



Doors Open Days *get into buildings!*

2015

PARTNER AND STAKEHOLDER REPORT



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DOORS OPEN DAYS 2015

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Summary

Doors Open Days is Scotland's largest free festival that celebrates heritage and the built environment. It offers free access to a thousand venues across the country throughout September, every year.

The aim of Doors Open Days is to ensure that Scotland's built heritage, new and old, is made accessible to people living and visiting the country on weekends in September. The focus is on maximising social, cultural and economic opportunities in addition to encouraging a greater interest in Scottish heritage.

In liaison with local coordinators throughout Scotland, by creating unique opportunities for insight into Scotland's hidden heritage and world-class architecture it is the ambition of DOD to promote civic pride, community cohesion and to encourage understanding between local and visiting individuals across the country.

Origins: in 1990 as part of the European City of Culture celebrations, the first ever Doors Open Days events in the UK took place in Glasgow and Ayr.

The popularity of the event encouraged several other areas in Scotland to take part the following year. In 1991 Scotland became the only country in the UK and one of only 5 European nations to take part in the first ever European Heritage Days.

The event brings people together from all walks of life celebrating the fascinating places and spaces that surround us and by sharing the stories that only our built environments can tell.

Event theme in 2015 – Year of Scotland's Food and Drink. This theme allowed coordinators to focus some of their programme on buildings and events that showcase Scotland's larder and its rich diversity, from a working flour mill to a restaurant in an iconic town building.

Event Coordination

Doors Open Days is coordinated nationally by the Scottish Civic Trust with funding support from Historic Environment Scotland and sponsorship from Aberdeen Asset Management.

Local area programmes are coordinated by a network of local authorities, heritage consultancies, civic societies and heritage groups who are in turn supported by a large number of volunteers, businesses, community organisations and building owners.

Alongside Scottish Archaeology Heritage Festival, coordinated by Archaeology Scotland and Dig It 2015, Doors Open Days forms Scotland's contribution to European Heritage Days, which sees over 25 million people from 50 countries take part annually, uniting our communities in a unique celebration of heritage in our own distinctive ways.

European Heritage Days events and activities aim to widen opportunities and access in addition to encouraging care for architectural and environmental heritage across Europe. This in turn increases understanding, support and respect for heritage among our communities. For more information about European Heritage Days see www.ehd.coe.int.

Mechanics

This report seeks to measure the success of Doors Open Days in 2015 by evaluating our event delivery, visitor feedback and participant reports.

The event evaluation has been informed by visitor surveys carried out at locations throughout Scotland, online and statistical reports produced by event organisers and collated by area coordinators, press cuttings, Google Analytics and social media analytics.

In 2015 we received 1200+ visitor surveys from across the world and data from over 1,000 participating events and building owners and 20 local area coordinator reports from across Scotland.

Participant Trends

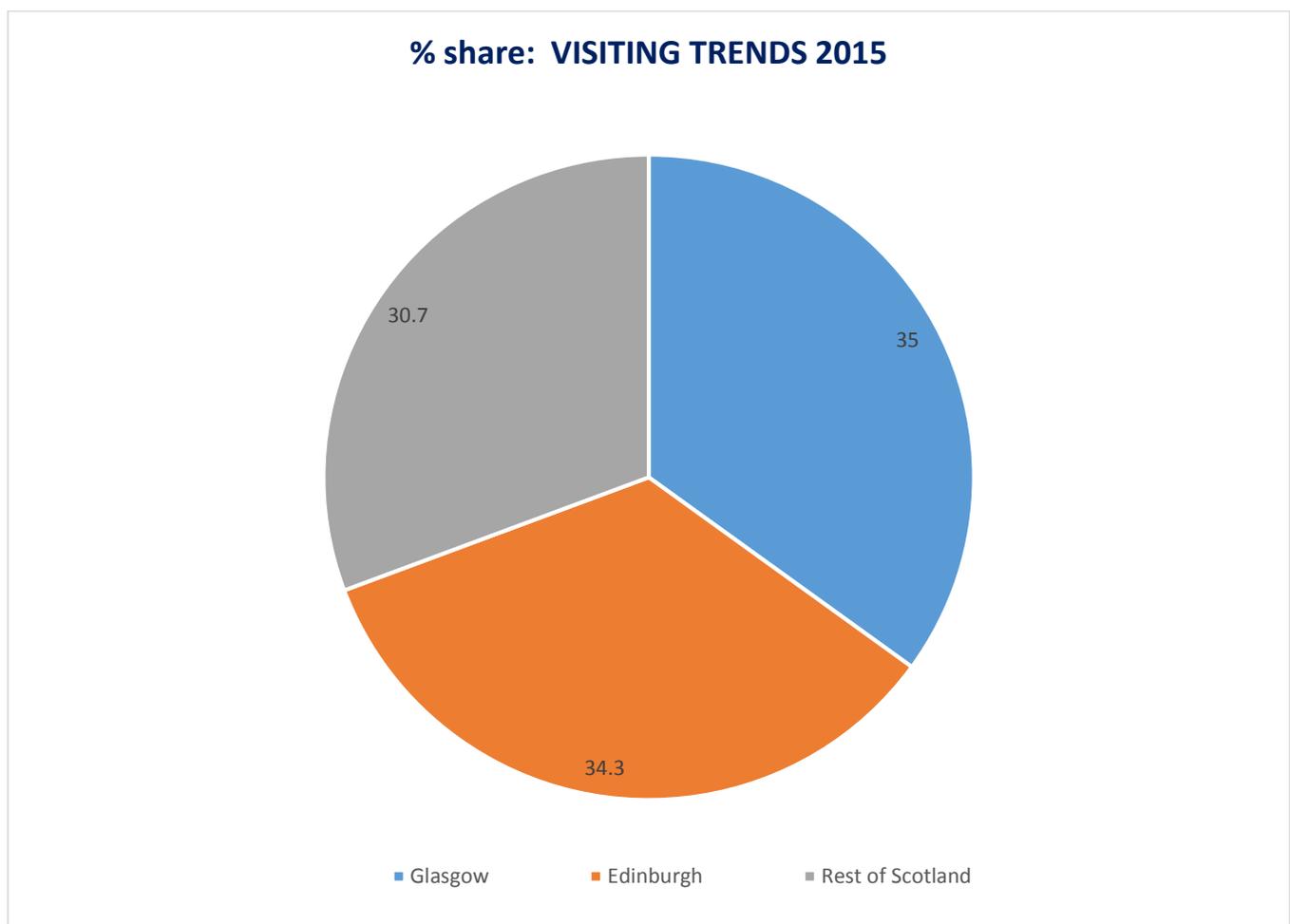
Doors Open Days is an inclusive event that incorporates visitors, volunteers, staff, local businesses, tourists, local government and national government.

The main participants who help make the festival happen are the staff and volunteers across the country who help open up doors.

The festival is one of the biggest volunteering events in Scotland: the 2015 festival saw over 5,000 volunteers and more than 2,000 staff members taking part, across 1,001 venues and events.

Visiting Trend: Attendance Throughout Scotland

In 2015 Doors Open Days welcomed 58,500 unique visitors, making up a total of 210,600 attendances across Scotland during the month of September



Attendance throughout the

Rest of Scotland

Glasgow and Edinburgh have increased their share of visitors to 69%, from 2014's 60%, with the remaining visitors focused on Scotland's cities outside the central belt: Inverness, Highlands; Aberdeen, Dundee, Stirling, Perth. Additionally, regions that have built a strong DOD profile in the past continue to sustain high visitor numbers year on year even though their overall visitor percentage share may appear low. Aberdeenshire, Angus, Ayr, Clackmannanshire, East Dunbartonshire, Fife, Lanarkshire (North and South) all have sustained visitor numbers and report high numbers of returning DOD supporters and new visitors. Areas that participated for the first time in a few years demonstrate strong local interest. One example is Argyll and Bute where a very busy weekend of events from Inveraray to Campbeltown was reported.

% share: Rest of Scotland detail

Aberdeen City	5
Aberdeenshire	1
Angus	1.2
Argyll and Bute	0.25
Ayrshire North, South, East	2
Clackmannanshire	1
Dundee City	3.5
East Dunbartonshire	0.5
East Renfrewshire	0.2
Falkirk	0.6
Fife	3
Highlands	2
Inverclyde	2.1
Midlothian	0.5
North Lanarkshire	2
South Lanarkshire	0.2
Perth and Kinross	2.6
Renfrewshire	1
Scottish Borders	0.3
Stirling	1.5
West Lothian	0.25

Visiting Trends: Duration

Doors Open Days is fortunate to have built a faithful returning audience over the past twenty years. The increase of returning visitors is also a significant outcome of the sustained quality of DOD overall. Throughout Scotland 25% of visitors had attended events in previous years, for Glasgow and Edinburgh the figure is higher with at least 36% of returning visitors.

With such a well-established heritage festival it is not surprising that more than 84% of visits are planned by visitors prompted by promotional aids to help identify where to go and what to see. The powerful attraction after previous familiarity with DOD is word of mouth, followed by finding the programmes online, social media promotion and more locally, posters, banners and balloons. The average unique visitor spent 2 days at DOD and over 70% visited at least 3 venues.

Significantly, over 90% of visitors Scotland-wide said they were very likely to attend DOD in the future. Consider this with the 16% of visitors who chanced on the event and took part and there is a very strong picture of a popular and loved festival of culture that reaches well beyond the central belt and impacts positively on a diverse audience.

6% of visitors to DOD were from outside Scotland, with 4% of visitors in the central belt cities not living in Scotland. Of this group of approximately 3,500 individuals, less than half travelled from England and Wales, a significant number were European; from France, Germany, Norway, Spain, Netherlands, Switzerland and Portugal; and a high proportion from North America – USA and Canada; and other countries noted were South Africa and Japan. Anecdotally, many of these visitors were familiar with DOD and organised their visit to Scotland in September to coincide with Doors Open Days.

Age profile

Traditionally DOD attracts an audience of all age groups, and in 2015 36% of visitors were under 44 years old; 28% between 45 and 59 years, and 33% of visitors were over 60.

As has been the trend for some years, most attendances were made over 2 days with 40% of visitors attending events for three days or more. It appears that DOD prompts movement between areas and across boundaries and encourages visitors to investigate their country and local more than they would have if DOD did not take place. The average number of visits is 3, with some visitors 'bagging' as many as 9 in a weekend and at least one hardy supporter visiting different areas on the eight weekend days of September.

These figures, along with the enthusiasm shown by survey respondents, indicate the public's continuing and growing involvement with the festival, across more than one day, which is also significant in terms of DOD's economic impact.

Economic Impact

While Doors Open Days is free to visitors, it generates considerable income in local communities. According to survey respondents answering, they spent an average of £25 per day they attended (travel, food, etc); 5% stayed overnight – some with family and friends and others in hotels/guest houses spending an average of £60 per night.

The total figure generated by visitors to DOD in 2015 was, approximately, £1.7million. So despite a 5% fall in overall visitor numbers, spend throughout Scotland remained at the same level as the previous year.



25

average figure spent per person each day at DOD

60

average cost of overnight accommodation

1.7M

figure generated by visitors Scotland wide during DOD

Visitor Experience

2015 Doors Open Days festival had a positive impact on its audience sense of enjoyment of the event, their individual experiences and their access to heritage.

99% of visitors rated DOD excellent or good and would recommend it to friends and family; with 0.4% feeling there is room for improvement. Of this group of 99%, 76% of respondents indicated they were aware of DOD before 2015; of this group half of them were aware that DOD is supported by Historic Environment Scotland and is a part of European Heritage Days. When asked if DOD enhanced their image of Scotland, 58% strongly agreed.

Overall, the visitors' survey illustrates how successful Doors Open Days is and why it is such an outstanding festival in the annual calendar of events in Scotland. The mix appears to be simple:

- volunteer and community involvement to organise programmes of events in local areas;
- buildings activity seeking to be part of the programme and engaging with the ethos of the Festival and
- every building and event made available and free to access

At the heart of DOD is free access to thousands of buildings around Scotland every September. In 2015, with combined support from volunteers, coordinators and supporting agencies in 23 local areas, this target was met.

Audience Engagement: Online

Social media engagement has helped expand the festival audience and reach a new age demographic by involving and attracting younger visitors, especially through Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

DoorsOpenDays.org.uk is the home for all events during September (with the exception of Edinburgh where a direct link to the Cockburn Association site for the Edinburgh weekend can be found). Each coordinator has access to the website and uploads their programme.

Of the 100,000 users, 30% were returning visitors and the remaining 70% were new to the site. Access is balanced between mobile, pc and tablet users.



The average duration of one session in the period from 1 July 2015 to 31 October 2015 was 3.51 mins, with users accessing 4 or 5 pages of the site. The bounce rate was just under 40% in mid-September, and as was expected this increased in October when the project had finished. The busiest online day with over 6,000 active users was Saturday 26 September when programmes were underway in Perth and Kinross, Clackmannanshire, Argyll: Campbeltown and Inveraray, Highlands: Lochaber, Badenoch and Strathspey and Edinburgh. (Interestingly DOD Edinburgh plays a smaller part in this picture than expected, as the detailed programme is held on the Cockburn Association's website.) Saturday 12 September comes a close second with 5,900 active users accessing information and with DOD programmes running in Aberdeen, Central Fife, East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire Highlands, Inverclyde, Midlothian, Stirling, West Lothian and Lanarkshire.

Doors Open Days was launched at Old Penicuik House in Midlothian on 2 September in partnership with Sir Robert and Lady Clerk the owners, Dig It! 2015 and Immersive Minds. We Minecrafted Old Penicuik House reaching a national, UK-wide, audience on the BBC online news pages where it was listed on the front page news that morning. This prompted interest nationally from *The Times* as well as in Scotland on STV's *Riverside Show*, BBC Radio Scotland's *Out for the Weekend*, and Radio Clyde.

Conclusion and to the future

Doors Open Days 2015 provided 58,500 visitors with over 1,000 events over four weekends in September, harnessing support from 5000 volunteers to ensure success. This was possible because 25 coordinators and their agencies organised programmes within their areas as part of Scotland's Doors Open Days 2015. The challenges faced by Doors Open Days, similar to any long running successful event, include managing visitors' expectations and delivering individual events of quality, free to the public and at the same time acknowledging the goodwill and support needed to realise continued success.

2015 FACTS AND FIGURES

HEADLINE STATS	2015
Local authority areas	25
Venues and events	1001
Volunteers	5,051
Unique visitors	58,500
Attendances	210,600
£ generated	£1.7M
VISITOR STATS	
Unique visitors	58,500
Unique visitors – Glasgow and Edinburgh	41,000
Unique visitors – Rest of Scotland	17,500
Attendances	210,600
Attendances – Glasgow and Edinburgh	133,000
Attendances – Rest of Scotland	77,600
ATTENDANCE STATS	
Average no. events attended per visitor	3.6
Average no. days attended per visitor	2.5
Returning visitors	35%
New visitors	65%
VISITOR ENGAGEMENT: ONLINE	
WEB TRAFFIC	
Sessions	139,455
Users	100,054
Page views	577,964
Pages per session	4.14
Avg. session duration	2.50
Bounce rate	44.73
% new sessions	71.23%
TWITTER	
Followers	11,600
FACEBOOK	
Likes	5,550
E-BULLETIN	
Subscribers	8,051
VISITOR ENGAGEMENT: OFFLINE	
No. national leaflets distributed	20000
No. of articles (national and local press)	330
PARTICIPANT STATS	
Number of volunteers	5,051
Number of hours volunteered	24500
Number of staff	2029
Number of hours worked	19221