

# PASSION TRUST

## PASSION PLAYS

### A GUIDE TO GETTING STARTED



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## WHY PERFORM A PASSION PLAY?

		Impact
1	<b>Community</b>	Public performances for local communities bring immeasurable benefits for local communities.
2	<b>Unity</b>	Churches of all denominations come together in unity around the centrality of the Easter story. It's all about Jesus and the real meaning of Easter.
3	<b>Education</b>	People who have never heard the Easter story are caught up in an experience of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

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## COMMUNITY: Poole Passion Play 2014

Passion Plays build community among the people who are involved in the performance and also in the local communities where the performances take place. The experience of staging a successful public event gives a voice, and the sense of being heard, to those who might otherwise feel unheard and unseen within the community. People who are seen to be underprivileged and marginalised, whether unemployed, homeless, at-risk youth or ex-offenders, can find a place to contribute here.



“This table has an amazing story: built by people from the charity Action on Addiction who supported the Poole Passion Play. It is a symbol of whole-community involvement and the valuable contributions of people in the process of overcoming addiction.”

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## UNITY: Brighton's Soul by the Sea Passion Play 2011

Passion Plays draw churches of different denominations together to focus on the centrality of the Gospel and of Jesus Christ. They remind us of our common faith and they draw people together to celebrate the unity of the Gospel message.

As arts projects that involve whole communities, they are able to build relationships between different groups and generate local ownership to make each passion play self-sustaining and in touch with local needs. Local councils, youth groups, churches and arts organisations have been very supportive of the community-building work that is part of putting on a Passion Play.



‘It is good to see the Christian witness on the streets of Brighton. I hope many church goers can support the initiative & make their presence felt in the broader community. This is a great opportunity let’s not miss it.’

Bishop Conry – Bishop of Arundel and Brighton

‘This event is a wonderful opportunity to witness the Easter story live in our home city. The suffering and triumph portrayed in the Passion Play speaks to everyone, regardless of culture or belief. The work of these dedicated actors and volunteers is both moving and inspiring. I would encourage everyone to come and partake in this amazing spectacle.’

Mike Weatherly, MP

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## EDUCATION: Edinburgh Passion Play 2014

Passion Plays are a great way to bring the story of the Gospel out to the streets. For those people who would never go to a church, this is an opportunity for the church to be taken outside to them. The experience of the gospel story through drama is compelling and the Bible becomes more than a book read in church – it is embodied out on the street.



### Aims of the Edinburgh Passion Play:

Produce a play that commemorates Easter from a Christian perspective.

Provide a Community play that is easily accessible and free of charge to citizens of Edinburgh, whatever their belief or none.

Assist church unity by creating a forum for Christians from all denominations to join together in the production and participation of the event.

“The early church in medieval times realised that using the arts was a very effective way to communicate Christianity to an illiterate society. In the 21st century producing plays is a great way of introducing people to Jesus. We believe the performance will help you experience Jesus in a very welcoming and relevant production.

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## GETTING STARTED

	What to do	Impact	More Details...	✓
1	Gather key people	****	Form a committee of people who are passionate and committed. Assign roles for everyone. EG: Someone with Finance skills can be the Treasurer. Someone with Practical skills can oversee the building of the set and co-ordination of the area in which you will be performing. Movers and Shakers who know other influential people can help in the fundraising area.	
2	Plan a budget	***	Remember to include the following in your budget: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wages and Fees (Director, 2 actors, Stage Manager)</li><li>• Costumes</li><li>• Set and Props</li><li>• Grounds and Car park (if private)</li><li>• Website</li><li>• Sound</li><li>• Generators, if required</li><li>• Printing, postage and stationery</li><li>• PR, Advertising and Photography</li></ul>	
3	Secure your performance location	***	Choose your location and try to use natural surroundings for your set! If structures are needed to be built, and will have actors using them, then you should have safety certificates (easy enough to have a builder do that).	

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4	Make a fundraising plan	***	Fundraising for your Passion Play is one of the hardest and most important aspects of getting started. As well as contacting local churches and church funds, some Councils have Seed Funding to help with start-up costs. For more creative ideas about fundraising, look at the Passion Trust's online resources.	
5	Find Jesus	*****	Passion Plays need only one professional actor and that is obviously the person playing Jesus. Another professional actor may be needed for Mary or Judas. The majority of your cast will be drawn from your local community – think of contacting your local church, amateur dramatic groups or advertising in local newspapers!	
6	Read the manual	***	Get hold of the Passion Play manual and read 46 pages of more detailed advice! <a href="http://www.passion-plays.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/how_to.pdf">http://www.passion-plays.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/how_to.pdf</a>	

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## KEY QUESTIONS

	Question	Answer	✓
1	How do I even start a Passion Play?	The Passion Trust is here to help you. Get in touch with us and look at the resources available online. You might like to start by reading the detailed Manual with 46 pages of helpful advice!	
2	How can I connect with other people putting on Passion Plays?	Connect via Facebook and join the discussion. Keep in touch via the Passion Trust newsletter. Come to the annual Passion Trust Conference - an excellent way of networking and learning from others.	
3	Where can I find a team?	Building a strong committee is an important way to start. The chair of your committee is someone who has the vision to see it through and the drive to push the project on and inspire others. It can be a long climb and you need strength, endurance, vision and faith to see it through! The rest of the committee will be made up of like-minded people with different skills. You might like to also connect with people from other churches or Amateur Dramatic societies. Read the Passion Trust Manual for more detail about forming a strong committee	
4	How can I find out what other Passion Plays have done?	The Passion Trust has a wealth of resources based on other successful Passion Plays. Be inspired by other passion plays at <a href="http://www.passiontrust.org">www.passiontrust.org</a>	
5	Where can I get money for my Passion Play?	You can raise funds from trusts that give grants or by running fundraising events. Visit the Passion Trust's fundraising pages for more detailed ideas.	

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## PROMOTING YOUR PLAY

	What to do	Impact	More Details...	✓
1	Publicise early!	*****	Contact and establish relationships with your local media (newspapers, magazines, tv and radio) and on-line bloggers, to encourage regular coverage – from the very first rehearsal or meeting until the production itself. You can also contact your local churches and ask them to put similar information in their parish newsletters. Set up a Facebook page, post articles and photos and Tweet to help engage a wider audience.	
2	Publicise creatively	****	As rehearsals progress, look for angles for stories that you can contact the press with – it might be about a cast member, an animal you're using, costumes – anything newsworthy or fun!	
3	Think laterally!	****	Ask cast members to promote your publicity materials through their businesses. If one is a doctor, for example, ask them to display a poster in their room or surgery, or if a dentist – it could go on the ceiling above the dental chair!	
4	Start small and keep going...	*****	Publicity can grow organically along with your production. Don't be put off by large budgets and advertising costs. God takes the seed that we plant and waters and nurtures it so that it bears.	

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5	Roadshows	*****	Take key scenes or an abridged version of your Passion Play on the road to schools or churches in your local area.	
6	Contact local journalists	***	Make it easy for local newspapers to run a story on your play. Build relationships and have images ready!	
7	Use social Media	***	Make your own Facebook page and Twitter feed with up to date information. Contact the Passion Trust for a page dedicated to your Passion Play on their website.	
8	Spread the word on the streets	*****	Use your costumes to spread the word through the streets. Hand out fliers or stage the 'feeding of the five thousand' with donated sandwiches or snacks in your local community. See <a href="http://www.biblesociety.org.uk/news/jesus-feeds-the-5000-on-brighton-beach/">http://www.biblesociety.org.uk/news/jesus-feeds-the-5000-on-brighton-beach/</a>	

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## VOLUNTEERS

	What to do	Impact	More Details...	✓
1	Plan for volunteers	*****	Define the roles and responsibilities that volunteers will take on. Be prepared to explain how and why volunteers will contribute to the overall aims and objectives of your Passion Play.	
2	Invite people to volunteer	***	What will volunteers get out of being part of your Passion Play? A supportive environment, training, learning new skills, using existing skills, a chance to get out in the fresh air, meet new people, be part of something worthwhile??	
3	Encourage mutual benefits	*****	Volunteers offer their time freely, but they should benefit in other ways, such as gaining a sense of achievement, having fun and learning new skills.	
4	Recognise all contributions	*****	Volunteers bring a variety of skills, experience and enthusiasm. Recognition of the value of the contribution of volunteers is fundamental.	