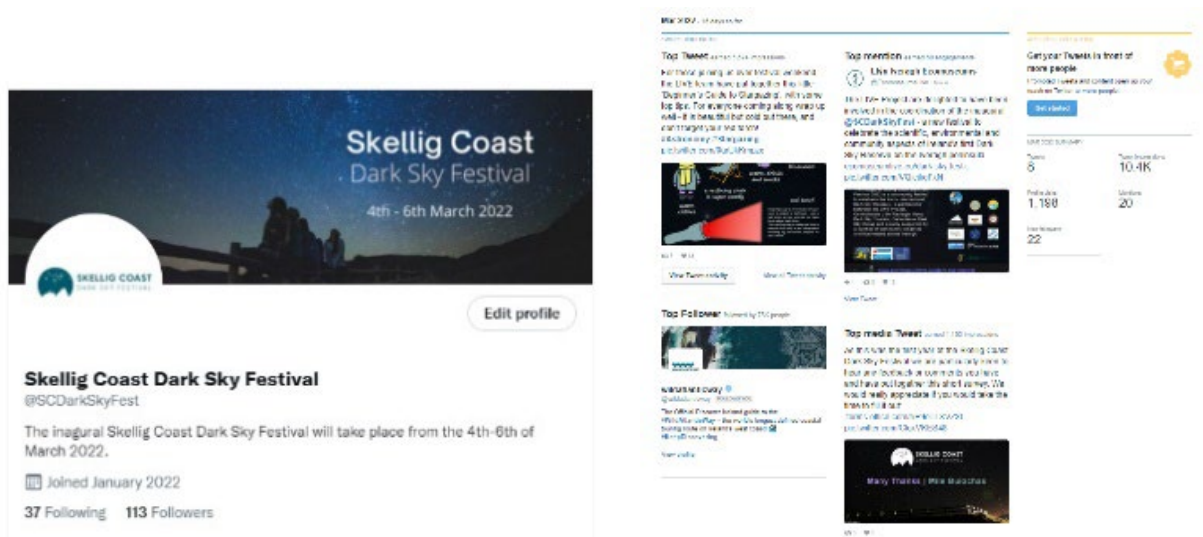


Figure 2 for the breakdown of the advantages and disadvantages of using Eventbrite:

Advantages	Disadvantages
Free and easy to use	When the festival was shared <i>word-of-mouth</i> , some people did not check to see if they needed to book or when they did eventually, the events were fully booked.
Easy to include relevant additional information and connect directly to Google maps for directions	Older generations and those without access to the online booking platform had no alternative.
Easy to add links to website, share on social media, other digital platforms	People booked multiple events too easily
Easily able to update attendees e.g., weather updates	We had a lot of last-minute cancellations and no-shows.
Manages cancellations and waitlists easily	Our attendee list did not necessarily reflect the actual attendees at the event.
Most people are used to having to book online because of lockdown restrictions	
Gathers contact details of attendees e.g., email addresses, so you can easily send out feedback forms post-event.	

Notes for the future
Offer a number of physical tickets locally e.g., 50% of ticket sales could be online, and 50% at the venue or elsewhere.
Have a temporary festival office in the week leading up to the event.
Have festival ambassadors in different locations e.g., shops and cafes, that are up to speed with all the information relating to the festival and can sell tickets for local events.
Charge a fee – people are less likely to book multiple events if they are charged a fee, however small.
Make sure to highlight on all online and physical media e.g., posters, that booking is required.

Table 1: Breakdown of each event with general commentary on the events

No	Event & Description	Notes
1	Dark Sky Talk, online: An online event that takes place on the first Thursday of the month and is hosted by LIVE in collaboration with Kerry Dark Sky Tourism. This was billed as a Pre-festival event with a discussion on the tools and techniques of stargazing. Organised by the LIVE Project and Kerry Dark Sky Tourism.	<i>Potential to develop the recordings and notes from these talks for the 2023 festival e.g., seasonal guide to the Kerry Dark Sky Reserve.</i>
2	Astronomy in the Classroom, Local schools: Caoimhin de Bhailis of Blackrock Observatory visited the three Gaeltacht Schools in the Area (Scoil Cillan Liath, Scoil an Ghleanna and Scoil Naomh Michil) as well as the Aonad in Coláiste na Sceilge to give a talk on the Sky at Night. A hugely successful event, Caoimhin was very engaging, and all the schools involved gave positive feedback. These events were organised Brí Uíbh Ráthaigh and sponsored by Udarás na Gaeltachta.	<i>These events took place in Gaelscoils only, but there was interest from local English-speaking schools too. For future festivals co-sponsorship/funding should be sought so these events could be delivered to more schools in the area.</i>
3	Astroarchaeology Walk, Doory: Local archaeologist and Knowledge Gatherer with the LIVE Project Aoi bheann Lambe led a walk to two archaeological sites in the Inny Valley including a standing row which is aligned on the lunar standstill. Organised and sponsored by The LIVE Project and Heritage Iveragh.	<i>This event was fully booked early. Good attendance by locals who knew of the sites but not the details. One issue with this event was the lack of clarity around where the start point was, causing many late arrivals. Suggest in future that the start point for events should be clearly marked on a map.</i>
4	Rock Art by Night, Caherdaniel: - Visit to a local significant rock art site in Caherdaniel village, again led by archaeologist and LIVE team member Aoi bheann Lambe. Organised and sponsored by The LIVE Project and Heritage Iveragh.	<i>Good attendance by locals and visitors. The village location provided opportunities for local business accommodation and food providers. Local access provided by landowner.</i>
5	Pop-Up Gaeltacht, Cahersiveen: An informal gathering of Irish speakers of various abilities to encourage practice speaking as Gaeilge. This event took place in the Fertha Bar, Cahersiveen. Organised and sponsored by Cathaire Saidhbhín le Gaeilge.	<i>Well attended and enjoyable evening with music organised by Cathaire Saidhbhín le Gaeilge to coincide with Seachtain na Gaeilge.</i>
6	Astronomy and Stargazing, Derrynane: Led by founder of Caherdaniel Dark Sky Group Michael Sheehan and archaeologist Aoi bheann Lambe – an evening of stargazing and sky lore in the grounds of Derrynane House and Gardens. Organised and sponsored by The Live Project, Heritage Iveragh, and OPW.	<i>This was a very popular event and overall successful. It was the first event to sell out and attendees gave mostly positive feedback. One survey comment was that in a crowd it can be difficult to hear the event leaders so this must be considered in future –amplification?</i>
7	Sunrise Yoga – Ballinskelligs - Led by Shannah Gordon from Time for You Yoga. Great interest and promising bookings. Organised and sponsored by The LIVE Project.	<i>While booking numbers were fine, turnout was low perhaps because the morning was very cold. The attendees who did show did however thoroughly enjoy it.</i>
8	Community Beach Clean – Ballinskelligs – Led and organised by the Ballinskelligs Environmental Action Group (BEAG).	<i>BEAG reported a higher than usual turn out for their regular beach clean and were very happy to be included in the festival programme.</i>
9	Puppet Workshop – Ballinskelligs - Led by Seán O’Laoghaire and held at Café Cois Trá, this was an interactive workshop run as Gaeilge to learn how to create shadow puppets based on aspects of the night sky.	<i>Very well attended and successful event. Higher turnout than bookings, but Sean managed admirably.</i>

10	Astronomy Talk, Ballinskelligs: Led by Caoimhin de Bhaillis of Blackrock Observatory, this afternoon talk as Gaeilge took place in Halla Pobail Dungeagan. These events were organised Brí Uíbh Ráthaigh and sponsored by Udarás na Gaeltachta.	<i>While online booking for this event was low, there was a good turnout locally who heard about the event word-of-mouth.</i>
11	Beginners guide to Astrophotography, Cahersiveen: Lead by Michael Sheehan and Aoiheann Lambe, this introduction to photographing the night sky was located in the Skellig Six 18 Distillery, Cahersiveen. Organised and sponsored by the LIVE Project.	<i>There was great interest in this event, and it booked out fast. However, the attendee list fluctuated with cancellations and a moving waitlist. In the end it had a high number of no-shows. This could have been due to the spectacular weather on the day. However, it was a very engaging session and there was great interest from the attendees and there were requests and suggestions for future workshops.</i>
12	Boat Tours with Kerry Aquaterra, Valentia: Organised by Kerry Aquaterra, who ran their boat tours around Valentia Harbour outside of normal booking season.	<i>Attendance was very good, and Kerry Aquaterra were very happy to be included in the programme.</i>
13	Nocturnal Wildlife Guide, Valentia: Led by zoologist and LIVE Team member Linda Lyne who talked about nocturnal wildlife and adaptations to live in in the dark, particularly bats, which showed up on cue, with an introduction by John O’Sullivan on the history of Ballyhearny House. Organised and sponsored by the LIVE Project and John and Ina O’Sullivan.	<i>Huge interest from locals and visitors with a very high turnout. Managed excellently by John and Ina, with needs such as lighting, and parking thought of in advance. They also provided refreshments after the event, which encouraged people to chat and mingle longer.</i>
14	Astrophysics Talk, Valentia: Talk by Prof Paul Callanan, physicist with UCC in the Royal Hotel Valentia on Gravitational Waves and the hunt for the missing Black Holes. Organised and sponsored by the LIVE Project, Kerry County Council and UCC	<i>Initial bookings were slow but grew closer to the date. Huge interest with local and visitors with a very high turnout, engaging event with great feedback.</i>
15	Astronomy and Stargazing Ballinskelligs - Led by Steve Lynott of Kerry Dark Sky Tourism and John Flannery Irish Astronomical Society, an evening of stargazing and astronomy in Ballinskelligs Beach carpark. Organised by Steve Lynott and sponsored by The LIVE Project.	<i>A hugely popular event, fully booked early on, with much larger numbers arriving than expected. Estimated 70-80 people. The numbers did cause some problems due to a lack of stewards at the start. This is because the previous event ran overtime. The arrival of new cars and car lights slightly dampened the experience for some at the start. Can be negated with better stewarding.</i>
16	Seashore Safari – Inny Strand - Led by Sea Synergy, a family fun event to explore the rock pools and animals that live there, learn cool facts, and find crabs, prawns, starfish and much more. Organised and sponsored by Sea Synergy	<i>This event was cancelled due to low bookings. Possibly clashed with other local family events, needed more advertising, perhaps as a package deal for families.</i>
17	Walk of the Planets – Caherdaniel - Led by local guide Traolach Sweeney, along a specially commissioned scaled representation of the solar system on the old Butter Walk from Caherdaniel to Coad. Organised and sponsored by the LIVE Project	<i>Fully booked in advance. This event was very well attended with a local audience exchanging their own knowledge and local names and lore.</i>

Figure 3: Breakdown of format and locations of events

Format:	Online: 1 In-person: 16
General areas	Caherdaniel and Derrynane Cahersiveen Ballinskelligs Valentia Waterville
Location/Venue	Indoor: 5 Outdoor: 12
Booking Options:	Zoom: 1 Eventbrite: 11 Event Leaders own booking system: 2 No booking required: 2 Not bookable (in classroom event organised directly with schools): 1
Total number of attendees:	Approx: 250 – Some of this number will have attended more than one event, meaning that the numbers of actual people who enjoyed the event may be lower.
Events most popular	Stargazing and Astronomy Nighttime wildlife Events Outdoor events Family friendly events

Table 2: Breakdown of each event with exact numbers and booking notes

Date	Event	Organiser/Leader	Booking Format	Registrants	Attended	Location	Comments
3rd	Dark Sky Online Talk	LIVE, Steve Lynott, John Flannery	Zoom	268	47		This event has been running for 10 months, so the registrants have built up over time. Over 250 people are registered, but the recordings have had a viewership of 1,040 in total as of March 22.
4th	Astronomy in the Classroom	Victor Bayda, Caoimhin de Bhaillis	Pre-organised	N/A	N/A	Local Schools	Very enjoyable event, schools happy.
	Astroarchaeology Walk	LIVE, Aoibheann Lambe	Eventbrite	11/15		Doory	Lots of interest. Booked up quickly, then had 4 Eventbrite cancellations at the last minute. Few showed not registered, larger number attended than booked.
	Rock Art by Night	LIVE, Aoibheann Lambe	Eventbrite	16/21	21	Caherdaniel	Lots of interest, larger number attended than booked.
	Pop-Up Gaeltacht	Aedin Ní Bhríain Fertha Bar	No booking	N/A		Cahersiveen	Coincided with Seachtain na Gaeilge, so included it in the programme.
	Astronomy and Stargazing	LIVE, OPW Aoibheann Lambe Michael Sheehan	Eventbrite	24/26	30-40	Derrynane House	Lots of interest. Booked up immediately, then had 2 Eventbrite cancellations at the last minute, but larger number attended than booked.
5th	Community Beach Clean	LIVE BEAG	No booking	N/A	-	Ballinskelligs Beach	Very happy to be part of the festival – noted a larger than usual turn out for their beach clean
	Sunrise Yoga	LIVE, Shannah Gordan	Eventbrite	9/20	5	Ballinskelligs Beach	High interest, decent bookings but low turnout.
	Puppet Making Workshop	LIVE, Café Cois Trá Seán O’Laoghaire	Eventbrite	9/12	20	Café Cois Trá Ballinskelligs	Venue great, Seán happy, but some confusion with attendees, some families turned up without realising they needed to book. Seán was able to accomodate by modifying the event however in future we must be clearer.
	Astronomy Talk as Gaeilge	Victor Bayda Caoimhin de Bhaillis	Eventbrite	3/25	25	Dungagean Hall	Very low bookings, but locals heard word of mouth but turned up at 2.30pm as was given the wrong time.
	Beginners guide Astrophotography	LIVE, June O’Connell Aoibheann Lambe Michael Sheehan	Eventbrite	14/15	7	Skellig Six 18 Distillery, Cahersiveen	Huge interest – booked out almost immediately, but had several cancellations, then rebooking, eventually had a waiting list. Only 7 people turned up for the event. However, it went very well.
	Boat Tours	LIVE, Aquaterra	Aquaterra	?	?	Valentia	Booked directly - Good turn out.
	Nocturnal Wildlife on Valentia	LIVE, Linda Lyne Michael O’Sullivan	Eventbrite	21/21	40+	Ballyhearney House	Huge interest – booked out almost immediately. Very successful event, fully booked with lots of extra walk-ins. Location very good.
	Astrophysics Talk	LIVE, John Griffin Paul O’Callanan	Eventbrite	21/35	40+	The Royal Valentia	Slow bookings, but very good turnout and went very well. Many went from this event to the stargazing in Ballinskelligs.
	Astronomy and Stargazing	LIVE, Steve Lynott, John Flannery	Eventbrite	36/36	70+	Ballinskelligs Beach	Huge interest – booked out almost immediately. Very successful event with double the turnout than expected. Not enough red light/torches or stewards to cover the numbers.
6th	Seashore Safari	LIVE, Sea Synergy	Sea Synergy	0/20	0	Inny Strand	Event leader managed booking - cancelled due to low bookings
	Walk of the Planets	LIVE, Traolach Sweeney	Eventbrite	15/15	17	Caherdaniel	Huge interest – booked out almost immediately. Very successful event, except lots of no-shows and walk-ins, so registrant list is not the same as attendee list.

Table 3 – Comments and thoughts from post event surveys:

Attendees Survey – 26 Responses

Positive	Negative
<p>'Positive festival'</p> <p>'Great to see things happening at this quieter time of the year traditionally'</p> <p>'Very positive'</p> <p>'Definite potential to grow this dimension. We have this resource, only to harness it further.'</p> <p>'Great for the area during off season'</p> <p>'More businesses need to promote it'</p> <p>'Guides were excellent and knowledgeable; we both really enjoyed the weekend'</p> <p>'Would definitely attend next year though!'</p> <p>'The talk as Gaeilge was welcome as it is a Gaeltacht area'</p> <p>'There was a very good range of activities over the weekend, indoor and outdoor, scientific and more practical'</p> <p>'Thanks to everybody involved in, what was, a super series of events.'</p> <p>'Overall, it was an amazing experience and one I will defo be looking out for next year'</p>	<p>'Really disappointed - The family day was really not good. The event in Derrynane was sold out before I knew to book it'.</p> <p>'Events with large crowds could have been better managed'.</p> <p>'There was no attempt to involve people in the events as far as I could see'</p>

Organiser and Event Leaders Survey – 9 Responses

Positive	Negative
<p>'Great collaborative initiatives between locals, showcasing a great mixture of expertise and community volunteerism'</p> <p>'High level of collaboration at all stages'</p> <p>'Very good'</p> <p>'Good'</p> <p>'Impressive and effective follow-through'</p> <p>'Well organised and well thought out'</p>	<p>'There was no clear idea who to target it to and there was a lot of mixed ideas'.</p> <p>'I didn't see many posts or photos of the events during the weekend on social by festival or participants'</p> <p>'I didn't know what hashtag to follow'.</p>

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