

The Hitchhikers guide to nofitstate

This is basic information for new people and an update on company development for existing company members. Some areas (the schedule for example) are subject to change, and in some areas, (Transport Policy for example) we welcome your feedback.

When we issue contracts you will receive a full information pack. This will include:

- Your contact
- Terms and Conditions
- All company policies
- Schedules
- Full company structure with job descriptions

Until the full tour management team are in place please feed back your questions and responses to Tom or Ali.

Company history.

In November Nofit State Circus celebrated its 20th Birthday. We are Wales' only professional circus company and have developed an international reputation for the work that we do. Over the last 20 years the company has grown from the 5 original members to a large scale touring company that employs about 70 people a year.

As well as the Immortal tour, the company also runs an extremely busy programme of weekly workshops and Master classes for both community participants and professional circus performers in the AnneXe in Cardiff, and runs workshops and classes and small performance projects throughout Wales.

During 2007 we will also begin creative development for a range of new performance projects. The company is growing extremely fast and over the next few years we want to focus on the creative development of the company, developing and growing the company of performers with whom we work, and developing and expanding the range of productions and projects we create and stage.

On-going Tour Development.

Over the winter we are developing a **Tour Bible**. This will include all policies and systems for creating a effective and efficient tour.

Turnaround. The turnaround has been looked at in two focus days. Many people were invited to input into this on paper and Tom, Tim, Marco, Howi, Helen, Shaena, Chevie, Sam and Barnz have discussed it at length. Sam took lots of notes and we (led by Tim and Marco) will now to produce a detailed plan. This process of detailed planning should provide a much more streamlined and efficient operation that will be less energy demanding and easier and better for everyone. Better drive time allocation and exit strategy from the rehearsal site issues have been addressed.

A similar process has been started with different combinations of people on other areas:

The kitchen

The front of house operation

Company welfare

The technical resources

Site life

Who's who

in the office

Tom Rack Tour Producer

Responsibilities: Tour Booking, budget management, developing company structures and overall responsibility for Immortal tour

Ali Williams Co producer

Responsibilities: Acting company manager for Immortal until Louise is fully in place, collaborating with Firenza to support creative development, rehearsals and casting and cast development. Ali is only working part time with nofitstate and does have other important areas of responsibility within the company. These include: creative development of new projects, managing the AnneXe, running the Agency

Alison Woods General Manager

Responsibilities: Contracts, financial management, visas, other legal matters. Other areas of company responsibility: fundraising; business development; company and policy development

Sam Minas Administrator

Responsibilities: liaison between office and Tour Management

This year we will have an experienced team managing the tour.

Tom - Producer and Tour manager

Tim - Operations manager

Louise - Company manager

Tim and Louise are not yet working full-time and therefore at the moment your first point of contact should Tom or Ali.

The relationship between Tom, Tim and Louise and the division of responsibilities are still being developed. The full company management structure with Job Descriptions will be included within the pack you get at the beginning of rehearsals.

The on tour company structure is still in development. A key aim for this year is to have very clear allocations of responsibilities and authorities in all areas. For example,

on tent days Tim, Barnz and Howie will work as a Borg linked walkie talkies, Tim and Shaena will take responsibility for site layout and arrival and departures. For some of the performers one of these days will be a day off which will allow them to train on what will be the tent crew's day off.

For load in and load out the whole company will be involved. Marco will be floor manager. He will coordinate with both trailer crew chiefs the rigging and LX teams to make the operation painless and efficient.

Provisional Tour Schedule

Rehearsal site probably Barry. During rehearsals we work a 6-day week

Tent up and maintenance	week beginning 16 th April
Rehearsals	week beginning 23 rd April
Tech rehearsal	8 th ~11 th May
Running in the show	12 th ~14 th May
Dress	15 th May
Preview	16 th May
Public shows	17 th ~19 th May
Strike and move	21 st ~23 rd May

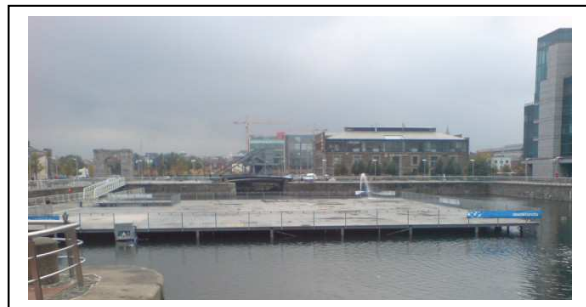
Dublin

Dublin is a split site with the tent and village being on separate locations.

The tent site is on water which is fantastic but will prove to be a slow and tricky build. 3 days have been scheduled for the get in.

In Dublin we will do 6 shows, 3 Cabarets and have one day off per week

24 th ~26 th May	Build
28 th May	Cabaret rehearsals
29~30 May	Show rehearsals
31 st May	Opening night
24 June	Last show
Strike and move	26~28th



Taunton

Taunton is still under discussion and is very provisional. This is what we are planning but it's still in the hands of the gods.

29~30 th June	Build and load in
1 st July ~5 th July	Training and Roundhouse preparation
6~8 th July	Performances
9~11 th July	Training and Roundhouse preparation
12~15 th	Performances
15 th ~17 July	Strike and move

The Roundhouse.

Again this is still a draft schedule and is subject to change and again is a split site

17 th July	our get in starts around their seating strike - probably our rigging team only
18 th July	Rigging, lx and set fit up
19 th July	Training and finish fit up
20~21 July	Rehearsals
22 nd July	Day off (performers) Lighting day
23 rd July	Dress
24 th July	Opening Night
5 th Aug	Last night

Policy on Policies

Why have a policy and what does it mean

1. An established policy is a set of rules, which inform decisions and actions. A policy will therefore include the aims, the rules, the basis on which compliance will be judged, the penalties of non-compliance
2. All established policies will be clearly and explicitly communicated to the entire company, all staff and Trustees, and possibly others where and when necessary. We will never assume common knowledge.
3. An established policy cannot be ignored or set aside by anyone whatever the circumstances.
4. If it becomes clear that a specific policy is a mistake, unworkable, having unintended consequences, etc, it cannot be ignored on an ad hoc basis. Rather we must formally change the policy and then clearly communicate to the entire company why and how the policy has changed and what the new policy includes.

How policies are created.

1. The Board may create a policy or demand of the management that a policy is created in a specific area. In such cases the Board need to sign off the policy – cf the Drink and Drugs Policy.
2. The management may decide to create a policy in a specific area apart from any board request.
3. The development of a policy may involve any combination of Trustees, management, company members, external experts.
4. A policy developed by the management will be agreed and signed off by the 3 senior managers before it is presented to anyone else. If the 3 senior managers cannot come to unanimous agreement then decisions will be based on the majority view. The dissenting individual must sign up to the policy, comply with it and maintain it in front of others as positively as the supporting majority. If the dissenting individual feels so strongly that they are unable to sign up they must refer up to and ask for Board ratification.

Policy on Transport.

As part of our developing environmental policy we want to minimise the environmental impact of touring. This is an ongoing process and hopefully we will become progressively better year on year. We are looking into solar power, bio-diesel, reducing use of fuel etc.

As a first step we want to encourage everyone to be as fuel efficient as possible and will therefore change the way we cover travel costs. Last year some people spent twice as much money on fuel as other people. This is both very expensive for us and environmentally damaging.

Based on last year we will calculate a generous average fuel cost for each journey.

Each company member will be given 50% of the fuel cost of each journey. By travelling in twos and towing each other you will therefore cover your costs and, if you have efficient vehicles, should have a little bit of money left over as a reward. If you have very inefficient vehicles or if you chose to travel on your own you will have to cover any additional cost. If you want to be very efficient and travel in bigger groups you will be rewarded by saving even more of your money.

Kitchen etiquette.

The kitchen provide one free meal a day and two during rehearsals and major turnaround days. Tea and coffee are provided for a small weekly contribution. The kitchen is the social hub for the company. It is also a working space for the kitchen staff and may be used for meetings. The kitchen and kitchen staff must be respected by everyone.

The kitchen staff are working in very difficult conditions and to very tight budgets. They will always cater for an individual's dietary needs – religious, ethical, or medical – but cannot be expected to cater for individual food preferences.

- The entire company has a responsibility for keeping the kitchen clean and tidy and returning immediately any cutlery etc that is borrowed.
- Everyone has a responsibility to arrive on time for meals and to wash up their own plates and cutlery.
- All company meals are social occasions and all company members are expected to eat in the kitchen tent.
- If you will not be present for a meal you must inform the kitchen staff in advance.
- The kitchen bins are not general rubbish bins for the entire company.
- The kitchen sinks are not general washing facilities for the entire company.
- No-one is allowed to disconnect kitchen equipment etc for any purpose unless asked to do so by kitchen staff.
- On show days performers and people working on the show need to eat first.

The kitchen is employed to provide for employees, volunteers, and any dependents who are permanently on tour. The kitchen is not required to provide meals for any visitors. In

certain circumstances the kitchen may agree to provide meals for visitors if they can do so without damaging the quality of service they provide to the company. It is entirely up to the discretion of the kitchen staff whether they can provide this service and how much they will charge for a meal. They cannot provide extra meals without at least 24 hours notice.

Site etiquette.

The site is both a living and a working space. The over-riding principle of site etiquette is to recognise that your individual actions and behaviour will have real impact on other people and not to do things which will cause problems for other people.

The following are specific rules and are under review and development.

- Site duties. Whilst we will attempt to reduce the additional work load on company members, individuals will be scheduled for other duties at various times. These duties may include: helping in the kitchen; FOH clean up; child care; teaching training sessions or workshops; general site care and maintenance.
- Everyone has specific responsibility for ensuring that they keep the area around their own vehicle clean and tidy.
- Everyone has collective responsibility for keeping the whole site clean and tidy.
- No one may connect / unconnect cables, water pipes etc unless they have permission or specifically been asked to do so.
- Everyone must separate rubbish out for recycling and place all rubbish in the rubbish bins. Everyone should empty rubbish bins and put rubbish in skips when necessary
- After the show has finished noise levels must be kept low. In particular, it is important to realise that other people may not have the same work schedules as you. You may have a late start or a day off and therefore chose to have a late night. Other people may need to start early when you do not need to, therefore they might chose to have an early night. Everybody needs to respect other people's needs as regards late night noise levels and activity on site.
- Everyone has collective responsibility for security on site. This includes keeping gates shut and locked and reporting any problems. You should report concerns about people's behaviour to Louise. You should report concerns about the structural security of the site to Tim.

Guests

- This includes taking personal responsibility for anyone you invite onto the site and the behaviour of your guests. If you invite a guest onto the site you must introduce them to Louise as Company Manager as soon as they arrive. No guests are allowed to live on site without prior permission from Louise. Although we want to accommodate friends and family, on some sites there may not be room for extra trucks etc. We almost certainly can't provide food and power etc for guests.
- Louise will have a prepared briefing for all visitors to make sure that everyone understands the rules of living on site and the rules surrounding a performance. Guests will be expected to comply with these rules.

- In most cities we are not running the box office. The promoter has paid very high fees for the show and needs to take box office income to earn money. We cannot therefore invite friends onto site and allow them into the performance for free. Please do not try it as it is very disrespectful to the promoter and will damage our reputation. The only people allowed into the performance for free are company employees, volunteers, and company guests (journalists, promoters, and funders etc).
- Complimentary tickets may be available at the last minute - you will need to check with Louise.

Personal responsibilities

As a Company we are doing our best to be better prepared for the tour that ever before. We expect company members to do the same. It is each company members responsibility to ensure they arrive at rehearsals ready and prepared.

Fitness and conditioning

Everyone needs to arrive to rehearsals with show level fitness and with routines up and running ready to be developed.

Transport and accommodation

Your accommodation is essentially your own problem to sort out. We will help where possible with the coordination of tows and for people who have not toured before do everything we can to make their first time painless and simple. If there becomes a real issue over accommodation or a shortage of tows or drivers we will consider the idea of a company bunk wagon.

The rehearsal period is not the time for vehicle maintenance and trying to get an MOT. This is your responsibility to sort out before we start. All vehicles must be tour ready and legal at the start of rehearsals. The same applies to caravans We expect all caravans to be road worthy with spare tyres, working lights and jockey wheels before the rehearsals starts.

In line with our emerging environmental policy we plan to reduce the number of hours we run a generator on site. Whilst we will provide power, individuals personal a 12V system. Unless there is a particular reason, late night power generators will be turned off at midnight and go on at 8 am.

Personal Protective Equipment

This is individuals' responsibility. We suggest you bring: strong gloves; steel toe cap boots / shoes (or similar), waterproofs, high visibility jacket, harness if appropriate. We will provide hard hats as necessary.

Company meetings and communication

It is everyone's responsibility to attend company meetings and regularly check the notice board for changes in the schedule etc. Louise as Company Manager is on tour to support

you and help solve any problems you may have. Personal problems and concerns must be brought to her.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

The drugs and alcohol policy introduced last year had a significant impact on company wellbeing and behaviour and is generally considered to have been a success. In case you have forgotten it is attached here.

Background

The abuse of alcohol and drugs on tour was brought up repeatedly in the company evaluation during the 2005 tour. The Board of Trustees decided that in response to the evaluation that a policy need to be written regarding this, and in consultation with the company. It was noted that the nature of the touring work means the company have to live and work on the road and it is therefore sometimes difficult to define work times and relaxation hours especially as the performances nearly always happen in the evening. In putting together this draft policy advice was sought from The Generating Company, and Gerry Cottle.

Everyone is employed to perform specific duties and must not allow drinking and recreational drug use to interfere with their ability to perform these duties.

This policy will be attached to contracts and we hope that any company member who feels that they cannot adhere to this policy will not take up their offer of employment.

Louise as Company Manager has primary responsible for upholding the policy.

Drinking or recreational drug use

Due to the nature of the work, the fact that the performance takes place over the public and rigging occurs during the performance there will be no drinking or drug use before a performance throughout the day of performance. This includes drinking so much on the night before a show that the effects of alcohol are apparent at showtime the next day. This policy applies to technical staff and crew as well as performers. At show time the whole company has a job to do and is under scrutiny of the public. It is important that we all do our jobs in a safe and sober manner. A breach in this rule may result in instant dismissal.

Once the show has finished and all post show tasks have been completed the company can be considered to be on free time.

Please note if someone reports for work and in the opinion of the relevant supervisor is unfit for work due the after affects from a heavy session the previous night this will also be considered as a disciplinary offence and could lead to dismissal.

If it is considered this is a borderline call the offender may be taken out of that day's performance, lose a day's pay and the standard disciplinary procedure be implemented.

If individual is “clinically clean” i.e. the drugs or alcohol are no longer in their system, but are or appear to be in a physical or emotional state as a result of alcohol and/or drug abuse which will or could impact on the quality of the performance or the safety of themselves, others, or members of the public then the same rules will apply.

The senior management team will enforce the disciplinary procedure in relation to anyone who is considered unfit to carry out their duties during work hours where safety is an issue. In extreme cases this may mean testing individuals for alcohol and drugs.

Drinking or recreational drug use on build or strike days

The same rules apply to build or strike days, including breaks, until such a time that the designated supervisor declares that it safe to have a drink.

A less rigid approach will be taken to reporting for work with a “hangover” providing the individual is sober and capable of working safely and at full capacity

Class A and B Substances

Will not be tolerated on. Apart from the legal implications and the effect class A and class B substances have on peoples moods, this year the company has to cross borders and we cannot afford to have members of the cast and crew being detained for transporting illegal substances and bringing the name of NoFit State under disrepute.

Prescription drugs

If a company member takes prescription drugs they must be declared on the medical form.

Days Off

The management does not have any say as what individuals do on there days off but if they return to work in a state which as a result of alcohol or drug abuse prevents them from fulfilling their duties they will be disciplined in line with the above policy. The company must also be aware that disorderly behaviour on site that affects or disturbs other company members or the public will not be tolerated.

Enforcement

This policy has/will be drawn up in consultation with the company. It is every company member’s responsibility to ensure that it is enforced. If any individual has concerns that individuals are not adhering to the above policy, they should feel able to report it to the Company Manager. This policy has not been drawn up to encourage a secret drinking culture but is about encouraging a happy, healthy and safe company in which respect for each other and oneself is paramount.