



# Southampton Festival & Events Strategy 2022 - 2032

Developed with:



## Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Context and Current Situation.....	3
2.1 Definition of Festivals and Events.....	3
2.2 Current Situation.....	4
3. S.W.O.T.....	10
4. The Strategy .....	13
4.1 Vision.....	13
4.2 Areas of Focus.....	13
4.3 Priorities.....	14
4.4 Purpose and Impact.....	15
4.5 Indicators .....	16
4.6 Portfolio Approach .....	17
5. Objectives.....	18
5.1 Nurture a Diverse and Authentic Portfolio.....	18
5.2 Develop and Reach New Audiences.....	20
5.3 Nurture an Inclusive and Productive Sector.....	22
5.4 Invest in Vibrant and Sustainable Spaces.....	24
5.5 Improve Policy and Processes.....	26
5.6 Leadership and Delivery .....	28
Appendix 1: Rotterdam Location Profile .....	30
Appendix 2: Audience Agency Map .....	33

## 1. Introduction

This Festival and Events Strategy has been developed to harness the considerable creativity, energy and enthusiasm for festivals and events amongst the city's stakeholders and within the culture and events sector. The strategy was developed between March and July 2022, with the direct input of 26 stakeholders building on the discussions that took place as part of the city's bid to be UK City of Culture 2025.

In this context, the Southampton2025 Trust will transition to become a strategic place-based Culture Trust delivering on objectives covering culture, festivals events, destination, creative industries and national and international partnerships that will continue to raise the profile of Southampton, drive footfall and attract greater investment. This strategy forms part of that process.

The research and consultation undertaken during the development of this strategy shows an ambitious, enterprising and creative festival and events sector with potential to grow and deliver real impact for Southampton. The city has considerable assets and expertise which could be more effectively used, and a significant potential audience for festivals and events making the city attractive to both home-grown and visiting event organisers. The adopted Cultural Strategy, Destination Management Plan and Economic Strategy provides a framework for a holistic approach that harnesses the potential of festivals and events to meet identified social, cultural and economic priorities and help tell a more compelling narrative of place. There is a strong track-record of partnership working and enthusiasm to do more together to develop Southampton into a festival city and event destination.

The festival and events strategy sets out a vision and framework for curating and developing a rich and distinctive portfolio and puts forward an indicative set of action areas. The next step will be to create an action plan identifying priorities for the short, medium and long term.

The strategy has been developed considering local strengths, opportunities, challenges, strategic ambitions and learning from best practice from other successful festival cities across the world.

## 2. Context and Current Situation

### 2.1 Definition of Festivals and Events

Festivals and events are sometimes used interchangeably in this strategy but can be understood as follows:

- Festivals are time limited public celebrations that convey, through a kaleidoscope of activities, certain meanings to participants and spectators
- Events tend to be discrete, one-off and often touring celebrations of fixed duration

Both festivals and events are not 'business as usual' and provide opportunities for shared public celebrations, distinctive from the 'everyday' and regular formal cultural activity.

The strategy categorises events into five broad categories based on international industry standards which FEI have adapted over the course of our work with cities and places. These categorisations are not hierarchical but instead consider a range of factors alongside scale. They are focused on the intention of the organiser and the potential outcomes of the event. This approach helps to ensure that festivals and events receive the most appropriate support and to help organisers identify specific areas of strength and improvement.



The most successful places have a portfolio of different event categories: Signature, Growth and Local, covering a range of forms and functions. They also have the capacity to host Major Events independently and sometimes play a role in Mega Events.

## 2.2 Current Situation

The Festival and Events strategy is built on an evidence base that was developed through the following activity:

- Strategic Context and Evidence Review – considering key strategic documents locally, regionally and nationally and analysing existing data
- Mapping – primary research to identify existing festivals and events in Southampton and identify those with the potential to develop
- Sector Survey – to understand more about the sector and its impact with 19 organisers providing detailed responses
- Case Studies – research into 4 cities (Rotterdam, Belfast, Glasgow and Bristol) in order to understand best practice for festival and event development and delivery

- Stakeholder consultations – 1:1 discussion with key stakeholders and representatives identified by the working group. 26 people were spoken to in the course of the project.

The key findings from this activity are summarised below.

### 2.2.1 About Southampton

#### ***A well connected, young and multi-cultural port city with distinctive strengths***

Southampton is a port city with a growing population with around 260,000 people calling the city home in 2021. It has a significantly younger and more culturally diverse population than the UK average. The city has been shaped through the endeavour and enterprise of generations of arrivals from all over the world and the city prides itself as being welcoming and inclusive with the desire to provide opportunities for all. It is a 'City of Sanctuary' with over 150 languages spoken in the city's schools.

Southampton has a rich built, social and industrial heritage linked to its strategic position as a port and an international reputation for innovation, particularly in marine and maritime research. With Solent Freeport status, Southampton is a 'gateway to the world' and has strong international connections and partnerships, particularly with the USA. The city is twinned with ports across the world and welcomes 2 million cruise visitors per year. The city has two universities who play an active civic role, and a student population of 43,000. Excellent transport connections via road, air, rail and sea provide the city with access to a significant audience regionally, nationally and internationally. Compared to much of the South East, Southampton has relatively high levels of deprivation, inequality and disadvantage some of which are also national outliers.

Southampton has some distinctive cultural jewels and assets including The Mayflower as one of the most successful commercial theatres in the UK and Southampton City Art Gallery, home to one of the best 20th century and contemporary art collections outside London. The city has cultural strengths in multi-cultural celebrations, live and electronic music, built and social heritage, urban culture, sports and contemporary visual and performing arts. Pre-pandemic the cultural sector generated £27m GVA with significant room for growth. The sector was hit particularly hard by the pandemic.

Southampton is also an important blue and green city with 52% designated as greenspace, nationally important wetlands and the Solent a Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI). Southampton City Council declared a climate emergency with a commitment that its assets and operations would be carbon net zero by 2030.

The city is bidding for Purple Flag status to support the night-time economy and is on the journey to become a UNICEF Child Friendly City. The city has priorities around health and wellbeing, access and inclusion, environmental sustainability, internationalism and economic growth particularly through destination development and placemaking.

### 2.2.2 Portfolio

#### ***A small and polarised portfolio which needs support to grow***

There are 90 festivals and events planned for 2022 of which only 60 are annual festivals and events. In 2019 it was estimated that there were 150 festivals and events each year which shows the impact of the pandemic on event activity in the city. The large percentage of touring and one-off events (33%) indicate that the city is an attractive proposition for external event promoters. Much of the portfolio had been running for more than 10 years (58%) and the sector considered that it was difficult to find enough sustained support to start new ideas and to grow new events and approaches over time.

The majority of events surveyed (46) are free to attend with 13 requiring registration and 16 partially or wholly ticketed. This indicates that a range of business models are in play. Most events take place in the city centre and June, July and September are the most popular months for both annual and occasional events. There is a noticeable gap in some parts of the city and in the months of March, October and over the December and January period. The most prevalent type of festival/ event is Community Event followed by Specific Cultural Celebrations: Live Music and Participatory Sporting Activity were also popular. Southampton has a number of key cultural strengths, assets and creative communities but not all are reflected in the city's portfolio.

All key city strategic partners actively support and invest in the portfolio. The BID has produced its own events and invests in others, and the University of Southampton runs two festivals: the Southampton Science and Engineering Festival and the Southampton Arts & Humanities Festival. Solent University similarly delivers a range of participatory events through the academic year.

There is only one Signature Festival – Southampton International Boat Show – there are opportunities to support the festival to engage with local communities and businesses. The Southampton Mela was highly valued and the most recognised and anticipated festival in the calendar but is classified as a Growth festival. Three other festivals were identified as Growth festivals (Slamma/ Skate Southampton, Southampton Film Week and Southampton Sailing Week). A further 15 were local festivals with a distinctive offering and the potential to grow given additional support. Commercial event organisers are open and willing to work with the Council and partners to increase their local impact.

The current festivals and event portfolio provides important social benefits for residents: a survey of 19 festivals identified 4,035 direct participatory opportunities helping to support resident's wellbeing and connection to others. Event organisers report an enthusiastic and loyal local audience and a collaborative sector.

### 2.2.3 Audiences

#### ***Mostly serving local and niche audiences and in need of a curated marketing and audience development strategy***

Southampton has a resident population of 260,000 and welcomes over 8 million visitors per year including 2 million cruise ship visitors. An estimated 1.5 million people live within 30 minutes' drive time.



The Audience Agency have developed a segmentation tool based on levels of cultural engagement. This shows that Southampton has a relatively high level of Experience Seekers ('highly active, diverse, social and ambitious regular and eclectic arts engagers'). The hinterland includes a high proportion of Commuterland Culturebuffs ('affluent, professional and suburbanite keen consumers of traditional culture'). The city also has relatively high pockets of Kaleidoscope Creativity ('Mixed age urban low engagers preferring free, local, culturally specific arts and festivals'). See appendix 2.

The Sector Survey indicates that the majority (56%) of festivals and events attract mainly local audiences. Larger commercial events serve an established, loyal but niche audience. When the city hinterland is taken into account, there is a large audience who are able to pay for cultural experiences. However, there are also large numbers of local residents who are unable or unwilling to pay high ticket prices and free events play an important role in supporting cultural engagement. None of the festivals and events reported that they had been able to engage effectively with cruise visitor audience and regional awareness of the festival calendar was low. Accessibility, diversity and inclusion are recognised as important factors and a development opportunity by event organisers.

The Council provide marketing support to events equivalent to 80% of a Senior Communication Officer who attend events to generate marketing assets and create paid-for and in-kind advertising packages for event organisers using council-owned outdoor and digital marketing assets. Throughout the consultation, there was a desire for a more curated and co-ordinated marketing and communication strategy to pool resources and share effort, and to spotlight curated elements of the annual festival programme.

#### **2.2.4 Sector**

##### ***A polarised sector but with huge potential to develop collaboratively through training and networking***

Generally, the sector is characterised by external commercial operators at one end and volunteer-led local community groups at the other with event budgets ranging from £300k to £1.5m. Public investment in festivals and events is small compared to other places. Southampton City Council invest approximately £125k each year into festival-related activity of which £50k is direct via a Festivals and Grants scheme. This compares to Rotterdam's €1.6m investment in festivals and Belfast's approximately £3m. Funding from Arts Council England (ACE) is also relatively low with only a very small number of organisations able to secure awards for festivals and events: only 6 organisations secured funding over the 2 ½ year period examined. More could be done to increase both direct resources and the capacity and knowledge of the sector to access funding. For example some practices, such as not paying artists and freelancers, makes projects ineligible for ACE funding and should also be addressed as a principle in the Council's grants and funding approaches.

The sector demonstrates a high level of commercial expertise and enterprise which could be better supported through policy interventions and partnership working and shaped to lever strategic impact. The two universities may play a key role in professionalising the sector, for example Solent University run a Festivals and

Events Management course and are active in research to support innovation and professional development in festivals and events.

Much of the sector is highly reliant on volunteers and freelancers with very few organised by paid professional staff. Despite that, festivals play an important role in the local economy. The 19 festivals that replied to the Sector Survey employed 46 permanent staff, 87 casual staff, 477 creative and technical freelancers and worked with 150 local suppliers and service providers. There is enthusiasm amongst the sector for a **Festival and Events Forum** to provide a space for greater networking, advocacy and to exchange skills and knowledge.

### **2.2.5 Spaces**

#### ***Some excellent sites and spaces for events which require sensitive management and programming***

Southampton is well served with parks and open spaces which host a variety of festivals and events with 57 identified through the research. Key amongst these are The Common, Mayflower Park and Central Parks. The Common is the largest site with a capacity of 20,000+, Mayflower Park has a capacity of 15,000 and Hoglands Park, 10,000. Many of these sites have specific limitations which need to be considered when programming and designing events. This includes historic byelaws and legal restrictions. There is very limited access to the waterfront in the city which makes Mayflower Park a distinctive and attractive location and a key event site for signature events. However, the park is in need of investment to make it fit-for-purpose and to limit any negative impact on park users and residents. Other parks such as Palmerston Park also require greater investment and resources. There are under-used spaces across the city that could be utilised more effectively for events including spaces in neighbourhoods beyond the city centre such as Shirley, Portswood and Bitterne.

The city centre is a key site for events and in need of year-round animation to support the city's role as a major retail and leisure destination. There are a number of partners involved in city centre events including the Council's Events team who manage and license the Bargate Area, Above Bar and Guildhall Square and events across the Grade II listed Central Parks; GO! Southampton, the Business Improvement District who promote, support and have delivered events across the city centre area, and Westquay who programme and manage the West Quay Esplanade event space. Guildhall Square is the heart of the Cultural Quarter and the city centre's most prominent open space. It is adjacent to many key cultural venues and organisations such as the O2 Guildhall, MAST, the John Hansard Gallery, City Eye, Central Library, SeaCity Museum and Southampton City Art Gallery.

### **2.2.6 Policy and Processes**

#### ***Efficient and valued practical expertise but with potential to increase quality and impact***

Many different departments across Southampton City Council are involved with events either directly or indirectly – for example the Parks team who manage and maintain the city's green spaces and protect environmental sensitivities and Green City & Infrastructure who hold the responsibility for transport infrastructure and the public realm. The Council does not have a formal Events Policy and relies on good relationships across departments.



Within the Culture & Tourism team, the Events team comprises 3 officers who are responsible for managing all events on Council land including festivals, events, promotional activity and markets. They also support civic events such as Mayor Making and the Remembrance Service. Financial targets and responsibilities have increased over recent years. In a typical year, the team enable 250 events to take place. They are the first point of contact for anyone wishing to run an event and often provide ongoing support throughout the planning process. The expertise and input of the Events team is highly valued by many event organisers. The Event team also co-ordinate the monthly Safety Advisory Group (SAG) where event applications are discussed with a range of stakeholders and maintain informal but regular meetings with other site managers and owners both inside and outside the Council.

Local event organisers felt that the Council could do much more in terms of nurturing and supporting commercial, cultural and community groups and creative individuals who wanted to develop and produce new events, to advise on creative and business development and to broker relationships across the city. However, there is a limit to the existing capacity and may require different expertise. Commercial event organisers were willing to do more to engage more widely and support the city's strategic objectives.

Generic information about organising events is provided online but there was a request for more on-line toolkits and guidance, and for a volunteer bank. Respondents to the Sector Survey wanted more support in improving their practice in Community Engagement, Environmental Sustainability and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Festivals and events can deliver a range of cultural, social and economic benefits for the city that are not yet being adequately captured through policy intervention. Funding programmes and site permissions and licenses do not clearly align strategically with city priorities. The recent adoption of the Cultural Strategy and Destination Management Plan provides a framework for embedding festivals and events in wider strategic objectives. However, consideration will also need to be given to the impact on local residents and the green spaces especially those with designated status – the Common is a SSSI and Central Parks are Grade II\* listed.

### **2.2.7 Leadership & Delivery**

#### ***Strong partnership working but no formal leadership structure to support festivals and events across the city***

Southampton has a strong track-record of partnership working with excellent communication across the Council and with external partners. This has recently been strengthened through the process of bidding for UK City of Culture 2025, led by the Southampton2025 Trust.

The Culture & Tourism team have played a key role in strategic cultural programmes for the city such as Mayflower 400 and the Women's Euros, and enabled the Southampton 2025 vehicle and UK City of Culture bidding journey with significant investment. As a result, there are strong regional partnerships in place and a desire to continue working together strategically on festivals and events and tourism.

As part of their business plan, GO! Southampton convene working groups for each of their four themes which are: Better Marketing, Culture, Events and Partnerships, A Greater City Centre Experience and Stronger Business. These engage with a range of business and strategic partners across the city.

Currently there is no single organisation or individual who has the responsibility for curating and programming the festival offer to ensure quality, relevance and impact. The strategy will require both leadership and resources for delivery. Additional fundraising and income generation will be required to support any agreed new initiatives and projects.

### 3. S.W.O.T.

The findings from the research and consultation have been gathered into a S.W.O.T (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis of the context for festivals and events in Southampton.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ambition and drive to continue to develop strong UKCoC bid legacy and programme, albeit at a different scale and pace</li> <li>• Newly adopted Cultural Strategy and Destination Management Plan</li> <li>• Strong partnership working amongst city stakeholders and across Council</li> <li>• Excellent regional partnership working</li> <li>• Distinctive cultural USPs – which have not yet been brought together into a coherent narrative</li> <li>• Attractive to commercial event organisers</li> <li>• Well established, active and culturally diverse communities who are experienced in producing festivals and events</li> <li>• Strong international links</li> <li>• Well established but modest cultural and creative sector with distinctive strengths in live music, young people, visual arts, heritage, spoken word</li> <li>• Good range of event sites including green spaces in and near the city centre</li> <li>• A diverse range of events including a large number that have been</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of clear vision for events shared by internal and external stakeholders, and communicated with residents and businesses</li> <li>• No Event Policy to guide departmental working within Council</li> <li>• Lack of regular home-grown events of scale and ambition. Over reliance on touring product</li> <li>• Some embedded bad practice that is counter to funding bodies policies – for example not paying artists</li> <li>• Over-reliance of the sector on volunteers and freelancers with very few paid staff</li> <li>• Sector limited in capacity to fundraise independently</li> <li>• Sector limited in capacity to collect and analyse data – economic, environmental, social</li> <li>• Very limited funding, advice and support to grow new ideas and support talent development – perception of risk aversion</li> <li>• Lack of quality control and curation</li> <li>• High number of local audiences unable/ unwilling to pay high ticket prices due to socio-economic circumstances</li> </ul>

<p>running for more than 10 years and with one signature festival (SIBS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaged and enthusiastic audience who take advantage of opportunities to participate and large catchment area</li> <li>• High number of local suppliers already engaged with events</li> <li>• Excellent transport links, accommodation and hospitality offer for visitors</li> <li>• Experienced and knowledgeable operational Events team with strong relationships with stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most popular sites not fit for repeated event use and footfall (impact on grass/environment) and in high demand (Mayflower Park, Common is SSSI). Lack of complementary indoor conference facilities identified by some stakeholders</li> <li>• Historical restrictions and limitations on the use of key sites</li> <li>• Lack of communication across sector leads to diary clashes and competition for resources</li> <li>• Lack of central marketing and communication strategy means duplication of efforts (though this is to be addressed as part of the Destination Management Plan)</li> <li>• Limited access to the water makes maritime activity challenging</li> <li>• Comparatively small amount of Council funding for festivals and events (reflecting overall challenging financial position of Council)</li> <li>• Limited city-specific on-line information about event guidance, sites etc.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Destination Management Plan (DMP) and small dedicated resource provided by Council and to be led by the Culture Trust</li> <li>• Legacy from strong UK City of Culture programme, partnerships and opportunities</li> <li>• Culture, Events &amp; Partnership strand of GO! Southampton to be aligned to other partnerships e.g. DMP, We are the Square</li> <li>• High numbers of potential audience from regional hinterland (2m) and from cruise ships (2m) and students (40k+)</li> <li>• City stakeholders could be brought together more formally to improve longer term planning</li> <li>• Excellent regional partnership working and interest in working</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate emergency – growing requirement to innovate with new approaches which requires resourcing</li> <li>• Potential resurgence of Covid-19 and lockdown measures</li> <li>• Changes in consumer/ audience behaviour threatens vibrancy of city centre</li> <li>• Increasing health and safety legislation and requirements increasing costs for event organisers</li> <li>• Proposed Protect Duty legislation may increase the financial burden on event organisers further</li> <li>• Highly fragile local sector with limited capacity to grow without sustained support and investment</li> </ul>

<p>together on product, packaging, promotion and sector support. Solent as a brand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of attractiveness of the destination from commercial event organisers</li> <li>• Two universities both already engaged with festivals and events but with potential to play a greater role</li> <li>• Businesses have offered support to the UKCoC bid showing that they will support if the offer is right</li> <li>• Excellent work with children and young people/ Child Friendly City ambitions</li> <li>• Night-time economy focus/ Purple Flag (decision pending)</li> <li>• BID's Accessible City group provide forum for consultation on accessibility</li> <li>• Invest in Mayflower Park (with appropriate surfacing), surrounding area and other purpose-built event spaces as part of regeneration/ public realm opportunities that reduces impact on Mayflower Park, SSSI Common, listed Central Parks and other green spaces.</li> <li>• Individual producers and organisations with great ideas and experience – but who require additional support to grow ambition</li> <li>• Large programme of public realm improvements planned over next 10 years creating new opportunities for event spaces and animation</li> <li>• Interesting built architecture and public settings – heritage, industrial, maritime and many green spaces</li> <li>• Strong neighbourhood identities and activity with good event sites across the wider city</li> <li>• City of Sanctuary status</li> <li>• Solent Apprenticeship Hubs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overreliance on external commercial operators with limited requirement to embed local impact</li> <li>• Many key sites have historic legal restrictions on use</li> <li>• Strong resident resistance to festivals and events in popular areas due to impact</li> <li>• Funding more competitive generally – Southampton is not a 'Priority Place for Culture'</li> <li>• Increasing cost of living puts added pressure on ability to pay for local audiences</li> <li>• Inclusion – 12% of residents do not speak English, growing numbers of people with long term disabilities – adaptations will need to be made for all to ensure inclusive, accessible and relevant</li> <li>• Changing political leadership can make longer term planning more difficult</li> <li>• Event team already at capacity with increasing income targets</li> <li>• Unsuccessful UKCoC bid, may result in loss of momentum and support for ambitious programme</li> </ul>
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## 4. The Strategy

The Strategy makes recommendations about how Southampton could achieve a rich, diverse and vibrant festivals and events offer with distinctive Signature Festivals known across the world, and a range of commercial, cultural and community led festivals and events of differing scales and stages of development. It will be a city where new ideas and approaches can flourish and be an attractive proposition for home-grown and visiting festival and event producers.

Stakeholders look to the Council to lead the strategy. The strategy's success depends on working collaboratively to deliver, including supporting the convening opportunities of the Culture Trust and the investment by founding partners in its continuation. It will also require the engagement of the sector and on other stakeholders playing their part and aligning their own business planning and resources.

This requires the articulation of a clear vision, priorities and a shared sense of the economic, cultural, and social impact that an enhanced festivals and events offer could have for the city. This Strategy aims to provide that and to make recommendations for specific objectives and actions that the Council and its partners can undertake in the short, medium and long term to deliver the strategy's ambition.

### 4.1 Vision

The proposed vision of the Strategy is:

*So Vibrant, So Distinctive, So Welcoming, So Southampton Festivals*

*Southampton is a city with a distinctive and varied range of festivals and events that bring the City's unique identity to life and extends a warm welcome to all, whatever your interests and wherever you are from.*

### 4.2 Areas of Focus

The themes, cultural strengths and principles, set out below, provide the mix of place-specific qualities that will help to ensure that the emerging portfolio is distinctive to Southampton. Together these form the 'Areas of Focus' of the strategy.

Encouraging festivals and events to describe how they meet these from the beginning will help the Council and other stakeholders to direct resources to gradually shape and curate the portfolio over time and to identify gaps and opportunities where intervention is required.

Themes	Cultural Strengths	Principles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An international city</li> <li>• A diverse city</li> <li>• An innovative city</li> <li>• A welcoming city</li> <li>• A city of opportunity</li> <li>• A green cultural city</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Port City/Maritime</li> <li>• Multi-cultural and diverse</li> <li>• Young people</li> <li>• Electronic music</li> <li>• Live music</li> <li>• Urban culture</li> <li>• Heritage assets and stories that link to the world</li> <li>• Contemporary visual and performing arts</li> <li>• Creativity and innovation</li> <li>• Blue/ Green environment</li> <li>• Competitive sport</li> <li>• Participatory physical activity</li> <li>• Business to Business</li> <li>• Film and Cinema</li> <li>• Neighbourhood Fairs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access and Inclusion</li> <li>• Environmental Sustainability</li> <li>• Wellbeing</li> <li>• Financial Sustainability</li> </ul>

### 4.3 Priorities

A shared understanding of priorities that all festivals and events should aim to meet will help to create a framework that can be adopted by different funders, partners and stakeholders. It will also help event organisers to describe and evidence the value of their festivals and events in a similar way.

Not all festivals and events will meet all of these priorities, and some will meet priorities to different degrees. However, the ambition should be that by 2030 there will be examples of good practice for all of these when the whole of the Southampton festival and events portfolio is considered.

The priorities are that festivals and events should aim to:

1. Be authentic, unique and of high quality to support the vision, focus and ambition of this strategy and put Southampton on the map.
2. Be relevant, maximising opportunities to develop audiences and partnerships on a local, regional and global scale.
3. Drive cultural place-making through animating new and under-used places across the city, and revitalising the city-centre with an offer that is year-round and supports the night-time economy.
4. Attract higher-spending visitors both domestic and overseas and encourage them to stay longer, come back and recommend Southampton to others.



5. Foster emotional connection by engaging communities, supporting wellbeing, building civic pride and local capacity through opportunities for participation and volunteering, ensuring access for all.
6. Actively contribute to addressing environmental sustainability challenges.
7. Be creatively innovative and sustainable, by producing new work and testing new ideas and approaches within a clear sense of future direction.
8. Strengthen the local and global connections of business, cultural and academic partnerships and networks.
9. Support professional creative, technical and management talent development through employment, training and showcasing.
10. Sustain and create higher value jobs and professions, including creating paid opportunities for creative freelancers.

#### **4.4 Purpose and Impact**

Different types of festivals and events will have different types of impact: Mega Events and Major Events may have good Economic impact but low Social Impact. Local Events may have profound social good but comparatively low levels of economic benefit. Many festivals and events will contribute across multiple domains, helping to lever additional value for the area. A strong portfolio will have a mix of different types of festivals creating different types of impact.

A standardised evaluation methodology and shared set of performance indicators will help guide Southampton's decision-making and provide a methodology for measuring the collective impact and tell the bigger story of the value of festivals and events in Southampton.

Festivals and events impact can be understood through different domains:

- Cultural Impact: the positive impact in your practice/genre/area of interest, the creation and amplification of a sense of place and the increase in cultural capital.
- Social impact: the positive changes that happen in your local community and the increase in human, social and natural capital. Environmental impact is included in this area.
- Economic impact: the additional spend that takes place within an area as a direct result of staging an event. This includes the direct spend of the organisers and the audience inside an event, and indirect spend of money spent in the local economy.

Each of these domains are measurable so that indicators can be discussed and agreed at different stages from initial concept through to event planning and finally in evaluation. These can be embedded in funding criteria and negotiated as part of commercial contracts and site permissions.

Sensitively applied, this can be a useful planning tool for the Council and event organisers to help design the festival and event to be as impactful as possible. The level of impact that can be achieved will be dependent on the capacity of the organiser and the resources they have at their disposal.

Impact Area	Measure
<b>Cultural</b>	Quality and Ambition of the idea/ concept/ perception of audience
	Place-making - alignment to themes, perception of uniqueness and authenticity
	Local capacity building (arts, sports, food, other) - new opportunities/ commissions
	International profile and reach - partnership alliances around common interests e.g. India (cult/crea ind) Miami (cruises)
<b>Social</b>	Local engagement and community development - number and nature
	Skills development - volunteers, learning opportunities, skills gained
	Wellbeing - happiness, life-satisfaction, pride
	Environmental sustainability impact and approach
<b>Economic</b>	Overseas visitor - number, bed-nights, spend, motivation
	Domestic audiences - number, spend, motivation
	Leverage - public, private, commercial, in-kind
	Employment and local services / suppliers spend
<b>Organisational Capacity</b>	Ability to deliver
	Quality of the plan
	Suitability of the site
	Financial viability/ risk
	Potential to grow

#### 4.5 Indicators

Indicators and targets can be developed for larger events to measure the impact in a consistent way with a baseline established in year one.

Targets should be agreed with individual events for a minimum three-year period with progress formally reviewed annually to complement the planning cycle for Signature and Growth festivals and events.

The collection of this data requires significant resources so may only be suitable for larger events. Some of the indicators are aligned with existing civic, regional and national surveys but collecting data for key events will help make the case for festivals and events contribution to wider trends.

Cultural indicators might include:

- Number of new creative products and experiences
- Growth of creative businesses and freelance contracts awarded
- Number of regional/ national/ international partnerships
- Audience satisfaction and perception of quality
- Positive peer and industry response
- Positive media and social media coverage
- International export (ideas, contracts, touring)
- Civic pride
- Industry awards and recognition

Economic indicators might include:

- Footfall in key areas (links to BID footfall)
- Attendances for individual events
- Number of domestic and overseas visitors, their motivation to visit and stay longer (links to DMP data gathering)
- Employment and direct spend on suppliers and services
- Increase in inward investment and leverage

Social indicators might include:

- Cultural engagement levels (links to Active Lives Survey)
- Reported well-being – life satisfaction, worthwhile, happiness, anxiety (links to Annual Population Survey)
- Reported satisfaction, belonging, connectedness and safety (links to City Survey)
- Volunteer number, attraction and retention
- Reported skills and confidence attained
- Decrease in negative environmental impact

#### 4.6 Portfolio Approach

The aim of the strategy is to achieve a balanced and mixed portfolio of quality festivals and events that put Southampton on the map and helps the city to be vibrant year-round, which celebrate and amplify its cultural assets and strengths, develops local pride and provides opportunities for local residents, businesses and visitors.

Taking the following factors into consideration will help decision-makers and enablers to discuss and agree shared priorities and address gaps.

Factor	Success Criteria
Festival Type	A mix of Signature, Growth and Local events with plans underway for Major events
Location	A vibrant city centre and strategic use of other parks and open spaces that allow time for rest. Considered alongside suitability of the event to the location
Seasonality	A year-round calendar of events with clear times of increased activity at key seasonal times in the year
Content	A portfolio that shows a balance of the City's cultural strengths and themes
Audiences	A portfolio that has a clear mix of events aimed at visitors/ local audiences or has the ability to engage with target audiences: cruise audiences, business, city-breakers and day visits (DMP)
Opportunities to Participate	A range of opportunities to participate across the portfolio for people of all levels in the chosen field of interest and activity (culture, sport, community)
Frequency	A balance of long-running and new festivals and events and activities alongside touring and occasional one-off events
Affordability and Accessibility	A balance of free, paid for and mixed festivals and events with clear accessibility routes in place for audiences with specific needs
Purpose and Impact	A balance of events that meet the desired Social, Cultural and Economic impacts
Strategic Focus	Prioritise events that link to current strategic priorities for the City – for example developing the night-time economy, creating a safer city and supporting the application to become a Child Friendly City. These are likely to change each year/ over periods of time.

## 5. Objectives

The Strategy should have the following Objectives.

### 5.1 Nurture a Diverse and Authentic Portfolio

The varied portfolio of successful festival cities and events destinations creates the eco-system that enables all festivals and events to thrive.

Southampton should aim to establish between 3 to 5 Signature Festivals by 2030 and foster a distinctive portfolio of 20 ‘Growth’ festivals – all of which will be known outside the city. This will include both home-grown and external and commercial and cultural events. These will provide interest points in a year-round calendar of vibrant and dynamic range of local festivals and events, civic events and one-off and touring commercial and cultural events. Southampton will work with regional and national partners to secure Major Events with wrap-round cultural programmes ensuring that these celebrate and benefit the city’s cultural and events sector.

#### Action Areas:

Harness the UK City of Culture Bid	The process of applying for the UK City of Culture bid has been transformative for the city and generated a range of distinctive creative ideas and programmes. It will be important to work with stakeholders and partners to identify what programmes can be taken forward as a positive legacy of the bid application process and kick-start the delivery of the strategy. This process will be collaboratively led by the Cultural Trust.
Adopt vision and strategy	Many different public and private partners, and different departments within the Council are involved in festivals and events. All partners should adopt the agreed vision and strategic framework set out in this strategy to facilitate joined-up but autonomous decision making and to curate an impactful programme over time. This includes the festival classification system and impact and evaluation framework to facilitate evaluation and forward planning.
Major Events	Southampton has demonstrated the ambition and capacity to host Major Events, and to play a prominent role in national and international programmes such as Mayflower 400 and the UEFA Women’s EURO championship – being part of the national cultural programme.  As a result of bidding for UK City of Culture, regional local authorities have expressed an interest in working together to secure future Major bid-for events. As most of the bid-for events are sporting, this will require the active engagement of the city’s sporting organisations and associations. The universities will also have a role to play in bid-for events, leveraging their international connections and assets.
Signature Events	Signature Events support a range of economic, cultural and social impacts. They can be global ambassadors for a

	<p>particular place attracting visitors and leveraging both project-based and long-term investment.</p> <p>All successful event destinations have a portfolio of Signature Festivals. Rotterdam has 3 (Rotterdam International Film Festival, NN North Sea Jazz Festival and World Port Days); Bristol has 4 (Bristol International Balloon Fiesta, MayFest, Bristol Harbour Festival and UpFest); Glasgow has 5 (Celtic Connections, Merchant City Festival, Glasgow International, Glasgow Mela and the World Pipe Championship) and Belfast has 4 (Belfast International Arts Festival, NI Science Festival, Culture Night and the Belfast Titanic Maritime Festival). The Southampton International Boat Show is the closest Signature Festival although more could be done to work with the organiser to develop stronger local engagement and impact. This may include the development of satellite events. The aim should be to develop between 2-4 additional Signature Festivals over the next 5 years with the expectation that at least one will be commercial and financially independent, one a new project and the others supported from the Growth portfolio.</p>
Growth Festivals	<p>Growth Festivals and Events help to keep the portfolio vibrant by investing in existing festival growth and testing new ideas and business models. These festivals and events may operate for a fixed number of years or grow into Signature Events. They should provide the context for professional and organisational development, capacity building and job creation, and should have clear strategic direction, target audience and growth. Growth Festivals include new ideas and product that meet identified gaps or opportunities. These ideas may emerge from the sector and from stakeholders. The ambition should be to identify potential Growth festivals and work closely with the organisers to develop 3-year business plans, identifying and securing stakeholder support and embedding KPIs and reporting requirements into funding agreements, MOUs and site permissions. This may form part of the ask for external investment from other funders.</p>
Local Events	<p>Local Events are incredibly important to the quality of life in a particular place and deliver a wide range of social outcomes. They play an important role in social cohesion and building stronger communities. They may also deliver significant health benefits through increased wellbeing for those people organising the events, taking part in other ways, or attending with family and friends. It is important to maintain and improve the annual grants programme to support local community festivals and events linking this to the strategy objectives and impact framework.</p>

	<p>Local community run events could also be supported through identifying more cost-efficient ways of providing organisers with support and advice (for example through online guides and sector led support such as mentoring). In Southampton, Local Events include a range of commercial touring product and attractions. These play an important role in the city's vibrancy and there is scope to work more closely with the organisers to identify ways in which their presence could support the wider ambition of this strategy and deliver on the identified impacts. These can be agreed and built into the permissions and asset use agreements.</p>
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## 5.2 Develop and Reach New Audiences

One of the most important drivers of impact and growth for festivals and events is improved audience insight and development supported through a coordinated marketing and communication strategy. Robust and effective audience evaluation is critical to understanding demand, audience expectation, justifying investment and telling the story of the economic, social, and cultural impact of festivals and events.

Rotterdam Festivals (RF) is an independent arms-length organisation that has responsibility for the strategic development and delivery of festivals and events, and which has helped make the city one of the most successful event destinations in the world. RF worked with the national government and university partners to develop a Cultural Target Audience segmentation tool to understand more about audience engagement and reach. Data from festivals and events is uploaded into the map and used to identify gaps, influence programme and direct marketing and communication resource.

Southampton has a large and diverse potential audience for festivals and events with an engaged local audience including a large student population, a relatively prosperous hinterland population and visitors attracted by the retail, leisure, sport and cultural offer. More than 2 million people coming to the city on their way to other destinations via the port and other transport terminals. Ensuring access and inclusion is a priority and underpinning principle for this strategy. The new Destination Management Plan provides an opportunity for improving the marketing and communication of festivals and events to visitors and residents.

### Action Areas:

<p>Improve audience data collection and insight</p>	<p>There is not a consistent way of measuring and evaluating audiences for individual events, or a way for information and insight to be shared across the sector. Stakeholders may want to consider commissioning research into improving how audience data is captured, shared and used to inform decision making. The universities may be willing to play a key role in this. In the short term this could be agreeing an audience evaluation format including a standardised simple audience survey, again linked to funding and asset agreements. In the longer term there could be a centralised ticketing system and service which collects audience data and may also provide an</p>
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	option for voluntary donations. Free events might incentivise pre-registration for events through exclusive offers.
Curate and co-ordinate marketing and communication of festivals and events	Southampton City Council and GO! Southampton work very effectively together on Visit Southampton which provides a space for promoting festivals and events across the city. In the short term this space could be more effectively curated with a calendar of key annual festivals and a higher profile given to key festivals and events (as defined through applying the strategy framework). This could form part of the Tactical City Campaign aimed at regional audiences. Tiered packages of marketing support should be developed that can be paid for by commercial event organisers (as has been successfully developed with Wela Markets) or offered up as quantified in-kind support.
Develop a social media strategy for festivals and events	The majority of festivals and events are self-contained in terms of their marketing and communication and this makes telling the wider story of festivals and events challenging. Facebook, and Instagram were popular forms of relatively low-cost marketing amongst the festivals surveyed. A central social media strategy around the core vision of the strategy #SoSouthamptonFestivals would help to support smaller festivals, promote a year round offer and extend reach.
Embed festivals and events in itineraries	A map and calendar of festivals and events has been developed in the course of this strategy with key events identified as being of most relevance and interest to audiences. This information should be utilised as part of the DMP to build new half-day, whole day and 2-3 day itineraries and packaged to target visitor audiences. This should include itineraries designed for pre- and post- stays and transit passengers.
Profile the festival offer to business and academic conference partners	Business tourism is an identified audience within the DMP. There are proposals to develop a Conference Ambassador programme amongst the city's leaders and academics to raise the profile of Southampton in specific strong and relevant sectors. There should be an awareness raising campaign about festival and events aimed at Ambassadors including presentations about specific festivals and events. Conference focused information should also be shared with festivals and events who may be able to lever their own networks to support increase in business tourism – for example Seawork and Music in the City who both have very strong industry links.
Improve city centre visibility and signage	The bid for UK City of Culture illustrated how effective a co-ordinated and highly visible campaign can be. High profile city signage, wayfinding and wayfaring also helps to promote individual events and alert residents to any upcoming disruption. There should be greater clarity about how festivals and events can access city signage and poster sites and in

	due course a curated approach that profiles key festivals and events. This dovetails with the DMP.
Improve access	All major stakeholders and funders put an increasing focus on ensuring access and inclusion to cultural events and the ageing population and diverse needs means that commercial events also recognise the importance of ensuring good access for audiences. 44% of the festivals surveyed would like more information about Diversity and Inclusion. GO! Southampton has an aim to create a more inclusive city centre through co-ordinating an Accessible City group and this may be a useful forum and focus group for organisers wishing to put on events in the city centre. The Child Friendly City and Purple Flag designations are other opportunity to embed good practice in festivals and events that support these initiatives. In the longer term, Southampton might develop Accessibility Toolkits for all event organisers, as Rotterdam has done.
Increase sustainable travel	Finding out more about Environmental Responsibility was another high priority for event organisers (44%). The biggest environmental impact of festivals and events is caused by attendee travel as well as on parks and green spaces. The Green City and Infrastructure Team at the Council hold the responsibility for transport infrastructure and have excellent strategic relationships with transport providers including the bus service. Generally, the bus operators are supportive of events but require more clarity and predictability. Having a core event calendar in advance would help to mitigate some of this impact and support joint planning. The Council has developed a new journey planner app called ' <a href="#">Breeze</a> ' which provides the opportunity for a more joined-up approach with event organisers and potential audience incentives – for example in packaging and promoting events and sustainable transport options, possibly as part of the itineraries proposed as part of the DMP.

### 5.3 Nurture an Inclusive and Productive Sector

Festivals and events are complex cultural products which have a complicated range of stakeholders and a high level of risk. A vibrant, diverse and sustainable portfolio of festivals and events relies on a knowledgeable, experienced and professional sector.

The popularity of festivals and events in the UK is huge and growing again post-pandemic. The events sector is estimated to be worth £70billion to the UK each year with more than 5 million attendances at festivals in 2018. This means that there are opportunities across the UK for experienced festival producers, event managers technicians and in all parts of the supply chain.

The Festivals and Events sector in Southampton is hugely diverse ranging from creative entrepreneurs to voluntary-led community organisations and large corporate businesses. The sector will need a range of different support mechanisms in order to develop the capacity and connectivity to play an active role in delivering this Strategy.

Action Areas:

<p>Support for organisations and businesses</p>	<p>The sector has expressed a need for access for advice and support earlier in the event planning process to help them to maximise opportunities and improve quality and impact. Stakeholders should look at how this support can be provided for key events. Alongside this in the longer term it is proposed that resources are identified for a training and development programme, potentially working with industry, universities regional partners and the Local Enterprise Partnership. This could range from on-line toolkits and group sessions to one-to-one support, mentoring and training. Sessions might include governance and business planning, fund-raising and commercialisation, audience development, access and environmental responsibility.</p>
<p>Support for freelancers</p>	<p>Many successful festivals and events are organised by creative producers who can work with communities, cultural organisations, businesses and/or local authorities to design and curate strategic creative festival programming. These are usually fixed-term, project-based freelance contracts and it is important that these are paid roles. A special training and development programme could be run for producers and freelancers alongside the support for organisations. Southampton may want to consider the feasibility of a Producer Incubation Hub, providing bursaries and office space to graduates or start ups. Successful producers accepted onto the graduate programme would be paired with festivals seeking to grow their capacity and work with these festivals for a specific period under the guidance of a mentor. There is also an opportunity for individuals to benefit from the advice from the newly established British Library Business and IP Centre based in Central Library Civic Centre.</p>
<p>Support for volunteers</p>	<p>Volunteers play an important role in all aspects of festivals and events from leadership and governance to supporting roles for professional-led events. Volunteer networks can help to reach deep into communities and engage those most marginalised from taking part. The sector reported some challenges around recruiting and retaining volunteers and there are opportunities to work more closely with Southampton Voluntary Services (SVS) in this respect. It would be useful to share good practice around volunteers and have agreed volunteer policies shaped and adopted by festivals and events. Another innovation could be an online register of volunteers. Bristol Festivals is an independent membership organisation and provides access to a volunteer database for its paid up members as well as providing central support and advice for training and working with volunteers.</p>
<p>Engagement with young people</p>	<p>Southampton has a number of organisations that work with young people to support their creative and cultural development including, for example, schools and colleges</p>

	<p>pursing Artsmark awards, Artwork, Southampton Music Service and Music Hub, City of Southampton Orchestra, Southampton Cultural Education Partnership (SCEP), University of Southampton hosted Connecting Cultures consortium project, Southampton Education Forum and the SoCo project. Festivals and events provide an excellent opportunity for developing creative, technical and soft skills which improve outcomes for young people. Ideas for how this might be harnessed include a signature festival that is co-created with young people, celebrates young people's achievements, fosters greater partnership working between the commercial and cultural sector that levers larger events to provide showcasing and training opportunities for young people and a summer long season of work that is produced and programmed by young people, such as Palmerston Park bandstand.</p>
<p>Festival &amp; Events Forum</p>	<p>Generally, there was a great deal of support for the idea of a Festival &amp; Events Forum (53% Yes and 47% Maybe). The Forum would be a space for greater collaboration and networking, a forum for rolling out training and development and a more effective mechanism for liaising with the Council and other stakeholders as a single sectoral voice. The Forum may require coordination from the Council in the short term, based on the model established by Belfast City Council. In the longer term, once its usefulness has been established, the Forum could be supported by the Culture Trust and build on the Bristol Festivals Ltd model which provides office space, pooled equipment and other services to its members and which undertakes fundraising and lobbying activity to support city-wide projects. The Forum should meet at least twice a year.</p>
<p>Hosting industry meetings</p>	<p>The Southampton festivals and events sector is generally well-networked regionally, nationally and internationally. Organisers are active members of industry groups such as the South Coast Events Forum, the Association of Independent Festivals, CVAN, BFI Fan Network and of informal knowledge exchange groups such as the national networks of Pride Festivals, Black History Month and youth music organisations. Southampton should aim to target and host annual conferences, AGMs and meetings of these groups to increase awareness of the city's offer to industry, raise the profile of local organisers and attract business visitors to the city. This dovetails with the work of the DMP to increase MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Exhibitions) activation.</p>

#### 5.4 Invest in Vibrant and Sustainable Spaces

Southampton is well served with a range of attractive and accessible sites for festivals and events of all types and sizes. This makes it attractive as a destination

for visiting event organisers and provides a rich and varied context for the development of distinctive home-grown festivals and events.

However, some key spaces are in huge demand and with sensitivities and restrictions which can limit their use. Key sites are in need of investment to make them fit for purpose and support the aims of this strategy. Other spaces are currently under-used and un-tested. There is a large programme of public realm improvements planned which could create new event spaces and provide the conditions for future animation. The city's parks are also excellent locations for events, for example Hoglands Park, but need clearer guidance for event organisers and recognition of the impact on the ecology. The city centre is a key event space with a number of stakeholders involved in programming, managing and funding events through the year.

Action Areas:

Mayflower Park	In a city with very limited public access to the sea, Mayflower Park has been identified as a key signature site for festivals and events and hosts 2 of the largest events, SIBS and Seawork. Mayflower Park has been the subject of various attempts to develop a Masterplan for the area and should this be initiated again this could be an opportunity for holistic re-development that attempts to mitigate negative impact on residents and park users. A city-wide Masterplan should involve key event organisers in redesign and development, alongside other stakeholders. Previous proposals had included a purpose-built indoor event facility that, if desirable, feasible and sustainable, could also support the city's cultural and destination ambitions.
Palmerston Park	The bandstand in Palmerston Park is underused and is a good opportunity but requires investment to improve its appearance and infrastructure and to support high quality content. It would work well as a summer season of regular events and could be utilised to showcase and develop the skills of young people. Palmerston Park is Grade II listed and in a residential area so the Parks team and residents would need to be engaged in shaping the development and programming scope.
City Centre Events Group	There is a desire for year-round animation in the city centre and drivers to increase footfall and the offer at key times of the year such as summer and over the Christmas period. A range of stakeholders are involved in events in the city centre including the Council, GO! Southampton, Westquay and major cultural partners in the city. Joint planning and working could be facilitated through a formal City Centre Events group to meet twice yearly using this strategy as a guide for decision making. The City Centre group might want to consider pooling resources to co-commission new activity which would help to foster greater knowledge exchange. Bristol City Council has recently launched a £300k open call for new events to animate



	the city centre with awards of £15k to £50k funded through the Cultural Development Fund.
Public Realm planning	There is a large programme of public realm improvement planned over the next 10 years that involves both the public and private sector. Events can be helpful in testing ideas, supporting consultation and in animating new spaces. It would be useful to develop a list of preferred requirements for new spaces so that they can support events in the future, and to build in resources for cultural event animation into planning applications via Section 106/ CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) contributions. The engagement of the Green City and Infrastructure team will be essential in embedding this into current and future public realm plans.
Location Guides	<p>One of the most interesting innovations that arose from the international case studies was from Rotterdam. Rotterdam Festivals work with city council departments (Parks, Traffic, Tourism) and local resident groups to create Location Profiles for all event sites which are made available online. A Location Profile consists of two parts: the desired programming/ ambition of the city and the management aspects and physical properties of the locations. For frequently used locations, binding Location Profiles set out the number of events, the number of visitors, the maximum noise exposure and the rest and recovery times. The Profiles gives both clarity and inspiration to organisers and helps ensure that the event and location fit together. The profiles are evaluated every two years with input from partners and users and adjusted if necessary (an example Location Guide for Rotterdam is included as an appendix).</p> <p>The Council may want to develop detailed Location Profiles for all event spaces in the city beginning with a pilot programme focusing on a small number of key sites, developed and iterated with the sector, partners and residents.</p>

### 5.5 Improve Policy and Processes

Southampton City Council enables and supports festivals and events in a wide range of ways across different departments. Culture & Tourism lead on more transformative cultural programmes (such as UK City of Culture) that seek to enriching the city as a destination, as well as a key role in managing and supporting events of all types through the Events team; Parks enable access to key green spaces and guidance on environmental protection and waste management; Communications provide marketing support, and Green City and Infrastructure support the development of public realm and traffic and transport management.

Communication across departments is often informal and relies on good relationships between individual officers. Inevitably there will be occasions of competing departmental priorities and it is not always clear how support for festivals and events fits into these.



Festivals and events also impact on other areas of the Council's work with communities, health and wellbeing, economic development and businesses, and there is not always a coherent sense across the Council about why festivals and events are considered important, and what they do for the city.

Action Areas:

Develop an Events Policy	The Events Policy would set out the commitment of Southampton City Council towards festivals and events and be developed with the input of the different departments and teams involved. This would include the rationale for why festivals and events are important for the city, the approach and ambition set out in the strategy and define the roles of different officers in the event planning cycle.
Strategic Events Group	Alongside the Events Policy it is recommended that there is a formal senior officers' group where festivals and events are discussed on a regular basis. This group would consider and review the upcoming calendar to identify gaps and challenges and be a forum where key larger and strategic events can be discussed in advance of going to the Safety Advisory Group. This could be either a new group or the inclusion of festivals and events as an agenda item on the existing Culture Board or other Corporate meeting. This group or discussion should take place at least twice a year.
Embed impact in commercial contracts	Many events in Southampton do not require or are ineligible for public funding which makes it more challenging to capture value. It is recommended that the portfolio approach is used to make decisions where there is competing demand for spaces, and that the Impact criteria is embedded in site contracts with a requirement for organisers to collect and share data in an agreed format with the Council or commissioning partner.
Embed impact in funding programmes	The Council has a comparatively very small budget for festivals and events. It should seek to sustain and grow the support in partnership with others. The impact criteria should also be developed into a funding requirement, with provision made for the amount of award, the size of the event and the capacity of the organiser. For example, small Local Events would not be expected to conduct an audience evaluation survey. All organisations receiving public funding should be required to provide a brief evaluation report. This could be collected via an online form to help to ease the administrative burden for organiser and the Council and to assist with the collating of information across the whole portfolio. Other partners in the city who manage and fund events such as GO! Southampton and Westquay should be encouraged to collect data in the same way.
Develop new funding programmes with partners	The Council and the Culture Trust have excellent relationships with other potential funders and partners including Arts Council England and the National Heritage Lottery Fund, and there are other funding opportunities that only local authorities or

	charitable organisations are eligible to access. The UK City of Culture bid secured the support of major business partners such as APB who already sponsor the Southampton Marathon. Other private partners in the city also invest in festivals and events. These provide an opportunity to lever the existing festivals grants budget and match it with public or private funding to run an open grants scheme aimed at meeting joint strategic priorities, and possibly themed – for example heritage projects. Consideration should be given to tiered funding streams that will support smaller project (with awards of under £1k), medium projects (awards between £1k - 5k) and larger projects (awards of £5k plus with an expectation of at least 1:1 match funding).
Formal charging policy for event spaces with different levels for commercial, cultural and community events	The Council has annual income targets for site hire from events. This target has increased over recent years and it is critical that income is sustained or increased. The Council does make provision for lower or no fees for community events but this is negotiated at officer level. This should be formalised and included within the event policy to ensure fairness and transparency and to protect individual officers. Consideration should be given to both the type of organisation and its ability to pay and the nature, purpose and impact of the event with different levels for community, commercial and cultural sector led events. Consideration should be given to reserving income from event sites for investment into the strategy.
Increase understanding of holding powers	Research into existing holding powers into key sites and investigate whether these are still relevant to the city’s needs and ambitions.

### 5.6 Leadership and Delivery

Southampton City Council is a key stakeholder across all aspects of festivals and events and has excellent relationships with city partners, and with the sector. The Council will therefore play an important role in leading the implementation of this Strategy in the short term and in sustaining the engagement and input of partners. This should be led by the Culture & Tourism team and developed alongside the Destination Management Plan which shares many of the same goals.

The future development of the strategy will need to be closely aligned with the ambition and business plan of the strategic Cultural Trust in order to harness the partnerships and ambitions developed during the process of bidding for UK City of Culture.

#### Action Areas:

Festival and Event Working Group	This strategy has been developed with the input and guidance of a steering group who have brought expertise and ambition to the process and who have key roles to play in the strategy’s delivery. It is recommended that this group continues to meet to oversee the strategy’s implementation. The Festival and Events Working Group should meet quarterly with reports being fed into the following groups:
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SCC Strategic Events Group/ Culture Board</li> <li>• Cultural Trust Board and Destination Partnership</li> <li>• GO! Southampton – Culture Events and Partnerships group</li> </ul> <p>The Festival and Events Working Group would provide a link through to these groups for the wider sector via the Festival &amp; Events Forum, once this is established. This group would be initially chaired by Carolyn Abel, Head of Culture and Tourism at Southampton City Council.</p>
Support the Culture Trust	<p>The Culture Trust will help to ensure that the strategy can deliver a festival and event portfolio of artistic quality, relevance and ambition. This may be through leading the development of new festivals and events, brokering new relationships with the national and international cultural and commercial sector and securing new investment for culture, festivals and events. The Trust will also help to identify new opportunities emerging from within the city. It is envisaged that the Trust will lead the strategy in the longer term and this should be embedded in future work plans.</p>
Appoint a Place Curator	<p>One of the key ideas that emerged from the strategy was the need for a stronger curatorial approach to the festival and event calendar. This strategy proposes a curatorial framework that will support individual and collective decision making but assessing and improving artistic quality through a framework is challenging. Thought should be given to resourcing and recruiting a ‘Place Curator’. This role would provide artistic direction to all cultural activity in the public realm including festivals and events and public art. They would do this through harnessing the expertise of the city’s main cultural partners and artists and inviting national and international experts to engage with the programme. The Place Curator would ideally sit within the Culture Trust.</p>

## Appendix 1: Rotterdam Location Profile

### Example:

#### Parkkade (Park Quay)

Capacity 5,000 – 10,000

#### 1. Starting point (ambition of the city, renewal)

The water area is the origin, the soul of Rotterdam. It is a 'gateway to the world.' In addition, the wetland (former port area) the capital/gold of the city and of large symbolic and economic value. The Erasmus Bridge and the Willemsbrug are the symbol of innovation; the new Rotterdam; the connection of north and south. By the connection, the city is one whole. The Waterfront is an important symbol for the profile of the city.

The Waterfront can be divided into the following locations:

- Boompjes & Boompjeskade
- Willemsplein
- Leuvehoofd
- Willemskade / Ferry harbour
- Park quay
- Westerkade
- Square 1940

#### 2. Profile from the power of the place

The Parkkade is a sturdy quay between the monumental Park of Zocher and the Meuse.

Parkkade remains a favorite mooring place for coasters and other interesting seagoing vessels.

The interior on the quay is therefore sturdy and grand, with generous colorful grass surfaces. There is space to lie down or to sit and watch the boats and the river. Access to the Park is facilitated, among other things by a new staircase in the middle of the quay. The environment of the monumental filter building of the Maastunnel will have a garden-like environment in line with the refined and unique architecture.

Desired programming matching profile

- Programming can tie in with the activity that is already in the area from the restaurants and cafes.
- The Parkkade invites you for programming that matches activities in Het Park that reflect and strengthen the atmosphere of both locations.
- In addition, the location can be part of larger events taking place in the area from the waterfront to a limited extent.

#### 3.1 Management aspects:

##### Physical characteristics of the place (surface, facilities)

- Urban harbor quay.
- Layout as a quay. Ships dock regularly.
- There is no camera surveillance.
- Natural stone (and therefore not suitable for heavy loads).
- Lots of green bins, trees, and street furniture, these must be kept free and organizers must take this into account when designing the site.

- Fire hydrants are limited.
- Calamity jetty is available (opposite the Ballentent). Space around this must be kept free.
- The Parkkade is the only free berth for seagoing vessels in Rotterdam. In coordination with the Port Authority Rotterdam an exception can be made for holding an event.
- Lighting: ordinary, public street lighting.

### **Size**

Gross surface, excluding carriageway, approx. 9,000 m<sup>2</sup>.

### **Type of environment (residential area/location)**

- Access road.
- Recreational waterfront.
- Next to Het Park, around the corner from the Euromast.
- Further away from (icon) Erasmus Bridge, but with a view of Wilhelminapier with De Rotterdam and Hotel New York.
- The entrance of the bicycle tunnel to Rotterdam South is adjacent to the Parkkade.
- Coordination with entrepreneurs (Parkheuvel, Ballentent, Dennis Snackbar and Scorpio) and residents in the area is necessary.

### **Pitches**

N/A

## **1.2 Management aspects**

### **Safety Crowd management options**

- Reasonably easy to make (physical) separation, so regulation of access is possible.
- There are sufficient escape options for visitors.
- It should be borne in mind that with any calamity on the Nieuwe Maas, whereby hazardous substances are released, the event area must be immediately cleared.

### **Accessibility (accessibility for emergency services)**

The organizer must check with the Port Authority whether there are any ships dock, if this is the case, five meters from the quay will be kept free for the skipper's path and five meters for the emergency route (so a total of ten meters).

From the police and the VRR (Rotterdam Security Region) it is advised to follow the calamity route / skipper's path fences, because the water in the Nieuwe Maas is life-threatening.

## **3.3 Management aspects: Traffic**

### **Accessibility public transport**

- Tram stop at 15 minutes walking distance.
- In general: not easily accessible by public transport.

Other traffic aspects

- Type of road: quay.
- Lane must remain free.
- Traffic impact at entire closure: traffic impact for the Scheepvaartkwartier is very large.
- Traffic impact with partial lane closure: major.
- Important traffic junctions in the immediate vicinity due to flow during event: none.
- In connection with drivability: never close at the same time as: the Scheepstimmermanslaan.
- The roadway must be kept clear.
- Emergency route emergency services.

### **3.4 Management aspects: Construction activities/ Refurbishment**

#### **Construction projects in progress**

Maastunnel work (2017 – 2018).

#### **Outdoor space projects (redevelopment) and intended start performance**

Work Parkkade (2015 – 2017).

It is still unclear when the refurbishment of the area is started. The ambition for the refurbishment is as follows ( [link to planning application](#)).

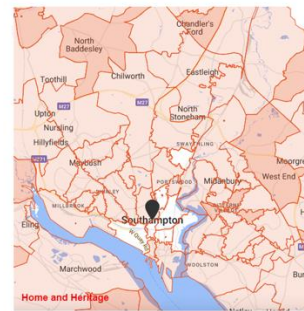
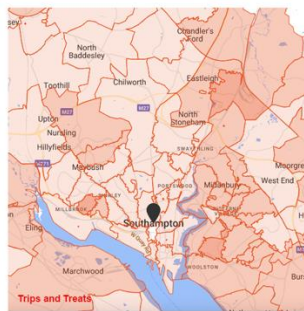
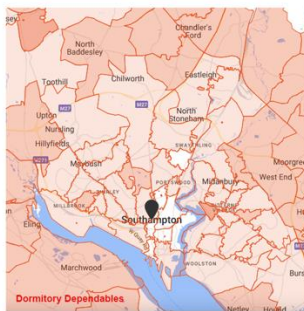


## Appendix 2: Audience Agency Map

### Higher engagement



### Medium engagement



### Lower engagement

