

Glasgow Events Strategy 2035



Foreword

Glasgow is a world-leading, innovative events destination and a city of great vibrancy and diversity. The city has an enviable annual portfolio of major events and festivals, complemented by many exceptional one-off events.

Glasgow has built an international reputation as a bold, imaginative, progressive and capable host city. Unforgettable and exciting experiences for people watching around the world are matched by the enthusiasm of distinctively Glaswegian audiences. Globally, Glasgow is recognised as a valued and trusted events delivery partner, willing to innovate and embrace its role as a host city working alongside the organisers and owners of every conceivable type of event. In this Events Strategy, Glasgow restates its ambition to retain these values and maintain this profile and position on the world stage.

Annual events such as Celtic Connections, Merchant City Festival, TRNSMT, World Pipe Band Championships, GlasGLOW, Glasgow Film Festival and the Great Scottish Run all contribute to the cultural identity of Glasgow and enhance the city as a place to live in and visit. The city also has a proven track record of hosting world-class and dynamic one-off sporting events including the 2014 Commonwealth Games and more recently the 2023 UCI Cycling World Championships and 2024 World Athletics Indoor Championships.

As a UNESCO City of Music, Glasgow has a wide variety of iconic music venues which welcome globally renowned artists throughout the year. In the last 50 years Glaswegians have embraced this event-rich environment and taken events to their hearts, being widely perceived as among the best live audiences in the world.

Over the decades since the 1980s, intelligent investment has seen Glasgow build, upgrade, and maintain a variety of venues

and spaces for event hosting. Glasgow has also generated significant economic return from events, gained widespread international media profile, strengthened delivery capability, built a reputation for welcoming people, and had the confidence to secure and deliver some of the world's largest events.

Business events, while not the focus of this Events Strategy, have also continued to strengthen and grow in Glasgow utilising many of these same assets. This has included the hosting of internationally significant events such as the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26).¹

Now there is an opportunity to build on this heritage and legacy of events, with a collective vision for the whole of Glasgow that is designed to share the benefits of events even more widely, and ensure that the portfolio of events in the city offers something for all of its residents as well as its visitors, while retaining the ambition that has driven success to date.



This Events Strategy sets out a vision and priorities to take Glasgow and its events through the next decade to 2035, responding to changes in the external environment, funding availability, and reflecting the city's overall priorities, including Glasgow's Grand Challenges. It sets out a shared ambition for all of Glasgow: the local authority, residents, community, and special interest groups, the commercial sector, and those wanting to work with the city to deliver events. This 10-year timeframe provides a sufficient window to make and measure change and aligns with Scotland's National Events Strategy 'Scotland the Perfect Stage 2024–2035'.

The vision, direction and strategic priorities in this Events Strategy are based on themes which emerged from extensive research and consultation.

Equally, wide-ranging action is needed to implement the strategy. Achieving the best outcomes requires support from both the public and commercial sectors. Collaboration and agreement will support

Glasgow and its events portfolio to increase its economic impact, visitation and profile benefits, and extend further into social impact for Glasgow's people.

Two common themes from the consultation were a recognition of the current strengths in events, and that Glasgow's portfolio² of events could do more to make the city better for all residents. A focus on ensuring the events portfolio is connected to the residents does not change the aspiration for events that deliver economic benefit and profile but adds the imperative to drive, for example, civic pride, social connection, and varied and inclusive opportunities for participation. Getting that right for residents also makes the visitor experience more positive, which continues to help build the economic return for Glasgow.

Top: GlasGLOW 2021 lights up the Botanic Gardens in the city's west end. Photo: Hawkeye Scotland.

¹ Details of business events can be found in the Glasgow 2030 Tourism Strategy

² A portfolio approach to Glasgow's events means that all the events delivered in the city are considered as a collective when achieving the outcomes of the strategy. Local events, mega events, regular sporting fixtures, theatre programming, concerts and publicly-funded events all contribute to the city's portfolio. More details on a portfolio approach, relevant to Glasgow, are found in Scotland's National Events Strategy 2024–2035. Public investment, in particular, can focus on gaps within the portfolio and aim for alignment with Strategic Priority One within this strategy: the right events for Glasgow.

Vision

Our events make Glasgow a better place to live in and visit.

The right events are delivered in a way that enhances the lives of our people and are best for our communities, our economy, our place, and our sector.



Above: Hundreds of runners make their way across the Kingston Bridge during the 2023 Great Scottish Run. Photo: Roddy Scott.

Mission

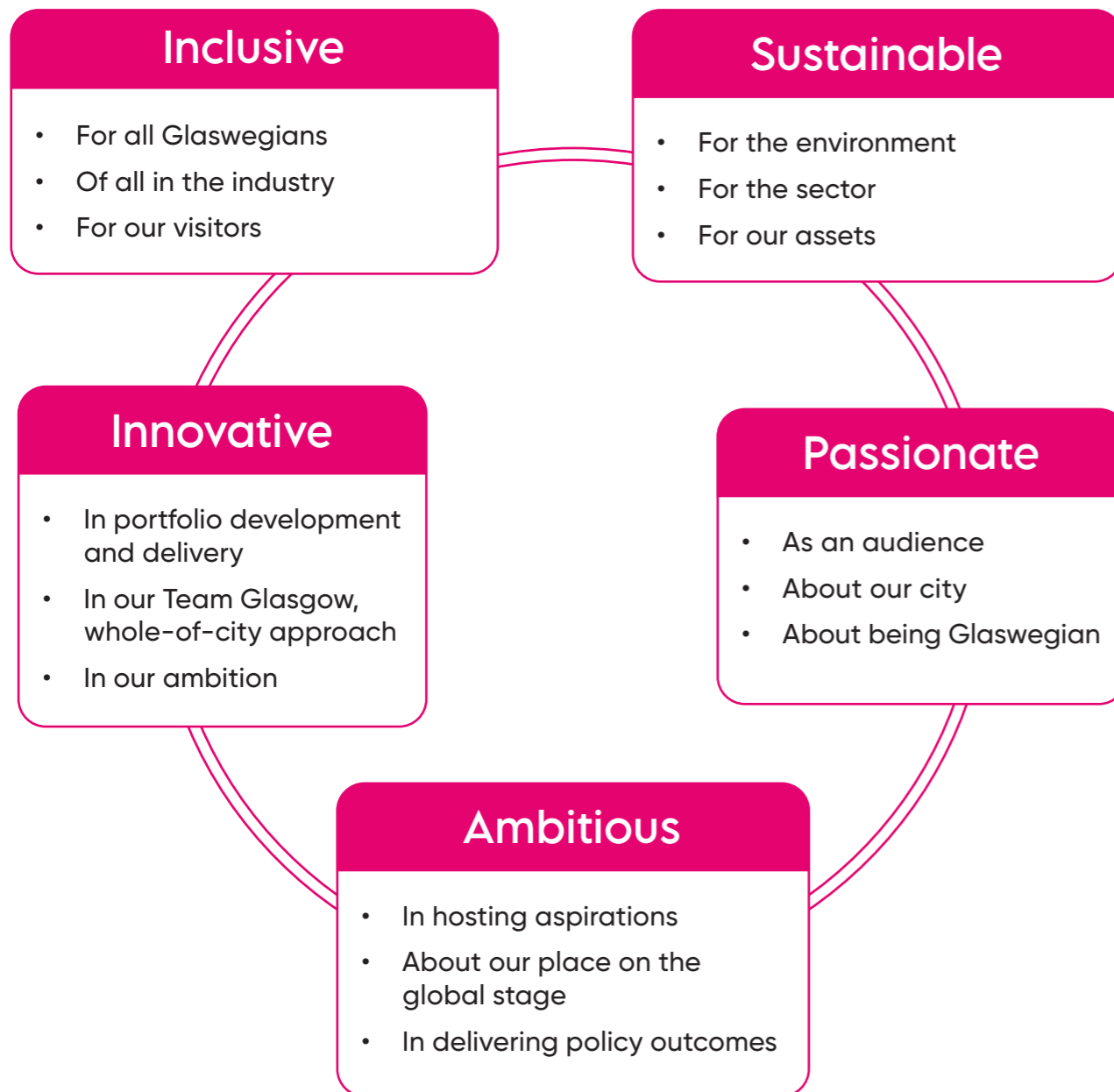
Glasgow will build an innovative and vibrant events portfolio to reflect its people and culture, drive economic, profile and social benefits, and maximise available resources.

Our events will cover a range of genres, be hosted in places and spaces across the city, and range in scale from community through to major events. These events will align with wider city objectives and promote Glasgow on the international stage.



Above: Viggo Mortensen is interviewed on the red carpet at Glasgow Film Festival 2024. Photo: Eoin Carey.

Values



Strategic priorities:



The right events for Glasgow

A deliberate portfolio of community, commercial and publicly funded events of various genres and scale, including major events. This mix reflects the needs of Glasgow's residents and the city's strategic priorities, making the most of our resources.



Great to do business with

Clear processes and decision-making will support an integrated and cohesive industry to deliver successful events that are well communicated to our stakeholders and city residents.



Protect today and tomorrow

Glasgow's environment, physical assets and workforce are nurtured, developed and sustained to meet current and future needs, optimising our resources with care.

Strategic context

Glasgow has a suite of city strategies which are designed to catalyse change through shared priorities and coordinated action. This Events Strategy is part of that suite and is designed to complement existing strategies and already identified priorities such as accessible parks and venues, reliable public transport, safe and clean streets, a supported workforce, and a thriving natural environment.

There is great advantage in focusing efforts on shared aims to make change happen. An events portfolio can be a key driver in helping achieve the priorities of other city strategies. Some of the most relevant are noted below and expanded upon in Appendix One.



Right: Rameet Sandhu on stage during the Glasgow Mela in Kelvingrove Park, 2024. Photo: Kris Kesiak





Building on Glasgow's strengths

Glasgow is an events city. It has built up a reputation for impressive venue assets, delivery expertise and welcoming people. It has a wide and varied portfolio, from small grassroots events through to pinnacle international events, and has been a trusted partner of Scottish Government and UK Government agencies for the largest events.

To carry this forward, Glasgow must continue to keep pace with – and lead – social, economic, political, and environmental change. This requires focus, investment, direction, structure, and leadership. The vision of this Events Strategy acknowledges what Glasgow has worked hard to build up in terms of sporting, cultural and business events. At the same time, there is clear direction to extend that benefit further into what's best for Glasgow's people: enhancing people's experiences and wellbeing, continuing to grow the economy, protecting our place, and supporting the events sector to thrive.

Sharing the reason why – building on the connection with Glasgow's businesses and residents

The positive story of events should be shared proactively with businesses and residents: why events are supported, what they achieve for our people and our place, and how residents and businesses might maximise the opportunity. More than 98% of respondents in public consultation believed events were important for Glasgow – a

ready group of advocates. Glasgow also has an established programme for connecting with businesses. This engagement with businesses and residents can extend to how events are selected, designed and delivered. Across the city's events portfolio there should be something for everyone: diversity in types of events, location, artist programming, volunteer opportunities, and cost to attend, including free events. New ways of communicating and engaging with communities and groups that are under-represented, and who currently do not feel included, can be prioritised.

Maintain and enhance Glasgow's breadth and scale of venues

Glasgow's events facilities are busy, flexible, and varied. These assets have made the city an easy choice for many events organisers, and they allow for diverse programming. To stay competitive, these assets must be maintained and continue to develop to meet the needs of tomorrow's residents and events organisers. Examples would include ensuring physical accessibility is improved for existing and new venues, and that venues are adapted for climate change.

Left: Huge crowds watch Liam Gallagher on stage at TRNSMT in Glasgow Green. Photo: Euan Robertson.

Ensure that events and wider city amenities support each other

The event experience includes what happens before and after arrival at the venue. Public transport, active transport options, visitor information, and clean and safe streets are very important for attendees, participants and organisers. Embedding these needs into decision-making for wider city centre management helps the events sector and the city to thrive. At the same time, there is opportunity to use events to help resolve challenges: to introduce and implement change. As the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games showed, and the 2023 Cycling World Championships has more recently reinforced, the city can benefit long after the event itself has passed, with event design and delivery making a noticeable shift in areas such as facility development, regeneration, sustainability, safety, and wider wellbeing.

Enable the commercial sector to flourish

The commercial sector is a huge contributor to Glasgow's portfolio. As examples, concerts provide choice for residents as well as generating visitor nights and revenue for the city; business events bring a steady stream of higher spending business visitors year-round. The public consultation for this Events Strategy gave resounding backing to an events portfolio delivered by a combination of commercial, public and third sectors. Nearly every event requires a mix of people and organisations across different sectors to come together for delivery to be possible. Regular communication, input into decision-making, capability building, written guides, and forums can bring all the parties delivering events together, supporting the development and expansion of events in a way that aligns with the city's growth plans. When the commercial sector is flourishing, the city's investment in events can focus on those which the market is not in a position to provide on its own.

Build every event on a foundation of what is best for Glasgow: people and place

The foundation of what is best for Glasgow's people and place are the underpinning principles of equality, diversity, inclusion, accessibility and sustainability. All events, whether delivered by the public or commercial sectors, need to embed these principles into their design and delivery. As an example, Glasgow has set itself the aim of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030. The city can do more to help events support this aim, which in turn becomes a competitive advantage for Glasgow and encourages event organisers and owners to continue to choose the city, and visitors to choose to attend events within it. There also needs to be a conscious effort to engage with all communities and groups throughout Glasgow to build an events portfolio which truly offers something for everyone.

Make the public sector easy to navigate

Every existing strength noted above, and every opportunity to build on those strengths, relies on a well-functioning public sector. This is important within the public sector itself, so that all the various parts of the local authority and its arms-length organisations are aware of their events-related roles and what they are responsible for. This would span areas including economic development, access to public space, community engagement and communication, funding, transport, event compliance and policy development. It's also important from an external perspective: an efficient, user-friendly approach is essential to ensure that it is easy for the commercial sector, third sector, communities, rights holders, and co-funders to connect with Glasgow, navigate the regulatory environment, and deliver city priorities on the ground.

Right: Bailey Lear and Femke Bol cross the finish line at the women's hurdles during the 2024 World Athletics Indoor Championships in the Emirates Arena. Photo: Jeff Holmes.



Events for Glasgow: The strategic priorities

Vision

Our events make Glasgow a better place to live in and visit.

The right events are delivered in a way that enhances the lives of our people and are best for our communities, our economy, our place and our sector.

Events can contribute significantly to many city outcomes: economic return, participation in sport or the arts, celebrating different cultures, city regeneration, sustainability, business sector alignment, media profile, visitation, civic pride, health and wellbeing, and much more.

This vision for Glasgow focuses on what is most important for its people, identified through existing strategic priorities, and the resounding feedback from workshops and public consultation. This means focusing on creating a portfolio of events that resonates with Glaswegians, and delivering this in the most inclusive way, while strengthening the economic and profile benefits for the city.

Across Glasgow's events portfolio, all residents can benefit from the social connection and participation opportunities that the right mix of events can provide. While good in its own right, this also supports events, as ongoing social challenges impact event delivery and make it harder to attract attendees to the city.

Social impact from events is critical for Glasgow and can be achieved in many

Right: Brass Aye? perform on Bell Street during the Merchant City Festival 2024. Photo: Kris Kesiak.

ways: job creation and career pathways, improved city amenities and city presentation, new money flowing into the city and its businesses, civic pride, volunteering, safeguards for the environment, a greater sense of belonging and social connection, cultural understanding, and an increase in participation in sport or the arts. Alongside economic impact and international profile, the long-term impact of Glasgow's events can also have a positive social impact on its residents. This is supported by proactively building the city's communities into the planning of events and development of the portfolio to ensure there is a strong Glaswegian feel.

Strategic priorities

To achieve this vision, three strategic priorities have been identified which build on the current strengths of Glasgow and meet future needs. They are:

- 1. The right events for Glasgow**
- 2. Great to do business with**
- 3. Protect today and tomorrow**





1. The right events for Glasgow

What this means

A planned portfolio mix of community, commercial and publicly funded events – across genres and of varying scale – to meet the needs of residents and the city's strategic priorities, while recognising the resource challenges facing Glasgow.

The portfolio continues to drive economic impact, visitation to the city and enhance its international profile but ensures that events are accessible for, and connected to, Glasgow's citizens.

The city's unique selling point is Glasgow and Glaswegians. Connection to both the city and its people will be what defines 'the right events'.

We will do this by...

- Working with the commercial sector so that its businesses can capitalise on opportunities to benefit, while also adding wider value to Glasgow. Choosing publicly funded events to achieve city outcomes, and national priorities for the largest events.
- Ensuring that events delivered by and for communities are representative of Glasgow's residents.
- Continuing to prioritise events that drive economic value and/or international profile.
- Ensuring every event has principles of equality, diversity and inclusion embedded in its design and delivery.
- Creating a portfolio that reflects a spread of events by type, impact, time of year and location.
- Encouraging different models of event delivery to integrate commercial funding opportunities into events.

Left: British Kabbadi League Final in Glasgow, 2022.
Photo: British Kabbadi.

Success looks like...

- A regular pipeline of new and/or major events.
- An industry which prides itself on being aligned with the culture and identity of Glasgow.
- Clarity and visibility of criteria and process for event selection for public funding and use of public spaces to support the vision.
- A range of positive impacts including visitation, economic, sustainability, international profile and social impact.
- A city that looks within, and to, its many different cultural communities, as well as outside to develop and fund its events portfolio.
- A portfolio spread across the year, genres and Glasgow's communities.
- A portfolio with broad appeal for the diverse people of Glasgow, as well as city visitors.
- A city where events are good for Glasgow, and benefit Scotland.
- A portfolio where events organisers have considered and planned legacy as part of their event delivery.

2. Great to do business with

<p>What this means</p>	<p>An integrated and cohesive industry ensures a clear and supported path to successful event delivery, which is well communicated to all stakeholders, including Glasgow's residents.</p>
<p>We will do this by...</p>	<p>Telling the positive story to businesses and residents about the benefits that events bring to Glasgow.</p> <p>Maintaining a user-friendly, relationship-driven process, which connects events organisers with the public sector for all aspects of event delivery.</p> <p>Providing dedicated facilitation support to manage regulatory and compliance for complex events and ensuring a clear process for all types of events of every scale.</p> <p>Ensuring public funding to support the vision is distributed with clear criteria and fair processes, providing clarity for decision-making.</p> <p>Maintaining and promoting Glasgow's suite of events venues and public spaces so they are well known and accessible for events organisers and attendees.</p> <p>Enabling every event delivered in Glasgow to support this Events Strategy - from the supply chain and public sector policy, through to marketing and leveraging.</p>
<p>Success looks like...</p>	<p>A shared vision for events in Glasgow stated clearly in the Strategy and understood.</p> <p>An integrated industry partnership which is cohesive, collaborative, and resilient.</p> <p>Increased economic activity by maximising the generation of income for businesses in Glasgow and creating and sustaining jobs and prosperity.</p> <p>Clearly identified roles and responsibilities with a user-friendly, relationship-driven process for new events.</p> <p>Work as a partner with new and existing events organisers to maximise benefits for all of the city.</p> <p>Streamlined, accessible and transparent processes, while still maintaining safe event environments.</p>



Above: Above: A crowd watches the UCI Cycling World Championships in 2023. Photo: Jeff Holmes.

3. Protect today and tomorrow

<p>What this means</p>	<p>Glasgow's environment, physical assets and workforce are nurtured, developed and sustained to meet current and future needs.</p>
<p>We will do this by...</p>	<p>Maintaining, developing and managing Glasgow's existing suite of event venues and public spaces to meet current and future needs.</p> <p>Connecting and working with privately owned venues and new developments to meet current and future needs.</p> <p>Nurturing Glasgow's events workforce - including volunteers - to attract, develop and retain good people, reflecting a diverse and inclusive working environment whilst delivering excellence.</p> <p>Ensuring policies, guidelines and implementation related to events contribute towards Glasgow achieving its net zero target.</p> <p>Tracking events-related initiatives in other cities and maintaining awareness of global best practice.</p> <p>Fostering sustainability best practice to reduce waste and environmental impact.</p> <p>Informing and educating residents and visitors in support of city priorities, such as waste reduction, decarbonisation, and inclusion through events.</p>
<p>Success looks like...</p>	<p>A city which is recognised globally as a leader in sustainability and accessibility.</p> <p>A city where the events industry is accessible and inclusive, and values and develops its diverse workforce.</p> <p>Ongoing programmes of development and maintenance nurture the city's physical event assets to be financially sustainable.</p> <p>Robust evaluation of events and the portfolio across economic, social and media metrics, aligning with relevant city and national measures.</p> <p>A city where the value of events in delivering wider city objectives is recognised and communicated.</p>



Right: The Christmas Lights Switch On celebrations in 2023 light up George Square. Photo: Paul Watt.

Delivering the strategy

To support these three priorities, a strong foundation is needed in order to deliver across Glasgow's events sector, and the many partners who play a role in the delivery of this Events Strategy. There are three key ways in which this can be achieved:

1. **Connected industry: public, commercial and third sectors**
2. **Engaged population**
3. **Protected assets**

1. Connected industry: public sector, commercial sector, and third sectors

Good looks like...

A delivery-focused events industry group ensures the public sector, commercial sector, and third sector are aligned in practical and effective ways, working in collaboration towards common goals and outcomes.

Roles are understood by all within a clear and accountable governance structure.

The Glasgow Events Board operates strategically with decision-making on public sector funding based on agreed and transparent criteria, processes and city priorities.

Glasgow connects with events organisers, and Scottish and UK government partners to achieve shared priorities.

Complementary and non-conflicting programming, wherever possible, between business events and public events of scale.

2. Engaged population

Good looks like...

Communication and engagement with residents about why events are delivered in Glasgow creates advocates within the city and fosters local understanding and support.

Regular communication to ensure key communities, the third sector, and national agencies are engaged and communicated with consistently.

The city activates events in a way that residents can relate to, engage with, and benefit from.

3. Protected assets

Good looks like...

Investment in the maintenance of venues and public event spaces, including asset condition assessments and renewal programmes.

The views of the Glasgow Events Sector Industry Group and/or Glasgow Events Board are shared with decision-makers with regard to decisions relating to city centre management, transport planning and social issues which impact event delivery and attendees' experience.

Resources ensure events are used to introduce, educate, and embed change in tangible areas such as waste minimisation, public transport uptake, and city presentation.

The events sector in Glasgow

At the sector's heart are those who have a primary focus on events as their day-to-day business: events rights holders, organisers, producers, funders, venues and suppliers. These can be public sector, commercial sector, and third sector, and they can be local, national (such as VisitScotland/EventScotland) or international.

However, the delivery of events is seldom achieved by one individual organisation. Many different partners must come together for successful delivery, particularly for events of scale.

There are the organisations with wider priorities, but which use events to maximise outcomes: economic growth agencies, tourism and hospitality businesses, and national tourism agencies, and the important role of national agencies such as sportscotland and Creative Scotland.

Then there are the many organisations which support safer and more inclusive event delivery; blue light services, security agencies, regulatory bodies, the local authority, and advisory agencies in areas such as accessibility, sustainability and compliance.

Roles, responsibilities and Governance

It is the local authority, given its city-wide focus, that will be the predominant driver of Glasgow's Events Strategy. However, it is the whole sector, and supporting agencies, that must come together to take forward the implementation of this strategy. This includes blue light services, third sector organisations that deliver events, the industry – such as events organisers, suppliers and venues, city, Scottish and UK creative, sporting, tourism, transport, event industry and enterprise agencies, and regulatory bodies that support delivery. This section focuses on the organisations that have a lead role in the implementation of this Events Strategy.

Glasgow City Council also carries responsibility for most of the policy, city presentation, wider city amenities, regulation and compliance that sit behind how events function within the city. Glasgow City Council's consideration of events in these wider areas, with input from Glasgow Life and/or the event groups, is critical to the success of this strategy.

Glasgow Life, as the city's lead agency for cultural and sports events, is the primary custodian of this strategy and therefore has responsibility for establishing and administering the systems, governance and processes which will support the delivery of Glasgow's Events Strategy. This will include primary responsibility for working with other partners to develop process maps for identifying, funding, delivering and leveraging events, and bringing the industry together to share information and progress the strategy.

The role, resourcing and mandate of Glasgow Life in the delivery of this Events Strategy are set by Glasgow City Council through the Terms of Reference for events advisory and decision-making groups which support the strategy. These Terms of Reference will include representative membership, and the threshold for delegated authority so these groups can operate freely and with agility, within agreed parameters.

A strategy for the whole of Glasgow requires support and participation from the industry, including the third sector organisations which deliver events, and a willingness to support implementation. The sector will have the opportunity to provide constructive input into policies and processes as they are developed. The sector should deliver events in a way that provides economic return and also supports positive social impact in areas including equality, diversity, inclusion, sustainability, and accessibility.

At every stage, communication within the sector or to the wider community will reflect the vision of this strategy. For example, event communications could build in key



Right: Volunteers at the UCI Cycling World Championships 2023. Photo: Jeff Holmes.



messaging on sustainable delivery, the accessibility of venues, and the benefits the event will bring to Glasgow.

Governance is needed to oversee this ecosystem. This will be led through two primary groups:

The Glasgow Events Board (GEB). This Board currently exists but will be further developed as an output of the Glasgow Events Strategy. The Board will:

- ensure that decision making, at every stage, supports the strategic direction for the city
- bring together key city and national stakeholders to strategically prioritise and plan Glasgow's events portfolio
- make event investment decisions according to a set financial delegation
- oversee the delivery of the Glasgow Events Strategy
- oversee the delivery of the supporting Strategy Action Plan

A Glasgow Events Sector Industry Group (GESIG). This group will:

- ensure the city is set up for cohesive public, industry and community event delivery on the ground, in line with strategic priorities
- be the forum for understanding industry needs and operating practices
- ensure public policies and processes comply with industry standards yet are efficient in practice
- make the city great to do business with
- connect the sector to the Glasgow Events Strategy
- communicate with the sector and support knowledge sharing
- foster collaboration opportunities
- provide an industry-wide view to the Glasgow Events Board (GEB) where requested

Collectively, these two groups can support alignment across multiple areas of city priorities including EDI (Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion), sustainability, transport, city presentation, enabling a better-planned and managed city events calendar and pipeline including aspects spanning seasonality, connection with business events, spread of event locations, and diversity of content.

Left: Hundreds of pipers participate in the march past at the World Pipe Band Championships in Glasgow Green, 2024. Photo: Kris Kesiak.

Glasgow Events Board

- Clarity of roles and responsibilities
- Clear parameters and criteria for decision making
- Wider representation
- Cement position within city approval structures
- Strategic focus
- Combines city leaders, partners and industry

Informed by

Glasgow Events Strategy 2035

- Strategic priorities of other national and UK funding partners, notably UK Sport

Glasgow Events Sector Industry Group

- Operational focus
- Representatives across the private sector and community representatives that deliver events

Informed by

- Direct industry feedback
- Direct community feedback
- Response to policy and process



Right: The Homeless World Cup 2016 in George Square. Photo: Homeless World Cup Foundation.

Evaluation and performance measurement

This Events Strategy is clear about the importance of evidencing the impacts and benefits of events as a key contributor to overall city and national priorities, and wherever possible, adding to the value of those impacts. Our approach to measurement will build on areas already measured by the city and are related to elements which are important to Glasgow, while also aligning with the National framework laid out in *Scotland the Perfect Stage 2035*.

As with *Scotland the Perfect Stage*, there are three interconnecting aspects in terms of measuring, reporting, and reviewing success and progress of the Glasgow Events Strategy. These are:

1. the Glasgow events sector's contribution to city and national priorities
2. the measurement by organisers of all events in the portfolio
3. reporting against the Action Plan produced alongside this strategy

These will be combined with other evidence, including qualitative data and research and, where possible, the data will be broken down by demographic or other relevant characteristics. Everyone involved in delivering this Events Strategy must seek to improve measurement, particularly in relation to environmental and community outcomes.

This strategy outlines broad measurement areas, purpose and methodology. As this becomes established it will be possible for all partners involved, with leadership from Glasgow Events Board and Glasgow Events Sector Industry Group, to develop a measurement framework as part of the Action Plan, and to set specific targets within the context of overall additional value.

1. The Glasgow events sector's contribution to city and national priorities

Measurement will be most beneficial, and most credible, when it aligns with existing measurement frameworks for Glasgow as a city, and for other national partners, such as the Scottish Government and VisitScotland/EventScotland. This will be central to the approach.

These high-level measures are intended to support an evidence-based narrative of how events in the city's events portfolio, and the sector, as a whole, are performing in delivering this strategy.

The data collected at a national level to evidence the value of events, as outlined in *Scotland the Perfect Stage*, will also provide the same demonstration of outcomes at a Glasgow level, therefore, that work will not be repeated as part of this strategy. However, there are some additional areas of focus required to assist with the ongoing evaluation of this Events Strategy and the provision of the evidence of the value of



events to the city. These particularly relate to residents' and industry satisfaction, community impacts and the environmental impact of the events portfolio as a whole.

2. The measurement by organisers of all events in the portfolio

As an original partner in developing the event IMPACTS methodology, Glasgow is an advocate of this approach and will continue to measure events in the city's portfolio using this framework. Glasgow Life will lead this evaluation work.

In addition to the existing work of measuring events funded by Glasgow Life, there will also need to be an evaluation of key commercial events and a methodology for aggregating direct research to derive an overall set of results for the sector.

3. Reporting against the Strategy Action Plan

Measuring progress against the Action Plan published alongside this Events Strategy will determine if the proposed and agreed progress is being made, and ensure that all key partners involved in delivering this strategy are held accountable for actions they have agreed to undertake.

The Action Plan will initially be heavily weighted to actions from Glasgow Life and Glasgow City Council but once the Glasgow Events Sector Industry Group is established it is anticipated that there will be an increasing variety of action owners.

The frequency of reporting on and updating the Action Plan is included in the 'Review' section below.

Top: Children gather at the MOD 2019 in George Square. Photo: Eoin Carey.

SIR BILLY CONNOLLY

SPIRIT OF GLASGOW AWARD



Review

In addition to this Events Strategy, a three-year Action Plan has been prepared to outline the first steps towards realising the 2035 vision.

The strategy itself should also be reviewed after three years to ensure it remains relevant. It must flex and adapt to the ever-changing external environment and industry needs. Changes that might bring forward a review include shifts in the strategies of supporting partners, significant changes to funding sources, the development of new event venues and spaces, or currently unseen challenges and opportunities at an industry level.

The review should be overseen by the Glasgow Events Board. The review should be informed by:

- the Glasgow Events Sector Industry Group, notably the buy-in from the wider sector
- the outcomes achieved to date, and any changes to indicators, measurements or methodology
- external changes, such as those noted above
- progress against implementation plans

Approval of any recommendations for changes to the Events Strategy that result from any review will be taken by Glasgow City Council unless delegated to the Glasgow Events Board.

Research and consultation process

The following was undertaken as part of the research and consultation process which was carried out for the formulation of this strategy:

- more than 40 one-to-one interviews with lead individuals from venues, national and regional agencies, commercial and public sector agencies, and elected representatives of the local authority
- six focused workshops bringing together subject matter specialists in sustainability, tourism, economy, sport, music, culture, and Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion; and representatives of communities, refugees and new migrants
- extensive desktop research including regional and national strategies
- surveying of the public, undertaken by Glasgow Life, which received 620 responses

Previous spread: Susie McCabe wins the Sir Billy Connolly Spirit of Glasgow Award at the Glasgow International Comedy Festival 2024. Photo: Tommy Ga-Ken Wan.

Top Right: Nadia Rossi, Angel Walker, Hussein Mitha, Holly White and Saffa Khan, *Loose tomatoes in the backyard*, 2024 presented by Rumpus Room. Part of Glasgow International. Photo: Eoin Carey.

Bottom Right: Panic at the Disco, at the OVO Hydro. Photo: Mark F Gibson.



Appendix: Detailed strategic context

This section expands on the correlation between other city and national strategies that connect with events.

Glasgow City Council Strategic Plan 2022-2027

This strategic plan includes four Grand Challenges for Glasgow:

1. Reduce poverty and inequality in our communities
2. Increase opportunity and prosperity for all our city's residents
3. Fight the climate emergency in a just transition to a net zero Glasgow
4. Enable staff to deliver essential services in a sustainable, innovative and efficient way for our communities

Events can contribute most directly to the first three of these Grand Challenges.

Glasgow City Council's Strategic Plan also includes missions which are relevant for events:

- Support Glasgow to be a city that is active and culturally vibrant
- Support the growth of an innovative, resilient and net zero carbon economy

Glasgow 2030 Tourism Strategy

The Glasgow 2030 Tourism Strategy includes five strategic priorities:

1. Increase the value of tourism to Glasgow's economy
2. Enhance the experiences that we offer
3. Create value for Glasgow's people through the tourism sector
4. Support vibrant places across the city and surrounding region
5. Deliver tourism in a sustainable and inclusive way

Specifically, this strategy notes festivals, concerts, live music, and major events to be lead drivers of city visitation – so the aim of growing the events sector within Glasgow will also increase the economic value of tourism. At the same time, the Tourism Strategy and this Events Strategy recognise that the way to manage growth effectively is through offering and delivering improved experiences, providing value for Glaswegians (not just visitors), contributing to vibrancy that extends beyond the city centre, and being sustainable and inclusive.

City amenities, creating attractive places for people to spend time in, and city centre placemaking are shared conditions of success for tourism and events. So too are

Right: The 800m men's race at the World Athletics Indoor Championships 2024 in Glasgow. Photo: Jeff Holmes.





expanding and upgrading facilities for major events, stepping up sustainability and accessibility, developing an events calendar that appeals to visitors and local residents across all seasons, and celebrating the city's diverse communities.

The principles for delivery within the Tourism Strategy also fully align:

- Everyone's included; all initiatives provide space and opportunities for those with disabilities, and for those experiencing poorer economic outcomes, to participate and contribute fully
- We take a Team Glasgow approach, with ever closer collaboration between public sector and industry
- Glasgow's people are informed and engaged in decisions on tourism development that affect them

Glasgow's Culture Strategy 2024-2030

An international Glasgow draws on its reputation for creativity to attract investment, tourists and new residents. It offers global import and export opportunities for artists and their work. The city's cultural offer has several appealing characteristics: an independent sector, a rich variety of artists working and living in the city, world-class public cultural institutions, events and higher education and a belief in access to culture as a part of everyday life.

The strategy aligns cultural ambition with the commitments set out in the Glasgow City Council's Strategic Plan, which is to be a city that is active and culturally vibrant. To help achieve those commitments, cultural representation should be integrated into key city partnerships to find strategic solutions that improve lives.

Left: Audiences at Glasgow Mela 2024.
Photo Kris Kesiak.

Glasgow's Culture Strategy comprises four interconnected priorities:

- 1.** Glasgow's cultural profile
- 2.** Cultural participation
- 3.** Skills
- 4.** Sustainability

Glasgow Economic Strategy 2022-2030

The city's Economic Strategy also recognises the contribution that economic change can make to the Grand Challenges. It includes specific themes as to how this will be achieved, which also align with this Events Strategy. For example:

- Developing a green economy, recognising the material limits to what the planet can provide, and moving towards net zero, climate-resilient ambitions
- Growing our Economy, crucial to tackling inequality and providing opportunity for Glasgow's residents
- A Fairer Glasgow, with too many people and communities experiencing deprivation, there is responsibility to target interventions to address this
- Infrastructure and Place, requiring continual investment and maintenance as well as creative reimagining and bold ambition for new investment to keep pace with global standards
- Supporting Key City Assets, including the expansion and regeneration of the Scottish Events Campus

Scotland's National Events Strategy 2024–2035

For the largest events, the intent of the Glasgow Events Strategy is to align with the city's own strategic objectives, as well as the priorities of EventScotland.

Scotland's National Events Strategy 2024–2035 has a specific focus on developing a responsible events sector that contributes to Scotland's wellbeing economy, with an inclusive portfolio for participants, workforce, communities and visitors. It will achieve this via three interconnecting strands:

1. Developing Events (inclusive events; investment and support; the portfolio approach, measuring, monitoring and reporting impacts)
2. Developing the Industry (attract, retain, develop a diverse talent pool; quality planning and delivery; responsible events)
3. Developing Scotland (infrastructure and services; reputation and profile; visitor economy)

All these areas of focus, and its portfolio approach to event selection, align with the Glasgow Events Strategy. There should be a clear correlation between Glasgow and Scotland in the measuring, monitoring and reporting of events' impacts to establish and demonstrate progress.

Right: Saturation Point by Ben Chatwin and Pete Harvey at Tramway during Sonica 2024. Photo: Neil Jarvie.

Cover Image: Demi Vollering wins silver in the women's race at the 2023 UCI Cycling World Championships. Photo: Jeff Holmes.

Next spread: Bothy Band at Glasgow Royal Concert Hall for Celtic Connections 2024. Photo: Kris Kesiak

UK Sport

For the largest events, the intent of this strategy is to align with the city's own strategic objectives, as well as the priorities of UK Sport.

The United Kingdom Mega Events Policy Framework (2017) notes that "the very biggest sporting events have huge power to drive economic, social and sporting impacts – both locally and globally. These events can improve the way that our communities feel about themselves, whilst at the same time enhancing the way that the rest of the world sees us." Therefore, mega events are also cemented in community and reach beyond economic benefits. UK Sport's priorities are being renewed but are expected to remain focused on driving wider outcomes, beyond economic and sport.



Celtic
CONNECTIONS



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MAKE
GLASGOW**