



## PRESS RELEASE

### ST. PATRICK ON TRACK FOR FESTIVAL 2015

#### - *The Patron Saint of Ireland Arrives in the Capital Ahead of our National Celebrations*

**12<sup>th</sup> March 2015:** St. Patrick made his eagerly anticipated arrival in Dublin this morning, rolling into St. Stephen's Green on the Luas Green Line. The patron saint took a breather to chat to two Festival Characters from pageant group Artastic about St. Patrick's Festival which officially begins on Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> March. This year's four-day programme is packed full of unmissable events, many of them free to attend, taking place throughout the city and will run for four days from March 14<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>.

Susan Kirby, St. Patrick's Festival CEO commented; "St. Patrick's arrival always brings a great sense of excitement ahead of the Festival and we are delighted he has once again arrived safely and on time, he is in great form and looking forward to the big day. We are very excited about delivering four days and nights of world class events culminating in the spectacular Parade on Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup>."

St. Patrick, very much looking forward to the festival celebrations said, "I'm absolutely delighted to be back in my favourite place, Dublin, at my favourite time of year. The line-up for this year's Festival looks fantastic and I'm looking forward to checking out a few of the events myself over the weekend. I've been keeping an eye on the weather for the big day on March 17<sup>th</sup> and have a good feeling that we'll be watching the spectacle in the sunshine."

For the first time ever in 2014, St. Patrick's Festival announced a three year theme and narrative for the Festival Parade of 'Past, Present and Future' adopting the commemorative era In Ireland's history as its inspiration. The 2014 Festival Parade themed 'Let's Make History' marked the first step on this exciting, creative journey. On March 17<sup>th</sup>, St. Patrick will join leading street theatre and pageant companies when they respond to the 2015 Parade theme 'Celebrate Now' drawing inspiration for their artistic creations from Ireland's present, embracing 'nowness' and savouring the moment. In 2016 the final installation of the thematic will see the parade look to Ireland's future and the festival will pose the question, 'who do we aspire to be in the next 100 years?'

Caitriona Faherty, Luas Marketing Department commented, "St. Patrick's Festival is always an exciting, energetic event that brings the whole city together and 2015 promises to be no different. Luas is delighted to be part of the Festival, bringing people into the city to enjoy the celebrations and then home again safely. We have 6 Park and Ride facilities so it's really easy to take Luas no matter where you're coming from."



St. Patrick's Festival will get underway on Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> March with the Festival Treasure Hunt and will be followed by other headline events over the four days including the Festival Céilí, Festival Big Day Out and Céilí House Live in Concert.

Another highlight of the St. Patrick's Festival 2015 programme is the Festival's cultural programme, *I Love My City*. Curated by St. Patrick's Festival, the series of evocative and intimate cultural events and happenings, featuring both established and emerging artists, from a variety of disciplines including literature, music, film, spoken-word, photography, design, visual art and more will be presented over the 4 days of the Festival, 14<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> March. The events are either FREE ticketed or PAID ticketed and those wishing to register or buy tickets for all events should visit [www.stpatricksfestival.ie](http://www.stpatricksfestival.ie)

St. Patrick's Festival will take place from 14<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> March. Please do link with the Festival; like our page on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/stpatricksfest), follow us on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/stpatricksfest) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/stpatricksfest) and use the hashtag #StPatricksFest. You can tweet the Festival @stpatricksfest.

## **ENDS**

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## **Notes for the Editor**

St. Patrick's Festival is funded by Fáilte Ireland and Dublin City Council.

The principal aim of St. Patrick's Festival, since its inauguration, is to develop a major annual international festival around the national holiday over which the Irish people would stand proud. It sets out to reflect the talents and achievements of Irish people on many national and world stages, and it acts as an exciting showcase for the manifold skills of the people of Ireland, of every age and social background.

As the one national holiday that is celebrated in more countries around the world than any other, St. Patrick's Day is the day when everyone wants to be Irish.

## **Why was it started?**

- To offer a national festival that ranks as one of the greatest celebrations in the world
- To create energy and excitement throughout Ireland via innovation, creativity and grassroots involvement, and marketing activity
- To provide the opportunity and motivation for people of Irish descent (and those who sometimes wish they were Irish) to attend and join in the imaginative and expressive celebrations



- To project, internationally, an accurate image of Ireland as a creative, professional and sophisticated country with wide appeal.

The first St Patrick's Festival was held over one day, and night, on March 17th 1996. The live audience for the day was estimated to be 430,000.

Preparation for the first St. Patrick's Festival used to take only 5 months, but with the growth of the Festival, it now takes 18 months to plan for Ireland's biggest annual celebration.

The 2013 St. Patrick's Festival added over €122 million to the economy in spending by tourists and Dubliners attending the programme of events.