

Permaculture Convergence 2010

Recipe for a small event



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Venue: Lambourne End Outdoor Education Centre, Hainault near London

Duration: 3rd -5th September 2010 (1st - 7th from arrival to departure)

My role: “Quartermaster” or site coordinator

Client: Permaculture Association

BRIEF

My task, as defined in the initial conversation with Hannah Thorogood (event coordinator), was to

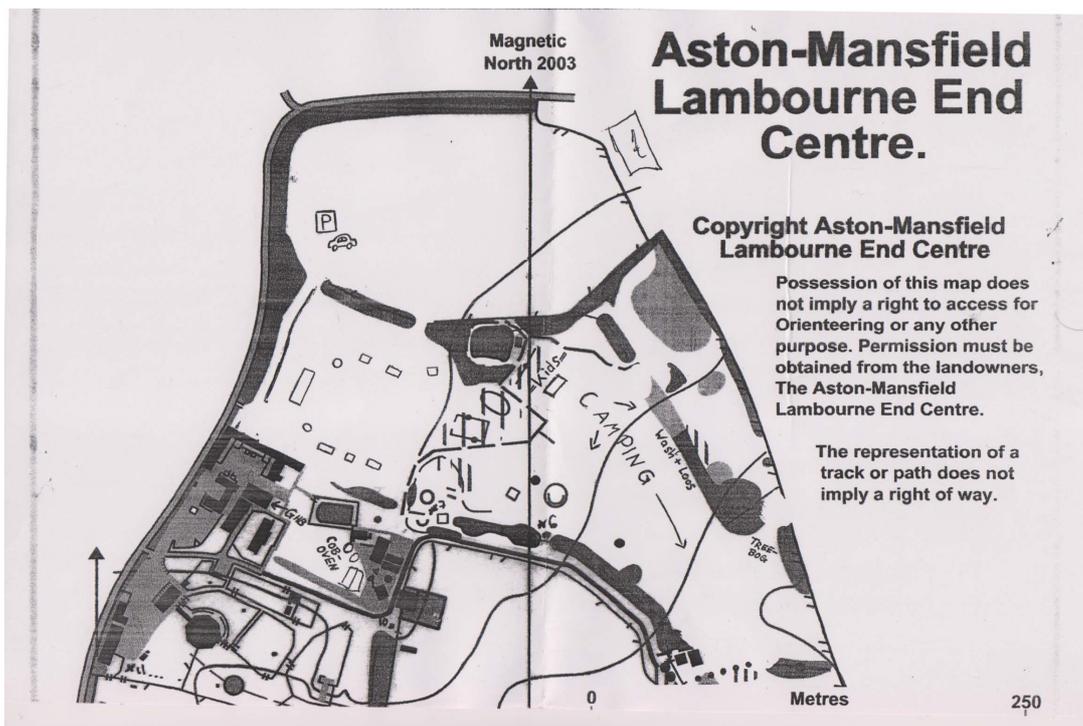
- source equipment
- decide the overall layout of the event and details for the events field and camping area
- get the equipment to site
- coordinate set-up, maintenance and taking down of infrastructure

SURVEY

This stage included:

- initial conversations with Hannah and Andy Goldring (PA coordinator) to clarify the brief – April 2010
- An initial site visit with Hannah and Jed Picksley (who became event crew coordinator) – May 2010 (See Appendices for notes)
- further conversations with Hannah, Jed, Tony Sharps (our Lambourne End contact)
- discussions with potential suppliers, crew members, drivers
- a final preparatory visit to the site and meeting with Tony in August

Base Map provided by Lambourne End
with location of events field sketched in



ASSESSMENT

Resource Needs

Lambourne End is an established venue with groups coming through almost daily and events for up to 1,000 people. Mains water, electricity and gas are on site, as are a number of indoor spaces, toilets and washing facilities and a small amount of dormitory accommodation. The main additional needs were:

- structures for plenaries and workshops
- structures for children's space
- outdoor toilets and washing facilities for the camping area
- power for some of the marquees

Crew Needs

Previous convergences relied on a large numbers of volunteers recruited by word of mouth and via the PA office. In contrast, we decided to have a small number of experienced crew members for the set-up and clearing up period, with a few additional people during the event. This was decided in order to save money and with the hope of more effective communication before and during the event.

Matching spaces and events

This year's convergence had 9 event streams (not including practicals) with varying resource needs. Streams requiring power were sited closest to the outdoor sockets of the Lambourne End buildings. Functions needing lockable space (reception, bookstall, bar) were grouped together within the building.

DESIGN

Site Layout

Compactness and accessibility were key considerations in the choice of site and overall layout. All events spaces were concentrated within/ around one small field, and camping facilities located within no more than a minutes walk.

Zoning – with the events area forming the core. Childcare was located close to but not within the core. Participants camping was below and away from the events area, with crew camping furthest away with separate facilities (giving the crew a hiding place away from demanding punters).

Event Field – all workshop structures were laid out in a horseshoe shape, with the largest marquee at the top. This design has proved successful at many previous events, such as Climate camps and other gatherings.

Registration, Bar, Bookstall – all grouped together in a lockable area near the events field and entrance.

Kitchen, Food serving & Eating space– separate from the events field, in the yard. The location of the kitchen was fixed and away from the main events space. While this was not ideal, we were lucky with the weather and it worked very well. The yard ended up being a great social space during mealtimes. It may have worked less well had the weekend been cold and wet.

Children's area – laid out in a circle between events and camping field, the area had its own structures and kitchen space.

Camping site, including washing and toilet facilities – below the children's space and events field. Feedback from previous convergences had been that people wanted flat space, which was not a problem on this site. As there was no nearby mains water connection, we decided to use an autonomous system for washing water. A 5 m³ bowser was located on site and placed uphill of the washing and toilet area.

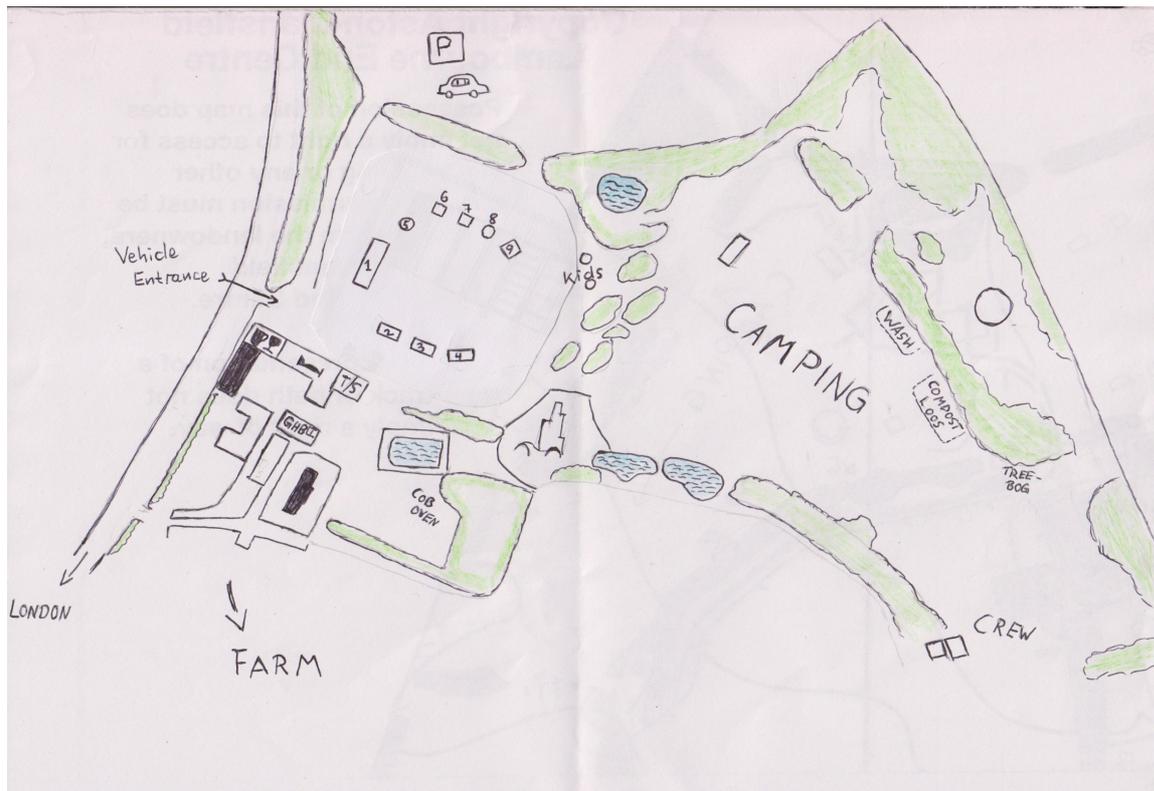
We provided separate straw-bale urinals for men and women and hired mobile compost toilets from the AT Collective.

Crew space – at the bottom of the site, with its own fire pit and pre- and post-event catering space

Car Parking – short route from the gate and events field, accessible via a lane between event field and road.

Living Vehicles – separate area in car park

Site Map used in the Convergence Programme



List of structures, spaces and equipment

See below.

Timeline for Convergence and Set-up

See tables below.

Transport plan

The initial plan was to hire a 7.5t lorry for transport of equipment from its storage in Nottingham to Lambourne End.

Quote from Romford lorry hire company:

24-hour rate 8am – 8am: £110, including 500 miles travel

We would have needed two 24 hour periods each for set-up and clearing up, a total of £440.

Additional Diesel costs: £80-100/journey

These costs were not calculated in the initial budget, and were only picked up on during the final weeks of preparation. This led to late changes in the transport plan which resulted in stress for drivers and organisers.

We did rise to the challenge and in the end had a 5.5t van and a 3t van carrying the equipment for less than half the quoted cost.

Budgeting and Costings

The overall budget was created by Hannah Thorogood in cooperation with the rest of the team. One post of the site budget – transport of equipment - was omitted from the initial budget, and was only picked up late in the preparations, leading to stress and late changes.

IMPLEMENTATION

Also see Timelines below

Set-up

Most crew arrived as planned on Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning. Marking out was finished by Tuesday evening. Most equipment arrived before Wednesday noon, and most structures were up by Wednesday evening, well ahead of schedule. All other structures were set up by Thursday evening.

Lambourne End volunteers

During Thursday we had a number of corporate volunteers helping out with set-up.

Crew coordination

We made our plans for the next day in the evening camp fire, and work was divided up after breakfast, with another brief check-in after lunch. Having a small but experienced crew was a great advantage, as everybody was clear about their tasks and what they involved.

Event crew

Jed took on the role of event crew coordinator, and set up a **rota [see separate document]** which was filled in by the core crew plus a few volunteers recruited via reception. Nobody felt overworked.

Clearing up

Many convergence participants stayed behind to take chairs. All marquees and most other structures were taken down by Sunday evening. Monday was spent packing and ferrying away equipment, and tidying up the site. All crew left by Tuesday lunchtime.

Name	Role	Email
Tony Sharps	Farm & Site Manager, Lambourne End	tony.sharps@lambourne-end.org.uk
Rob Gayler	Chief Executive, Lambourne End	rob.gayler@lambourne-end.org.uk
Board of Trustees	Decision making / Approval	
Andy Goldring	Decision making / Approval / Ents license / bar shifts	andyg@permaculture.org.uk
Hannah Thorogood	General Co-ordination / site design / programme / crew	hannah_thorogood@hotmail.com
Louise Cartright	Programme (LAND / tours / PAB) / catering liaison	network@permaculture.org.uk
Joe Atkinson	Programme (teachers / cinema / practicals) / transport	learn@permaculture.org.uk
Jay Ashton	Communications / PR	communicate@permaculture.org.uk
Harriet Walsh	Office / admin / reception co-ordination / bookings	office@permaculture.org.uk
Helen White	Finance / bookings	finance@permaculture.org.uk
Debbie Jones	Website	web@permaculture.org.uk
Katy Adams	Kids Co-ordinator	littledonkey79@hotmail.com
Jenni Lauruol	Accessability co-ordinator??	jennifer.lauruol@btinternet.com
Debbie Jones	Bar Co-ordinator	web@permaculture.org.uk
Core crew	Setting up, clearing up, event crew	
Tomas Remiarz	Quartermaster, site layout, crew coordination	tomas.remiarz@yahoo.co.uk
Jed Picksley	Core Crew – event crew coordinator	jed2f4@yahoo.co.uk
Billy Frugal	Core Crew	fremder@riseup.net
Shtig	Core Crew - signs	s@shtig.net
Brenna Powys	Core Crew - first aider, decorations	brennasbox@yahoo.com
Mark Phillips	Core Crew	markjphillips65@yahoo.co.uk
Daniel Bos	Core Crew	mr.bos@hotmail.co.uk
Paul Chandler	Core Crew	paul_chandler@hotmail.com
Chris Pepper	Core Crew - first aider	chrispy.pepper@googlemail.com
Mole	Core crew from Thursday	wehavenotv@riseup.net
Justin Moran	Core Crew	fabrioni@gmail.com
Liz Snook	Event Crew	
Julie Nutchley	Catering co-ordination	
Fran Pickering	Catering co-ordination	
Anna	Will be a number of core catering crew	
Steff	Will be a number of core kids crew	
<i>Planned Crew, cancelled</i>		
Tom Purling	Core Crew - Decorations	geo2013@googlemail.com
Emma Chance	Core Crew - Decorations	emmachance@hotmail.co.uk
Andy Holdaway	Core Crew	adholdaway@yahoo.co.uk
Jay Pettitt	Bicycle Powered Cinema setup	jay@jaypettitt.co.uk
Elias	Bicycle Powered Cinema setup	
Valerie	Bicycle Powered Cinema setup	

Crew and staff

Structures, venues & equipment for Convergence 2010

What	Qty	From	Notes	For	Power	Set up
						time x how many
100x30' marquee	1	Indian Marquee Co	projector	Big events	ext.	Tue pm
20x40 marquee	1	ATC	projector	Association	ext.	Wed pm 2h x 5
20x35 marquee	1	ATC		Projects	ext.	Wed pm 2h x 5
20x20 marquee	1	ATC		People care	none	Thu am 1h x 5
20x35 marquee (Czech Army)	1	ATC	bike powered	Cinema	own	Thu am 1h x 5
20x20 marquee	1	ATC - Cambridge	bike powered	Core theory	none	Thu am 1h x 5
Geoffrey Hooper Barn		Lambourne End	Diploma Presentations - proje	Yes	sockets	
9m x 9m Dark green tent	1	Lambourne End	Plastic structure,	Permaculture	off grid?	done
Party tents 3m x 9m	3	Lambourne End		Practicals	none	Fri am 3h x4
Geodome frame 20'	1	ATC		Nothing On	none	Thu pm 1h x 3
Geodome frame 18'	1	Stef		Open Space	none	??
Geodome frame 14'	1	ATC		Tool tent	none	Thu pm 1h x 3
BPT Field kitchen	1	Fran Pickering		Kids Kitchen	?	
Ecowash kit	1	ATC	3 Windbreaks, 3 shower bags, 2 push showers, 1 gazebo 3 bowls, 3 foot mats	camping field		Thu pm 2h x 3
24' Yurt		Hannah Thorogood		Kids space	none	Thu pm 2h x 3
12' Yurt		Hannah Thorogood		Kids space	none	Thu pm 2h x 3
Sail cover for domes	3	Hannah		cover for domes		
Tools and equipment						
What	Qty	From	Notes	For		
1,000 l Bowsers	2	locally	replace when needed	Camping field		Thu am Tony
Plumbing		ATC	??	Camping field		
Compost toilets	1x3	ATC	With buckets, cleaning kit			Thu pm 2h x 3
Strawbale urinals	1x3	ATC	Sanitary bins, cleaning kit			Thu pm 2h x 3
Toilet cleaning kit	1	Tony	Rubber gloves, wheelbarrows, overalls			
Comms radios	10	ATC	With chargers			Fri am
2 gas urns		ATC	Ask Fran			
Power		ATC	Extension leads, lights, multiple sockets, exit signs	Details t.b.c.		Fri am Chan + 2
Wheelchairs		??	All terrain			
Misc tools		ATC	4 Sledge hammers 4 Hammers Screwdriver set 3 panel saws 1 rubber mallet 2 adjustable spanners			

Projected timeline for Convergence 2010

The overall timeline was worked out by the event coordinator and the programme coordinators.

Time	Event	Where	Notes	Numbers
				(on site)
Tuesday eve	Core team arrives			Up to 5
Wednesday am	Set-up crew arrives			15
Wednesday am - Fri am Friday am	Set-up	Events field, Camping field		15
Wed	Caterers arrive & start cooking	Crew area		Fran & crew
Wed-Thu	Teachers meeting			30-40
Thursday pm, eve	Set up convergence spaces			15
Friday am	Event support arrive			3
Friday (when?)	Main catering set up and usable	Kitchen hut		Fran & crew
Friday, Sat am	Convergence registration			350
Friday pm	Event crew induction			12
Friday – Sunday pm	Gate, event support			Event crew
Daily rota				
Sunday pm	Clear out structures	Marquees, buildings	sheets in all spaces	Everybody
	Participants leave			
	Event crew debrief			
Sunday eve	Tat down crew relaxes			Core crew
Monday	Take down structures			Core crew
Tuesday	Final tidy up			Core crew
Tuesday pm	Everybody has left			

Projected Set-up timeline Convergence 2010

as worked out by the Quartermaster.

What	Transport	Notes	For	Set up
				time x lead + helpers
Crew meeting	TUESDAY			Tue pm
Marking out	n/a	Hazard tape, pegs, site maps, signs for structures	Location of structures	Tue pm Tomas + 5
Crew breakfast	WEDNESDAY			8-9 am
unpack Luton	Luton arrives 9 am	Mark out tat area/bays		Wed am Billy + all
Indian Marquee	IMC		Big events	Wed am IMC + 2
Crew meeting & Lunch	WEDNESDAY			Wed after unpacking
20x40 marquee	Luton from Nott	projector, screen, flipchart	Association	Wed pm 2h Jed + 4
20x35 marquee	Luton from Nott	flipchart stand	Projects	Wed pm 2h x Billy + 4
Unpack Transit	Transit arrives by 1pm			Wed 2pm
Crew meeting	THURSDAY			Thu 9am after breakfast
20x20 marquee	Transit from Nott	flipchart stand	People care	Thu am 2h x Jed + 4
20x35 marquee (Czech Army)	Luton from Nott	bike powered, screen, projector	Cinema	Thu am 2h x Billy + 4
20x20 marquee	Transit - Cambridge	flipchart stand	Core theory	Thu am 2h x JB + 3
1,000 l Bowsers	locally	replace when needed	Camping field	Thu am Tony
9m x 9m Dark green tent	Lambourne End	Plastic structure,	Permaculture	done
Geodome frame 20'	Luton from Nott		Nothing On	Thu am 1h Billy + 2
Compost toilets	Luton from Nott	With buckets, cleaning kit		Thu pm 2h Jed + 2
Crew Lunch & update	THURSDAY			Thu 1pm - 2.30
Geodome frame 18'	Stef		Open Space	??
Geodome frame 14'	Luton from Nott		Tool tent	Thu pm 1h Billy + 2
BPT Field kitchen	Fran Pickering		Kids Kitchen	?? Fran
Ecowash kit	Transit from Nott	3 Windbreaks, 1 gazebo 3 shower bags, 2 push showers 3 bowls, footmats, mirrors	camping field	Thu pm 2h Jed + 2
24' Yurt	Hannah Thorogood		Kids space	Thu pm 2h Daniel + 2
12' Yurt	Hannah Thorogood		Kids space	Thu pm 2h Daniel + 2
Sail cover for domes	Hannah Thorogood		cover for	Thu pm 1h Daniel + 2
Strawbale urinals	Luton from Nott	Sanitary bins, cleaning kit		Thu pm 2h Billy + 2
Inventory				Thu pm, Tomas
Crew meeting	FRIDAY			Fri 9am after breakfast
Plumbing	ATC	??	Camping field	??
Toilet cleaning kit	Tony	Rubber gloves, wheelbarrows, overalls - to tool tent		Fri am Jed
Comms radios	Transit - Cambridge	With chargers		Fri am
Party tents 3m x 9m	Lambourne End		Practicals	Fri am 3h JB + 3
Shopping trip	??	Builders merchant, stationery etc. - list following inventory		Fri am <i>who?</i>
Power	Transit from Nott	Extension leads, lights, multiple sockets, exit signs	Details t.b.c.	Thu, Fri am Chan + 2
Crew Lunch and update	FRIDAY			Fri 1pm - 2.30
Crew handover	FRIDAY			Fri pm

Contractors

AT Coop

at-coop.org.uk

Hire details:

Date	Item	Details	Fee
1 st - 7 th September	1 Marquee 20x40ft	Canvas, poles, pegs	100
	1 Marquee 20x35 ft	As above	£100
	1 Marquee 20x35 ft dark	As above	£100
	1 Marquee 20x20ft	As above	£100
	1 block compost toilets	Set of panels, bolts, 7 wheeliebins Basic cleaning kit and buckets provided, Sawdust and toilet paper from venue	£100
	1 block strawbale urinals	Set of panels, bolts, basic cleaning kit and buckets Straw bales and toilet paper from venue, also more cleaning eqpt	£100
	Plumbing kit	Piping, connectors, plumbing tools	£75
	Electrics kit	Batteries, extension leads, lights, sockets	£50
	Radio set	6-10 radios, charging set-up	£50
	Catering equipment	2 gas urns	£20
	Misc tools etc.	Mallets, hammers, nails etc.	£25
	Total		£820
	Deposit		£1,000

Andi Martin

Indian Marquee Company

36 Tangle Drive, Wokingham, RG41 2NY

info@indianmarquee.co.uk

0118 978 5667

30 x 100 ft marquee,

£1,325 paid on set-up, Wed 11am

Review

Plus points

Overall, the convergence was a great success.

The site and team coped very well with a record 400 attendees.

Structures and facilities were generally sufficient.

The experienced and committed site team conducted a very efficient set-up, event support and clean-up of the site.

Set-up and cleanup were both faster than expected.

We stayed within budget.

Minus points

Some marquees were not very clean --> pass them on to other groups and buy replacements?

Transport of equipment and materials was not included in the site budget – this led to stressful last-minute changes. This was the only hiccup in an otherwise very smooth operation.

Interesting points

Who are we not reaching with an event held largely outdoors?

What is the maximum size for convergences in their current form?

What other formats for events can we develop, to cater for a variety of needs and preferences?

This document can form part of the “Pattern for convergences” which was started but has not yet been finished.

Lessons learnt

A small, committed and competent crew beats a larger, less effective one hands down.

As a quartermaster, get involved in the initial budget discussions.

Set transport costs as individual budget item.

Acknowledgements

To the magnificently committed and competent site crew, for always being in the right place, at the right time.

To Tony Sharps and Lambourne End Outdoor Centre, for being such great hosts.

To Hannah and the Association staff for running a pretty tight ship.