National Events Strategy Consultation Analysis

Final Report August 2023

Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

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Introduction and background

Scotland: The Perfect Stage was first published in 2008 in response to Scotland's burgeoning potential to be a global leader in the events industry. It was last reviewed and updated to cover the period 2015-2025. On the 24th March 2023, the Scottish Government launched a 14-week public consultation to seek views on the National Events Strategy. This consisted of an online survey and a series of nine face-to-face and one online workshops. The workshops were hosted between April and June 2023 to which 222 participants attended. The online consultation survey received 102 responses from a range of individuals and organisations.

Research method

Wavehill, an independent research company, was appointed in June 2023 to undertake a thorough, systematic and objective analysis of consultation responses received. Wavehill conducted a detailed thematic analysis, examining survey responses and workshop discussions to highlight the themes and issues raised.

Level of support for the proposed ambition

Survey responses demonstrate strong support for the proposed ambition of the strategy. The majority of people responding to the survey (92%) supported the ambition with only a small proportion (4%) opposing it. Where respondents expanded on their reasoning behind their support for the proposed ambition, they reinforced the importance of driving stronger economic and social benefits for Scotland and maintaining its role as a 'world leader' for events. Similar levels of support were evident in feedback captured through the series of workshop sessions, with general agreement on the key priorities included in the strategy.

Views on key strategic priorities for the events sector

Respondents were asked their opinion of the relative importance of key strategic priorities for the events sector over the next ten years. The responses suggest that boosting the economy and the events sector contributing to enhancing well-being and community engagement are considered to be the most important strategic priorities. Very few respondents indicated that the stated priorities were not important. Around three quarters (76%) of respondents suggested other strategic priorities that they felt should be included in a refreshed strategy. The most common suggestion was on promoting inward investment. The second most prevalent theme was on the strategy including a greater focus on equalities, diversity and inclusion. Similar themes emerged from the workshop discussions, although greater emphasis was placed on making the event sector a better place to work and the strategy providing a focus on enhancing well-being and community engagement.

Creating an excellent event experience

Respondents were asked to identify what was important for them in creating an excellent event experience. The most prevalent themes included the importance of events creating a welcoming, inspiring, enjoyable atmosphere, of being accessible and inclusive and the event experience being of high quality. A small proportion of respondents highlighted the interdependencies between the ability to create excellent event experiences and wider infrastructure factors relating to transport, the retail offer and hospitality.

Views on events in Scotland

The survey asked respondents to provide views on a range of statements about events in Scotland, including the extent to which events are accessible, affordable, inclusive and welcoming. Just over half (52%) of respondents agreed that events in Scotland are inclusive and a similar proportion (48%) agreed that events in Scotland are accessible. The statement that secured the relative lowest level of support across the four statements was that events in Scotland are affordable with 41% of respondents agreeing with this statement. The responses show that a high proportion of respondents held neutral views regarding three of the four statements. This perhaps highlights a difficulty in answering this question in general terms given the variation in accessibility, affordability, inclusivity and the level of welcome across all events in Scotland.

Mixed views were expressed on the extent to which event organisers involve communities in planning the events they hold. Although just over half (55%) of respondents agreed with this statement, around a quarter (28%) neither agreed nor disagreed and around one in six (15%) disagreed. More than twice the proportion of individual respondents disagreed with that statement than organisation respondents. A similar breadth of views were evident in the workshop discussions with participants both citing good practice and recognising the need to involve communities in event planning. Feedback in the workshop sessions also highlighted challenges in involving communities due to a lack of resource, training or where event organisers had limited or no links into the community in which their event was taking place.

Similarly mixed views were received regarding the extent to which event organisers communicate about how the events taking place will affect local people. The most prevalent sentiment was that respondents agreed that event organisers do communicate about how the event taking place will affect local people (52% in agreement). Around a third (30%) of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed (30%) and around one in seven (14%) disagreed with the statement. Workshop discussions echoed these, with examples given of where event organisers were communicating effectively with local communities but also concerns that this was not yet standard practice.

Increasing the benefit of events for local communities

Respondents provided a range of views on how the benefits of events could be increased for local communities. The most prevalent response highlighted by just under three quarters of survey respondents related to ensuring that events meaningfully engage communities and secure community ownership. Responses emphasised the importance of event organisers effectively communicating with and involving local communities from the outset, including in the planning and design phases. The main other themes identified in responses related to the benefits of events being increased for local communities by ensuring that they provide clear, demonstrable support for local economies and contribute to local causes.

Diversity of events in Scotland

The majority of people responding to the survey indicated that the diversity of events in Scotland is very important, with a similar proportion of respondents agreeing with its importance of in terms of the variety of type, spread of location and range of size. The most prevalent barrier to holding a diversity of events raised by around half of respondents related to inadequate infrastructure across Scotland, in particular transport and accommodation, but also an absence of suitable event spaces for major events outside of cities and the capacity of local supply chains.

The next most prevalent barrier was the difficulty of accessing sufficient funding to resource a diverse range of events across Scotland. Some respondents specifically referenced a perceived bias towards the central belt for event funding. One of the themes raised in the workshop sessions was an acknowledgement of the important role that local authorities play in engaging diverse communities as well as recognition they can be under-resourced and so unable to provide the level of support desired by event organisers.

Working in the event sector

The consultation asked respondents a series of questions about the attractiveness of the sector as a place to work and experiences around Fair Work practices in the sector. The majority of people that responded to the survey (61%) think that the event sector is an attractive place to work. Around one in six (16%) disagreed and did not think it was, and a quarter (23%) of those responding to the survey indicated that they didn't know. Individual respondents were more likely to respond that the events sector was not an attractive place to work than organisation respondents.

For those that responded that the sector is an attractive place to work, the reasons provided broadly centred around a view that the sector supported transferable skills, that it was engaging, creative, innovative and collaborative and could be an exciting and fun environment to work in. Several respondents referenced the variety in the scale, nature and focus of events which provided a range of opportunities for developing skills. For those that thought that the sector is not an attractive place to work, the main reasons provided related to concerns around low pay, zero hours contracts and a lack of job security. Workshop participants raised concerns about these factors driving workforce and skills shortages and the related implications for the viability and sustainability of the sector.

Those working in the sector were asked whether there was anything that they would like to see change in relation to Fair Work practices. The most prevalent theme in responses was a desire for better regulation of the sector in terms of working hours, pay and conditions. Connected to this was respondents wishing to see increases in wages offered in the sector and improved benefits such as sick pay provisions or maternity leave.

Opportunities for the event sector in Scotland

Feedback highlighted that the majority of survey respondents did not think that there are sufficient opportunities to learn about what it is like to work in the sector, to gain the skills and experiences needed to work in the sector and to further a career in the sector. When asked how access to these opportunities could be improved, the most prevalent suggestions centred around better provision of training and education and increasing the use of apprenticeships, internships, and work experience. Workshop discussions covered similar areas but with a greater focus on issues relating to recruitment and career pathways.

Events and environmental sustainability

The majority of survey respondents provided views and perspectives on what would enable events to become more environmentally sustainable. The most prevalent themes related to event organisers and the wider sector providing more information and guidance around environmental sustainability, most notably to encourage or aid those attending events to make changes to limit any negative environmental impacts from their attendance or participation. Several survey respondents and workshop participants suggested that guidance resources and a standardised monitoring framework could be developed and shared with organisations hosting events.

Financial sustainability of events

A range of views were provided by survey respondents on the sources of income that the events sector should be developing to be financially sustainable. A number of responses related to securing sponsorship or working towards diversifying event organisers revenue streams such as through corporate partnerships, advertising and branding. Other sources of income referenced were through the award of public funding or from ticket sales. Some respondents emphasised the importance of core public funding in supporting events and the risks associated with overreliance on ticket sales. The importance of public sector support was highlighted in workshop sessions with participants emphasising a need for public sector financial support to implement sustainable measures and achieve long-term goals.

Measuring the importance of events

A range of themes emerged from responses to the question on what would support the event sector to measure the importance of events. The most frequent suggestion related to support for the capture of data from audiences and participants and turning these into impactful case studies. The next most common suggestion included support for measuring the direct and indirect economic impact of their events. A few survey respondents suggested that a standardised assessment should be undertaken nationally each year to enable the economic impact and contribution of events to be measured and monitored through agreed KPIs. Some workshop participants suggested that consideration could be given to establishing a dedicated team in Visit Scotland or EventScotland to support evaluation work.

Role of events in promoting Scotland internationally

Respondents provided a range of views on the ways in which events can promote Scotland internationally. The most prevalent response focused on Scotland showcasing the diversity of its culture internationally and challenging or changing stereotypes or misconceptions about Scotland as a nation. Respondents emphasised that events provide a valuable contribution to raising the profile of Scotland internationally as an aspirational destination, helping to grow the visitor economy.

Views on priorities for mega events

Common themes expressed in responses on the specific aims that they would prioritise for mega events included ensuring that they provide clear benefits for local communities, such as using local suppliers and enabling local participation, as well as skills development opportunities for those that work or volunteer in the sector. Discussions within the workshop sessions focused mainly on a desire for mega events to prioritise creating development opportunities for those working in the events industry and ensuring sustainable legacies. Benefits for local communities in terms of boosting the local economy also featured strongly.

Delivering positive impacts for society

The survey asked respondents to what extent they agreed or disagreed that event organisers make connections between events and their ability to deliver broader positive impacts for society. The majority (61%) of those responding to the survey reported positively and agreed that event organisers did make connections between events and their ability to deliver broader positive impacts for society. One in five respondents (20%) neither agreed nor disagreed and a similar proportion (17%) disagreed with the statement.

1.   Introduction and Background

This report provides an independent analysis of responses to the National Events Strategy Consultation. It sets out views and perspectives offered by respondents on the vision and strategic objectives outlined in the existing strategy 'Scotland: The Perfect Stage'.[1]

1.1   Background

Scotland: The Perfect Stage was first published in 2008 in response to Scotland's burgeoning potential to be a global leader in the events industry. It was last reviewed and updated to cover the period 2015-2025. Its vision is that Scotland's reputation as the perfect stage for events is recognised nationally and internationally. Although Scotland has had many successes under the current strategy, the event sector has recently endured a period of unprecedented disruption. This presents several challenges and potential opportunities for the sector in Scotland which is set out in 'A Changing Context' document produced as part of the consultation paper. As the term of the current strategy nears conclusion, Scottish Government committed to supporting another review and update of 'Scotland: the perfect stage'. Discussions in December 2022 with industry, trade union, local authority and public sector representatives informed the design of consultation exercise with discussions considered themes of business and economy, skilled workforce and Fair Work, environmental sustainability, community and wellbeing.

1.2   Consultation

On the 24th March 2023, the Scottish Government launched a 14-week public consultation to seek views on the National Events Strategy. The consultation questions which are provided in Appendix 1. The consultation sought views on:

- The ambition and priorities for events and the event sector in Scotland
- The accessibility of events
- What it is like to work in events
- How events in Scotland can continue to collaborate and innovate
- How events can promote cities, regions and Scotland as a whole internationally.

This survey was aimed at:

- people who attend or would like to attend events in Scotland, people living in communities where events are held, and groups who represent them
- organisations and people working in and with the Scottish event industry, across the public, private and third sectors

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[1] Visit Scotland (2015)- 'Scotland: The Perfect Stage'.

- People and organisations from outside of Scotland were also encouraged to provide a response to share their experiences of Scottish events and working with the Scottish events sector, and the approaches that the private, public and third sectors take to events in other countries.

1.2.1   Regional Engagement Workshops

A series of regional workshops were also hosted between April and June 2023 to which 187 participants attended (Table 1.1 below). Notes from these workshops were taken by VisitScotland staff and provided to our research team for analysis.

Table 1.1 Overview of regional workshops

Location	Date	Attendance
Aberdeen	21st April 2023	16
Dumfries	27th April 2023	9
Edinburgh	2nd May 2023	32
Dundee	4th May 2023	21
Inverness	9th May 2023	22
Orkney	16th May 2023	12
Oban	24th May 2023	9
Glasgow	1st June 2023	45
Galashiels	7th June 2023	21
		Total 187

In addition to the regional workshop sessions, an Event Industry Sector workshop

was hosted virtually on the 22nd June 2023 with 35 participants. A member of our research team also attended this event to observe the discussion.

1.3   Definition of an Event

For the purpose of the current national events strategy, events are public-facing events and festivals which anyone can attend either for free or by buying a ticket, or by viewing it on television or digitally. In addition, the strategy includes 'business events'. These business events are for designated groups which the general public cannot access. Examples of business events include corporate meetings, product launches, exhibitions and conventions, and incentive travel. The strategy does not cover family or personal events such as weddings, funerals and birthday parties. Events can be:

- Fixed – happening each year or more regularly in the same place permanently
- Recurring – happening each year in the same place for a set number of years, often on a biennial or quadrennial basis
- One-off – usually bid for and brought in a single staging.

Events also vary widely in size, from local and community events all the way up to mega events hosted across borders.

UK Sport use the following indicators in deciding what is a mega sporting event. Refence in the context of this consultation is intended to give an indication of the scale and nature of events classified as 'mega'. An event need not necessarily fulfil all criteria to be considered a mega event

- Event represents the pinnacle of the sport at World or European level
- Event is itinerant – i.e., not considered as permanently resident in the UK
- Event is likely to have a staging cost more than £10 million
- Event is likely to attract more than 100,000 spectators
- Event may require partial or full underwriting by the public sector
- Event may require government guarantees
- Event may entail significant delivery complexity.

Further detail on mega events and the framework being trialled by the Scottish Government to help understand how well a mega event might align to strategic aims in Scotland can be accessed via the National events strategy review consultation paper.

2. Research Method

Wavehill, an independent research company, was appointed in June 2023 to undertake a thorough, systematic and objective analysis of consultation responses received by Scottish Government during the consultation period.

2.1 Analytical Approach

To analyse the perspectives expressed by respondents, the authors of this report conducted detailed thematic analysis. This approach systematically examines each response and highlights the themes and issues that are raised. Based on this analysis, the team are then able to explore how widely certain views and perspectives are held.

The analysis has been undertaken in two distinct phases. The first step included the development of a thematic framework, which provided a structure from which to capture the issues and themes raised by respondents within and across all qualitative responses. The thematic framework is important as it sets out the range of issues and themes highlighted by respondents. Secondly, to determine the prevalence of themes and perspectives, each response was coded and mapped against the framework. This enables the analysis to draw out the prevalence, including areas of consensus or disagreement, which surround responses to the consultation questions, including the extent of agreement with the key statements about the events sector in Scotland.

The research team reviewed and coded responses received across different formats, including Citizen Space, non-Citizen Space (i.e. respondents that did not use the consultation questions) and outputs from the regional workshops. This was followed by an exploration of the prevalence of certain views and perspectives across responses to individual questions and across each response holistically. This enabled us to identify possible trends within particular stakeholder groups and respondent types (e.g. individual or organisation respondents).

2.2 Terminology

Whilst the research team has not quantitatively analysed open questions, descriptive terminology is used where this aids clarity and understanding of the views captured during the consultation exercise. Detail on how these terms are defined is provided below:

- **Few** - fewer than ten responses
- **Handful** - five or fewer responses
- **Majority** - the greatest proportion of similar views expressed
- **Several** - more than two responses but not many
- **Some** - used to illustrate or introduce an issue or theme but without specifying the amount or number.

2.3   Limitations

There are a number of limitations regarding this analysis that are important to note. The respondents who kindly contributed their views and perspectives are not necessarily representative of the wider events sector or people who attend or would like to attend events in Scotland. The high likelihood of self-selection and the relatively small number of responses compared to the number of organisations and people working in and with the event industry in Scotland or people attending events or living in communities where events are held, increases the possibility that those who responded hold different views and perspectives than are found amongst people and communities from across Scotland more broadly.

There was diversity in the length and detail of responses to the consultation questions from respondents. This may be due, in part, to the wide-ranging nature of the questions, and to respondents placing varying degrees of importance on different aspects of the strategy. Not all respondents answered every question, and it was not always possible to accurately determine their full position from the information provided.

We have therefore sought to communicate the balance of opinion qualitatively. We have only made statements of prevalence where clear patterns emerge, such as where themes or sentiments are widely held amongst respondents, or if they are peripherally held only by a few. In this respect, qualitative terms are only indicative of opinions on the basis of those who responded. Therefore, statements of prevalence should not be assumed to relate numerically back to the total number of people and organisations that responded to the consultation, or to the broader population.

Given these limitations, the aim has been to effectively and accurately communicate an understanding of the range of key themes and issues raised by respondents, as well as the reasons for holding particular views. Such information includes potential areas of agreement and disagreement between the different groups of respondents.

Taken together, therefore, this analysis should be considered as providing an indication of some of the views and perspectives held by people, communities and organisations towards the National Events Strategy, rather than a definitive account of views.

2.4 Responses

Between 24th March and 30th June 2023, the consultation received 102 responses. This included responses from a range of individuals and organisations with an interest in the National Events Strategy. Sixty-eight responses (67%) were received from organisations (one organisation provided two survey responses and another respondent did not provide the name of their organisation in their response) and thirty-four (33%) from individuals. Of the sixty-six unique organisations responding to the survey that provided their name, exactly half (thirty-three) were assessed by our team to have a national remit and an equal number a local remit.

Detailed notes were taken from each of the nine regional workshops and the Event Industry Sector workshop held in May and June 2023. The content of these notes were analysed alongside the Citizen Space survey responses. Twenty-one organisations that provided a response to the consultation survey also participated in the workshop sessions, demonstrating a degree of overlap across the two consultation mechanisms.

Where permission has been provided, details on the organisations and individuals that have responded to the survey or participated in the workshop sessions is provided in Appendix 2.

2.5 Navigating this Report

This report presents a summary of the key themes and perspectives raised across responses to the consultation, both from survey responses captured via Citizen Space and from feedback provided by the 222 people who took part in the regional engagement workshops and sector workshop. It is structured against the key consultation questions. In the data tables presented in the report, the most prevalent response, view or rating is denoted in red.

2.6 Use of Quotes

Subject to the publishing preference of survey respondents, this report draws on extracts of responses to illustrate specific themes, ideas or issues raised. These are either attributed directly to the respondent or attributed anonymously as either an individual or organisation response. These quotes do not constitute the analysis and are not provided to communicate a finding, but rather provide an example of a point made or view expressed by respondents in the context of the analysis presented.

3. Findings

The following section of this report sets out responses to each question, drawing first on the Citizen Space responses and then cross-referencing with the themes and views from the workshop sessions.

3.1 Level of Support for the Proposed Ambition

Responses received to the consultation demonstrate strong support for the proposed ambition of the National Events Strategy. The majority of people responding to the survey (92%) supported the ambition with only a small proportion (4%) opposing it. Support was slightly stronger from those responding from an organisation to those responding individually. Just over half of those providing a response indicated that they strongly supported the ambition (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1 Level of support for the proposed ambition of the strategy
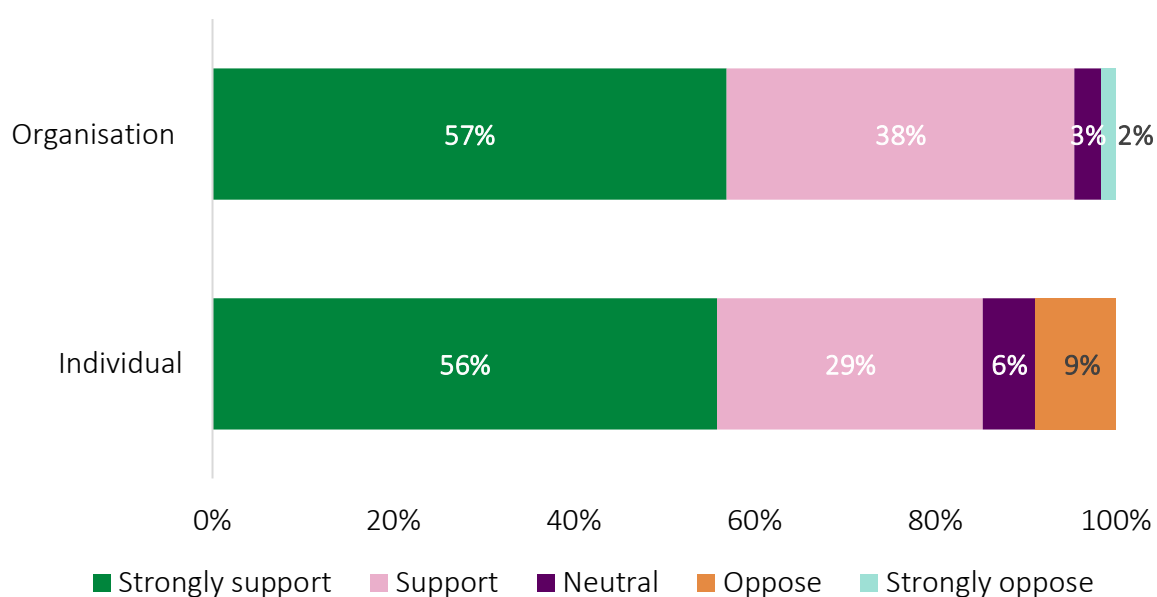
Source: National Events Strategy Consultation Responses; n=101

'Events deliver economic benefits to a wide range of sectors and are often undervalued and not given the recognition and support that they should get.'
Individual respondent

'We support the Ambition as set out and would urge that the Strategy is suitably resourced to enable full delivery of all the elements contained within it.'
Organisation respondent

Where respondents expanded on their reasoning behind their support for the proposed ambition, they reinforced the importance of the ambition in driving stronger economic and social benefits for Scotland and maintaining its role as a 'world leader' for events.

> 'Scotland is often overlooked, but it shouldn't be, by being this ambitious will really help.' **The Scottish Traditional Boat Festival**
>
> 'We support the wellbeing approach to the ambition however, we think that the strategy needs to demonstrate how all events and festivals contribute to this thereby ensuring that the approach is inclusive.' **Argyll and Bute Council**

Given only a handful of Citizen Space responses stated that they opposed the proposed ambition it is not possible to identify any clear themes.

Similar levels of support for the proposed ambition of the strategy were evident in feedback captured through the series of workshop sessions, with general agreement on the key priorities included in the strategy. Feedback in particular acknowledged the need for the strategy to help to address the challenges facing the sector, working to build the profile and reputation of Scotland as a nation, contributing to Fair Work objectives, and providing stronger recognition of small-scale events.

> 'From an economic perspective, Fair Work is more important than the other points – if this is not secured then there will be no workforce. We need skills development to support job security (hospitality is in the same position). Young people don't see a future in the sector. Fair work is a move to address this. Workforce needs to come through in the updated strategy.' **Oban workshop**
>
> 'There is a feeling that the industry need re-energised after such a difficult few years. There is a real sense of fatigue, not just due to COVID but ever changing legislation and requirements that need to be met.' **Edinburgh workshop**

Other themes highlighted in the workshop discussions included the importance of securing 'ground-up' support from local communities and suppliers, not just responding to 'top-down' policy objectives or overly focusing on large scale events. This was highlighted as important to enable events to deliver benefits for the communities within which they are located. This point was emphasised in later question responses.

3.2   Relative Importance of Strategic Priorities

Respondents were asked their opinion of the relative importance of key strategic priorities for the events sector over the next ten years, including:

- Boosting the economy
- Enhancing well-being and community engagement
- Contributing to the drive towards net zero and environmental sustainability
- Making the events sector a better place to work
- Showcasing and promoting Scotland's assets.

The responses suggest that boosting the economy and the events sector contributing to enhancing well-being and community engagement are considered by respondents to be the most important strategic priorities. The responses also show that the majority of those responding to the survey rated all five priorities as either very important or important (Table 3.1). The most prevalent response is highlighted in red showing a rating of very important across all five strategic priorities. Very few respondents indicated that the stated priorities were not important. Whilst the strategic priority for events contributing to the drive towards net zero and environmental sustainability was rated as relatively less important, this was still regarded as important by eight out of 10 respondents.

Table 3.1 Views on the relative importance of strategic priorities

Rating	Boosting the economy	Enhancing well-being and community engagement	Contributing to the drive towards net zero and environmental sustainability	Making the event sector a better place to work	Showcasing and promoting Scotland's assets
5 Very important	65%	64%	46%	49%	56%
4	22%	27%	34%	31%	29%
3	8%	6%	15%	14%	11%
2	5%	1%	3%	2%	2%
1 Not important	0%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Don't know	0%	0%	1%	2%	0%
N=	99	100	101	100	101

Source: National Events Strategy Consultation responses from Citizen Space; most prevalent response in red

Analysis of the consultation responses reveals some difference in views on the relative importance of key strategic priorities based on whether the respondent was an organisation or individual (Figure 3.2 over page). Organisations placed greater importance across all key strategic priorities than individual respondents, although the sentiments in terms of the key strategic priorities all being important were shared.

Figure 3.2 Views on the relative importance of strategic priorities by respondent type

			5 (Very important)	4	3	2	1 (Not important)
Boosting the economy	Individual		59%	26%	3%	9%	3%
	Organisation		66%	18%	11%	3%	2%
Enhancing well-being and community engagement	Individual		53%	35%	3%	3%	6%
	Organisation		69%	23%	8%		
Contributing to the drive towards net zero and environmental sustainability	Individual		32%	38%	15%	9%	6%
	Organisation		53%	31%	16%		
Making the event sector a better place to work	Individual		47%	32%	12%	3%	6%
	Organisation		53%	32%	13%	2%	
Showcasing and promoting Scotland's assets	Individual		44%	38%	12%	3%	3%
	Organisation		65%	22%	11%	2%	2%

■ 5 (Very important) ■ 4 ■ 3 ■ 2 ■ 1 (Not important)

Source: National Events Strategy Consultation responses from Citizen Space

Whilst responses denoting specific priorities as not important were in small minority, these were more likely to be expressed by individual respondents than organisation respondents. Key strategic priorities for boosting the economy and making the event sector a better place to work attracted a much higher proportion of individual respondents rating these as being less or not important than organisation respondents.

Around three quarters (76%) of respondents suggested other strategic priorities that they felt should be included in a refreshed strategy. Where these were provided, the most commonly suggested priority centred around promoting inward investment.

> 'There is an opportunity to align the strategy more clearly with the Scottish Government's International Cultural Strategy and therefore a new priority could be supporting Scotland's role in international and intercultural exchange and dialogue.' **Scottish Contemporary Art Network**
>
> 'The strategy makes total sense but must be supported by long term funding. Very difficult to follow through on 10 year strategy with one year funding.' **The National Piping Centre**

The second most prevalent theme suggested by respondents focused on the strategy including a greater focus on equalities, diversity and inclusion (EDI).

> 'Supporting low income families and supporting events in areas of deprivation. Looking to support not only International events but community events which are more likely to spread events to a wider demographic and address issues such as health and wellbeing.' **Individual respondent**
>
> 'The continued and enhanced pursuit of event targets that encourage broader inclusivity and diversity across all aspects of society (e.g. para sports, girls' and women's sports).' **The Scottish Football Association Limited**

Other suggested themes outlined a desire for the refreshed strategy to include a focus on knowledge exchange and collaboration and more sustainable work practices. Generally, the themes provided in response to this question are picked up in further detail by respondents later in their submitted response.

Similar themes emerged from the workshop discussions, although greater emphasis was placed on making the event sector a better place to work and the strategy providing a focus on enhancing well-being and community engagement.

'We need to make events a better place to work. We can't solve global warming or boosting the economy, but we can make events more sustainable / employ more people / stay in business. A natural by-product of this is that you then boost the community.' **Galashiels workshop**

'Social impacts and community engagement is now and should be much more of a driver… economic impact is important, but the social impact and community engagement piece is now imperative.' **Glasgow workshop**

Analysis of the notes from the workshop sessions demonstrates that many participants recognised the interconnectivity between the key strategic priorities, but also where the events sector is dependent on action taken nationally and internationally more broadly on areas such as climate change and achieving economic growth. However, the contribution that the sector can and should make was widely acknowledged.

3.3   Creating an Excellent Event Experience

Respondents were asked to identify what was important for them in creating an excellent event experience. The range of respondents to the survey, incorporating organisations of different sizes and from different locations as well as members of the public, is reflected in the varied responses to this question.

The most prevalent themes in responses included the importance of events creating a welcoming, inspiring, enjoyable atmosphere, of being accessible and inclusive and the event experience being high quality. Many respondents expanded their answer in response to later survey questions, in particular around accessibility, inclusivity and increasing the benefit of events for local communities.

'Every event should be special or it's not really an event. Give people a great time, give them a memory, give them a great experience! Let them go home afterwards feeling good, singing your songs, inspired, entertained, happy, thoughtful, joyful, having met new people and old friends and even having been educated. Every special event must make a difference in someone's life even if it is just a fleeting moment in time or a lifetime.' **Individual respondent**

'It's important for visitors to feel they are encountering something special, different, and to a degree exclusive. We need to know events are offering unforgettable, memorable experiences that will be talked about and shared across multiple platforms. It needs to leave visitors with that "you had to have been there" experience…because that will make them into advocates for Scotland and our attractions and drive others to want the same experience.' **Scottish Arts Trust**

'Creating an environment in which all who attend feel safe and comfortable, allowing them to focus on the content and subject matter, and the opportunity to participate and provide input in a way that allows attendees to feel that they have contributed to moving something forward.' **University of Strathclyde**

Other themes evident in the responses related to excellent event experiences delivering economic (national and local) and social benefits. A small proportion of respondents highlighted interdependencies between the ability to create excellent event experiences and wider infrastructure factors relating to transport, the retail offer and hospitality.

'For events to be successful, they rely on the wider tourist, hospitality and cultural infrastructure being strong and attractive. From transport networks to quality of venues, availability of accommodation and affordability as a place to visit, all must be aligned in order to deliver a truly excellent and sustainable experience.' **Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce**

3.4   Views of Events in Scotland

The survey asked respondents to provide their views on a range of statements about events in Scotland, including the extent to which events are accessible, affordable, inclusive and welcoming. Survey responses show that the statement that events in Scotland are welcoming secured the strongest support with 83% of respondents agreeing (Table 3.2).

Just over half (52%) of respondents agreed that events in Scotland are inclusive and a similar proportion (48%) agreed that events in Scotland are accessible. The statement that secured the relative lowest level of support across the four statements was that events in Scotland are affordable with 41% of respondents agreeing with this statement.

Table 3.2 Views on events in Scotland

Extent of agreement for events in Scotland								
Rating	Accessible	+/-	Affordable	+/-	Inclusive	+/-	Welcoming	+/-
Strongly agree	12%	48%	9%	41%	13%	52%	45%	83%
Agree	36%		32%		39%		38%	
Neither agree nor disagree	33%		25%		32%		16%	
Disagree	11%	12%	26%	26%	15%	16%	1%	1%
Strongly disagree	1%		-		1%		-	
Don't know	8%		8%		-		-	
N=	92		91		87		85	

Source: National Events Strategy Consultation Responses from Citizen Space; most prevalent view in red

What the responses also show is that a high proportion of respondents held neutral views regarding three of the four statements, with around one third neither agreeing or disagreement with the statements around events in Scotland being accessible and inclusive and just over one quarter that events in Scotland are affordable. This perhaps highlights a difficulty in answering this question in general terms given the variation in accessibility, affordability, inclusivity and the level of welcome across all events in Scotland.

There was variation in responses to these statements based on whether the respondent was an organisation or individual (Figure 3.3 over page). The responses show that individual respondents were more likely to neither agree nor disagree on whether events in Scotland were accessible. Organisation respondents were more likely to neither agree nor disagree on whether events were affordable or welcoming. The response with the greatest disagreement in views expressed by individuals compared with organisations was in relation to events being affordable, with nearly half (44%) of individuals disagreeing, compared with only 16% of organisations. Where 'don't know' responses were provided across the statements, these were all provided by organisations.

Respondents were asked to identify any reasons for not attending the events they would like to. The main reasons provided by just over two thirds of those responding to this question related to affordability, accessibility and transport issues (or a perception of these factors).

'The one thing I might highlight here would be public transport and connectivity… our public transport network is still not all it could be. Journeys are hard to join up and sometimes fares - when added to the cost of an event ticket and/or time out of the office (for business events) - can be prohibitive.' **University of Strathclyde**

'Financial constraints and the infrastructure (mostly transport) to get to the destination where the event is held… affordable accommodation is also an issue.' **Organisation response**
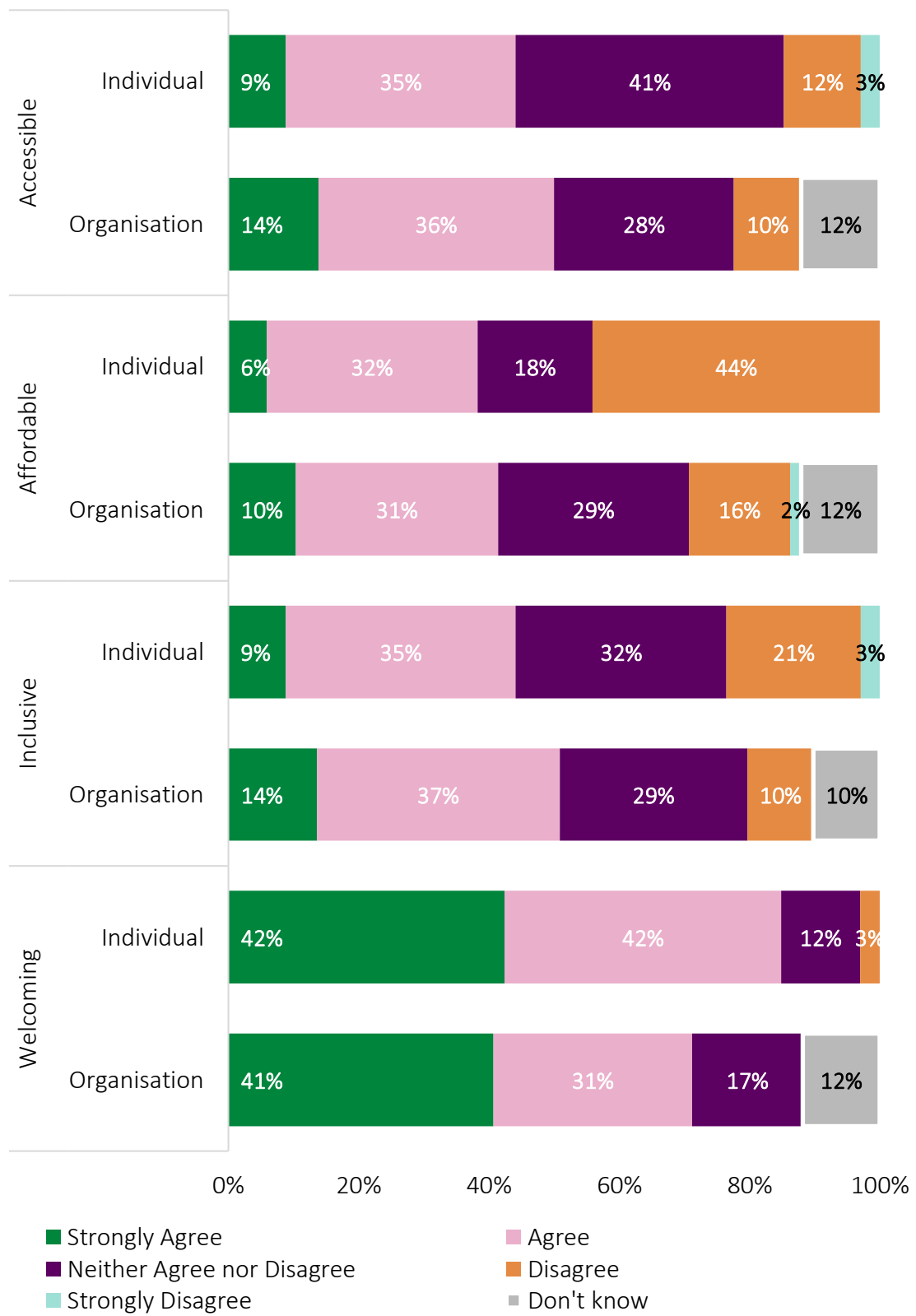
Several respondents referenced what they viewed as the unequal distribution of events across Scotland which compounded these issues, in particular poor connectivity and transport links, in particular outside of the central belt. The issue of price inflation due to tickets being resold on ticketing platforms was also mentioned in the context of the issue of affordability.

'In many rural, remote rural and island locations in Argyll and Bute travelling to events in the central belt can be unaffordable and impracticable, due to the distance involved, the entry price, accommodation and transport costs… National events and festivals therefore need to be better distributed across the country.' **Argyll and Bute Council**

Figure 3.3 Views on events in Scotland by respondent type

Accessible
- Individual: Strongly Agree 9%, Agree 35%, Neither Agree nor Disagree 41%, Disagree 12%, Strongly Disagree 3%
- Organisation: Strongly Agree 14%, Agree 36%, Neither Agree nor Disagree 28%, Disagree 10%, Don't know 12%

Affordable
- Individual: Strongly Agree 6%, Agree 32%, Neither Agree nor Disagree 18%, Disagree 44%
- Organisation: Strongly Agree 10%, Agree 31%, Neither Agree nor Disagree 29%, Disagree 16%, Strongly Disagree 2%, Don't know 12%

Inclusive
- Individual: Strongly Agree 9%, Agree 35%, Neither Agree nor Disagree 32%, Disagree 21%, Strongly Disagree 3%
- Organisation: Strongly Agree 14%, Agree 37%, Neither Agree nor Disagree 29%, Disagree 10%, Don't know 10%

Welcoming
- Individual: Strongly Agree 42%, Agree 42%, Neither Agree nor Disagree 12%, Disagree 3%
- Organisation: Strongly Agree 41%, Agree 31%, Neither Agree nor Disagree 17%, Don't know 12%

Legend: Strongly Agree; Agree; Neither Agree nor Disagree; Disagree; Strongly Disagree; Don't know

Source: National Events Strategy Consultation responses from Citizen Space; n=92

Mixed views were expressed by respondents on the extent to which they agreed that event organisers involve communities in planning the events they hold. Although just over half (55%) of respondents agreed with this statement, around a quarter (28%) of respondents to the survey neither agreed nor disagreed and around one in six (15%) respondents disagreed (Figure 3.4). More than twice the proportion of individual respondents disagreed with that statement than organisation respondents.

Figure 3.4 Extent to which event organisers involve communities in planning events
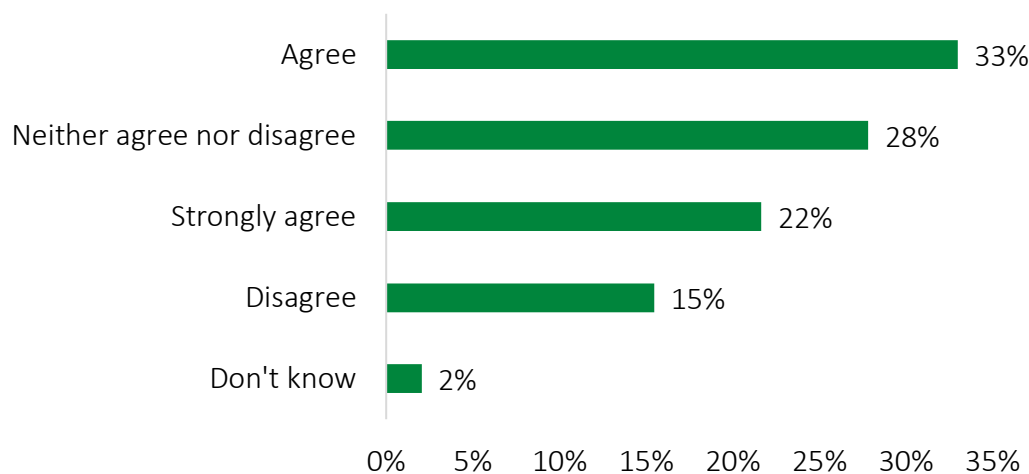
Source: National Events Strategy Consultation responses from Citizen Space; n=97

A similar breadth of views were evident in the workshop discussions with participants citing examples of good practice and recognising the need to involve communities in event planning. However, feedback in the workshop sessions also highlights challenges in involving communities due to a lack of resource (notably time and money), training or where event organisers had limited or no links into the community in which their event was taking place. Workshop participants also acknowledged the importance of managing community expectations.

'It is important to ask communities how an event could benefit them instead of just telling that it will benefit them. There is a need to work with communities to identify what benefits they would like – and then to keep data on the outcomes.' **Dumfries workshop**

'Communities ask for things that aren't achievable which causes disappointment so you need communication ahead of this.' **Glasgow workshop**

Similarly mixed views were received regarding the extent to which event organisers communicate about how the events taking place will affect local people (Figure 3.5 over page).

The most prevalent sentiment from the survey was that respondents agreed with the statement that event organisers do communicate about how the event taking place will affect local people (52% in agreement). Around a third (30%) of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed (30%) and around one in seven respondents (14%) disagreed with the statement.

<u>Figure 3.5 Extent to which event organisers communicate about how the events taking place will affect local people</u>
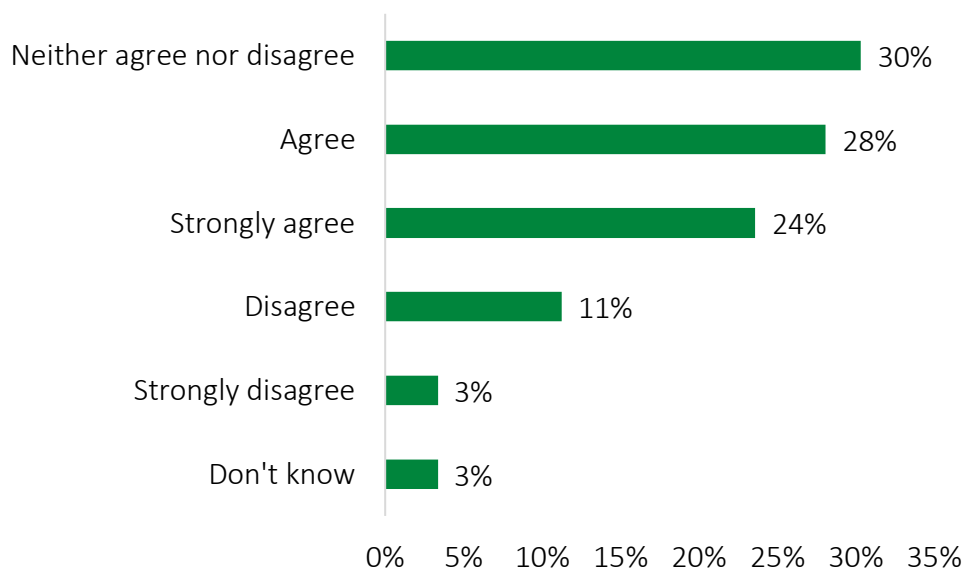
Source: National Events Strategy Consultation responses from Citizen Space; n=97

Just over a quarter (26%) of individual respondents disagreed that event organisers communicate how the events taking place will affect local people compared to 5% of organisation respondents, with similar proportions neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

Workshop discussions echoed the sentiments from the survey responses, with examples given of where event organisers were communicating effectively with local communities but also concerns that this was not yet standard practice. There appears to be consensus amongst workshop participants that effectively and meaningfully engaging, informing and involving communities is essential for an event to be regarded as successful.

'Communities get forgotten about by organisers – we need to start making people think about this. The priority is to get the job/event delivered rather than looking wider which would be the preference.' **Aberdeen workshop**

'The more you can engage local communities the better in my opinion - that way if there is some disruption it is more likely to be seen as acceptable - if the community can see some benefit to the event taking place.' **Individual respondent**

3.5   Increasing the Benefit of Events for Local Communities

Respondents provided a range of views and perspectives on how the benefits of events could be increased for local communities. The most prevalent response to this question highlighted by just under three quarters of respondents to the survey related to ensuring that events meaningfully engage communities and secure community ownership. Responses emphasised the importance of event organisers effectively communicating with and involving local communities from the outset, including in the planning and design phases.

There was recognition from several respondents that this required event organisers to factor in sufficient time and resource to enable them to increase the benefit of their event for local communities. Specific approaches referenced within responses included co-production and asset-based approaches.

'It is important to use asset-based approaches to developing, designing, activating and delivering events to enable local 'host' communities to maximise ownership and any economic and social benefits accrued.' **Glasgow Life**

'Events must be done with local communities, in partnership with them - we should never be in a position where local residents and businesses feel as though things are being done to them... if there is likely to be a substantial degree of disruption, or there are genuine opportunities for the local community to be involved in co-creating programme or content, there might be community consultation during the planning stages.' **University of Strathclyde**

'It's mainly about adding the time, funding and the mindset that allows for participatory consultation and genuinely creates opportunities for people to be part of the process... it is about involving the community in planning and design from the outset so that the event is fully owned by them and something of which they feel proud.' **Scottish Arts Trust**

A handful of respondents to the survey stated that the design and delivery of events needed to include 'kick backs' for the local community such as free or discounted tickets, unique participatory experiences connected to the event or donating to local causes. Several respondents emphasised an ambition for events to be a catalyst for change and for them to create a meaningful legacy.

Several respondents to the consultation highlighted a link between effective community engagement and the ability for event organisers to successfully advertise and promote their event to local people. Some workshop participants suggested that dedicated Events Community Engagement Officer roles were needed to provide the necessary capacity to establish links with and deliver demonstrable benefits for local communities.

A small number of respondents also suggested that the strategy needs to acknowledge that events may have negative impacts on local communities (e.g. noise, litter, road closures, congestion) and that effective engagement with local people can help to mitigate these impacts. For example, investing in local infrastructure such as permanent or temporary event staging or discussing the use of local public spaces to host outdoor events. Several respondents provided detail on existing arrangements and approaches of involving local communities in the planning of events, for example using Safety Advisory Groups (SAG) or similar to enable event organisers to listen to and understand any concerns of local communities and find mitigations to address these.

> 'Local communities are more aware of their needs and often anxious about the impact some events may have on their local neighbourhood (disruption, litter, anti-social behaviour etcetera) and involving local communities is an opportunity to ensure events meet their needs where appropriate, to address any negative unintended consequences and to reassure communities on the impact the event with have in their local area.' **Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland**

The main other themes identified in responses related to the benefits of events being increased for local communities by ensuring that they provide clear, demonstrable support for local economies and contribute to local causes. This included engaging and involving local traders, working with local hospitality and transport providers, offering employment or training opportunities for local people or helping to market the area to contribute to growth in visitor numbers outside of the event.

> 'Involving the local community as much as possible aids communities in collective learning and enjoyment. Ways to involve local communities may be through employment opportunities, volunteering as local guides, making recommendations for local places to stay, eat drink, shop and visit may also be welcomed by local communities and provide a boost to the local economy.'
>
> '[The benefits of events could be increased for local communities by] setting quantifiable objectives which improve the health of local communities (across all ages and special needs) and unlock growth in the local economy - with 'outcomes' which increasingly rise throughout the short, medium and long-term.' **Individual respondent**

Many respondents touched on themes or topics raised by later questions in the consultation survey, most notably around accessibility, affordability and effective planning and coordination of events to avoid unhelpful competition and clashes of dates.

3.6   Views on Diversity of Events in Scotland

The majority of people responding to the survey indicated that the diversity of events in Scotland is very important, with a similar proportion of respondents agreeing with its importance of in terms of the variety of type, spread of location and range of size (Table 3.3). None of the respondents indicated that diversity was not important at all and only a handful of responses provided a rating of 2 (not important) for each of the categories.

Table 3.3 Importance of diversity of events

Rating	Importance of diversity of events		
	Range of size	Spread of location	Variety of type
5 Very important	**56%**	**66%**	**60%**
4	29%	20%	29%
3	9%	10%	9%
2	5%	3%	2%
1 Not important at all	-	-	-
Don't know	-	-	-
N=	96	98	97

Source: National Events Strategy Consultation Responses from Citizen Space; most prevalent response in red

Analysis of the consultation responses reveals some small difference in views about events in Scotland based on whether the respondent was an organisation or individual, with the latter group generally rating each of the factors slightly less important than the former (Figure 3.6). The proportion of individual respondents rating the range of size of events as not important (rating 2) was three times the proportion of organisation respondents. Across all three factors, more organisations provided a neutral response (rating 3) than individuals.

Figure 3.6 Importance of diversity of events by respondent type
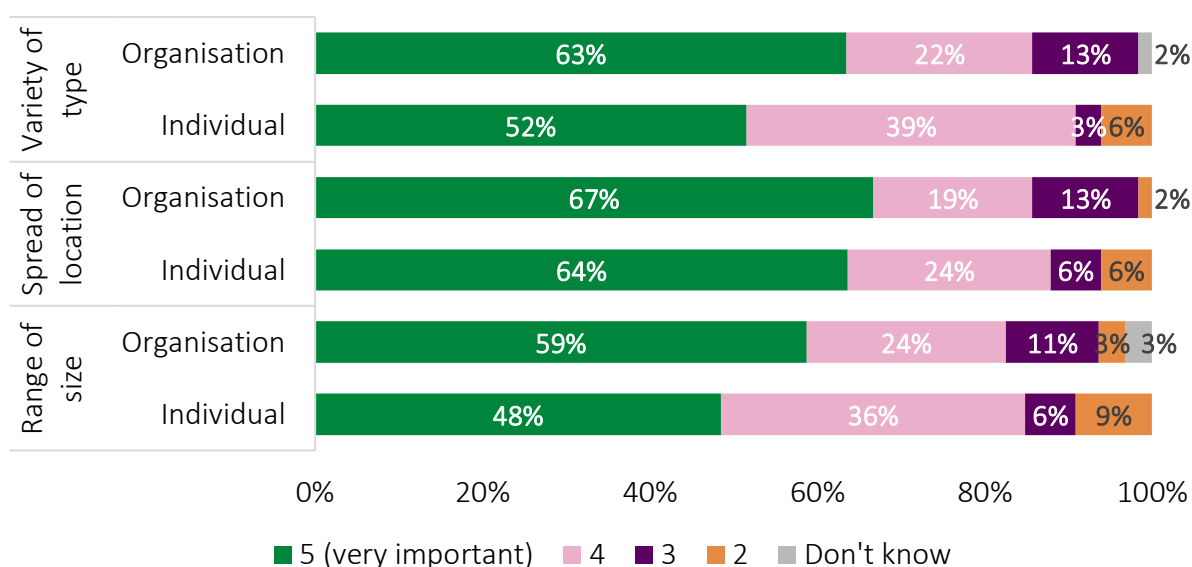
Source: National Events Strategy Consultation responses from Citizen Space; n=96

Survey respondents were asked what barriers, if any, there are to holding a diversity of events in Scotland. Building on sentiments and views provided to earlier consultation questions, the most prevalent barrier raised by around half of respondents related to inadequate infrastructure across Scotland, in particular transport and accommodation but also an absence of suitable event spaces for major events outside of cities and the capacity of local supply chains.

'The lack of adequate infrastructure for accessing regions beyond Edinburgh or Glasgow dissuades event organisers from exploring alternative venues like Dundee, which are deemed too challenging to reach. It is crucial to encourage private sector investment in appropriate amenities and provide them with relevant guidance to ensure maximum flexibility in supporting a wide range of indoor and outdoor events.' **Organisation respondent**

The next most prevalent barrier highlighted by respondents was the difficulty of accessing sufficient funding to resource a diverse range of events across Scotland. Some respondents specifically referenced a perceived bias towards the central belt for event funding. Others highlighted an increasingly challenging environment to attract funding and sponsorship for more niche events.

'Funding is mainly directed to sporting events, leaving little for any other sectors. There is little funding for events in rural areas… these events need a higher level of support to overcome the barriers of lower-earning populations, bad infrastructure, little public transport, poor communications, older populations.' **Individual respondent**

Other themes raised by respondents included a lack of available and/or suitable accommodation which served to restrict the capacity of events in some areas and a failure of local strategies to recognise the value of and provide support for the events sector. In workshop sessions, some participants suggested work was needed to better integrate events into place-based work and strategies to ensure that opportunities were realised.

'There are constraints in some areas due to infrastructure issues such as lack of accommodation or housing for employees and visitors.' **Argyll and Bute Council**

'Events and conferences should be used to shine a bigger spotlight on the host community and its people – helping to create the feeling of being in 'a better place to live'. Place is about delivering on a blend of different priorities to benefit all. Passion and collaboration are needed to make things work; it should not just be about ticking a box.' **Aberdeen workshop**

One of the themes raised in the workshop sessions was an acknowledgement of the important role that local authorities play in engaging diverse communities as well as recognition they can be under-resourced and so unable to provide the level of support desired by event organisers.

3.7   Working in the Event Sector in Scotland

The Scottish Government's Fair Work First agenda[2] aims to support employers to consistently engage in fair work practices, and understand the steps required to help all workers to receive fair and good quality work as part of a continuous improvement approach. Such fair practices include congruous channels for effective voice, such as trade union recognition; the consistent implementation of appropriate contracts; and action to enhance inclusivity and diversity in the workplace. The consultation asked respondents a series of questions about the attractiveness of the sector as a place to work and their own experiences around Fair Work practices in the sector.

The majority of people responding to the survey (61%) think that the event sector is an attractive place to work. Around one in six (16%) disagreed and did not think it was and a quarter (23%) of people responding to the survey indicated that they didn't know. This may highlight an area for development in the national events strategy to raise awareness of the attractiveness of working in the sector. Responses may highlight a difficulty in answering this question in general terms given the diversity of roles supported within the sector and the nature of these roles covering full time or part time jobs, permanent and fixed-term and zero-hours roles. Organisations were nearly twice as likely to respond that they didn't know compared with individual respondents to the survey (Figure 3.7). Individual respondents were also more likely to respond that the events sector was not an attractive place to work than organisation respondents.

Figure 3.7 Do you think the event sector is an attractive place to work? By respondent type
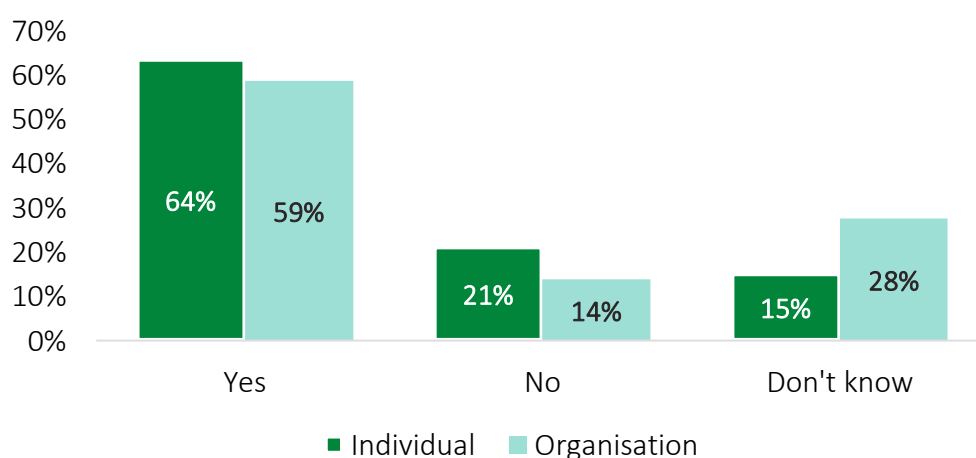
Source: National Events Strategy Consultation responses from Citizen Space; n=93

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[2] View the Fair Work action plan

When asked to expand on their views on whether the event sector is an attractive place to work, respondents provided a range of views. For those that responded that the sector is an attractive place to work, the reasons provided for selecting their response broadly centred around a view that the sector supported transferable skills, that it was engaging, creative, innovative and collaborative and could be an exciting and fun environment to work in. Several respondents referenced the considerable variety in the scale, nature and focus of events which provided a range of opportunities for developing skills.

'The events industry is a fun, varied and rewarding place to work. Seeing an event come together from start to finish and watching the public enjoy themselves is such a great feeling. It can provide real purpose and enhance the skills of those working in the industry.' **Organisation respondent**

'Although the sector has been damaged so badly over the pandemic, I still believe many see the entrepreneurial excitement of events work where business and creativity can be mutually important. Being part of a team that creates a space or time for people to connect, enjoy and be engaged in all manners of ways is pretty special still.' **Glasgow International Comedy Festival**

A smaller number of respondents stated that they felt the sector provided good career and professional development prospects, enabling those that work within it to specialise in specific areas or to diversify into different roles both within and outside of the sector.

'Collectively within the industry, that variety and diversity of career paths, and the span of skills, ability and experience is an asset and one in which we must build upon.' **Edinburgh International Festival**

'The event sector relies upon a range of different skills, services, and support from across society, providing excellent opportunities to develop a professional (or voluntary) career.' **The Scottish Football Association Limited**

Similar themes were raised, but to a lesser extent, during workshop sessions, with discussions highlighting that work in the sector could be exciting, that it offers flexibility and can open opportunities. A common theme raised across many of the workshops was that the external perception of work in the sector being attractive did not always match reality. Separately, workshop discussions also focused on work and different roles in the sector not being visible and as a result people outside of the sector having less information about the attractiveness of working in the event sector.

For the survey respondents that stated that they thought that the sector is not an attractive place to work, the main reasons provided for selecting their response related to a view that the sector is characterised by low pay, zero hours contracts, a lack of job security and can be hard work.

Some respondents to the survey also felt that work in the sector could be stressful with a culture of working long hours.

'Too many events adopt exploitative employment practices, offering gig economy contracts for terrible terms and conditions. The industry does not invest sufficiently in local workforce, often content for promoters to bring in a temporary workforce from elsewhere.' **Individual respondent**

Notes from the workshop sessions provide evidence of strong views around the realities of work in the events sector with frequent references to a lack of job security, low pay, long hours and a reliance on volunteers. Workshop participants raised concerns about these factors driving workforce and skills shortages and the related implications for the viability and sustainability of the sector. A handful of workshop participants also used the term 'exploitation' with reference to some practices in the sector.

'The perception is that it is an attractive place to work, but many don't understand the reality of what goes on behind the scenes.' **Dumfries workshop**

'The industry doesn't always look after its workforce in terms of hours and mental health issues. You can be destroyed after a busy event season physically and mentally. Although it is improving.' **Glasgow workshop**

What is evident in the responses to the consultation is that most respondents recognised both the appealing aspects of working in the sector as well as those that were less attractive. A minority of respondents acknowledged that some improvements had been made in professionalising the sector, in addressing workforce issues and improving its attractiveness, but with recognition that further work was required.

Respondents who worked in the event sector were asked to share their experiences of Fair Work practices. Three quarters of respondents provided a response to this question. These experiences cover both positive and negative aspects, but with a marginally higher proportion of positive experiences reflected in the consultation responses. Positive experiences centred around principles of fair work practices being evident and appropriately applied, albeit with recognition that there can be considerable variation across the sector. Several respondents highlighted the importance of the sector achieving greater consistency in the adoption and application of Fair Work practices.

'[Our experience of Fair Work practices in the sector are] very good but it builds extra cost which is not supported by increase in ticket pricing, and public sector funding. So we should do it and we do, but acknowledge it is an additional cost we have to fund.' **Edinburgh International Festival**

'The five fair work dimensions can only be seen as a positive step to ensuring that everyone working across the industry is treated fairly and with respect.'
Organisation respondent

A small number of respondents recounting negative experiences highlighted the precarious nature of work in the sector, a perceived reliance on volunteers for what some felt should be paid roles, and a widespread use of minimum wage for roles. A few respondents cited the disproportionate impact of a lack of Fair Work in the sector on women and those with care responsibilities. However, some respondents also acknowledged that seasonal and short-term contracts were attractive for some.

'Undoubtedly, working in this sector is highly precarious. Guaranteed work is never truly a given, meaning there is a need to work multiple jobs to get by. It is a sector which feels almost exclusive to work in because it feels particularly gatekept.' **Individual respondent**

'In the sector as a whole I think there is excellence and poor practice. It is not homogenous. Many roles within the sector are 'seasonal' and may be on fixed terms or zero hours contracts and while that is fine for some it doesn't provide the consistency or stability many are seeking.' **Individual respondent**

Several respondents elaborated on their experiences, citing a perceived lack of funding to enable the sector to pay fair wages or investment in training and professional development opportunities for their workforce. A small number of respondents stated that in their experience it was challenging for organisations to implement Fair Work practices due to external influences and factors such as rising energy and supplier costs.

'All of our staff are paid Living Wage but staff who work extra hours in evenings and weekends for events are not paid - the only option is time off in lieu as the council does not have the budget for extra hours.' **Organisation respondent**

'We do find it difficult to be able to deliver formal training to members out with the core team. This is due to lack of finances and instead we give informal/mentoring training from within the team.' **Organisation respondent**

Those working in the sector were also asked whether there was anything that they would like to see changed in relation to Fair Work practices. Around two thirds of respondents provided a response to this question. The most prevalent theme in responses was a desire for better regulation of the sector in terms of working hours, pay and conditions. Connected to this was respondents wishing to see increases in wages offered in the sector and improved benefits such as sick pay provisions or maternity leave.

Similar themes were covered in the workshop discussions with acknowledgement of the importance of the events sector making changes to comply with the Fair Work First agenda but also recognition of the challenges faced by event organisers in achieving change whilst maintaining the viability of the sector as a whole. Further sector specific guidance around compliance with the Fair Work First agenda was also referenced as being needed to inform the funding and delivery models of event organisers.

3.8   Opportunities in the Event Sector in Scotland

Feedback from respondents on opportunities in the sector highlighted that the majority did not think that there are sufficient opportunities to learn about what it is like to work in the sector, to gain the skills and experiences needed to work in the sector and to further a career in the sector (Table 3.4). A high proportion of respondents to the survey indicated that they did not know about whether there are sufficient opportunities in the sector which may provide an indication of the visibility of opportunities across the sector. Where respondents to the survey felt there were sufficient opportunities, this was most prevalent with regards to opportunities to gain the skills and experiences needed to work in the sector.

Table 3.4 Opportunities in the events sector

Rating	Opportunities in the events sector		
	Learn about what it is like to work in the sector	Gain the skills and experiences you need to work in the sector	Further a career in the sector
Yes	24%	36%	30%
No	**48%**	**43%**	**45%**
Don't know	28%	21%	25%
N=	89	89	89

Source: National Events Strategy Consultation responses from Citizen Space; most prevalent response in red

Analysis of responses by respondent type reveals the most marked difference in view in relation to the statement on opportunities to learn about what it is like to work in the sector. Around six in ten individual respondents disagreed with this statement compared with around four in ten organisation respondents (Figure 3.8 over page). Individual respondents were more likely to state that they didn't know about opportunities to further a career in the sector compared with organisation respondents.

Figure 3.8 Opportunities in the events sector: views by respondent type
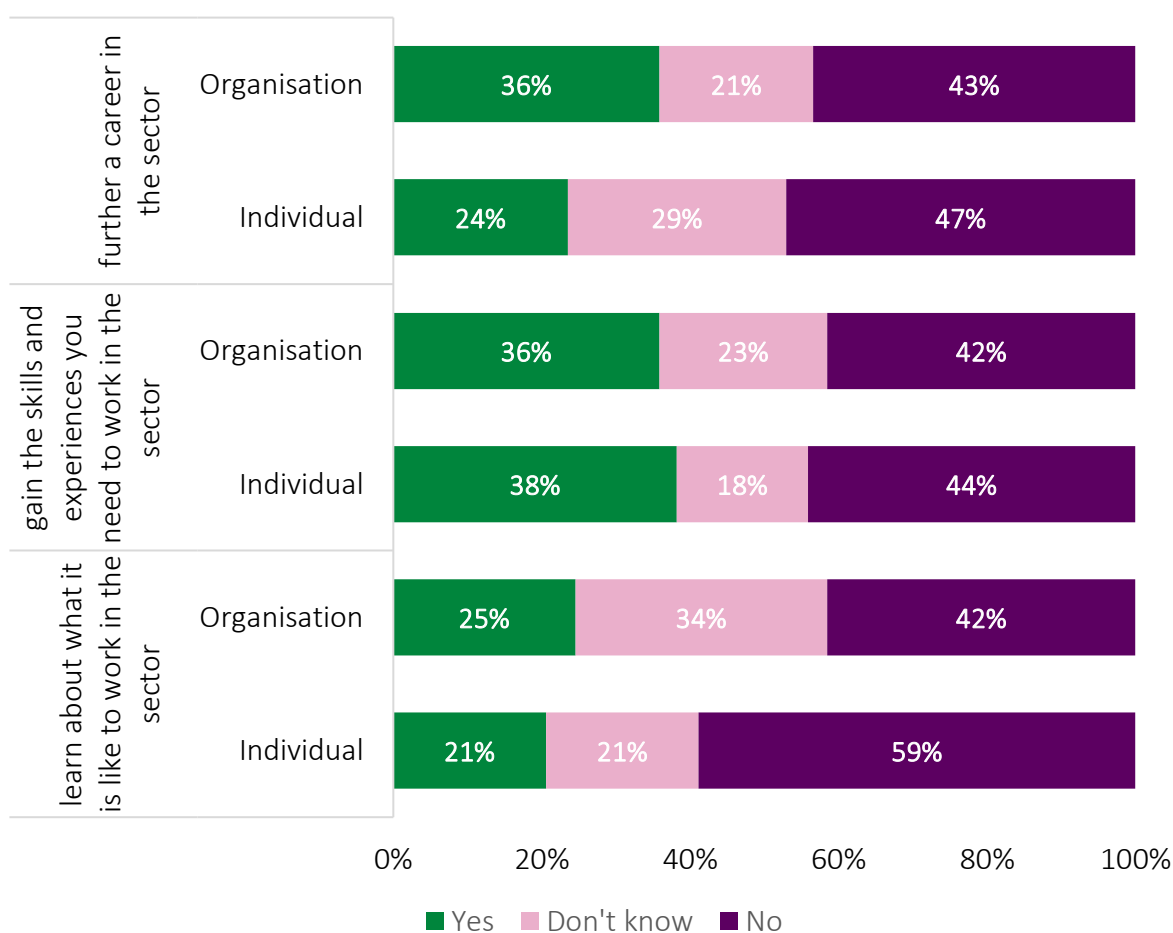
Source: National Events Strategy Consultation responses from Citizen Space; n=97

When asked how access to these opportunities could be improved, responses covered a range of areas. The most prevalent suggestions for improvement centred around better provision of training and education and increasing the use of apprenticeships, internships and work experience. Several respondents suggested that the sector needed to develop stronger links with universities and colleges who offer event management (or related) courses to offer work experience and recruit to apprenticeship roles.

'There is a lot of work that needs to be done to improve the opportunities for getting into the event sector. Internships and apprenticeship schemes are invaluable when it comes to gaining on the ground experience however, there aren't many of them, which then affects the opportunity to gain the skills and experience.' **Organisation respondent**

'The provision of skills and training will be crucial to the continued success of the events sector and will help to ensure a pipeline of employees.' **East Ayrshire Council**

'More investment is also required to diversify, develop and retain freelance and employed expertise in roles the cultural events sector, such as co-ordinator, producer, curators and visitor roles… the cultural events sector must be supported to professionalise, share good practice and invest in workforce training and development.' **Scottish Contemporary Art Network (SCAN)**

Continuing professional development and progression opportunities were also highlighted in responses as being important to help retain talent within the sector. Other ideas put forward by respondents included a need for the strategy to provide a stronger focus on promoting work in the sector, creating more networking and information sharing opportunities and support for those entering or already working in the sector, including through mentoring.

'Informing people at a younger age about what opportunities exist within the events sector.' **Individual respondent**

'There is the opportunity to engage local communities in learning more about the events industry and accessing opportunities through work experience, internships and community initiatives linked to the hosting of events.' **Organisation respondent**

Workshop discussions covered similar areas to those fed back by survey respondents but with a greater focus on issues relating to recruitment and career pathways. Discussions also fed back that stronger networking and better promotion was needed to ensure more people were aware of and attracted to opportunities in the sector.

'We're guilty of not providing enough opportunities for students to come in and gain experience. In some cases, organisers have been approached by students, but due to being short-handed can't accommodate the request. The calendar of events also presents a challenge – with less events taking place at the time of the year that would suit students.' **Dumfries workshop**

'There is a low awareness of how to find out about work opportunities and a lack of knowledge of where to go when graduating from events management courses. University course leaders also don't appear to have the answers for their students. There is a disconnect between employers, universities and those graduating.' **Inverness workshop**

3.9   Events and Environmental Sustainability

The majority of survey respondents provided views and perspectives on what would enable events to become more environmentally sustainable. The most prevalent themes evident from responses related to event organisers and the wider sector providing more information and guidance around environmental sustainability, most notably to encourage or aid those attending events to make changes to limit any negative environmental impacts from their attendance or participation.

Several respondents also suggested that guidance resources and a standardised monitoring framework could be developed and shared with organisations hosting events in Scotland. This could include existing, recognised accreditation for sustainable practice such as ISO 20121 Sustainable Event Management, guidance produced by Creative Carbon Scotland and sustainability strategy tools produced by Julie's Bicycle. Respondents indicated that quality guidance, tools and resources who aid event organisers to plan and design their events to be more environmentally sustainable.

'Ensuring people know more about how to be environmentally sustainable when they are at your event by giving them pre event information on this.' **Organisation respondent**

'Increased education and specific funding to be made available for promoters to share and invest into sustainability initiatives for their events. KPI's would need to be set but this is a huge area of growth and focus which everyone in the events industry needs to challenge themselves on to do.' **IMG UK Ltd**

'Agencies like local authorities, EventScotland and Creative Scotland should be provided with funding to create a bespoke Scottish wide sustainability manager who would be employed to create an Events sector sustainability hub and who would seek to advise the sector and co-ordinate a sectoral approach to sustainability.' **Organisation respondent**

The next most prevalent suggestion for how events could become more environmentally sustainable raised by respondents was for event organisers to ensure that their supply chains were locally sourced, that materials used are recyclable and renewable energy sources used where possible.

'There seems to be a lack of awareness of how to become more sustainable and how to access appropriate goods and services. It would be good to have a support programme in place for the sector.' **Argyll and Bute Council**

'Look at examples such as the BECTU Sustainability Hub where they are looking at low carbon power for film sets. Hydrogen has been tried for some festivals but is not practical or cost effective yet.' **Highlands and Islands Enterprise**

Other suggestions raised by respondents focused on improving public transport links to encourage and enable sustainable travel routes and setting clear environmental targets to mitigate negative impacts.

'Subsidised green transport associated with each event created as a necessary condition for funding.' **Castle Douglas Development Forum**

'Improved public transport connectivity and safe active travel encouragement.' **Organisation respondent**

Within the workshop sessions, a common theme around making events more environmentally sustainable was a desire for more information, guidance or support for event organisers.

'Organisers don't have a good sense of what an environmentally sustainable event looks like, they need to be educated. It's such a big field and there's so much information out there a one stop shop is needed.' **Dumfries workshop**

'Events Scotland can provide recommendations on small, low cost changes relevant to events. Events are struggling to make it work for them and need guidance on ideas and best practice.' **Scottish Borders workshop**

Workshop participants also concurred with survey respondents about the potential for event organisers to better use local supply chains, use renewable energy sources and limit single use containers for food and beverages. A small number of references were made in workshop sessions to a need for an alignment of national and local policy to support the sector.

'[It] would be good to have one central point / resource where event organisers access a key suppliers list for sustainable supplies. There is a sense of everybody reinventing the wheel at the moment – all doing the same research to find the right suppliers and support– if this info could be held centrally by EventScotland it would be easier.' **Edinburgh workshop**

3.10 Financial Sustainability of Events

A range of views were provided by survey respondents on the sources of income that the events sector should be developing to be financially sustainable. A number of responses related to securing sponsorship or working towards diversifying event organisers revenue streams such as through corporate partnerships, advertising and branding.

'More sponsorship opportunities... national and international companies spreading their sponsorship across smaller and more sustainable events.'
Organisation respondent

'I think events need a number of income streams and need to be creative to always be thinking "can this make us money?" or "how does this save us money?".' **Individual respondent**

Sponsorship is often a key income source for events however there has been a shift in the objectives of the organisations that would usually sponsor events from media exposure and hosting to a more corporate social responsibility perspective, seeking deeper, longer-term benefits for communities.' **Glasgow Life**

Other sources of income referenced by respondents to the survey, in order of frequency, were through the award of public funding or from ticket sales. Some respondents to the survey emphasised the importance of core public funding in supporting many events and the risks associated with overreliance on ticket sales.

'Public funding for culture in the UK and Scotland is a third less than the EU average. The events sector is precarious and needs the stability of regular funding... Local Authority funding should be encouraged where possible... multi-year funding is crucial to see long term impacts and support planning cycles.'
Culture Counts

A smaller proportion of respondents felt that the events sector should be developing collaborative partnerships with other sectors (e.g. Food and Drink or Tourism) or looking at generating income streams through online delivery

The importance of public sector support was highlighted in workshop sessions. Workshop participants emphasised the need for public sector financial support to implement sustainable measures and achieve long-term goals.

Workshop participants noted that the use of short-term (i.e. 1 year) funding agreements can be a barrier to effective planning given that many event organisers often work on multi-year timeframes. One of the views expressed in the workshop sessions was that the use of short-term funding approaches can lead to uncertainties and 'reactionary decision-making' with participants stated a need for medium-term thinking and strategic investment to support event organisers in developing propositions that can be executed with consistent budgets and achieve stronger impacts for local communities and society as a whole.

Another theme evident in the workshop discussions was a need for adequate resources (not restricted to funding), guidance and leadership from local authorities to support the events sector to become financially sustainable.

3.11 Measuring the Importance of Events

A range of themes emerged from responses to the question on what would support the event sector to measure the importance of events. What is evident from the body of responses is differing levels of technical knowledge, experience and confidence in measuring different aspects of events, including but not restricted to their importance. Respondents commonly highlighted the lack of standardisation and cited a desire for better sharing of measurement approaches and practices.

The most frequent suggestion evident in responses related to support for the capture of data from audiences and participants and turning these into impactful case studies. Several respondents to the survey suggested that data on measuring the importance and impact of events should be captured on an annual basis at a national level. However, survey respondents also highlighted the cost and resource implications of capturing robust and systematic data to measure the importance of events and that approaches were needed that were appropriate for the scale and focus of different types of events.

'There are clear resource implications in terms of carrying out impact assessments which require funding and staffing resources. The costs associated with organising events have increased significantly in recent years and many organisers are simply unable to afford formal assessments.' **East Ayrshire Council**

'A research survey template would be beneficial to ensure that all events in the country are measuring the same points to ensure the sample is relevant. Things like economic impact reports are great to have for shouting about the value of events however, they are very expensive to produce and not something that every event organiser can afford to do so, support with templates, cheaper alternatives or free ways to do these would go a long way.' **Organisation respondent**

The next most common suggestion put forward by around one in four survey responses included support for measuring the direct and indirect economic impact of their events. A few survey respondents suggested that a standardised assessment should be undertaken nationally each year to enable the economic impact and contribution of events to be measured and monitored through agreed KPIs.

> 'There are various ways to showcase the economic and social impact of an event. One effective method is through the use of multipliers, which can be utilized as a standard for assessing the economic value of business events.'
> **Organisation respondent**

A similar proportion of responses to the survey stated that guidance was needed to help event organisers to learn about different data collection methods and provide access to standardised templates and validated survey tools. This was particularly so to enable a balanced assessment of the importance of events for both economic and social objectives.

> 'Strong measures of economic impacts as well as an understanding that benefits of events are substantial, including the beyond tourism impacts, and the general benefits they deliver to our society, including in terms of improving wellbeing and connections.' **Convention Edinburgh**

A smaller proportion of respondents to the survey specifically referenced a need for support with measuring the wellbeing impacts of events. A handful of respondents referenced a desire for establishing collaborations with universities to help them measure the impact of events and for opportunities to share learning and showcase measurement approaches and practice.

> 'Could we look at greater links with academia, or how students could be linked to events, almost 'adopt a festival' so that greater data analysis could be undertaken.' **Highlands and Islands Enterprise**

Less than half of respondents to the survey provided a response to the request to submit evidence on the measurable impacts of events. By some distance, the evidence base put forward focused on reports covering the economic impacts of events. A small number of survey respondents also provided examples of impact reports that, whilst not directly focused on events, could provide a useful model to be adopted by event organisers in Scotland. Specifically referenced publications included:[3]

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[3] Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of all of the research evidence submitted by survey respondents.

- British Future (2022)- 'Seizing the Moment': Why Events Matter for Social Connection and Shared Identity. A report commissioned by Spirit of 2012 for their Events Inquiry.
- BOP Consulting (2022)- 'Economic Impact of the Edinburgh Festivals'.
- RYA Scotland (2023)- 'Impact Report Year 1 2022-23- People, Places and Communities'.
- BOP Consulting (2023)- 'PlaCE Programme- Interim Report: Year 1-3'.

Many survey respondents did not specifically include a link or report reference in their response but rather offered to provide further details on request.

Workshop sessions discussed similar themes to the consultation responses, recognising a need to balance both economic and social/community aspects of events. The most frequent points raised in the workshop discussions were around a need for guidance and resources for event organisers to support measurement planning and activity (either from EventScotland or those funding events). Within this, some workshop participants suggested that consideration could be given to establishing a dedicated team in Visit Scotland or EventScotland to support evaluation work across the sector. As with survey responses, wellbeing measurement featured consistency across the workshop sessions.

'If everybody from events had access to a framework with financial support this would be key so there can be a consistent data gathering exercise for all events that can be tailored between events.' **Glasgow workshop**

3.12 Role of Events in Promoting Scotland Internationally

Respondents provided a range of views on the ways in which events can promote Scotland internationally. The most prevalent response focused on Scotland showcasing the diversity of its culture internationally and challenging or changing stereotypes or misconceptions about Scotland as a nation. Respondents emphasised that events provide a valuable contribution to raising the profile of Scotland internationally as an aspirational destination and helping to grow the visitor economy. Survey responses also referenced the role of events in promoting Scotland's world class facilities which could support efforts to attract overseas business and investment.

'Showcase landscapes, attractions, food and drink, Scotland as an aspirational destination, more than just tartan and castles.' **Individual respondent**

'Scotland's global reputation for its population being fun, friendly and good natured should be both harnessed and enhanced by our events.' **Glasgow International Comedy Festival**

Within these views, several respondents cited the important contribution that events make in fostering and supporting international collaboration, creativity and learning. Their ability to provide a platform for Scotland's artists and cultural organisations to promote themselves on an international stage was also highlighted in some responses.

'Not only do events help to promote Scotland as a place to live, work, visit and study, but by gathering together people from across the world, they also help to create an unparalleled hothouse for international exchange of new creative ideas, skills development and learning.' **Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce**

'Events provide significant profile for Scotland's artists, institutions and places internationally. International working is intrinsic to the contemporary art sector, and is closely aligned with values of education, reciprocity, exchange, and shared ambition. Contemporary artists and arts organisations look to international peers for mutual artistic exchange, shared endeavour and joint approaches to current questions and challenges.' **Scottish Contemporary Art Network (SCAN)**

The next most prevalent response centred on Scotland competing to host more mega/international events. Several respondents commented that the process of investing time and resource into bidding for and hosting high profile events in turn helped to attract future events to Scotland.

'Mega events will be televised world-wide so provide a unique advertising opportunity that is not available through other channels. These types of events also show what we are capable of delivering which in turn has a positive impact on the likelihood of smaller scale events considering Scotland as a viable destination.' **Individual respondent**

Respondents to the consultation also highlighted the importance of events in promoting diversity and inclusivity, in raising the profile of Scotland internationally to support efforts to attract overseas investment and in showcasing Scotland at the forefront of the environmental sustainability agenda.

'Events that include Gaelic language and culture demonstrate the diversity of Scotland. They provide authentic/unique experiences not available in other countries.' **Organisation respondent**

'We can see the success of Scandinavia selling themselves across, TV and film, literature, design, wellbeing, environment and so on. Scotland could take a very similar approach to how we present ourselves to be in that space.' **Highlands and Islands Enterprise**

'CRER is concerned with the way in which Scotland is perceived from a race equality standpoint. This means that when discussing international events and the reputation of Scotland, one must consider how black and minority ethnic contributions are included. Only with black and minority ethnic communities involved in events can there be a sense of pride and confidence at a national level.' **CRER**

Discussion on the ways in which events can promote Scotland internationally was not addressed directly or consistency across all workshop sessions. As such, it is not possible to compare survey responses to workshop themes.

3.13 Views on Priorities for Mega Events

Common themes expressed in responses on the specific aims that they would prioritise for mega events included ensuring that they provide clear benefits for local communities, such as using local suppliers and enabling local participation, as well as skills development opportunities for those that work or volunteer in the events sector. These two areas stand out most prominently in the survey responses with a common reference to ensuring a legacy is achieved, for example by handing over event facilities for the use of local communities, strengthening local supply chains or through building local skills and capacity through training opportunities.

'Priorities for those events that are externally produced, must be around legacy: e.g. improvements to infrastructure, job creation and economic generation.' **Scottish Contemporary Art Network (SCAN)**

'One specific aim that we do believe should be prioritised is investment in the local supply chain, as well as a commitment to ensure the majority of the economic benefit is retained within the local economy, through a commitment to using local suppliers and creating jobs locally.' **Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce**

Within their response to this question, many respondents reinforced the importance of ensuring a balance of event size across Scotland, including homegrown and smaller-scale events which their feedback stating could equally provide many of the envisaged or desired benefits from mega events. Also referenced by several survey respondents was a need to ensure that mega events were hosted across Scotland and not just within the main cities

Notably a handful of survey respondents suggested that the definition of mega events used for the consultation was too narrow and needed to be revised, recognising that Scotland has its own homegrown regular rather than one-off mega events.

Discussions on mega events within the workshop sessions focused mainly on a desire for mega events to prioritise creating development opportunities for those working in the events industry and ensuring sustainable legacies. Benefits for local communities in terms of boosting the local economy also featured strongly. Several contributors to the workshop sessions questioned the overarching justification for or assumptions around the value provided by mega events.

'Mega events are a short-term win but with all the effort and cost that goes into them they must have lasting impact. What does each deliver in the long term for the whole of Scotland i.e. out with the central belt, and what's their value to all regions.' **Oban workshop**

'If there is no legacy then there is no reason to host mega events.' **Glasgow workshop**

3.14 Delivering Positive Impacts for Society

The survey asked respondents to what extent they agreed or disagreed that event organisers make connections between events and their ability to deliver broader positive impacts for society. The majority (61%) of those responding to the survey reported positively and agreed that event organisers did make connections between events and their ability to deliver broader positive impacts for society (Figure 3.9). One in five respondents (20%) neither agreed nor disagreed and a similar proportion (17%) disagreed with the statement.

Figure 3.9 Views on whether event organisers make connections between events and delivery broader positive impacts for society
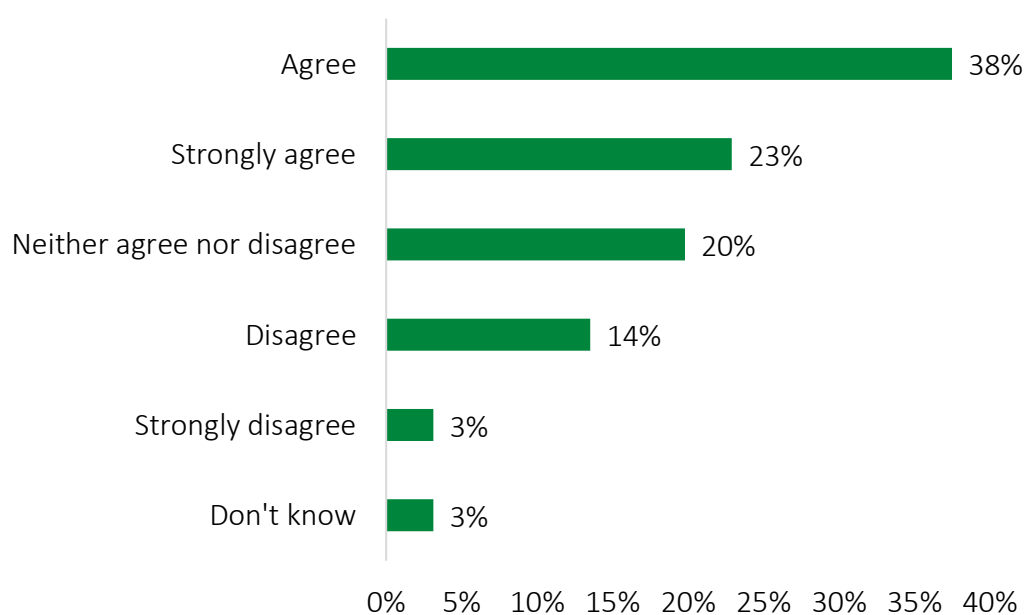
Source: National Events Strategy Consultation responses from Citizen Space; n=96

Analysis of responses by respondent type reveals that individual respondents reported higher levels of disagreement with this statement than organisation respondents and were also more likely to state that they neither agreed nor disagreed (Figure 3.10).

Figure 3.10 Views on whether event organisers make connections between events and delivery broader positive impacts for society by respondent type
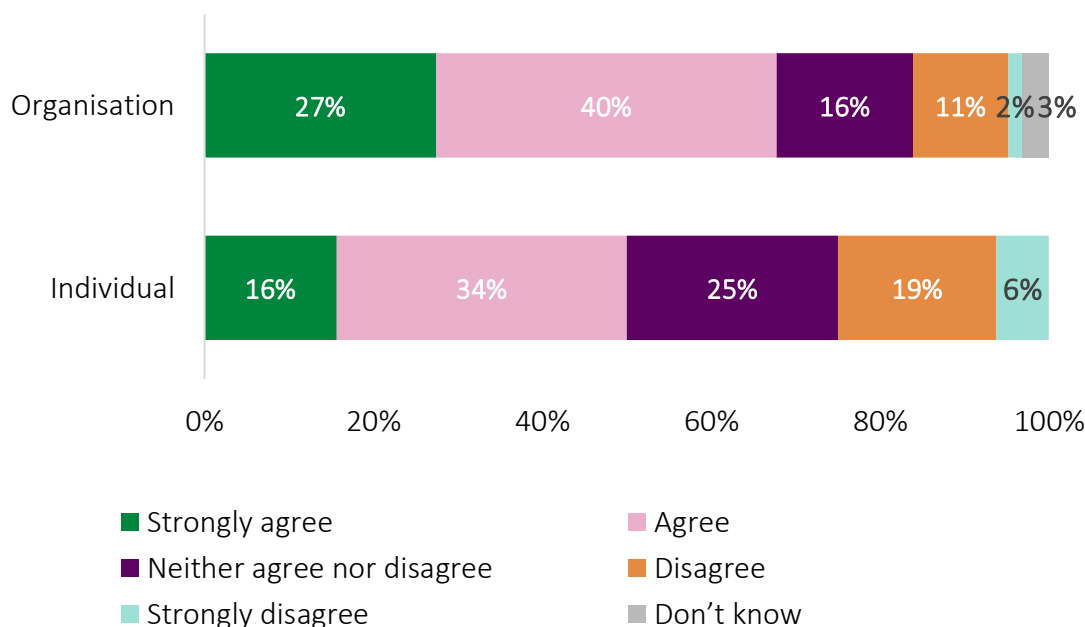
Source: National Events Strategy Consultation responses from Citizen Space; n=94

Respondents were encouraged to provide any evidence on how event organisers are working together with local and/or national bodies to deliver outcomes. Just over half of respondents provided a response to this request. One aspect highlighted by respondents was the events sector working with mental health charities and other partners to promote, support and improve mental health and wellbeing of their workforce, audiences and participants.

'Arts and cultural events have been known to positively impact social well-being through their ability to build social capacity. Organisers collaborate with local artists, performers, and community groups to showcase talent, cultural diversity, and creativity, thereby fostering a sense of belonging and connection among participants.' **Culture Counts**

'[The Mull of Kintyre Music Festival] ran music tuition workshops in Campbeltown Grammar Schools and students helped as volunteers in setting up the halls including helping with the sound and lighting production teams.' **Organisation respondent**

Other key areas evident in the responses was in providing training and development opportunities (in particular for young people) and in collaborating with organisations such as Green Tourism and the Green Blue programme of the RYA [Royal Yachting Association] and British Marine to support and promote environmental sustainability, green initiatives and active travel.

> 'Bringing more events to the area gives the opportunity to employ more staff, we regularly work with local students, providing opportunities for experience in the events sector. The team also provide mentoring to events students locally each year.' **Individual respondent**
>
> 'Partnerships with companies large (First Bus) and small (Velo-City Deliveries) to promote the use of public transport and active travel across the city during the festival.' **Glasgow International Comedy Festival**
>
> 'We created the TGWSO [Trust Golf Women's Scottish Open] On The Green brand in 2022 which showcased the sustainability initiatives that were delivered for the tournament.' **IMG UK Ltd**

Several contributors to this call for evidence also indicated that event organisers were working with community groups, charities, networks and membership bodies to encourage participation, to reach underrepresented groups in their audience profile and to promote specific causes. Examples included collaborations with the Scottish Ethnic Minority Sports Association (SEMSA), the Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH) and High Life Highland.

Respondents were asked if there was anything else that should be considered as part of impact assessments for the events sector. No clear consensus or themes emerged from the responses provided which suggests that the previous questions had elicited the views of respondents. The small number of ideas and suggestions put forward included:

- The impact of new technologies on the events sector (workforce and audiences)
- Research on the impact of events on housing, most notably the use of short-term lets
- The contribution of events to supporting the Gaelic language
- Benchmarking of licensing and policing costs across Scotland
- The impact of volunteerism in the events sector
- Research on the long-term impacts of mega events
- The impact of the current 'cost of living crisis' on attendance and participation rates, in particular for lower income households
- Examples of good practice of event organisers collaborating with equality groups, in particular in the early stages of a planning process.

3.15 Suggested Changes for the Current Strategy

Just under half of respondents suggested any other changes to the current National Events Strategy. No clear themes or prevalent views are evident in the responses but with a range of suggestions such as a need to consider the content of Brexit, the post-pandemic recovery and the current 'cost of living' crisis, to differentiate between events of different sizes and types and enabling more collaboration between event organisers and funders.

From the workshop sessions the key changes suggested related to a desire for the strategy to enable and facilitate more collaboration between event organisers and funders, government, the private sector and academia. Similar to survey respondents, workshop discussions also highlighted a need for the strategy to highlight or showcase the importance of different types of events and events delivered at different scales.

4. Summary

This report provides an independent analysis of responses to the National Events Strategy Consultation. Drawing on the formal responses submitted by individuals and organisations with an interest in the National Events Strategy, along with discussions at the regional engagement workshops and the sector workshop, it presents the analysis of the extent of agreement with the ambition outlined in the strategy, views on its strategic priorities and opinions on the enablers and barriers facing the sector. Our analysis finds strong support for the proposed ambition outlined in the strategy, both from organisations and individuals responding to the survey. Responses recognise the importance of the ambition in driving stronger economic and social benefits for Scotland.

The responses suggest that boosting the economy and the events sector contributing to enhancing well-being and community engagement are considered by respondents to be the most important strategic priorities. The responses also show that the majority of those responding to the survey rated all five priorities as either very important or important. The most suggested other strategic priorities that survey respondents felt should be included in the refreshed strategy centred around promoting inward investment and including a greater focus on equalities, diversity and inclusion.

Those responding to the consultation emphasised the importance of events creating a welcoming, inspiring, enjoyable atmosphere, of being accessible and inclusive and the event experience being high quality. These were identified as key ingredients of creating an excellent event experience.

Views on the events sector in Scotland vary. There was greatest agreement from survey respondents that events are welcoming and least agreement that they are affordable. The main reasons provided by survey respondents for not attending the events they would like were their affordability, accessibility and transport issues (or a perception of these factors). The issue of transport connectivity was raised regularly across the survey responses and in workshop sessions.

Consultation responses reveal mixed views on the extent to which event organisers involve communities in the planning of events they hold or communicate how the event taking place with affect them, although there is consensus that effective engagement and involvement of communities is not just desirable but essential to achieve positive benefits.

The majority of survey respondents agreed that the diversity of events is very important, in particular the spread of location. This issue was raised across responses to several of the consultation questions. The main barrier to achieving greater diversity of events across Scotland highlighted by survey respondents was inadequate infrastructure and challenges associated with accessing sufficient funding to resource a diverse range of events.

Although a majority of people responding to the survey think that the event sector is an attractive place to work, around one in six disagree. The events sector is viewed positively as being engaging and collaborative as well as supporting the development of transferable skills and enabling flexibility. However, responses to the consultation also highlight issues relating to a lack of job security, low pay, long hours and a reliance on volunteers. Key changes needed in relation to Fair Work practices included better regulation of the sector in terms of working hours, pay and conditions. The majority of those responding to the survey also did not think that there are sufficient opportunities to learn about what it is like to work in the sector, to gain the skills and experiences needed to work in the sector and to further a career in the sector.

A range of views were expressed in relation to the steps needed to enable events to become more environmentally sustainable. The most prevalent themes included more information and guidance around environmental sustainability being made available to event organisers, most notably to encourage or aid those attending events to make changes to limit any environmental impacts from their attendance or participation. Several respondents suggested that a standardised monitoring framework could be developed and shared with organisations hosting events in Scotland. The next most prevalent suggestions were for event organisers to ensure that their supply chains were locally sourced, that materials used are recyclable and renewable energy sources used where possible.

With regards to supporting the events sector to become more financially sustainable, the most prevalent responses related to securing sponsorship or working towards diversifying event organisers revenue streams. Some respondents emphasised the importance of core public funding in supporting events and the risks associated with overreliance on ticket sales. The importance of public sector support was highlighted in workshop sessions with participants emphasising a need for public sector financial support to implement sustainable measures and achieve long-term goals.

What is evident from the body of responses on measuring the importance of events is different levels of technical knowledge, experience and confidence in measuring different aspects of events. Respondents commonly highlighted the lack of standardisation and cited a desire for better sharing of measurement approaches and practices.

Common themes expressed in responses on the specific aims that should be prioritised for mega events included ensuring that they provide clear benefits for local communities, such as using local suppliers and enabling local participation, as well as skills development opportunities for those that work or volunteer in the events sector. These two areas stand out most prominently in the survey responses with a common reference to ensuring a legacy is achieved. Notably several contributors to the workshop sessions questioned the overarching justification for or assumptions around the value provided by mega events.

Less than half of survey respondents suggested any other changes to the current strategy. No clear themes or prevalent views could be identified in these responses, but rather a desire for the strategy to consider the content of Brexit, the post-pandemic recovery and the current 'cost of living' crisis. Consultation responses also requested that the strategy should differentiate between events of different sizes and types and enable more collaboration between event organisers and funders.

Appendix 1- Consultation Questions

Question 1: To what extent do you support, or oppose the proposed Ambition?

- Strongly oppose
- Oppose
- Neutral
- Support
- Strongly support
- Don't know

Question 2: How important do you think each of these strategic priorities are for events over the next ten years? Give a score of one to five for each, where one is not important at all and five is very important, or "don't know":

- Boosting the economy
- Enhancing well-being and community engagement
- Contributing to the drive towards net zero and environmental sustainability
- Making the event sector a better place to work
- Showcasing and promoting Scotland's assets

Question 3: What other strategic priorities, (if any), do you think should be included in a refreshed strategy?

Question 4: People attend events for a range of different reasons. Can you identify what is important for you in creating an excellent event experience?

Question 5: To what extent do you agree, or disagree that events in Scotland are:

- Accessible (strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree or disagree, disagree, strongly agree, or don't know)
- Affordable (strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree or disagree, disagree, strongly agree, or don't know)
- Inclusive (strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree or disagree, disagree, strongly agree, or don't know)
- Welcoming (strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree or disagree, disagree, strongly agree, or don't know)

Question 6: We are also interested in knowing about why people might not be able to attend events. Can you identify any reasons for not attending the events you would like to?

Question 7: To what extent do you agree, or not, that event organisers involve communities in planning the events they hold?

- Strongly oppose
- Oppose
- Neutral
- Support
- Strongly support
- Don't know

Question 8: To what extent do you agree, or not, that event organisers communicate about how the events taking place will affect local people?

- Strongly oppose
- Oppose
- Neutral
- Support
- Strongly support
- Don't know

Question 9: How could the benefits of events be increased for local communities?

Question 10: How important is the diversity of events in Scotland in terms of each of the following? Give a score of one to five for each, where one is not important at all and five is very important, or "don't know":

- Range of size
- Spread of location
- Variety of type

Question 11: What barriers, if any, are there to holding a diversity of events in Scotland?

Question 12: Do you think the event sector is an attractive place to work?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Question 13: Please tell us why you selected yes, no or don't know here.

Question 14: If you work in the event sector, what are your experiences of Fair Work practices in the sector?

Question 15: If you work in the event sector, is there anything you would like to see change in relation to Fair Work practices?

Question 16: Do you think there are sufficient opportunities to do each of the following? Give an answer of yes, no, or don't know for each:

- Learn about what it is like to work in the sector
- Gain the skills and experiences you need to work in the sector
- Further a career in the sector
- Learn from the lessons and good practice of others in the sector

Question 17: How do you think access to these opportunities could be improved?

Question 18: What do you think would enable events to become more environmentally sustainable?

Question 19: What sources of income do you think events should be developing to be financially sustainable?

Question 20: What would support the event sector to measure the importance of events?

Question 21: We would welcome evidence on the measurable impacts of events, particularly those held in Scotland. This could include, but is not limited to impacts on:

- Local business
- Job opportunities
- Opportunities for participants to develop skills
- Environment
- Health and wellbeing of individuals or groups
- Community connections and cohesion
- Promoting diversity
- Profile and promotion of your area

Question 22: In what way do you think events can promote Scotland internationally?

Question 23: What specific aims would you prioritise for mega events?

Question 24: To what extent do you agree or disagree that event organisers make connections between events and their ability to deliver broader positive impacts for society?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Question 25: We would welcome evidence on how event organisers are working together with local and/or national bodies to deliver outcomes. This could include, but is not limited to:

- Delivering events that have a positive impact on wellbeing
- Meeting the needs of local people
- Being more environmentally sustainable
- Supporting local business
- Attracting people to work in events
- Developing the event workforce

Question 26: If there is anything else that you think we should be considering as part of impact assessments, please give details here.

Question 27: If there are any other changes to the current National Events Strategy you wish to see, please give details here.

Appendix 2- Consultation Respondents

Citizen Space Survey

The following organisations and individuals provided a response to the Citizen Space survey and gave permission for their name to be published in the report.

Organisations

- Argyll and Bute Council
- Arran Pride
- British Marine Scotland
- British Rowing
- Castle Douglas Development Forum; Buskers spoken word and performance company; Performance Collective Stranraer
- Convention Edinburgh
- Crawick Multiverse Trust
- Creative Carbon Scotland
- Creative Edinburgh
- CRER
- Culture Counts
- East Ayrshire Council
- Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce
- Edinburgh International Festival
- Festivals Edinburgh
- Glasgow International Comedy Festival
- Glasgow Life
- Highlands and Islands Enterprise
- IMG UK Ltd
- Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland
- Renfrewshire Council
- Scottish Arts Trust
- Scottish Contemporary Art Network (SCAN)
- Scottish Grocers' Federation
- Spirit of 2012
- sportscotland
- The Highland Council
- The National Piping Centre
- The Scottish Football Association Limited
- The Scottish Traditional Boat Festival organised by Portsoy Community Enterprise

Individuals

- Andrew Ormston
- Bob MacFarlane
- Danny Anderson
- Gordon Hodge
- Nikki Pearce
- Wyn Fanshawe

Workshop participants

The following organisations participated in the workshop sessions and gave permission for their name to be published in the report. Please note some organisations were represented by more than one representative across the sessions.

- 2023 UCI Cycling World Championships
- 21CC Group Ltd
- Aberdeen City Council
- Aberdeen FC
- Aberdeenshire Council
- AJL Marketing Ltd / Hill & Glen Scotland
- Argyll and Bute Council
- Belladrum Festival / The Gathering Festival
- Blair Castle International Horse Trials
- Bòrd na Gàidhlig
- Border Union Agricultural Society
- Branches & All
- British Kabaddi League
- Caledonian Concepts
- Capital Theatres
- Castle Douglas Development Forum
- Ceangail CIC
- Celtic Connections
- City of Edinburgh Council
- Citymoves Dance Agency
- CM Communications
- Courtyard by Marriott Inverness Airport
- Crawick Multiverse Trust
- Creative Edinburgh
- Cryptic
- Curated Place
- Curl Aberdeen
- Dumfries & Galloway Council
- Dundee City Council
- Dundee Heritage Trust
- Durty Events

- East Dunbartonshire Council
- Eden Court Highlands
- Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society
- Edinburgh Napier University
- Edinburgh Science Foundation
- Erskine Veterans Charity
- EVENTIT
- Fèis Rois
- Festivals Edinburgh
- Four Pillars
- Fringe by the Sea
- Genuine / SRD
- Glasgow Film Festival
- Glasgow International
- Glasgow International Comedy Festival Ltd
- Glasgow Life
- Glasgow Science Centre
- HebCelt Festival
- Hickory
- High Life Highland
- Hillside Outside Ltd
- Imaginate/WCCF
- IMG
- International Canoe Federation
- Ironworks Venue
- JMP3 Ltd (Jeffrey Music Promotions)
- JR Events & Sales
- Killin Music Fest
- Kirkcudbright Summer Festivities
- Lammermuir Festival
- LCC Live
- Leisure & Culture Dundee
- Moray Council
- Mull Rally

- National Trust for Scotland
- North Ayrshire Council
- Orkney 2025
- Orkney International Science Festival
- Orkney Islands Council
- Ourea Events
- P&J Live Aberdeen
- Party At The Palace
- Perth and Kinross Council
- Prostate Cancer UK
- Recast
- Renfrewshire Council
- Robert Gordon University
- Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Development Trust
- Royal Highland Agricultural Society of Scotland
- Royal Highland Centre
- Saltire Society
- Scone Palace
- Scottish Borders Council
- Scottish Football Association
- Scottish Land & Estates
- Scottish Squash
- South of Scotland Destinaton Alliance
- St Andrews Botanic Garden
- Still Going Strong Ltd
- Stranraer Development Trust
- The Highland Council
- The National Piping Centre
- The Rockfield Centre
- This is EventoS
- Tiree Music Festival CIC
- UK Sport
- UNESCO City of Design Dundee / Dundee Design Festival
- Unique Events Ltd
- University of Aberdeen
- University of Dundee
- University of Edinburgh

- University of Edinburgh Hospitality & Events Collection
- University of the West of Scotland
- VisitAberdeenshire (Aberdeen Convention Bureau)
- VisitCairngorms / Cairngorms Business Partnership
- Wasp Studios (Inverness)
- Wraptheworld

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