



**Basingstoke
and Deane**

News release

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Get ready for another weekend of fantastic Festival fever

Basingstoke Festival is set to deliver more feelgood summer vibes throughout its second weekend with top entertainment for free on Saturday 3 and Sunday 4 July.

The popular annual festival of creative arts has returned bigger and better after COVID-19 forced it to be cancelled last year.

Its exciting programme 'Discover Art in Unusual Places in Unusual Times' features open air theatrical productions, music and dance performances, creative workshops and much more for all ages, running until Sunday 11 July.

Health and safety measures will be in place to protect the public at all events by organisers Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council and visitors are advised that some events will have a restricted capacity, admitting the audience on a first come first served basis. All events are listed on the festival website - www.basingstokefestival.co.uk

A sea giant will be stalking through the Top of the Town when performers from Autin Dance Theatre presents Out of the Deep Blue on both Saturday and Sunday. The giant puppet will feature in the magical story of Eko the sea giant who rises from the ocean and meets a little girl on the seashore. A contemporary performance set to a mesmerising musical soundscape, with five puppeteers and a female dancer, and inspired by the themes of the climate emergency and the biodiversity crisis.

There are two performances each day, at 11am and 2pm, starting at London Street's Triumphal Gates, from where the audience can walk with Eko to the performance space.

Basingstoke Festival will be one of the first places in the country to present the environmental show CastAway. Supported with funding from the borough council, the Highly Sprung production outdoor spectacle challenges our 'throwaway society'.

CastAway is a response to the excessive production and use of disposables and the devastating effect they have on our waterways. An all-female cast unravels the difficulties to find ways to change and promote understanding. Performances will be on both days, at 12.30pm and 3.30pm, at Eastrop Park, by the bandstand.

Playful acrobatics and a mysterious box of tricks feature in Box, a humorous and uplifting tale about sibling connection, competition and compassion, performed on Saturday at 12noon and 3.30pm, in London Street.

Come along to visit Scratchbuilt's Magical Market Stall on Saturday at 10am, 11.30am, 12.30pm and 2.30pm in Basingstoke's Market Place. Find your heart's desire – and there's no money required. Family favourites Scratchbuilt Productions' puppets will be more than happy to provide you with exactly what you need.

Meet by the bridge in Glebe Gardens at 11am and 1pm on Saturday to enjoy a new outdoor work - This Place, commissioned by Basingstoke Festival and Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. A collaboration between Fluid Motion Theatre Company and Zoie Logic Dance Theatre, with the support of local youth dance group Dance Phaze, the production uses local people's stories to reflect where we have come from and where we might be going.

Get ready for uplifting performances on Saturday and Sunday at 1pm and 3.30pm, at Cross Street, by the Blue Coat Boy. Lifted is breathtaking and highly-skilled acrobatic theatre, movement and circus skills which show connections and promote a positive image of women. Performed by Mimbire, the show creates unexpected moments in unusual spaces.

Roll up, roll up for a magical circus experience at My House in Eastrop Park. Performed on both days, at 11am and 1.30pm, the audience is invited to look through the doors and windows as two strange looking figures try to find a way to exist together in their quirky looking house.

Apocalyptic Circus brings comedy and thrills for children and their families to prove it is possible to understand each other even though we are very different. My House is supported by Without Walls, and commissioned by Just So Festival.

Join children's favourite artist Junk Jodie in Eastrop Park to make a Planet Earth necklace at a COVID-safe creative craft session on Sunday between 11am and 3pm.

Florence Nightingale will be shining a light on her Pop Up Pedestal on Sunday, at 12noon, 1.30pm and 3pm, near the Eastrop Park fountains. Statistician Florence will ask the questions: Who deserves a place on the pedestal in 2021? How should history be presented in our towns and streets, on our plaques and memorials? What progress has taken place during the 19th & 20th centuries?

Take part in solving The Riddle, starting in War Memorial Park. An outdoor experience for anybody aged over 12 using their smartphone or tablet to enjoy at their own pace, just for fun, throughout the festival.

Art lovers can view the work of students from QMC Creative Arts' Saturday Club at The Malls, next to Boots, during the whole festival. Young people have taken part in creative workshops, including still life, fine art, photography, branding and upcycling. See what the Year 8 and 9 students from schools across the borough have created in lockdown.

Also running during the entire festival is New Mythologies of Basing Stoeche – an audio adventure taking place at various town centre locations. Download the adventure map on your mobile to hear 15 stories based on the past, present and future of Basingstoke.

Cabinet Member for Communities, Planning and Infrastructure Cllr Simon Bound said: "The fabulous Basingstoke Festival is set to reach fever pitch this second weekend with such a diverse and interesting programme for people of all ages to enjoy.

"Whether you want to walk with a sea giant at the Top of the Town, debate with Florence Nightingale on her pedestal or visit a Magical Market Stall, you're sure to have a great day out for free.

"Just to reassure festival visitors, our outdoor performances and workshops will be COVID safe, with social distancing measures in place, so you can be confident when you join in the summer festival fun."

For more information about the activities on offer during Basingstoke Festival, please visit www.basingstokefestival.co.uk
Follow Basingstoke Festival on social media for the latest updates on Facebook: [@basingstokefestival](https://www.facebook.com/basingstokefestival); Twitter: [@bstokefestival](https://twitter.com/bstokefestival) and Instagram: [@bstokefestival](https://www.instagram.com/bstokefestival)

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