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**Press Release  
For Immediate use**

**New cultural festival takes over former Thomas Cook shop to explore the Big Ideas that travel from across the world.**

Big Ideas by the Sea is a new cultural festival that will bring to Scarborough some of the best speakers from across the UK to talk about the big issues related to the environment, climate change, education and employment.

The brain child of artist Kane Cunningham and former City of York archaeologist John Oxley the focus will be on concerns facing local communities and people from across the globe.

Kane Cunningham said, 'We did plan the festival for May 2020, though like many events we had to postpone due to the pandemic, so are announcing now our intention to run the festival in May 2021.'

The festival will be an annual event with the intention of becoming the leading cultural festival in the North of England.

John Oxley said, "We are also planning a community archaeological dig in the Old Town of Scarborough. Our intention is to open 20 small trenches and to look for artefacts and objects which tell us more about the history of Scarborough. This 'Time-Team' style dig over the weekend will take the festival to communities that would not normally take part in such an event. And of course, we have Professor Carenza Lewis of Time Team taking part in the festival!"

The festival has already attracted to some top speakers to include mountaineer Alan Hinkes OBE, Professor Joann Fletcher, photographer Joe Cornish and adventurer and TV presenter Paul Rose.

Kane said, "We are delighted with the quality of speakers who are all keen to get involved and to travel to Scarborough. These are all experts in their field to include Paul Rose former Vice President of the Royal Geographical Society, Chair of the Expeditions and Fieldwork Division and currently Expedition Leader for the National Geographic Pristine Seas Expeditions."

Paul Rose said, "I am delighted to be involved in this new and innovative festival that focuses on the big ideas related to climate change and the environment. Scarborough has the opportunity to be part of the global effort to raise awareness of the issues and therefore attract attention via this important event nationally and internationally."

John Oxley said, "What better place than the former Thomas Cook shop to launch Big Ideas By The Sea? The shop is a perfect metaphor for ideas that travel and that have shaped the world we live in today. This is a timely reminder of how international links and travel have connected different cultures and exchanged ideas across the globe. Scarborough, with its wonderful heritage, its skills in science and engineering, and its creativity and intellectual curiosity is the perfect place to explore the Big Ideas of today and tomorrow."

The 2021 festival is funded by the Big Lottery Fund Awards for All and Yorkshire Coast BID.

**Photographs of speakers can be provided**

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