



## **Major Festivals and Events Strategy 2018 - 2021**

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## 1. Introduction

1.1 This Strategy follows on from the original Major Festivals and Events Strategy, 2014-2018 (MFES), which helped create a distinctive and well performing economic sector in the region – the major events sector. Dumfries and Galloway Council has led on the preparation of this follow on Strategy, and will be the Lead Agency to oversee its delivery and monitor its impacts.

1.2 Since 2005, the Council and its partners have invested in three consecutive strategies designed to develop capacity, skills and experience in major events. The cumulative effect of these strategies has been the gradual emergence of a clearly identifiable and sustainable portfolio of major events based in and rooted in Dumfries and Galloway. This Strategy aims to build on previous public sector investment in major events to deliver economic regeneration across our communities and the region as a whole. Similarly to its predecessor, the MFES, this Strategy recognises that it is the major, nationally significant events based in the region that generate the most important economic, cultural, sporting and community benefits.

1.3 The Major Festivals and Events Strategy 2018-2021 (MFES 2018-2021) is aligned with Dumfries and Galloway's Regional Tourism Strategy, Scotland the Perfect Stage, Scotland's Events Strategy 2015-2025, the Council's Plan 2017-2022 and the Regional Economic Strategy. The links to these Plans and Strategies are provided in **Annex 1**.

1.4 It is a holistic regional Strategy that invites agencies, communities and events organisations to join forces to take forward great events in partnership, and to position Dumfries and Galloway as a leading destination for high quality rural festivals and events. There is a clear thread of best practice that can be taken from MFES and developed further and implemented in MFES 2018-2021.

## 2. Definitions

2.1 MFES 2018-2021 will continue with the definition of a major event, under the terms of the Strategy, as being:-

- An event which attracts 1000 or more unique visitors
- An event that operates on a net budget that exceeds £30,000
- An event that is marketing to a quantifiable set/target market of out of region visitors
- An event that can demonstrate an excellent return on public sector investment

2.2 As well as the criteria to be defined as a major festival or event under the terms of this Strategy, our funded major events require to have one or more of the following quality benchmarks:-

- They should be recognised as being within the top 3 to 5 events of their kind, in their theme or subject matter, within Scotland
- They may have a special, protected status within a sporting calendar e.g. Scottish, European or World Championships, and draw competitors from across Scotland, the UK and further afield

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- They should have excellent management, capable of responding to all of the challenges that face nationally significant festivals and events, with effective leadership and a strong sense of purpose

### 2.3 The Aim of the MFES 2018 - 2021

The aim of the MFES 2018 – 2021 is to develop and sustain Dumfries and Galloway as an internationally renowned rural events destination that continuously attracts new visitors to the region.

2.4 We will achieve this by nurturing and funding major events which are memorable, vibrant, colourful, authentic and creative, and which highlight and capitalise upon the unique appeal and landscape of Dumfries and Galloway.

2.5 A festival or event can be defined as a special programme of themed activities that take place separately to normal ongoing sports, cultural, community or heritage programmes. They may be held annually but are confined to a limited amount of time.

## 3. Context

3.1 In the Autumn of 2016, the Council conducted an 'in-house' Review of Effectiveness into the delivery and impacts of MFES 2014-2017. The Review identified positive outcomes from the delivery of the MFES in its first three years of operations.

3.2 At the time of the Review, 38 grants had been awarded to 18 separate events organisations, committed to delivering major events in the region. The cumulative total economic impact of the supported events was quantified as £17.647m. The events in questions had attracted 43.9% of their total audiences of 161,730 people from outwith Dumfries and Galloway. The Council's investment of £764,500 was therefore calculated as safeguarding and stimulating more than £23 of expenditure in the regional economy for every £1 spent on the MFES.

3.3 The Review of Effectiveness was endorsed and the importance of MFES as an economic stimulus for the region was accepted and reaffirmed by the Council. The MFES was continued for one final year, to continue to provide support and stability to the major events sector, and to allow for the preparation of this Strategy, MFES 2018-2021.

3.4 The preparation of this Strategy has a different context to the research and design of the original MFES – MFES 2018-2021's aim is to support the sustainability and ongoing excellence of the major events sector that has emerged in the past five years, rather than the previous Strategy's aim of developing and coordinating this new sector. When the term 'sustainability' is used in this Strategy, it means to keep an event or our overall sector continuing at similar or higher levels of impacts as the present, if at all possible.

3.5 The Strategy has been prepared in consultation with the major events of the region, and the partner agencies that provided wise counsel – but not funding – for helping to oversee the successful delivery of MFES.

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3.6 Tourism now, as it was in 2013, during the period of research into MFES, remains one of the region's key industries. Tourism requires active support and development to create a profile for Dumfries and Galloway, facilitate collaboration between our SME business base and public agencies and create competitive advantages for the region through bespoke Strategies.

3.7 The Strategy has been prepared in full appreciation of the limited resources public agencies can contribute to festivals and events development. MFES 2018-2021, like its predecessor, will place a premium on reporting on the Public Return on Investment.

3.8 The delivery of this Strategy forms part of the Council's Plan 2017-2022.

#### **4. Development of the Strategy**

4.1 This Strategy has been prepared in close consultation with the Dumfries and Galloway Events Partnership and the major festivals and events of our region.

4.2 The Council established the Dumfries and Galloway Events Partnership, to oversee the delivery of the original MFES. The Dumfries and Galloway Events Partnership comprises: Dumfries and Galloway Council, Dumfries and Galloway Chamber of the Arts, Dumfries and Galloway Chamber of Commerce, EventScotland, VisitScotland, Third Sector First and the Crichton Institute.

4.3 The Strategy was prepared using the Council's best practice Policy Development and Review Framework. The Events Partnership were in agreement with the process and methodology of researching and preparing this new Events Strategy for the region. This process has been driven by a detailed programme of consultation which has included:-

- A comprehensive online survey for all MFES funded events to complete
- Two dedicated Strategy workshops with the partner agencies of the Council
- Sharing the new draft Strategy at early and final draft stages with the agencies of the Events Partnership for their comments and input
- Meeting with Officers of EventScotland to ensure close alignment between the national events strategy, 'Scotland, the Perfect Stage' and our regional Strategy
- Sharing the new draft Strategy with the Signature Events for comment
- Sharing the new draft Strategy with the Council's Heads of Service for their review

4.4 It is clear from all consultation undertaken that there should be a high degree of continuity between the current MFES and this continuation Strategy, the Major Festivals and Events Strategy, 2018 - 2021.

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4.5 It is appreciated by all regional stakeholders and EventScotland, the Events Directorate of VisitScotland, that the foundation for future economic regeneration and events growth in Dumfries and Galloway is based upon the interplay between the Council, partner agencies and existing major events. In the consultation period for the preparation of this Strategy, events organisations reported that they believe their existing events to be highly sustainable; they have good management systems in place to guide their development and are optimistic that they can create further visitor growth – to the benefit of the regional economy. They have limited financial reserves however, which is the most significant threat to their resilience.

4.6 This Strategy seeks to safeguard the region's Public Goods Events. The Public Goods Events have unique properties which require public funding to sustain them for the regional population. MFES 2018-2021 recognises the particular importance of seven Public Goods Events and seeks them to be embraced as the Signature Events of Dumfries and Galloway. These events, of outstanding cultural and sporting significance are accessible and available to everyone in Dumfries and Galloway to enjoy, and fully merit the status of Signature Events. Paragraphs 6.5 to 6.11 and **Annex 2** provide more details on signature events.

4.7 The Signature Events should be promoted whenever possible through the Council's own communication channels and be identified as priorities for marketing when the Council and VisitScotland prepare the annual Service Level Agreement for regional tourism marketing. The identification of the importance of the seven events in itself, and the reinforcement of the term 'Signature Events', can be one contributing factor to these events sustainability.

## **5. The Objectives of the Strategy**

The Strategy has two objectives, with related action plans:-

- To deliver the MFES 2018-2021 Investment Programme – to act as a catalyst for investment across Dumfries and Galloway.
- To promote collaboration, cooperation and shared knowledge in the major events sector.

## **6. Delivering and Monitoring the Strategy**

6.1 Review of the original MFES has upheld the suggestion that it is principally the major events of the region that create the greatest economic impacts. Accordingly, retaining the definition of a major event employing the criteria as stated in paragraph 2.1 provides the economic rationale to take forward MFES 2018-2021 with confidence.

6.2 Key considerations when forecasting the public return on investment from grants, and identifying the value of recommending grants, can be based on the following:-

- Where the festival or event is in the product lifecycle
- What additional value the festival or event creates for the regional economy
- What additional value the festival or event creates for the regional tourism industry

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- What additional value the festival or event creates for important regional resources or Council assets e.g. Dumfries Ice Bowl, 7stanes, Wigtown Book Town etc.
  - Realistic forecasts of the event's growth prospects and future dependency on public sector funding
  - Whether the festival or event is helping Dumfries and Galloway access new visitor markets

This analysis will help the Events Partnership make grant recommendations from the three grants programmes of the Strategy outlined in paragraph 6.3, with the intention of maximising the economic return on the public sector investment in the Strategy.

6.3 This Strategy's investment programme will be based on three separate and transparent funding streams, two of which will recommend and distribute funding on a competitive basis. The three funding programmes are:-

- The Signature Events Fund
- The Major Events Strategic Fund
- The Regional Events Growth Fund

6.4 The Signature Events Fund and Major Events Strategic Fund will be designed to sustain our existing major events portfolio, and seek growth through new events development only when it is prudent to do so. The Regional Events Growth Fund will develop criteria that can secure events growth, whose economic impacts are forecast to be modest at first, from within the region's start up and local festivals and events base.

### **6.5 The Signature Events Fund and the Region's Signature Events**

During the delivery of the MFES, the Council identified that there were a number of stand-out cultural events that take place each year in the region that should be afforded some security of funding – until that point, all major festivals and events had to apply annually, on a competitive basis, for MFES funding.

6.6 The regional Events Partnership, the multi-agency partnership that oversees the delivery of the Council/regional events strategies, recommended that the Council negotiate two year funding agreements with three important cultural events – the Wigtown Book Festival, Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival and Spring Fling. The Council accepted this recommendation. Together with the Big Burns Supper, which had Beacon Event status in the period 2014-2016, these four cultural events became grouped with each other as Signature Festivals. This is a helpful and informative categorisation that indicates the cultural, community and economic importance of these four vitally important festivals to Dumfries and Galloway.

6.7 Whilst there is a degree of policy coordination and development for the cultural sector in the region, sports events development is more fragmented. Nonetheless, during the period in which the four cultural Signature Festivals came to prominence, so too have some superb sporting events. Three sporting events now identified with and of significant value to the region are The Tour of Britain, the Scottish Rally and World Championship Ice Hockey.

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6.8 These seven events (Listed at **Annex 2**) should henceforth be regarded as the **Signature Events** of the region, and the Council will negotiate two year funding agreements with the Signature Events that take place here annually, to assist their planning. Funding will be ring-fenced for Signature Events such as the Tour of Britain that visit frequently, but not always annually, due to the nature of the event, to ensure the best planning cycle is in all place for all Signature Events of the region.

6.9 The experience of delivering MFES has clearly demonstrated that it is the major events of the region that deliver the greatest economic impacts. By extension is the empirical finding that it is our seven Signature Events that create the greatest profile, cultural and sporting experiences for the resident population of Dumfries and Galloway and our visitors. These events, with the notable exception of the commercial outdoor music festivals, also create the most important economic impacts for Dumfries and Galloway. The profile these seven Signature Events create for Dumfries and Galloway is part of the lifeblood of the region, and the cultural and sporting impacts they deliver, in the full drama of the events unfolding, play a huge part in the quality of life in living here.

6.10 Crucially, the events are all 'Public Goods Events' – they are held and celebrated for the enjoyment they bring to the regional population, and are open and accessible to all. Six out of seven of the Signature Events are delivered by not for profit organisations\* which have important public outreach programmes, and in some instances are free to view. They require an element of public subsidy on the basis that they promote –where the free market cannot, public access to sports and culture of real significance. They are also Public Goods Events in that they provide a compelling reason to visit Dumfries and Galloway, and public funding is required for this economic programme (individual businesses in the region would not be capable of providing the funding for our Signature Events).

\*The Tour of Britain is the exception, but meets all of the other key criteria of being a Public Goods Event.

6.11 The key benefits that the Signature Events create for Dumfries and Galloway are:-

- Economic benefits, now in excess of £250,000 plus per event
- Cultural benefits, in excess of normal programmes of activity that take place in the region
- Sporting benefits, that otherwise would not be experienced in the region
- Media benefits, that profile Dumfries and Galloway across print, broadcast and social media well above the norm
- Community benefits, in terms of bring communities together
- Skills development, of professional staff, young people, volunteers and the newly retired
- They are either indigenous to the region, or closely associated with Dumfries and Galloway, and as a result contribute to our identity and profile



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## 6.12 The Major Events Strategic Fund

The Council, through the original MFES, created a robust, well managed funding programme to support the growth of major events in the region – the Major Events Strategic Fund. The MESF over the period 2014-2018 helped to grow Electric Fields, Eden Festival, World Championship Ice Hockey, the Tour of Britain, Muckle Toon Adventure Festival and provided funding for important one off events such as International Sheep Dog Trials and the Pack Up Your Troubles Festival

6.13 It is important to recognise the value of the Tour of Britain and World Championship Ice Hockey to Dumfries and Galloway, and within the strategic context of MFES 2018-2021 define these events as Signature Events. Equally important is the requirement to consider an exit strategy from Council funding for the commercial music events of Electric Fields, Eden Festival and the Knockengoroch World Ceilidh, which have used their respective MESF grants well in the past three years. The retention of these festivals has highlighted Dumfries and Galloway's potential to become Scotland's destination for summer music festivals. There is a requirement to safeguard the economic and cultural impacts of these three festivals, and aid their development as a 'standout-sector' within the overall major events sector. This can be achieved by ring-fencing funding for collaborative actions that involve all three festivals together.

6.14 Any exit strategy will require to be formulated sensitively, in recognition of the loyalty the three festivals generate within the regional population, and the degree of importance national funders place on continued DGC support before they allocate their own grant-funding. Should any of the festivals present plans and evidence for beyond average visitor growth, a re-assessment can be made of the value of MFES 2018-2021 investment. Nonetheless the Council has already played a significant role in these events' growth and should seek to taper off funding to them, to invest in new growth festivals emerging and to sustain our Signature Events.

6.15 It has been this orientation, over more than a decade, to deliver a rolling programme of investment that has contributed to a year on year increase in the number of major events developing, growing and flourishing in the region. This progressive attitude and orientation requires to continue to create the best foundation for success for MFES 2018-2021.

6.16 The Major Events Strategic Fund remains an important source of funding for major events and vital to the delivery of MFES 2018-2021. The Fund will continue to operate over the full course of MFES 2018-2021 and be allocated up to 20% of the total MFES 2018-2021 budget every year.

## 6.17 The Regional Events Growth Fund

A significant point of difference between MFES 2018-2021 and the original MFES is that the Council and its partners will put in place a mechanism to help grow smaller events with potential into prospective regional quality events. The proposed mechanism is the **Regional Events Growth Fund**.

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6.18 The Regional Events Growth Fund will identify, on a competitive basis, up to three events in total, with recognised potential, to assist their growth. The Regional Events Growth Fund will be introduced in 2019/20 and operate for the remaining three years of MFES 2018-2021.

6.19 It is recommended to allocate up to 10% of the total Strategy budget to the Regional Events Growth Fund in the period 2019/20 to 2021/22 (up to 10% of the budget of these three years). The Council will prepare criteria to take forward the process of determining Regional Growth Events, and work with the Events Partnership to manage this competitive process – the process will be similar, but less onerous, to that of identifying Beacon Events for the region, which was a feature of past regional events strategies.

6.20 The nominated events will not be expected to meet all the criteria of a major event, under the terms of this Strategy, in its first year of funding as a Regional Growth Event.

6.21 The identified festivals/events will be considered for funding, as recommended by the Events Partnership and approved by the Council. They will also receive mentoring support from staff or Board Members of the Signature Events of Dumfries and Galloway.

6.22 Collaboration, Cooperation and Shared Knowledge is the Key to Maintaining our Competitive Advantage - MFES 2018-2021 will, as per its aim, '**sustain and develop Dumfries and Galloway as an internationally renowned rural event destination that continuously attracts new visitors to the region**'.

6.23 This Strategy, in comparison to its predecessor, will place more emphasis on cooperation and collaboration between events organisations in the region, to share good practice, marketing campaigns, health and safety knowledge and joint purchasing. Dumfries and Galloway has a competitive advantage within rural Scotland in the planning, management and delivery of major events, and it is timely to seek to sustain and extend this advantage through improved joint working in the sector.

6.24 To facilitate collaboration and cooperation, the Council will retain 5-10% of the MFES 2018-2021 budget annually to take forward the most economically advantageous sector development projects and services. These are the projects, services or initiatives – which can be promoted as CCSK initiatives (Collaboration, Cooperation and Shared Knowledge), designed to extend best practice in the major events sector and help events attract more visitors in cooperation with other major events or reduce their cost base. This approach can improve the resilience of the major events sector, and prepare the foundations for future growth if the economy as a whole is expanding.

6.25 Promoting collaborative and cooperative approaches within the MFES 2018-2021 Action Plan and delivery is an evolutionary pathway - there are now several professional events organisations, and more than a dozen important voluntary events organisations based in Dumfries and Galloway, embedded within the community, and their support and know-how is vital to the success of the Strategy.

6.26 There are opportunities to trial new ways of working between events organisations, and to research whether social enterprise approaches can help recruit more volunteers for major festivals and events and contribute to providing cost-effective services for events e.g. generator hire, PA hire, joint purchasing of print materials.

**6.27 National Best Practice and Alignment with ‘Scotland the Perfect Stage’, the National Events Strategy**

The Council will continue to work closely with EventScotland, which is a team within VisitScotland’s Events Directorate, to create value from collaborative approaches to events development.

6.28 The Council and EventScotland have enjoyed an effective working relationship for more than a decade, and in partnership work to add significant value to major festivals and events that take place in the region. There is close alignment between Scotland the Perfect Stage Strategy and the MFES 2018-2021 – both strategies seek to develop the events industry to create a virtuous cycle of development. Please refer to **Diagram 1** below.

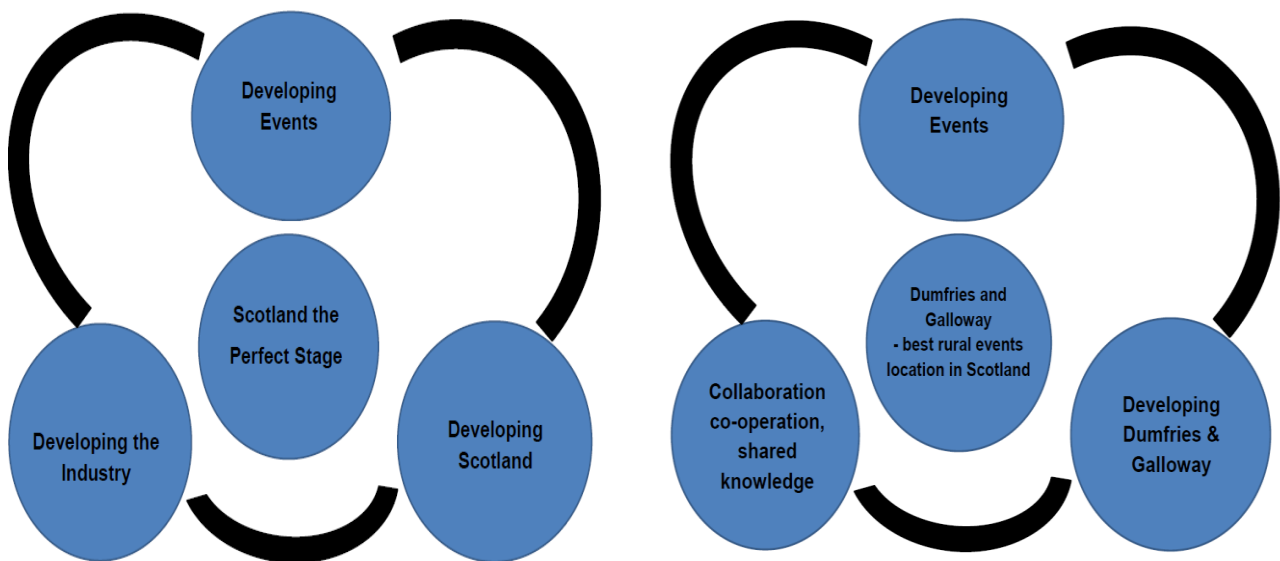


Diagram taken from Scotland The Perfect Stage, EventScotland, 2015

MFES 2018-2021 aligns with the National Events Strategy (DGC)

**Diagram 1 – Virtuous Circles of Development**

6.29 And whilst Scotland the Perfect Stage has a pyramid of development at national and global level, Dumfries and Galloway is seeking to develop this pyramid at regional and national level; MFES 2018-2021 aligns with the National Event Strategy. This development model is illustrated fully in the adjacent pyramids in **Diagram 2** below.

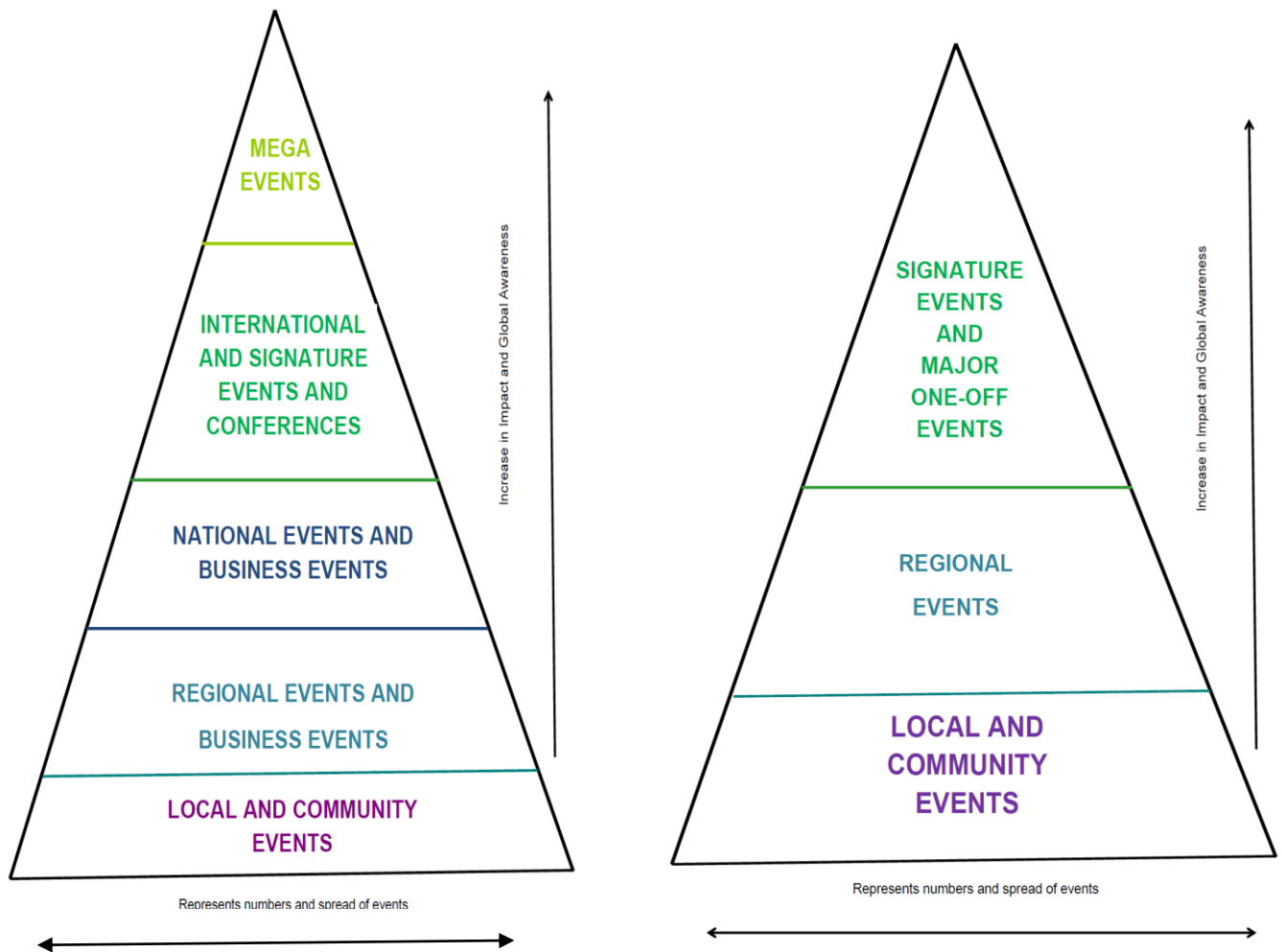


Diagram taken from Scotland The Perfect Stage, EventScotland, 2015

MFES 2018-2021 aligns with the National Events Strategy (DGC)

**Diagram 2 - Development at National and Global Level**

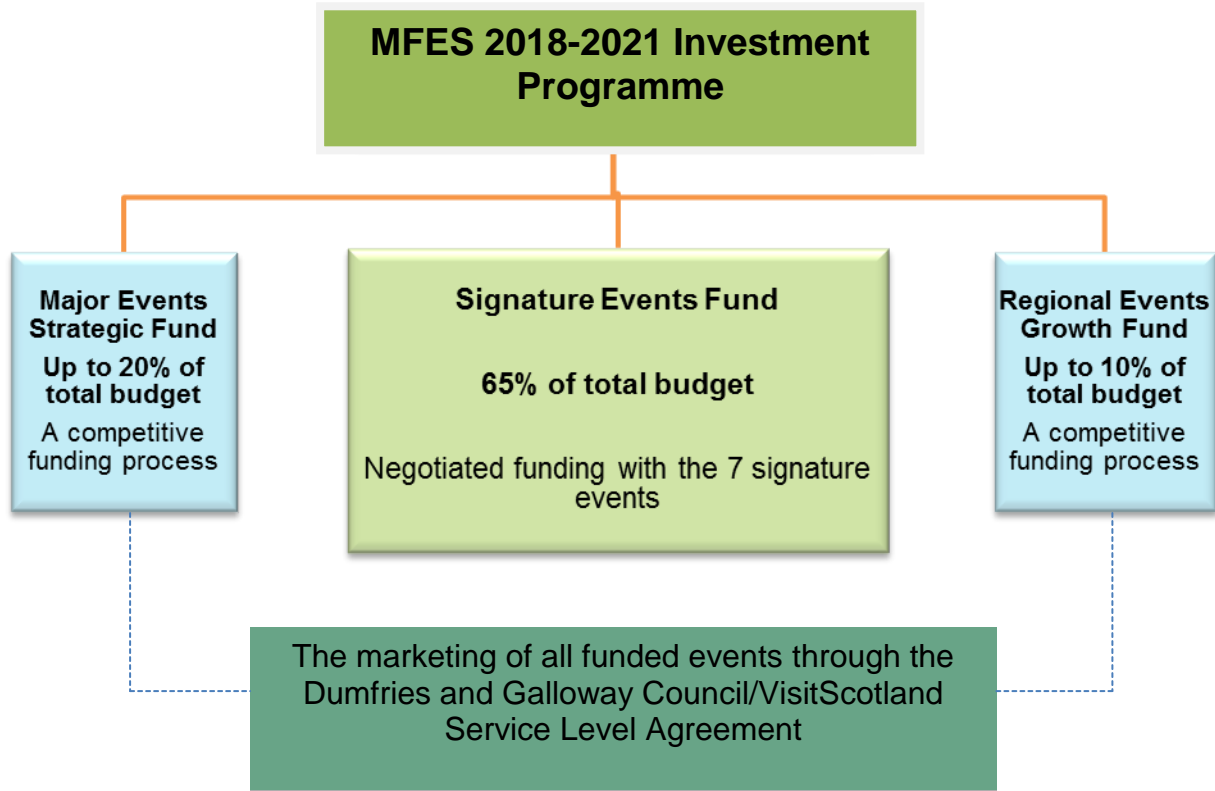
6.30 The Council will also support EventScotland, VisitScotland and the Scottish Government’s programme of themed years. Past evaluations of themed years have found that they have been helpful frameworks to secure events organisations ‘buy-in’ to partnership working and tourism promotion. The themed years programme at present is:-

- 2018: The Year of Young People
- 2020: The Year of Scotland’s Coasts and Water
- 2022: The Year of Scotland’s Stories.

### 6.31 Delivering the Economic Impacts Forecast

The Council has a positive, transparent track record in facilitating economic regeneration through investment in major events.

6.32 The Strategy will build upon the good practice established by the MFES, to deliver a tailored Investment Programme to support economic regeneration across the length and breadth of Dumfries and Galloway. The MFES 2018-2021 Investment Programme is illustrated in **Diagram 3**.



**Diagram 3 – MFES 2018-2021 Investment Programme**

6.33 The major events of the region have reported that they believe they still have, in the majority of cases, growth potential. Endogenous growth i.e. growth from within, is therefore possible and the two Objectives of this Strategy fully recognise this. Important case studies of the regional major events sector do illustrate how the growth of major events in the region has contributed – apart from their direct economic impacts, to more widespread economic benefits.

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### 6.34 Regional Growth Case Studies (Examples of Endogenous Growth)

**Diagram 4** shows Endogenous Growth and Positive Externalities\* related case studies – two vital economic concepts that are embedded in MFES 2018-2021 and create economic value for Dumfries and Galloway.

#### **Case Studies of Regional Growth and Positive Externalities in the MFES/MFES 2018-2021**

- Spring Fling, now managed by Upland CIC, has led to a number of arts exhibitions – in Newcastle, Glasgow, London and Berlin, to promote regional artists and craft makers and tourism to Dumfries and Galloway.
- The Wigtown Festival Company now runs a year round series of festivals, with an ever increasing number of partners, to promote cultural and economic development in Scotland's Book Town.
- Electric Fields is one of Scotland's fastest growing summer music festivals, based at Drumlanrig Castle. The Festival has developed from Comlongon Rocks, which was created as a showcase for local bands by brothers Alex and Nick Roberts.

#### **Diagram 4 – Endogenous Growth and Positive Externalities**

*\*Endogenous Growth means growth from within. In this instance it means we have the internal resources and skills to continue to grow the economic impacts of our Major Festivals and Events. Positive externalities are benefits and positive outcomes that develop from policies or business transactions over and above that which is funded or bought.*

6.35 The optimism around future growth in our existing major events portfolio should be tempered with caution – at some point many events will plateau in terms of their visitor numbers. The economic outlook for the UK in the next four years is difficult to decipher and forecast. Despite the uncertain economic environment, MFES 2018-2021 will seek to nurture economic growth from the Signature Events and Major Events Strategic Fund. To safeguard and promulgate future growth the MFES 2018-2021 proposes an investment programme based upon:-

- Comprehensive and detailed work with the region's Signature Events to safeguard these events and explore growth opportunities
- Investment in existing and new major events through the Major Events Strategic Fund
- Nurturing grassroots growth and development through the Regional Events Growth Fund

6.36 The complete delivery of the Strategy with its associated investment programme, is forecast to generate more than an additional £30m for the regional economy in the period 2018 to 2021 inclusive. This will be achieved through the return on investment as outlined at **Diagram 5**.

## The Forecasted Economic Benefits



**Diagram 5 – How the £30m Economic Stimulus will be Secured**

6.37 The Council, an organisation made up of many different business teams and services, will require to understand how its responsiveness to the events sector is one important form of capacity building to deliver this Strategy, and that it is an essential agency in facilitating economic value. As stated above, the Council is the single most important public sector institution in Dumfries and Galloway in facilitating the best environment for major events to flourish. This Strategy therefore requires to be adopted by all four Directorates of the Council to enable it to be fully delivered.

### 6.38 The Importance of the Council/Signature Events Service Level Agreements

Detailed work will go into the preparation of Service Level Agreements between Signature Events and the Council. Economic growth within regional economies comes from bespoke processes, the desire for excellence, tailored investment and creating the best policy framework for major events to grow within. The delivery of the MFES 2018-2021 is heavily dependent upon the effective relationship between Signature Events and the Council, and this needs to be recognised in the care and attention that goes into the preparation of the Service Level Agreements for the Signature Events. The operating principles for this work is listed at **Annex 3**.

6.39 A review of the events that comprise Signature Events of Dumfries and Galloway will take place at the mid-point of MFES 2018-2021. The review will be overseen by the Events Partnership. This will enable the seven Signature Events to deliver their two year Service Level Agreements (2018/19 and 2019/2020), and for their impacts to be monitored before future Service Level Agreements are entered into.

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#### **6.40 A New Methodology for Calculating the Economic Impacts Which Derive from the Strategy**

The Council, with the Events Partnership, will review its methodology for evaluating the economic impacts of major events. The MFES fully discounted the economic value of local people attending events – in economic terms this is regarded as displacement. During the MFES's delivery, it was important to report to Members financial values which were completely consistent, and were not clouded by displacement issues. This approach was adopted to ensure economic reporting was concerned purely with net contributions to the region's GDP from visitor spending and events budget spending. This will now be reviewed, especially in respect of the case of overnight and weekend visitors, who originate from Dumfries and Galloway, attending a regional event that requires them to stay in serviced accommodation. Common-sense dictates that these visitors are contributing to the regional economy, and their spending is creating value in the region.

#### **6.41 Collaboration, Cooperation and Shared Knowledge Can Extend Dumfries and Galloway's Competitive Advantages as a Rural Events Destination**

This Strategy will be dedicated to promoting collaboration and cooperation between events organisations and their support agencies. Collaboration, cooperation and shared knowledge initiatives are rooted in good economic development practice. The successive events strategies of the Council since 2005 have identified the importance of Human and Social Capital to economic development. Social Capital is defined as, 'the networks, norms and trust' that enables individuals in communities to work cooperatively for public, rather than private gain. These individual contributions in aggregate are a key source of the competitive advantage of Dumfries and Galloway as a leading destination for rural major events.

6.42 The region's stock of Human Capital in the major events sector has grown substantially in the past decade, and is best observed in the number of professional events organisations now based in the region; Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival, Upland (Spring Fling), Electric Theatre Workshop (Big Burns Supper), Eden Festival CIC, Knockengoroch CIC, Rocks Events Ltd (Electric Fields) and Wigtown Festival Company. The work of the Council's Youth Services team in working with young people to plan and deliver Youth Beatz also forms part of our regional stock of human capital around events management.

6.43 There are many voluntary sector events organisations that also make a tangible difference to the economy of Dumfries and Galloway, including, but not limited to the Muckle Toon Adventure Company, the Trophy D'Ecosse Committee, Kirkcudbright 2000, the Kirkcudbright Summer Festivities and Kirkcudbright Arts and Crafts Trail, the Newton Stewart Traditional Music Association, Moffat Community Promotions, Stranraer 400, Riding of the Marches Committees and the Dumfries Ice Bowl Curling Association. The region has a community vibrancy that this Strategy fully recognises and wishes to support.



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6.44 Major Events organisations have expressed a willingness to cooperate around joint marketing campaigns, to build marketing skills and knowledge within their organisations, and to attract visitors more cost-effectively. The opportunities to take forward joint marketing campaigns between groups of major events will be reviewed in depth during the period of MFES 2018-2021 and in time, grant funding will be more tailored to organisations that demonstrate collaborative approaches with other events organisations and/or tourism organisations and businesses.

6.45 One strand of Social Capital value is volunteering. The Council will work with Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway and major events organisations to review opportunities to promote volunteering at major events.

6.46 Competitive advantages within markets can be promulgated in many ways, including innovation and reducing the cost base of delivering services and products. The first Collaboration, Cooperation and Shared Knowledge project (CCSK) will be to research the viability of either an existing regional organisation or a new **Social Enterprise**, managing a set of events related equipment e.g. generators, PA Systems, stages, marquees, on behalf of the major events of Dumfries and Galloway, who would pay a membership fee to access this equipment below the market rate. If the research establishes that much of this equipment and these resources are already present, but dispersed within the region, a more viable option may be to establish a Register of Assets for Major Events, to promote access to these resources. The Youth Services team of the Council will be involved in these discussions to identify how this initiative can support the delivery of Youth Beatz, and to identify what good practice from Youth Beatz can be utilised more widely in the regional major events sector.

6.47 In the first year of the Strategy, the Council will work with the three major music festivals – the World Ceilidh at Knockengoroch, Eden Festival and Electric Fields, to identify what collaborative actions can strengthen these individual festivals operations, and retain and build upon their collective skills. Youth Beatz organisers will also be invited to join this dialogue and to make closer links with the commercial music festivals of the region whilst acknowledging its uniqueness in being a free to attend festival.

6.48 It is recommended that the Events Partnership organise twice yearly MFES 2018-2021 network meetings, open to all major events in the region, including Youth Beatz. The purpose of these meetings will be to promote collaboration, cooperation and knowledge sharing in the sector. The meetings can be thrown open – for part of the time, to members of the regional Chamber of Commerce and tourism businesses to extend business development opportunities.

6.49 The successful applicants to the Regional Events Growth Fund will be allocated mentors from one of the region's Signature Events, to provide helpful advice and support, in assistance towards the delivery of their events. The funding for this initiative will be built into the respective Signature Festivals Service Level Agreements with the Council.

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6.50 The Council will retain its Events Toolkit and distribute it upon request. The Toolkit is an extensive guide to planning, managing and delivering events in the region, and is an excellent way to encourage the growth of local events. The Toolkit will be refreshed in 2020.

## **7. Evaluation and Review**

7.1 Continuous evaluation of the funded events of this Strategy forms an integral part of the Strategy's design. Following on and building upon the original MFES, the evaluation of funded events, their economic impacts and the Strategy's overall economic impacts will be achieved by;

- Detailed post-event reports being a condition of funding of all funded MFES projects
- A new methodology for assessing the economic impacts of the funded major events will be researched in the immediate aftermath of the Strategy being adopted
- Detailed scoring of all grant applications will enable the Events Partnership to recommend the best events projects for funding to the Council
- The 7 Signature Events of the Strategy will undergo a mid-Strategy Review, after their first Two Year Service Level Agreements are completed
- Commissioned studies by individual festivals and events organisations such as Visitor Studies, Economic Impact Studies, Development and Business Plans can be shared with the Council and its partners to help the overall Strategy evaluation.

7.2 This data, and relevant information and data supplied by project partners, in particular EventScotland, will be employed to conduct the MFES 2018-2021 Evaluation in the final year of the Strategy.

## **8. The Strategy's Action Plan**

8.1 Arrangements will be put in place to deliver the Strategy through an Action Plan focussed on its two objectives. The outline activities for the Action Plan are as detailed:-

The Strategy objective: To deliver the MFES 2018-2021 Investment Programme – to act as a catalyst for investment across Dumfries and Galloway:-

1. To deliver the Signature Events Fund.
2. To deliver the Major Events Strategic Fund.
3. To establish and deliver the Regional Events Growth Fund.
4. To establish a new methodology for evaluating the economic impacts of major events in Dumfries and Galloway.
5. To employ the Council's Service Level Agreement with VisitScotland to promote individually and collectively the Signature Events of the region.
6. To undertake a Review of the Signature Events of Dumfries and Galloway before the funding settlement for 2020/21 to 2021/22 is negotiated.

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The Strategy objective: To promote collaboration, cooperation and shared knowledge in the major events sector:-

1. To establish twice yearly MFES 2018-2021 network events open to all major events in the region.
2. To review with all major events the opportunities for them to undertake collaborative marketing campaigns with other events and regional businesses.
3. To promote volunteerism at regional events.
4. To research a cooperative, membership approach to establishing a region-wide enterprise that makes available events plant, products and services below the market rate, to reduce the cost base of delivering events in the region.
5. To develop a well-defined collaborative approach to the development of the three major commercial outdoor music festivals of the region and Youth Beatz.
6. To provide mentoring support to the new Regional Growth Events
7. To refresh the Events Toolkit in 2020.

**Strategies and Plans linking to the Major Festivals and Events Strategy 2018 – 2021**

Dumfries and Galloway Council Plan 2017 – 2022 (Link to be attached)

Dumfries and Galloway Regional Economic Strategy, 2016 – 2020

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/16713/Regional-Economic-Strategy>

Dumfries and Galloway Tourism Strategy, 2016 – 2020

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/16714/Regional-Tourism-Strategy>

Scotland the Perfect Stage, National Events Strategy, 2015-2025

<http://www.eventscotland.org/stps/>

Annex 2

Matrix of Benefits of the Signature Events

Festival/Benefit	Public Good Event	Nationally Significant (UK)	Region Wide Event	Economic Impact >£1m	Economic Impact >£250k	>8000 Unique Visitors	>40% audience/visitors from outwith D&G	Media Values >£250k	Professional Organisation Based in Region	Track Record of Legacies	Operated by not for profit organisation
Big Burns Supper	√	√			√	√			√	√	√
D&G Arts Festival	√	√	√		√				√	√	√
Scottish Rally	√	√	√		√			√		√	√
Spring Fling	√	√	√	√		√	√		√	√	√
Tour of Britain	√	√	√		√	√		√		√	
Wigtown Book Festival	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√
World Championship Ice Hockey	√	√			√					√	√

## **Operating Principles for Dumfries and Galloway Council/Signature Events Service Level Agreements**

Service Level Agreements between the Council and Signature Events will adhere to the following operating principles in their negotiation and delivery;

1. The Agreements will identify the Public Goods properties of the Signature Event and Council funding will make a contribution to safeguard and promote these Public Goods assets.
2. The Agreements will promote the best possible access to the Signature Event for the people of Dumfries and Galloway.
3. The Agreements will seek to secure sustainable, responsible event growth that protects the longevity of the Signature Event and contributes to community economic growth.
4. The Agreements will be prepared in a spirit of trust and respect that the Signature Event is rooted within the community, ecology and economy of Dumfries and Galloway, and that it will not seek to move outwith the region's borders.
5. The Agreements will include actions for the Signature Event to provide mentoring services to a new or growth festival.
6. The Agreements will be managed and monitored through quarterly, comprehensive meetings between the Council and Signature Event representative/s.
7. The Council, as a holistic organisation, will identify what added value it can create for the Signature Event, separate to the funding it allocates.
8. The Signature Event will carry the Council identifier year round on its web-pages and all marketing materials. There should never be any 'tokenism' in the way in which Signature Events displays the Council Identifier.

These operating principles are over and above the normal financial and legal clauses of standard Dumfries and Galloway Council Service Level Agreements.

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