

FIRST LIGHT FESTIVAL: The UK's only beach front festival returns this June

Submitted by: J Houghton PR

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Lowestoft's renowned free cultural, community focused event, 'First Light Festival' returns to South Beach, Saturday 17th & Sunday 18th June 2023.

After a triumphant weekend in 2022, Lowestoft's free summer solstice celebration will return for 2023. Inspired by Lowestoft's location as the most Easterly part of the country and therefore the first to receive sunlight, the festival programme has been curated to celebrate the cycles of the sun with events taking place throughout the weekend from sunrise to sundown.

Championing Lowestoft as a growing creative hub by showcasing and supporting new talent within the local community, alongside a full programme of events and activations to engage and excite – First Light Festival is the UK's only free beach festival.

2023 CONFIRMED LINE-UP & FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

MUSIC - Big names include:

DJ Paulette - 2022's Winner of the DJ Mag Top 100 Lifetime Achievement Award

DJ Luke Una - Cult club culture pioneer and one half of iconic duo, The Unabombers

Jembaa Groove - 2023 SXSW-approved, Berlin-based 7-piece band

Eliza Carthy - Folk legend (presented by FolkEast).

First Light also features a strong showcase of local and emerging talent, and a diverse line up of East Anglia's foremost DJs.

FIRST WORD - Comedy, spoken word and performances curated by acclaimed poet Luke Wright. Highlights include:

Linton Kwesi Johnson - World renowned reggae poet and recording artist

Josie Long - Multi-award winning comedian and television panel show regular

Joelle Taylor - 2022 TS Elliot-prize winning poet

Caleb Femi - Former Young People's Laureate, director (BBC, Channel 4, Bottega Veneta and Louis Vuitton) and poet

Harry Baker - World Poetry Slam Champion

Jasmine Gardosi - Birmingham Poet Laureate and winner of the Out-Spoken Prize for Poetry

Robin Ince will headline a special evening event at The Seagull Theatre

UNIQUE DAWN EXPERIENCE - An extraordinary shoreside gathering featuring new collaborative commissions, music and free communal feast as the sun rises

SHINING A LIGHT ON FUTURE TALENT - Young and local musicians invited to play at the UK's only free beach festival through New Dawn and Playbreak open calls.

PLANET POSITIVE - Cross-sector collaboration with Natural History Museum, Cefas, University of East Anglia, and Suffolk Wildlife Trust promotes the latest in climate research through an accessible

programme of talks and activities.

CULTURAL PARTNERSHIPS - First Light Festival will showcase three newly-commissioned works involving many local primary and secondary schools, artists from across the region and a choir of over 100 debuting new works from acclaimed theatre company HighTide. Also for 2023, a partnership with Historic England & Emergency Exit Arts, 'Hi! Street Fest', sees Lowestoft selected to launch the project.

WELLBEING BY THE WAVES ZONE - A hugely popular, accessible programme of meditation, yoga, breathwork and movement that takes place on the shore.

TIDES, MOONS AND PLANETS - Festival marks anniversaries of 1953 and 2013 Lowestoft floods through imaginative programme of music, installation and large-scale community projects featuring Trinity Laban musicians, acclaimed sculptor Laurence Edwards and renowned climate photographer Gideon Mendel.

'COSMIC PIRATES' – Kids zone encompassing storytelling, art & interactive activities.

Focused on the belief that cultural events should remain available to all, especially with ongoing and extensive cuts to the arts in the UK and the current cost of living crisis; First Light aims to ensure creativity is showcased and actively supported. 2022 saw record attendance of over 35,000 festival-goers throughout the weekend.

PLACEMAKING – First Light is changing the narrative surrounding Lowestoft & celebrating its strengths; providing a fresh perspective of the town as a growing creative hub and a rich cultural tourist destination. First Light Festival will return to Lowestoft's South Beach as well events taking place at leading local landmarks, with an extended Sunday programme.

FESTIVAL TIMINGS - Opening 12pm noon to sundown (9.30pm) on Saturday and from 10am – 4pm on Sunday, with a dawn sunrise programme of arts from 3.30am on Sunday morning. Additional late-night events will take the celebration to a number of different Lowestoft venues (details and tickets announced soon).

"We're thrilled to announce our 2023 dates, along with exciting news on some of our upcoming projects. We hope that everyone in Lowestoft will have the chance to get involved with this year's First Light, whether that is contributing to our parade, playing on a stage or soaking up the festival atmosphere and all it has to offer."

Genevieve Christie, CEO of First Light Festival CIC

NOTES TO EDITORS

ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMMING & RESPONSIBILITY - First Light have partnered with national and cultural organisations such as the Natural History Museum & CEFAS to create a programme that focuses on environmental knowledge sharing and hands-on interactions with the latest scientific research. Committed to minimising the event's environmental impact, 2023 will see further positive developments taking place and building on the success of 2022 sustainability successes through First Light's 'Planet Positive' zone.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION - First Light actively encourages community engagement, through locally-focused musician call-outs, a large-scale community opening parade project, artists showcases, schools involvement in creative activities and multiple on-site activities.

WILD BEACH CAMPING – The ONLY festival that offers experiential ‘on the beach’ camping right alongside the festival. Camping tickets are now available, with Campervan Tickets available now: www.firstlightlowestoft.com/camping

ACCESSIBILITY – In contrast to many festivals, First Light encourages sustainable transport links with its beachfront and central town location, ensuring ease of travel for festival-goers with direct train & bus routes.

Environmental responsibility

First Light Festival 2023 will see further positive developments taking place and building on the success of 2022 sustainability successes including:

‘Planet Positive’ zone in partnership with the Natural History museum offering interactive displays and talks around positive action on climate change

Multiple festival events being powered by solar energy

Increased requirements for traders to use sustainably-sourced produce and packaging

Reuse, redesign and repurposing festival installations and signage for 2023 production

Majority of performers are locally based to minimise transportation requirements & increased local transport options and discounted camping tickets for those not travelling by car

ENDS

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