



DOORS OPENDAYS

Get into buildings!

2016

PARTNER AND STAKEHOLDER REPORT



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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 over 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 locals and visitors 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 2016 – Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design. The European Heritage Day theme is Community. These themes allowed coordinators to focus their programmes. Doors Open Days worked with the Festival of Architecture 2016 to raise awareness of Scotland's architectural heritage throughout September.

Event Coordination

Doors Open Days is coordinated nationally by the Scottish Civic Trust with funding support from Historic Environment Scotland and for this year, grant support from the Festival of Architecture 2016.

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 Month, coordinated by Archaeology Scotland, 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 2016 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 2016 we received 1200+ visitor surveys from across the world and data from over 1,000 participating events and building owners and 32 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 2016 festival saw over 4,300 volunteers and more than 2,000 staff members taking part, across 1,013 venues and events.

Visiting Trends

In 2016 Doors Open Days welcomed approximately 69,500 unique visitors, making up a total of approximately 227,600 attendances across Scotland during the month of September. Of these 4% confirmed they stayed overnight.

Attendance throughout the Rest of Scotland

Glasgow and Edinburgh have maintained their share of visitors at 68%, from 2015's 69%, with the remaining visitors focused on Scotland's cities and towns outside the central belt: Inverness, Ayr; Aberdeen, Dundee, Paisley, 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.

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 24% 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 once again a high percentage of visits are planned – 79% in 2016, prompted by promotional aids to help identify where to go and what to see. The top five ways of knowing and finding out about Doors Open Days is reassuringly traditional and expected. 24% have attended DOD before; 13% hear about it from peers; 9% know to look at our website; 8% check the DOD Facebook page and 13% picked up or received a leaflet – the remainder see posters and balloons, advertisements and stories in local papers, other online listings, radio and TV.

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 likely to attend DOD in the future. Consider this with the 21% 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.

7% of visitors to DOD were from outside Scotland, a significant number were European; from France, Germany, Norway, Spain, Netherlands, Italy, Switzerland and Portugal; New Zealand, Australia, and a high proportion from North America – USA and Canada. Anecdotally, an interesting number 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 2016 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 £22 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. For 2016 the trend has been a spend slightly lower per day, but nevertheless providing a significant economic impact.



22

average figure spent per person each day at DOD
(£25 in 2015)

1.5M

figure generated by visitors Scotland wide during DOD

Visitor Experience

2016 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.

98% of visitors rated DOD excellent or good and would recommend it to friends and family; with 0.4% feeling there is room for improvement. Over half of those who responded agreed strongly that DOD enhances their perception of Scotland.

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.

Audience Engagement: Online

In 2016 DOD was fortunate, with support from Historic Environment Scotland, to be able to rebuild the website. From an adequate nine year old site, a striking pictorially led and practical functioning event site at DoorsOpenDays.org.uk site was relaunched in August 2016 with full programme details for events throughout Scotland published. It is the home for all DOD events during September. Each coordinator has access to the website and is able to upload and amend their local/regional programme.

Of the 100,000 website users, 30% were returning visitors and the remaining 70% were new to the site. This is in line with data from 2015. Access is balanced between mobile, PC and tablet users, with a steady increase in mobile users. Website page views reached 645,000; this is a slight increase on last year.

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. Facebook support has increased to 6,380 likes from around 5,000 in early September 2015. The DOD Twitter account too has steadily increased with 12,100 followers.

National publicity from BBC Radio Scotland's *Out for the Weekend*, BBC Online web pages and a feature in History Scotland attracted greater interest from a broad audience and hopefully introduced Doors Open Days to new visitors.

Conclusion and to the future

Doors Open Days 2016 provided 69,500 visitors with over 1,000 events over four weekends in September, harnessing support from 4300 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 2016. In addition, with support from the Festival of Architecture 2016, programmes were organised from the National DOD office in the remaining regional authority areas. This ensured that we had programmes in all 32 council areas.

Support for Doors Open Days from each coordinator's agency, council, heritage or civic trust is gratefully appreciated. Without this support Doors Open Days simply could not take place:

University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Angus Council, South Kintyre Development Trust, Kyle and Carrick Civic Society, Clackmannanshire Council, ARKTX Chartered Architects, East Dunbartonshire Council, East Renfrewshire Council, The Cockburn Association, Falkirk Community Trust, Fife Council, Glasgow Building Preservation Trust, Inverness City Heritage Trust, Inverclyde Council, Midlothian Council, Moray Council, Cumbernauld Community Development Trust, Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust, Renfrewshire Council, CARS Project supported by Scottish Borders Council, New Lanark Trust, Stirling Council, Linlithgow Civic Trust, Clydebank Local History Society, Lennox Heritage Society.

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.

2016 FACTS AND FIGURES

HEADLINE STATS	2015	2016
Local authority areas	25	32
Venues and events	1001	1013
Volunteers	5,051	4,300
Unique visitors	58,500	69,500
Attendances	210,600	227,600
£ generated	£1.7M	£1.5M
VISITOR STATS		
Unique visitors	58,500	69,500
Unique visitors – Glasgow and Edinburgh	41,000	47,500
Unique visitors – Rest of Scotland	17,500	22,000
Attendances – Glasgow and Edinburgh	133,000	148,400
Attendances – Rest of Scotland	77,600	79,200
ATTENDANCE STATS		
Average no. events attended per visitor	3.6	3.3
Average no. days attended per visitor	2.5	2
Returning visitors	35%	30%
New visitors	65%	70%
VISITOR ENGAGEMENT: ONLINE		
WEB TRAFFIC		
Sessions	139,455	139,198 (+2.6%)
Users	100,054	102,049
Page views	577,964	644,902
Pages per session	4.14	4.63% (+10%)
Avg. session duration	2.50	3:57mins (+39%)
Bounce rate	44.73	37.72% (-14.2%)
% new sessions	71.23%	69.86% (-2.3%)
TWITTER Followers	11,600	12,100
FACEBOOK Likes	5,550	6,379
E-BULLETIN Subscribers	8,051	8,050
VISITOR ENGAGEMENT: OFFLINE		
No. national leaflets distributed	20000	30,000
No. of articles (national and local press)	330	335
PARTICIPANT STATS		
Number of volunteers	5,051	4,300
Number of hours volunteered	24500	21,000
Number of staff	2029	2026
Number of hours worked	19221	17,000