



The Dumfries and Galloway Events Strategy 2023-2026

Executive Summary



For every
£100

spent by Dumfries and
Galloway Council, it
spends less than

7p

on the Events Strategy

Introduction

On behalf of Dumfries and Galloway Council, we are delighted to present this Executive Summary of the Dumfries and Galloway Events Strategy 2023-2026.

The Strategy follows on and has evolved from the Major Festivals and Events Strategy 2018-2022, that was fully delivered by the Council and its partners, and which created a framework for the economic growth of the events sector until the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Spring of 2020. This prior Strategy then focussed on supporting community events to be established and to take place safely, to contribute towards health and wellbeing across Dumfries and Galloway after the prolonged periods of lockdown.

The Dumfries and Galloway Events Strategy 2023-2026 will continue investment in the Signature Events of the region, and retains the Major Events Fund and Community Events Fund. The Council will commission and publish Scotland's first Greener Events Toolkit, and monitor funded projects for their economic, social and environmental benefits.

The Council has secured the UCI World Para-cycling Championships in August 2023 for the region. We will work closely with the project partners to deliver a World Championships that celebrate the endurance and inspirational qualities of the para-cyclists and profiles the wonderful cycling opportunities of our scenic region.



Councillor Archie Dryburgh, Chair of Communities Committee



Councillor John Campbell, Vice-Chair of Communities Committee

As with the previous four regional Events Strategies of Dumfries and Galloway, the adoption of this Strategy is an empowering act; to empower events organisers to make the most of their vision and skills, to empower communities to become more self-determining, and to assist businesses and agencies to promote sport, heritage, arts and culture in Dumfries and Galloway.

This Strategy aims to sustain the existing events sector through the difficult economic and social times we are living through, to secure the long term future of our superb portfolio of festivals and events for the long term.



The 2019 World Coastal Rowing Championships in Stranraer

The Strategy's Aim, Vision and Objectives

The Strategy Aim

The aim of the Major Events Strategy 2023-2026 is to develop and sustain Dumfries and Galloway as an internationally renowned rural events destination that continuously attracts new visitors to the region.

The Strategy Vision

The Vision is to make Dumfries and Galloway the best place in rural Scotland in which to plan, manage, deliver and visit great festivals and events.

The Strategy objectives

The strategy objectives are;

- To deliver the Major Events Strategy 2023-2026 Investment Programme – to act as a catalyst for investment across Dumfries and Galloway.
- To promote collaboration, cooperation and shared knowledge in the regional events sector.
- To work in partnership with events organisers to reduce the carbon footprint of festivals and events in Dumfries



Confirming the Definition of a Major Event Within this Strategy

- attract **1,000** or more unique visitors
- operates on a net budget that exceeds **£30,000**
- are marketing to a quantifiable set/target market of out of region visitors
- can demonstrate an excellent return on public sector investment

Investing in and Supporting the Signature Events of Dumfries and Galloway

The seven Signature Events are Big Burns Supper, the Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival, Spring Fling, the Wigtown Book Festival, the Tour of Britain in Dumfries and Galloway, World Championship Ice Hockey tournaments and the Scottish Rally. Their collective net worth to the regional economy, before the COVID-19 pandemic curtailed economic growth, was more than £6.5m per annum. The Signature Events programme will be retained in this new Strategy. The Seven Events are allocated up to 60% of the annual Events Strategy budget each year.



The Council and its partners will take forward, in 2024, a Signature Events Advancement process, to identify one or two new Signature Events for the region. This will be open to all regionally based festivals and events that meet the qualifying criteria.

The Signature Events are '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 (the Tour of Britain is the one exception) 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.

The Major Events Fund and Community Events Fund

The Council will operate the Community Events Fund in financial year 2023/24 and 2024/25 and Major Events Fund annually during the lifecycle of this Strategy.

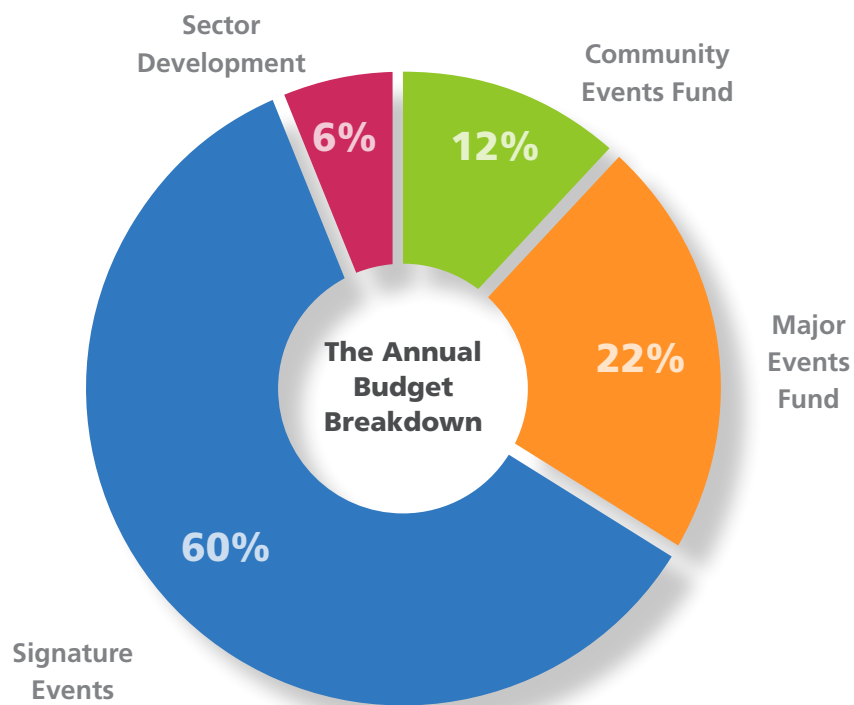
The Community Events Fund will have a minimum budget of £25,000 and the Major Events Strategic Fund a minimum budget of £50,000 per annum. The application process will be much more robust than it has been previously, in assessing the environmental management proposals of the projects seeking funding and their links to the regional poverty and inequalities strategy.

The Council will plan to launch these funding programmes in October of each year, and inform organisations of the outcome of their applications no later than February of the following year.

The Greener Events Toolkit

The Council will work with environmental and events agencies to prepare Scotland's first Greener Events Toolkit, and launch it in 2023. The Council will arrange training sessions on the Toolkit, and all successful applicants for events strategy funding will be required to participate in this training. Events organisers can take the lead in helping the region reduce our carbon emissions, and help take forward behaviour change in our business and consumer lives.

Annual Budget Breakdown



A Strategy That Responds to the Turbulent Economic Times

This Strategy will respond comprehensively to the cost of living crisis and the issues of poverty and inequalities in Dumfries and Galloway by;

- Linking the Signature Events funding to their social inclusion programmes
- Bringing the Tour Series exclusively to Annan and Stranraer when it is attracted to Dumfries and Galloway, to create economic benefits for the two towns and to involve and upskill local events organisers (this is dependent on funding outwith the Strategy budget)
- Creating events capacity building and training programmes in Dumfries, Stranraer, Annan and Upper Nithsdale
- Advancing one or two new Signature Events for the region
- Supporting events organisations with their work to attract match and project funding for initiatives that lower ticket prices for their programmes

The Council is Serious About Supporting Cycling

The Council is serious about supporting cycling. The Council has secured the UCI (World Cycling's governing body) World Para-cycling Championships in August 2023 for the region. We will work closely with the project partners to deliver a World Championships that celebrate the inspirational qualities of the para-cyclists and profiles the wonderful cycling opportunities of scenic South West Scotland. The Tour of Britain will return to the region during the period of this Strategy.

There will also be efforts made to fund and deliver further Tour Series in Dumfries and Galloway during the lifecycle of the Strategy, and to invest in cycling events that are sustainable and have community and consumer appeal.



Dumfries Ice Bowl and Kirkcudbright Galleries

The Events Strategy recognises the importance of the Council itself as a key events resource for Dumfries and Galloway, and that the Ice Bowl and Kirkcudbright Galleries play a vital role in the events sector of South West Scotland.

The Ice Bowl has a renowned events programme across Ice Hockey, Curling, Ice Dancing and Figure Skating. The Council will be proactive in seeking to secure international quality events for the venue, that bring great sporting and economic benefits for Dumfries and the wider region, often at times of low occupancy rates in local hotels.

Kirkcudbright Galleries is a regional gallery of national significance and the newest of the Council's Arts and Museums sites.

It has already held exhibitions celebrating great names such as Pablo Picasso and Sir Edwin Landseer as well as a recent exhibition on The Galloway Hoard: Viking Age Treasure from the National Museums Scotland which attracted more than 40,000 visitors. As part of these key exhibitions Kirkcudbright Galleries also runs a programme of events both in the building and in spaces around the town. The exhibitions are likely to go from strength to strength, and the Galleries are highly successful at promoting Kirkcudbright Artists' town and the cultural attractions of Dumfries and Galloway.



For more information contact:

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October 2022