



The Political Economy of Informal Events, 2030

Written and edited by
James Woudhuysen



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Access All Areas

NTIA | NIGHT TIME
INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION

THE FAIR

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Published by

Access All Areas, in association with the Night Time Industries Association and
We Are The Fair

Access All Areas, 2nd Floor Applemarket House,
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ISBN 2019:

978-0-9576478-7-9

Please note:

Except for the Foreword, and where individuals are quoted at length, the views in this paper – and the errors – are those of the author alone. He thanks everyone who is quoted; Andy Grimsey, solicitor with Poppleston Allen, for help with the legal intricacies of licensing, and Michael Kill, CEO of the NTIA, for work on how the music festival season and particular music festivals relate to UK recorded crime, both national and local.

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Foreword

**Why
events
matter**

Everyone has been to an event they love. In summer, there are village fetes and classical music recitals held in English Heritage grounds. Annually, too, there's Lumiere, a festival dedicated to light that began in Durham in 2009 and this year returns there. Then there's For The Love Of It, where people who make live art outdoors hold 48 hours of shows and workshops – from Cobden Works, Salford, Manchester, to the 101 Outdoor Arts Creation Space on Greenham Business Park, Berkshire. And let's not forget all the festivals about science, children, film, jazz and blues, art, books and the military that are held in Edinburgh; most prominently, the Edinburgh International Festival (classical music, theatre, opera, dance and visual art), and the more informal Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

Informality is the stuff of many events. It is also a strength.

More than two decades ago, when England hosted the Euro 96 football championship, a bright mate of Julian's, who in turn knew a Czech builder, took a business gamble that illustrates just this point. He leased a people carrier vehicle for the builder's Czech friends and offered to take them to some of the different places around England where matches were being played. His offer was accepted, the Czech national team made it all the way to the Euro 96 Final, and the fans he drove around England saw lots of the country over nearly a month. The result: not only were the fans happy, but Julian's mate developed a car service business that thrives to this day. As Julian says: **'When events happen, participants come looking for other services, and are prepared to pay for them. What's not to like?'**

Alan also upholds the power of informal conversations to drive forward new kinds of events. Years back, he had to endure that rite of passage known as Sharing An Office Coffee Area With Another Company. And he did so at London's equivalent of Manhattan's Tin Pan Alley – Denmark Street, Soho.

In that tight corner, Alan brewed coffee with the people who set up the international art fairs known as Frieze London, Frieze New York and Frieze LA. Later, after co-founding The Old Truman Brewery as an arts and events centre in East London, he helped Frieze organise its first ever Fair on the premises.

Nick tells a similar tale. Inspired by DJs in Islington, London, he made the subject of his first promotion the late DJ Paul 'Trouble' Anderson, and trouble the gig proved to be: it was a financial disaster. However, Nick moved on from promotion to booking acts, only then to turn to putting on his first outdoor show – Coventry University's Summer Ball.

From these fiery and chaotic baptisms, he built a business that now organises more than 90 outdoor festivals a season, all the way from health and safety, through licensing and on to full production.

Mutual and informal interactions like those reported above characterise many small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the events business. Indeed, informal alliances help such SMEs preserve a creative and commercial edge – an edge in **innovation** – over the big



Julian Agostini, managing director, Mash Media, publishers of Access All Areas



Alan D Miller, former chair, The Night Time Industries Association



Nick Morgan, CEO,
We Are The Fair

firms that now dominate much of the world market for events.

The ideas-to-market innovations made by events SMEs are all the more remarkable, as Nick observes, because securing, say, a green space and an accompanying licence can now be very tough. Local authorities can be overly restrictive. At the same time, eventgoers' expectations have never been higher. Finally, today's social media allow audience reactions to events to be both very personal and completely instantaneous.

In the 21st century, too, **creating branded locations through events is a challenge.** It means mounting a variety of attractions over an extended period of time. Yet when events SMEs have been around to support all that, cities from [Amsterdam](#) to [Austin](#) in Texas have been transformed.

What James Woudhuysen aptly calls the Political Economy of Informal Events is, then, something that British cities, counties and regions need to consider. **For when any kind of event happens, its benefits can spread into every nook and cranny, whether locally or beyond, whether noticed or not.**

This White Paper brings together just some of the modest, rather disparate literature and statistics that exist on British and international events. The range of sources referred to is necessarily varied, but we would like to thank all the publishers, organisations and individuals quoted.

Drawing upon economics, politics, sociology and technology, the paper uses official government data, and data taken from business sources, to give a sense of the likely future growth of informal events. It estimates not just the considerable demand for informal events, but also the challenges – particularly around licensing – that they are likely to encounter over the decade to come.

We hope that the paper deepens what UK cities and other jurisdictions think and do around events. England has 353 local authorities. There are unitary authorities run by Scotland (32), Wales (22) and Northern Ireland (11). If all these bodies now get together with Business Improvement Districts and other local forces to bring events into their master plans for the future, they will be able make a lot more out of events than they do at present.

In June 2017, headline band The 1975 took to the stage at [Parklife Festival](#), Manchester. They did so with the mayor of Greater Manchester, Alan, and many of those professionals – police, firefighters, nurses, ambulance workers and others – who had made the first response to the Manchester Arena bombing in May, when, at a concert given by Ariana Grande, 22 people lost their lives.

For a full minute, everyone on stage and in the audience – everyone – stood and cheered their united defiance of those who try to divide audiences at events.

It is in that spirit that we hope you engage with this White Paper. **All those involved in events have a common interest in ensuring that Britain puts on some truly great ones between now and 2030.**

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE ARGUMENT

*Good, balanced **research** about events is key to local authorities making the right, proportionate decisions around the risks that any particular event may pose.*

*That research must include all the **benefits** which events can bring.*

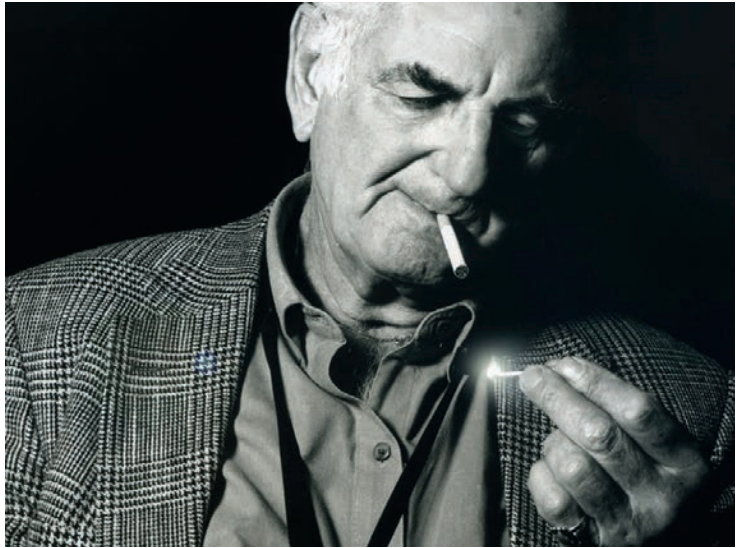
*Councils should couple such research with an active policy of **events development**. When they draw up their 10-year master plans, they should give events a central position within those plans.*

*Reconceived by organisers and taken more seriously by all levels of government, events could, by 2030, be even **more dynamic** than they are now.*

*They could form **a new, cohesive and unique wealth-making sector** for Britain – one that enjoys worldwide renown for its creative, technological and social innovation.*

Chapter one

Introduction

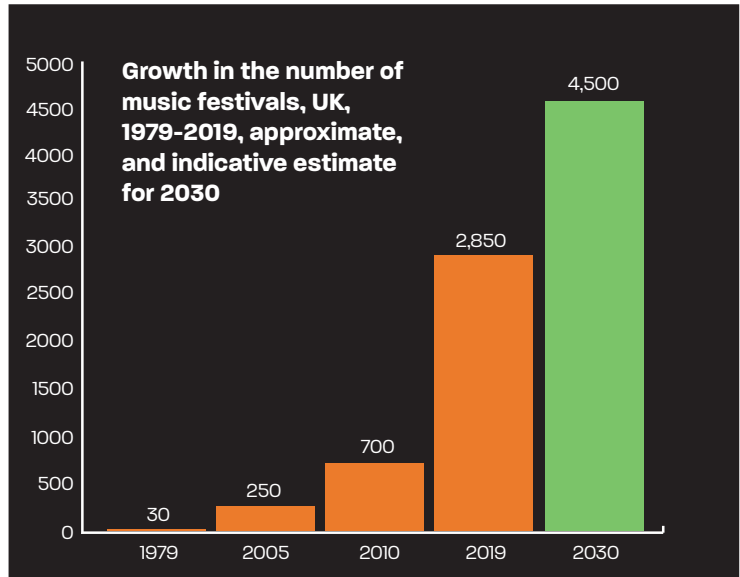


Three great innovators in UK consumer services:
saxophonist and jazz club entrepreneur
Ronnie Scott (1927-96);
Harvey Goldsmith (born 1946), events producer and promoter; and Kanya King, CEO of the MOBO (music of black origin) Awards, which since 1996 has provided a performance platform and prize-giving ceremony for some of the biggest names in contemporary black music



Chart 1

Source: Chris Anderton,
Music festivals in the
UK: Beyond the Car-
nivalesque, 2018; Find
Festival; UK Rock Festivals;
 Access All Areas estimates.
 Note: reporting in 1979
 was less thorough than it
 is today

**1. INTRODUCTION**

When so much of modern working and leisure life depends on the virtual world of IT, real-world events retain their power to attract business participants and large consumer audiences. They are an essential part of any city's cultural and economic life; they help bring in the 2-3 million tourists and £1-2bn tourism spend that Britain attracts each month; they have shown that highbrow shows, around literature and public debate, can win new audiences.

Events are also expanding. Take music festivals. That category has become more elastic over time – many firms now claim to run a music festival of one sort or another, while few did 30 years ago. Still, music festivals have certainly multiplied, and have come to attract larger, more diverse audiences than those of the past. Altogether, Chart 1, above, has a force that cannot be denied.

In events there is an unrepeatable confluence of people,

Wild Thing, 24 February
1969: after a barnstorming
Monday night at the Albert
Hall, The Jimi Hendrix
Experience booked the
next Monday night – and
cooked up a tumult:
 'He played with his teeth
 and then on the floor.... [the
 stage] was besieged [sic]
 by fans, police, bouncers,
 floor managers and practi-
 cally the entire audience!'.
 Jane Simmons, The Official
 Jimi Hendrix Fan Club Of
 Great Britain, newsletter,
 April/May 1969



In December 2018, the Boss (born 1949) triumphantly completed more than a year of five-nights-a-week gigs at the Walter Kerr Theatre in New York City (capacity 975). There, it's true, his solo acoustic and actorly performances amounted to formal, not informal events. But in their intimacy, they also confirmed that there's more to the future of live music than concerts held in giant stadia



place and performance. What's more, performance can extend beyond the performer, to the audience: there's often a chance to dance, to speak up and to speak out. Fashions add to the heady mix, while mobile phones capture and spread the moment.

In the past 10 years, music festivals held in green fields have had an impressive run. Putting ticket sales online has helped; more careful marketing has helped. For the same reasons, but just within the past five years, urban outdoor events have spread, sometimes across whole towns and cities.

The picture isn't entirely rosy. Night-time clubs, though more fashionable than ever, have suffered a number of closures, especially in London. In 2017, a House of Lords Select Committee [scrutiny](#) of the [Licensing Act 2003](#) reported hearing the view that [over-zealous regulation](#) was to blame. However, since 2017 others have pointed to the emergence of a new, competitive breed of nightlife, as special kinds of [foods, games and even trampolining](#) have become more popular among the health-conscious.

So where then are events headed, not just in 2020, but in the decade after that?

Of course, no event lasts forever. Also, [events alone can't produce urban regeneration](#). Yet, alongside enlightened local government policies, events can do much to build confidence, incomes and brands among cities and regions. Between now and 2030, they're likely to prove more central to the British economy, and to British society, than many imagine.

The value of business-to-business events – conferences, exhibitions and the like – is [£32.6bn](#), according to the [Business Visits & Events Partnership](#), or [£33.3bn](#), as reckoned by [Eventbrite](#). Meanwhile the value of consumer events – outdoor attractions, festivals, cultural events, musical performances and sports fixtures – has been estimated at a more modest [£5.7bn](#).

This White Paper is about consumer events, and especially about *informal events*: *relatively casual consumer gatherings that are crafted rather than mass-produced, and that are only rarely held at big, fixed facilities*. We focus on such events in music, especially, as well as those around sport. We touch, too, on informal events in art, design, computer

games, fashion, flowers, food and those performing arts that lie beyond music.

Mass events at large, dedicated venues such as stadia will remain a key part of wealth creation and culture in 2030. But informal events – outdoor in the city or countryside, indoor in the day and particularly at night – will play a bigger role than in the past. To audiences, local authorities and local business, and to public discussion, informal events in 2030 promise to bring more maturity, more spending, more excitement and, yes, more debate.

Why? Already, some of what we see in the media or on social media is held to be *fake news*. By 2030, then, it's likely that still more of everyday experience will be thought untrustworthy or even illegitimate. That, however, is only another way of saying that *authenticity will be highly prized*. And this demand for authenticity augurs well for informal events.

Informal events are mostly organised not by global corporations, but by independent and often innovative small and medium enterprises (SMEs): firms with fewer than 250 employees and a turnover of less than €50m. So the current and future demand for authenticity in British life should boost the prospects of both informal events, and the SMEs that organise them. Indeed, the rise of fake news could open up real opportunities for SMEs active in informal events. For at such occasions, the typical attendee comes, to quote John Lennon, because 'All I want is the truth'.

At the same time, however, the very informality of live events, and their natural association with alcohol and occasional misbehaviour, could prompt growing concerns.

This White Paper understands those concerns. They have surrounded everything from Jamaican 'bashment' music in a Croydon bar, through a school sports day in Manchester, to London's Wireless festival, an annual three-day hip-hop and R&B event. However, this White Paper also insists that concerns about informal events be well founded; for the facts suggest that the current incidence of crime and terrorism at informal events in the UK is pretty small.

Event safety and security should be subject to judicious and proportionate regulation. Yet informal events will not boom in 2030 if they're still confined by the formalities of the Licensing Act 2003.

Britain urgently now needs better partnership, clarity and consistency in the events licensing process – and better education about that process, too. In particular, future assessments of the risks surrounding events should fully consider both the immediate and the long-term *benefits* of letting them go ahead.

Michael Smith

Managing Director, Brixton Business Improvement District, on the benefits of events for business – and for young workers



“Great events provide a valuable increase in local footfall and local business. They also can establish places as branded destinations in the popular mind.

“Brixton is already a dynamic environment for business and gains an undoubted boost from the events it holds. We want more. Indeed, over the longer term, events can give our local young people an opportunity to work in what is clearly a vibrant sector, and even gain apprenticeships in that sector.”

Chapter two

**Great
prospects
for event
SMEs**

1. CONSUMER EXPENDITURE ON CULTURE AND SPORT

One of the striking things about events is how hard it is to get good data about them. That applies especially to informal events. The government's Office for National Statistics (ONS), its Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) and VisitBritain/VisitEngland, the tourism authority funded by the DCMS, would all benefit by investing in better coverage of events as an economic category – and well before 2030, too.

Nevertheless, the broad evidence is clear: events already help create a great deal of wealth, jobs and social dynamism.

There's no need to continue with [hype about the experience economy](#), which in fact dates back to 1997. The story with events is more interesting than that. It begins, as Chart 2 shows, overleaf, with the fact that *UK consumer spending on cultural, recreational and sporting services has grown – not least, in the years since the Crash of 2008.*

2. THE NUMBER OF ENTERPRISES IN AND AROUND THE EVENTS SECTOR

Nowadays, a portion of the cultural, recreational and sporting services that UK consumers spend money on is of course provided by Big Tech firms headquartered in the US: by Netflix, for example. Still, *a surprisingly large number of UK enterprises directly provide cultural, recreational and sporting services.*

Not all the enterprises in Chart 3 (overleaf) were, in 2017, directly in events; but we can be sure that very many of them were. The chart shows that the UK has nearly 9,600 enterprises in performing arts, more than 21,500 in sport, and several thousand more in other events-based leisure. By contrast, the UK's business events sector is relatively concentrated: it boasts just 3,885 enterprises.

The 2017 total of about 31,000 enterprises strictly in performing arts and sport compares with a 2018 total of 171,000 VAT- and/or PAYE-based enterprises in what the ONS classifies as 'arts, entertainment, recreation and other services'. So: events enterprises in performing arts and sport make up a respectable 18 per cent of those in the wider field of culture and recreation, including enterprises that offer museums, historical sites, gyms, betting shops and the like.

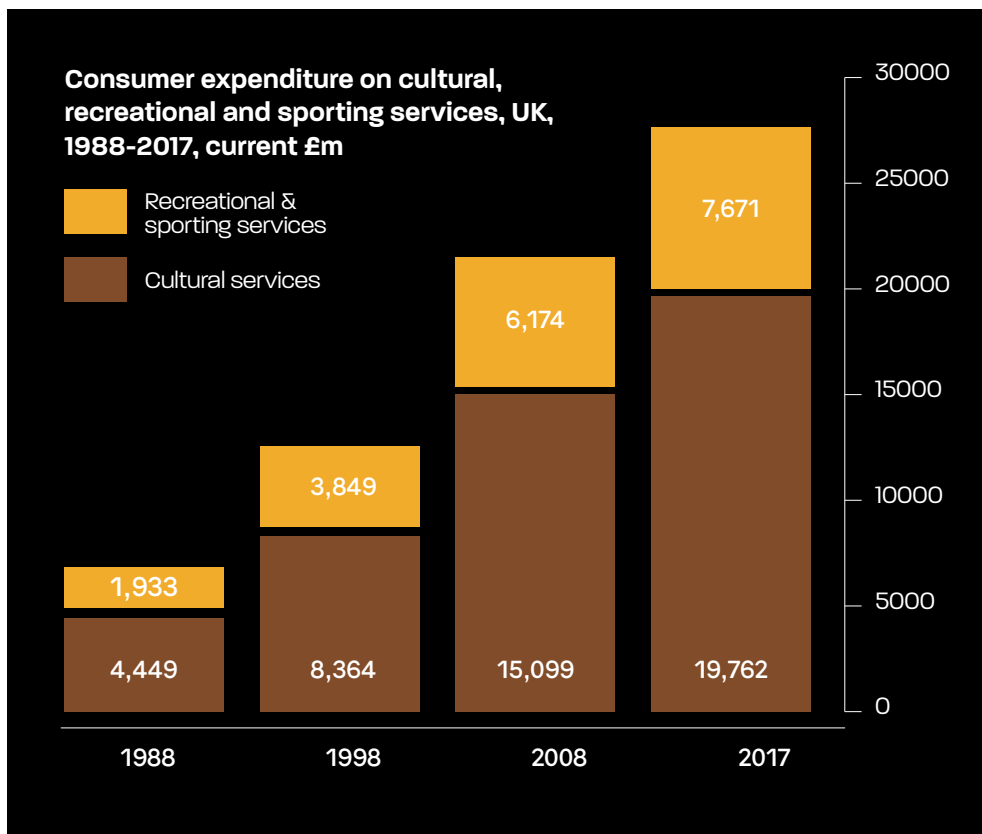


Chart 2

Source: [Office for National Statistics](#), 2018

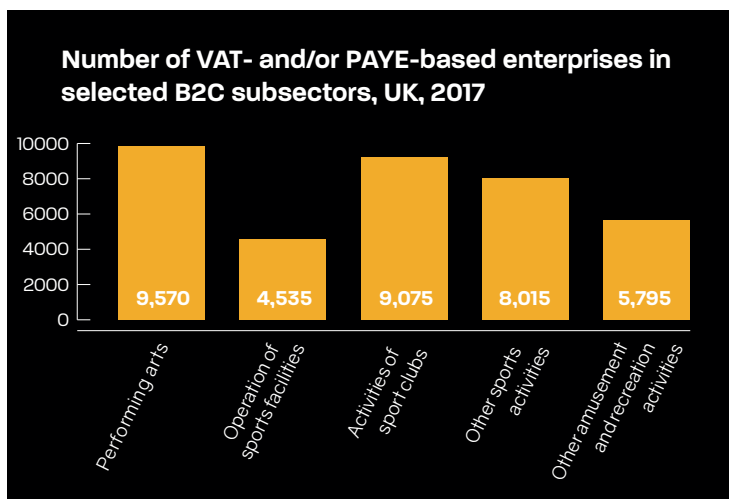


Chart 3

Source: [Office for National Statistics](#), 2018

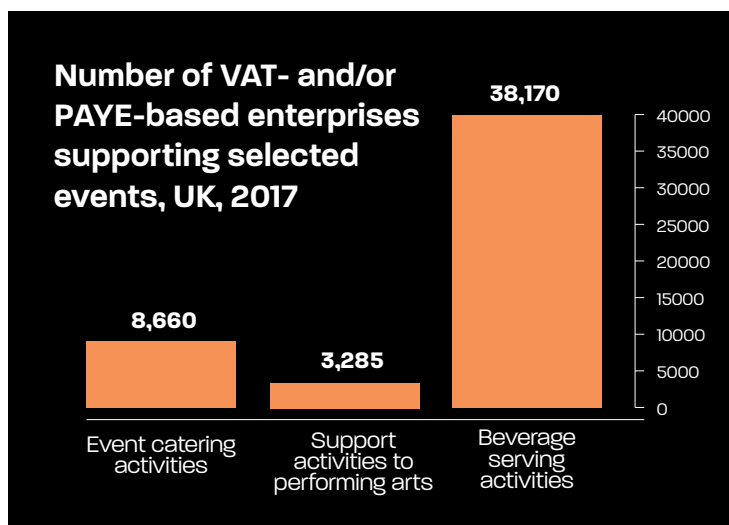


Chart 4

Source: [Office for National Statistics](#), 2018

On top of the enterprises mentioned above, there are thousands of enterprises which don't quite put events on, but support them. So: to the 31,000 firms directly in events can be added nearly 12,000 event caterers and suppliers to performing arts. And as Chart 4 shows above, there are pubs, bars and clubs that support events, too.

Of course, quite a lot of enterprises in what the ONS describes as beverage serving activities – in the first instance, pubs – don't put on events, and never will. Yet more and more do: perhaps as many as 10,000 of the 38,000 logged in Chart 4. Successfully applying for Temporary Events Notices (TENs), which cover small events (under 500 people, including staff), independent bars have in recent years done a lot with events: with no fewer than 147,200 TENs granted in the year ending 31 March 2018, [TEN numbers were six per cent up on 2016/7](#), much of which reflected applications related to events.

Pubs, bars and clubs with later licences and good connections to live and dance music have put themselves and new artists on the map, and have won a growing and enthusiastic public. According to market analysts [CGA](#), entertainment pubs and bars – venues that embrace 'competitive socialising' concepts around golf, ping-pong and 'immersive' bingo – have seen a steady rise in popularity. But among those that have moved to add events to their offer of drink and food, much is done out of love for the music and the fans: the extra revenue generated by events doesn't always cover their costs.

Nevertheless, **between now and 2030, more and more beverage**

serving enterprises are likely to include events in what they offer. When you're going out to the pub, away from the world of screens at work, it will remain fun to see or hear something special in the flesh. That will apply, even if sports bars have already proved among the first to adopt TVs with screens that are 10x6' or more in size.

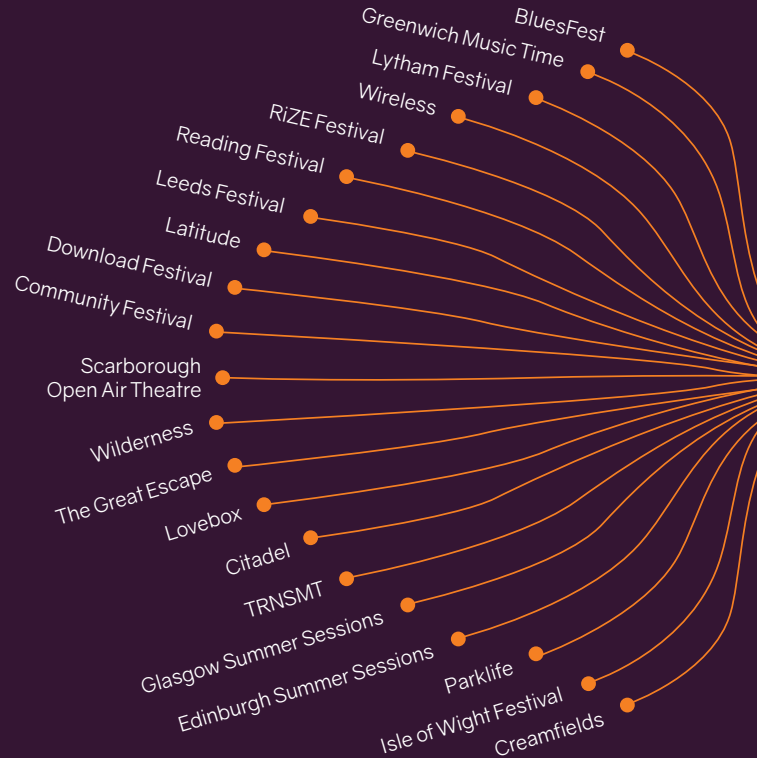
To return to the overall number of enterprises active in events: it's worth noting that the statistics in Charts 3 and 4 above don't include those UK enterprises in transport and security that owe some of the work they get to the events sector. But even without that, **the number of UK enterprises directly in and indirectly supporting events in culture and sport exceeds 40,000**. Clearly informal events provide enormous benefits to events SMEs.

3. BIG INTERNATIONAL EVENTS COMPANIES AND SMALL INDEPENDENT INNOVATORS

There's no need to be sentimental about events SMEs. After all, Britain's events employers don't always pay the best wages for the fewest working hours. Just as importantly, too: in the events sector, as in others, oligopoly is the rule, not the exception – as is shown by Chart 5, overleaf, which is based on research done by the Association of Independent Festivals (AIF). Using data for 2018, it shows how UK music festivals are heavily dominated by a few major corporations.

The passion, commitment and innovation of independent events SMEs are, in fact, what have lately led international conglomerates in the leisure and events business to acquire so many of them. And that isn't all a bad thing: the conglomerates offer efficiency through economies of scale, and who can blame tenacious independents if they eventually decide to cash out? Already, though, in both the US and the UK, the state authorities charged with ensuring fair competition have put the big events conglomerates under a microscope, concerned about their ticketing arrangements.

2. Great prospects for events SMEs

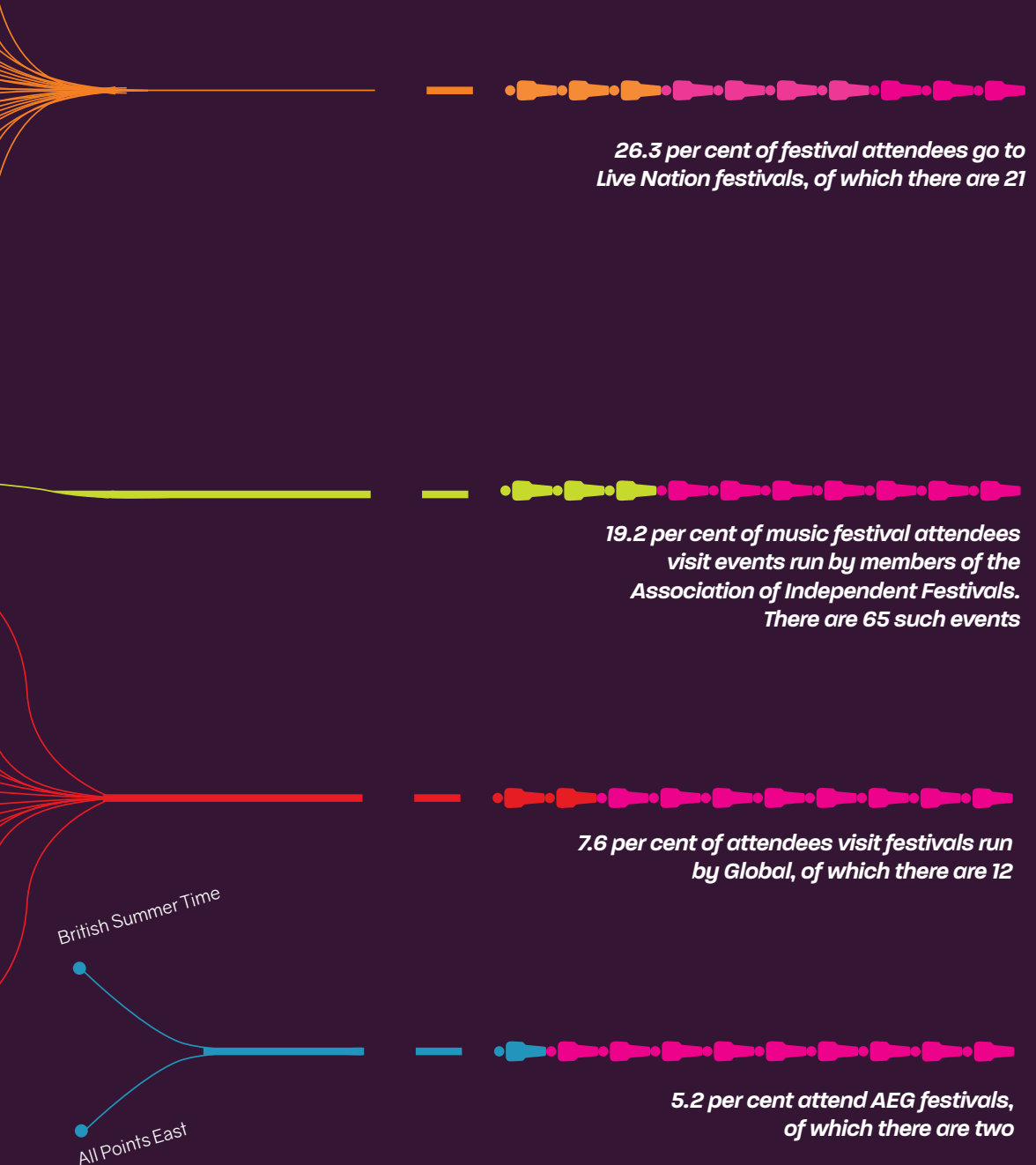


65 independent music festivals



Chart 5
Source: Adapted from
AIF statistics

UK music festivals, 2018: a highly concentrated sector



“It’s Glastonbury that really established the West of England as a location for music festivals. Talent settled in Bristol because of Glastonbury. Unlike the big corporations that do events, myself and others were festivalgoers who ended up in the festivals business, not leisure multinationals that one day decided to go into festivals.

*“To their credit, the big guys tend to professionalise things, and have the clout to animate whole cities. They often let independents establish a new market before they take advantage of our groundwork. We’ve done that in Bristol city centre, where we’ve experimented with **Simple Things**, a festival with six day-time stages and five night-time ones – all of them just 10 minutes away from each other.*

“In fact it’s urban outdoor events and metropolitan festivals that have really boomed for the past five

years, especially as outdoor, campsite-based festivals have been saturated for a while now. We’ll probably see new kinds of events created to serve markets that aren’t being catered for: at the moment big technology companies, for instance, don’t quite know how to showcase themselves to the wider public. But if independents can say to widget-makers: ‘we’ll get you a Bjork for a music-meets-tech showcase,’ the proposition starts to look interesting.

“The UK licensing system is markedly less liberal than Europe’s. In village squares all over the continent you can dance with old women till 5am. OK, so family and kinship structures aren’t quite the same in the UK. But consistent and regularly updated guidelines on best practice and acceptability – particularly in relation to noise – could allow towns and cities to smooth processes and cool tempers.”

Tom Paine

*Organiser of the festival **Love Saves The Day**,
Bristol, and more, on events SMEs as innovators*



The conglomerates offer consumers convenience and big-name acts. They have cash, lawyers and a number of local authorities on their side. Because they can mount festivals relatively easily, they seem to vindicate the 17th-century French proverb – that Providence is always on the side of the big battalions. And yet...

The famous 18th century French advocate of free speech, Voltaire, had a good riposte. In a remark committed to a private notebook, he wrote: 'God is not for the heavy battalions, but for those who fire best'. And in events, it is often independent SMEs that fire best.

If the British resist anything in life, it is regimentation. That is why they have grown strongly committed to smallish, intimate events that boast a genuine provenance and contain the promise of not being the same old Business As Usual. In return, and to survive, the best kinds of events SMEs can never afford to be formulaic.

Flexible enthusiasts and survivors, UK events SMEs will be a big part of consumer entertainment in 2030. Whatever their human weaknesses, they deserve credit not just for the jobs they provide, but for the innovations they pioneer.

Voltaire (1694-1778).
A defender of free expression, he also had a keen eye for professionals who might not boast massive organisations, but who excelled in hitting their target



PT Barnum (1810-1891).
First a New York Democrat, then a Republican, many of his events were little short of outrageous (sound familiar?). But as well as being an early purveyor of fake news, he was still a pioneer and an innovator in circuses and events – on both sides of the Atlantic



BOX 1: EVENTS BEYOND MUSIC THAT OWE THEIR ORIGINS TO LIVE MUSIC

Cirque Du Soleil. Biggest theatrical producer in the world. Founded in Quebec in 1984, by two former street performers

Secret Cinema. Mix of film screenings with the performance of theatre, art, music and dance. Founded 2007

Rooftop Film Club. Offers movies from spectacular views in London, LA, New York and San Diego. It was founded in 1997 in New York by film-maker Mark Elijah Rosenberg

Punchdrunk. Site-specific theatre. Took \$40m in the US with its drama *Sleep No More*, complete with roaming audience. Founded in 2000 by artistic director Felix Barrett, the event gives audiences the freedom to choose what to watch and where to go

Gunther Von Hagen's **Body Worlds.** This phenomenally successful exhibition, which runs worldwide, began in 1995. It has attracted more than 47 million visitors in more than 130 cities across Europe, America, Africa and Asia

De La Guarda. Argentinian circus meets performing arts. Founded in 1994, it is a mixture of dance, acrobatics and theatre, accompanied by music of various styles – rock, techno, Latin. The audience stands in a darkened room and the performance mainly takes place above it.

4. TIME TO IGNITE THE NIGHT-TIME ECONOMY (NTE)

Yes, it's true that a world economic crash, and especially one accompanied by a liquidity drought, might see some of the UK's cash-constrained events independents wiped out. That, though, is a reason for every independent to become better at what it does. And it's a reason for every far-sighted local authority, Business Improvement District and mayoral office to value and encourage events SMEs, and to do its best not to hold them back.

Brits like to put on a show. The next 12 years are a time for the UK to become more ambitious about events, not less – for that is what the public will demand. In particular, the *night* is still an enormous untapped opportunity for events.

As a Museum of London exhibition of after-dark photography confirmed in 2018, **the night is a cultural arena in its own right**. In and after October 2019, a Barbican exhibition and set of performances will reinforce this, by highlighting how the world's avant-garde artists have long gained creative inspiration from cabarets and clubs.

The night has its own dynamics, and its own surprises. That is why the Greater London Authority issues extensive guidance on the night-time economy, and conducts in-depth research on the subject; it is also why the Mayor of London has appointed a Night Time Commission, so as to help London become more of a 24-hour city.

In Britain the NTE also commands the attention of the London Assembly, the Welsh government, the Office for National Statistics and public policy analysts. In 2018, Aberdeen hosted Scotland's first conference on the NTE. Yet bringing better leadership and organisation to the NTE is also a worldwide trend. New York City has an Office for Nightlife, and other US cities run something similar, too. Scandinavia has an annual night mayor summit. Amsterdam has an elected night mayor, councillors in Prague appointed a night mayor early in 2019, and Dublin may follow suit.

This is all welcome. But in the UK the need now is to ensure that official recommendations about the NTE are *acted upon*. That way, the NTE can truly, by 2030, become a round-the-clock economy.

“Events are really important to cities and regions. They bring in investment, create jobs, attract tourists. They also contribute toward people seeing the area as one that’s fun and dynamic.”

“Events happen both day and night and we know that the night-time economy is the fifth largest industry in the UK. It’s vital to Greater Manchester’s economy. That is why I appointed a night-time economy adviser for Greater Manchester. When our High Streets are struggling, the NTE has an important role to play in diversifying our town and city centres. We’re committed to making Greater Manchester’s night-time economy inclusive, diverse, safe and accessible – for all our residents and for all our visitors.”



The Mayor of Greater Manchester on the need to get serious about night-time events

Andy Burnham

“We are very lucky in Greater Manchester that the city’s political leaders have a full understanding of the key role events of play within the region – and especially the role played by live music and clubs. I think this goes back to the Madchester period of the late 1980s and early 1990s. Then the whole world was looking for our next move and our next band.

“Parklife is now the largest metropolitan festival in the UK, attracting 80,000 people a day over the first weekend in June. Outside of the festival proper, it brings more than £10m into the local economy. Greater Manchester recognises that, supports that, but also encourages other exciting events to make it a healthier, diverse and diversified city.

“Glasgow has the same spirit. The towns and cities that don’t have it will suffer.”



Founder of Parklife Festival and NTE adviser to the Mayor of Greater Manchester, on live music events

Sacha Lord

“The night-time economy matters to London. It contributes billions to the economy, employs 1.6m people, and helps shape all aspects of life in the capital. At City Hall, we are determined to give all Londoners the opportunity to enjoy the capital’s fantastic cultural riches, day and night. That’s why the Mayor appointed the Night Czar and the Night Time Commission, and why we are working together with boroughs, residents and night-time businesses to make sure the city works for everyone, 24 hours a day.”



***Deputy mayor for culture and creative industries,
Greater London Authority,
on the NTE***

**Justine
Simons OBE**

Chapter three

Different kinds of informal events

1. LICENSABLE AND NOT LICENSABLE EVENTS

Some events require a licence, some don't. Following the Home Office's important [Revised Guidance](#) on the 2003 Licensing Act (issued in April 2018), here's a list of events that are broadly licensable and those that are not:

Events that are generally licensable

1. Music

This includes any playing of recorded music. In live music, this category includes classical music, and, in their own unique ways, musicals, musical theatre and opera. Apart from the live music played in clubs, this category obviously includes live acts at music festivals. The website [Music Festival Wizard](#) lists 97 of such events for 2019, in these sub-categories:

- a. Electronic
 - b. Rock
 - c. Country
 - d. Psytrance
 - e. Hardstyle
 - f. Jam
 - g. Metal
 - h. Hip-Hop
 - i. Bluegrass
 - j. Blues
 - k. Folk
 - l. Jazz Indie
2. Boxing and wrestling.

Events that are broadly licensable in principle, but from which exemptions can apply (see below)

3. Plays in performance
4. Dance performances
5. Full, for-profit film shows
6. Indoor sports events
7. Events on local authority, hospital and school premises
8. Events on community premises
9. Circuses.

Events that are generally not licensable

10. Amplified live music between 08.00 and 23.00 on premises authorised to sell alcohol for consumption there; or, in unlicensed workplaces; or in unlicensed but consenting local authority, hospital, school and community premises. Audience sizes must be below 500
11. Unamplified live music between 08.00 and 23.00
12. Educational – teaching students to perform music or to dance
13. Plays and dance performances between 08.00 and 23.00 with audience sizes below 500
14. Indoor sports between 08.00 and 23.00 with audiences sizes below 1000
15. Greco-Roman or freestyle wrestling between 08.00 and 23.00 with audiences below 1000, and with both wrestlers and audience wholly inside a building
16. Morris dancing and accompanying music, or similar
17. Garden fêtes not done for private gain
18. Games played in pubs, youth clubs, etc – for example, pool, darts and table tennis)
19. Stand-up comedy
20. Provision of entertainment facilities – for example, dance floors.

Now: dividing up events like this might appeal to neo-Victorian enthusiasts for classification – after all, the *Revised Guidance* itself carefully discusses combined fighting sports, in which boxers or wrestlers add, to their craft, ‘one or more martial arts’. Yet as we already saw from the prestigious international mixed-media events listed in Box 1, **the market for events has already evolved beyond simple classifications**. In Bournemouth, for example, the [Bournemouth 7s](#) appeals to men and women aged between 18 and 25 with a heady mix of rugby, netball, dodgeball, hockey and volleyball – all alongside DJs, bands and beer.

It's true that innovation is **much more** than a simple combination of what has gone before. At the same time, however, **informal events will likely be even more eclectic in 2030 than they are today**.

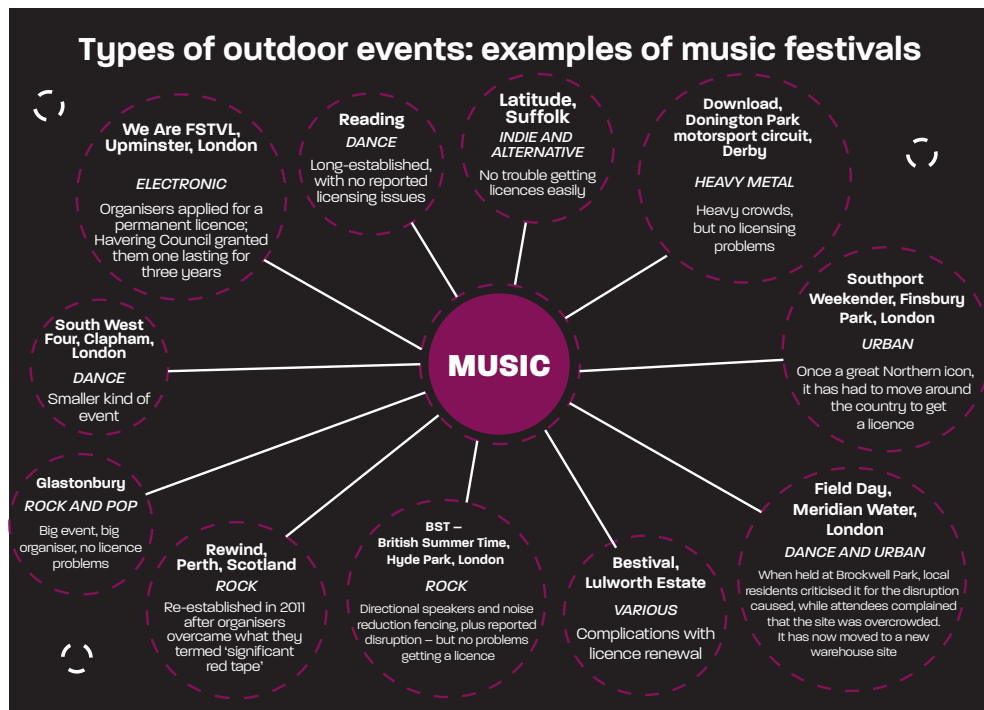


Chart 6

2. STILL OTHER KINDS OF EVENTS

There are other kinds of events to consider, too. These can be subject to some restrictions, but are not covered by the *Revised Guidance*:

21. Fashion shows
22. Food and drink events
23. Art, design and architecture events
24. Debates, literary festivals
25. Live, on-site computer games contests
26. Cookery demonstrations
27. Flower shows
28. Street markets and farmers' markets
29. Parades, demonstrations and **protests**.

Right away, we can expect some of these informal events – not the cookery or horticulture shows, but perhaps the debates, and certainly parades, demonstrations and protests – to come more under the regulator's gaze. After all, there has already been a strong trend toward **exhibitions**, as well as **museums and theatre plays**, becoming the subject of censorious protests.

Given the likely impress of regulation over the years to 2030, the key distinction to be drawn about events is not between those that legally require licences and those that don't. The key divide is between those which can obtain licences easily, and those which cannot. Indeed, one way that divide pans out today is the trend for clubs to try to obtain day licences for outside areas, car parks and the like, because late-night licences have become so hard to get.



Chart 7

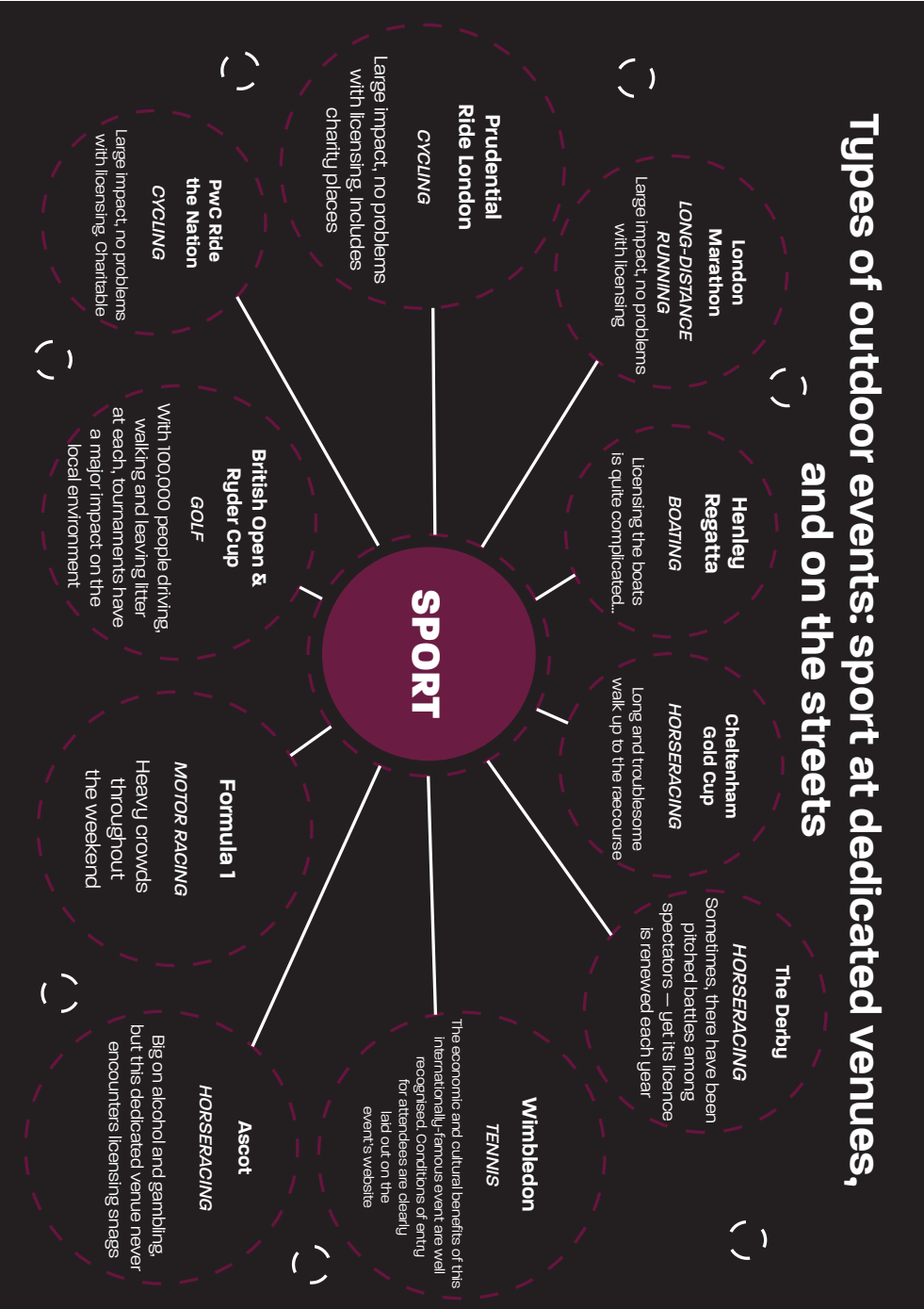
That can't be right. When [Yuri Gagarin](#), the first man in space, flew to Manchester in July 1961, thousands mobbed him and crowds broke through a very large police presence. Now, that really was a memorable event; but the Russian was forced to address more than 5000 Trafford Park workers from... a car park. Has Britain's respect for events really not moved on since then?

In Charts 6 and 7 above, and Charts 8 and 9 overleaf, we list some important kinds of outdoor event. The charts show not only the broad genres of events, but also the ease or difficulty with which each is able to get a licence.

What the charts show is that **the licensing of different events is dogged by relatively high levels of inconsistency**. Despite being prone to incidents or having untoward local impacts, some events repeatedly gain licences with ease, perhaps because they are relatively upmarket. Other, more informal events encounter significant difficulty with licensing, perhaps because they appear plebeian in composition.

Altogether, something of a 'People Like Us' atmosphere seems to accompany some events, while more than a few informal ones are too easily stigmatised.

Thinking about 2030, it's clearly time to move on from the prejudices that still accompany many events.



3. Different kinds of events

Chart 8

Types of outdoor events: examples around food, culture and other activities

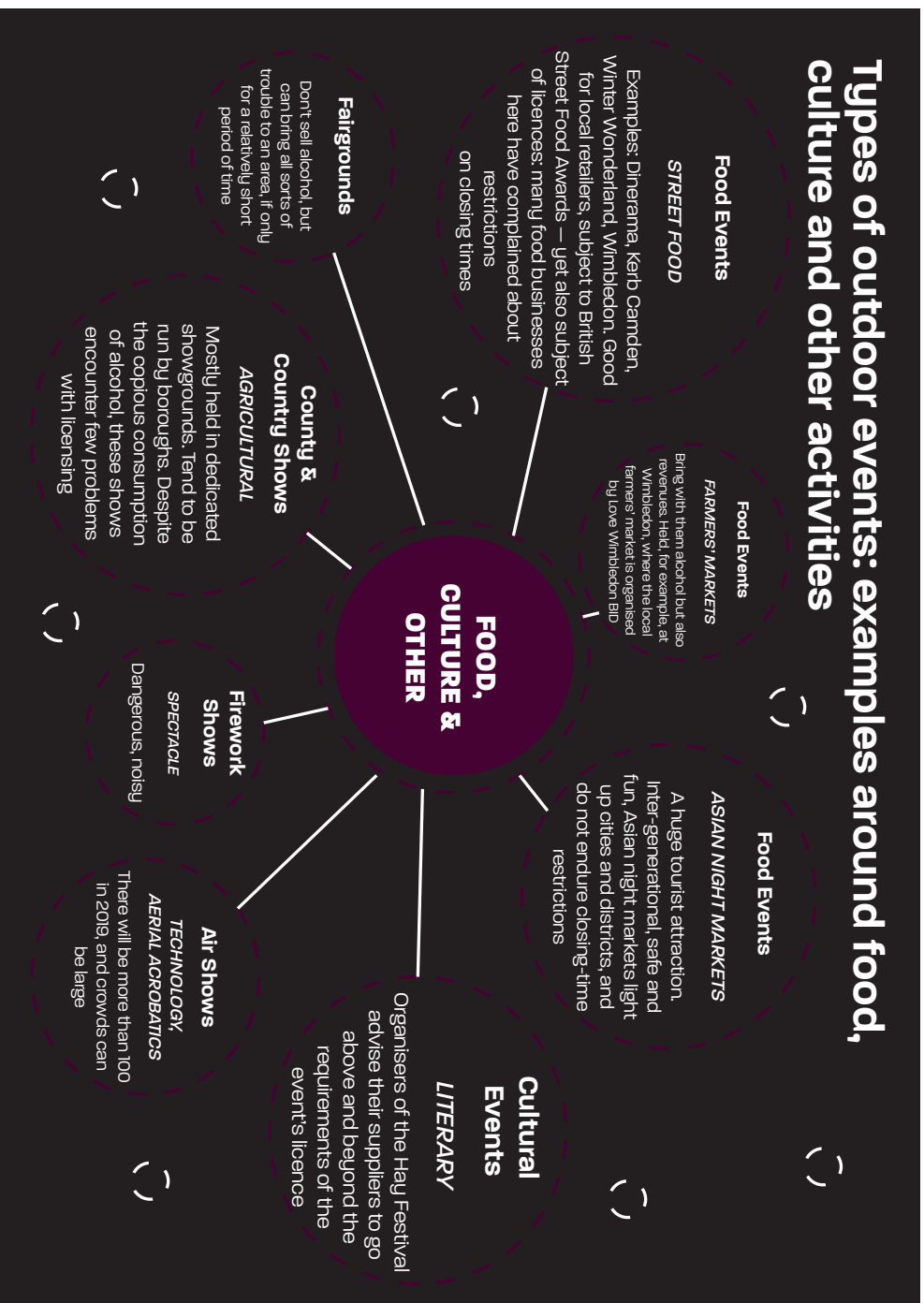


Chart 9

Chapter four

The economics of informal music and sport events

1. FORECASTS FOR THE UK EVENTS MARKET

In events, as elsewhere, **conducting balanced research on the future is the right thing to do**. Of course, like many other institutions in today's Britain, forecasting – particularly economic forecasting – has been widely discredited. Yet that doesn't mean that informal events should just ignore the predictions that are out there in the public domain, or that the sector should avoid making its own.

For 2018, the research firm Mintel estimates that the UK music concert and festivals market alone was worth £2.46bn – and that it's continuing to grow, fuelled by more events, higher ticket prices and more music tourists from overseas. However, Mintel also argues:

“Some fans are beginning to cut back on the number of music events they attend. This will become more noticeable if ticket prices continue to rise. As the amount of festivals increases, so does the experience consumers expect from them. A good line-up may not be enough to draw in audiences as demand for additional activities grows. The rise in focus on health and fitness means many events are introducing elements of wellness and adventure.”

In music concerts and festivals, there are certainly no grounds for complacency. Helen Fricker, Mintel's associate director for leisure, rightly describes the marketplace for such events as ‘increasingly crowded’. And the same applies to the NTE, and to performing arts and sports events in general.

Thinking more broadly, there are three kinds of upheaval that professionals in informal events need to be vigilant about:

1. A serious crash on the world economy
2. Major social or political instability overseas
3. The spread of threats to national security.

After the May 2017 terrorist attack on the Ariana Grande concert at the Manchester Arena, independent companies in informal events need to be alert to what further incidents of this kind might bring – not least, in terms of the overall social and political climate for holding events. That is only realistic. However, **so long as the three factors outlined above remain absent, the long-term future of informal music events in the UK looks pretty good**.

The research firm Statista forecasts online sales of music events for 2019 and 2023. In the bar-chart on the facing page, we have added our own, purely indicative estimates for the year 2030.

Even then, sales online may only take the vast majority of music event sales, not all of them. And if forecasts of such sales are accurate to within, say, a \$1-2bn, those for purchaser numbers, the penetration of national markets and spending are much more prone to error.

Yet whatever the caprice of economic and political developments at home and abroad, increased public participation in events

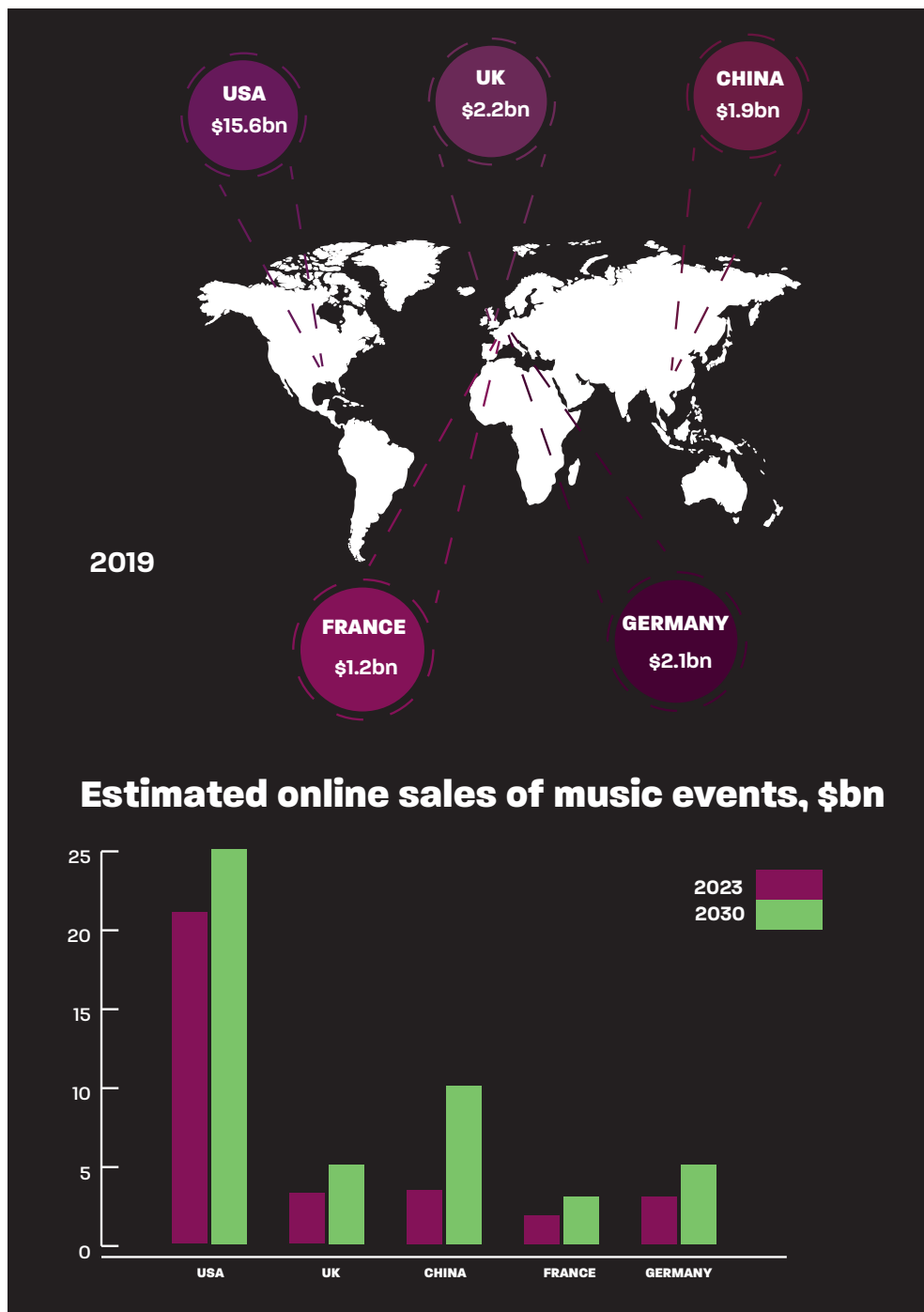


Chart 10

Source: Statista for the years 2019 and 2023. Forecasts for 2030 are those of the author, and are purely indicative



Chart 11

Source: Statista for the years 2019 and 2023. The author's forecasts for 2030 are indicative only, but do take account of population trends

and increased spending around them look like unstoppable international trends.

The market for UK music events should stay pretty unsaturated. That's likely, even though the Brits display a higher level of participation in music events than do the Chinese – at least for the foreseeable future. It should be added that, between 2009 and 2017, among customers of the 55 members of the AIF, average overall spending at festivals rose from £364 to a hefty £483. Expenditure on festival tickets alone rose by only £32, to £186 in 2017 (somewhat higher than Statista's \$149 estimate for UK online sales of general music events in 2019, Chart 11); but outlays on accommodation more than doubled to £55, while spending on food and drink expanded by more than 40 per cent, to £116.

Events have generated an unmistakable halo effect in terms of the wider spending they now trigger. More generally, they have moved up-market. As the AIF notes of its members' music festivals, camper-vans have doubled in popularity since 2010. To many festivalgoers, the humble tent is just that – humble.

The trend for informal events to move up-market may not, however, triumph completely.

Since the first and second century AD and the Roman poet Juvenal, satirists have made fun of *cheap-and-cheerful imperial attempts to appease the unruly masses* by means of food handouts and entertainment events,

or *bread and circuses*. Juvenal lampooned voters for neglecting their political power and civic duties in their dash to ‘escape all cares’. His successors poked fun at the authorities for using cheap events to placate, distract and buy off the broad masses – and this kind of critique is still made, rightly or wrongly, today.

Viewed this way, informal events won’t necessarily always get dearer. Indeed, recessionary trends and greater competition might cheapen the events market just as much as they broaden it.

Is, then, Britain’s market for informal events likely to grow coarser, and not simply more refined, by 2030? That’s possible, but the authorities should not overreact.

Like many other pastimes, the desire to escape the humdrum through events, and thus gain a sense of belonging mixed with personal abandon – this is only human. For the people to act responsibly around the informal events of 2030, then, the relevant authorities need themselves also to act responsibly.

They should trust the people.

2. GROSS VALUE ADDED, JOBS, PRODUCTIVITY

It is hard to put a definite figure on the *Gross Value Added* (GVA) to the UK economy strictly by events. According to UK Music, an umbrella group for commercial music, live music contributes a GVA of £1bn. As Chart 12 shows overleaf, that’s a good 10 per cent of the DCMS figure of about £10bn for the *total* value added by music, performing and visual arts, whether by means of events or by other activities.

Chart 12 includes DCMS figures for the GVA by sport. Interestingly, **the Gross Value Added to the UK by sport is very comparable with that added by music, performing arts and visual arts.**

Totting up, in Chart 12, the 2017 GVA of **music, performing arts and visual arts, as well as sport, shows that, in total, they contribute more than one per cent of the UK’s GVA. Better still, the GVA of these sectors has risen much faster, since 2010, than total UK GVA.**

How much of that above-average record is based upon the value added specifically by events? That’s difficult to answer. What we can say, comparing Chart 12’s evidence on GVA with that given by Chart 13, overleaf, on *jobs*, is that **in music, performing arts and visual arts, and sport, GVA growth has been double jobs growth. At the same time, jobs in these sectors have multiplied faster than jobs in the UK as a whole: at triple that rate (the arts), or double it (sport).**

Admittedly DCMS statistics for GVA cover 2010–17, while those that the DCMS has for jobs growth cover 2011–7 – a shorter period. Still, the point holds good: in music, performing arts and visual arts, GVA rose by 68.6 per cent, 2010–17; jobs, by 32.5 per cent, 2011–7. In sport, the figures are 40 and 18.3 per cent. **Music, performing arts and visual arts, together with sport, have added a significant number of posts to their payroll, but even more value to the UK economy.**

Given the UK’s perennial problem of low *productivity*, this is a great achievement. **The arts and sport have been recruiting, but have**

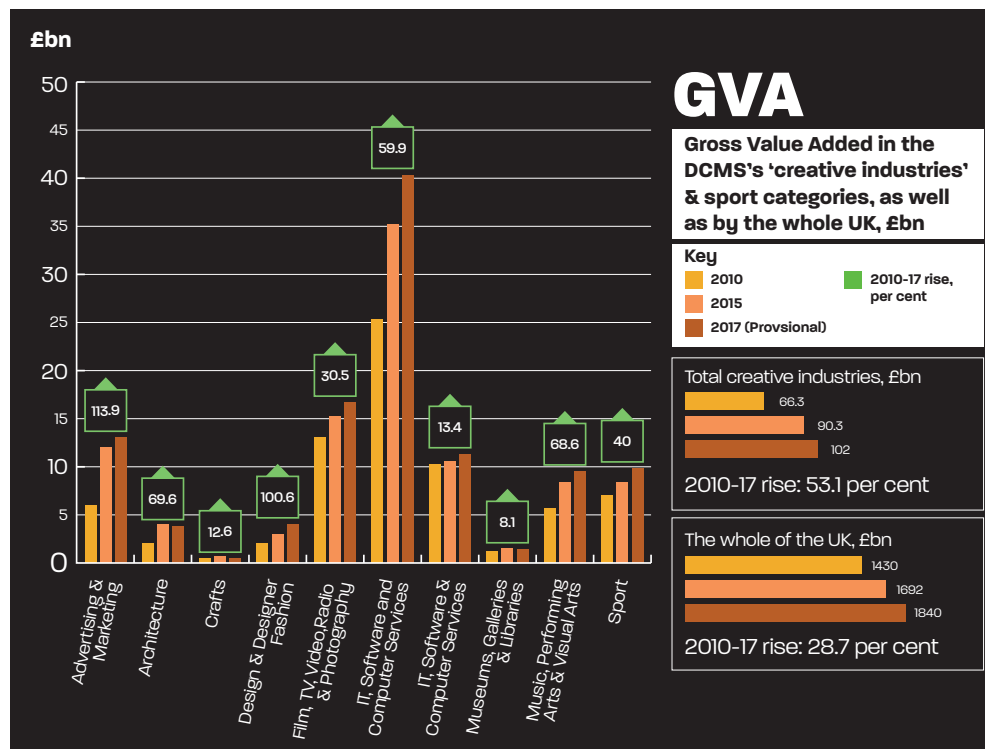


Chart 12

Source: DCMS, DCMS
Sector Economic
Estimates Provisional 2017:
GVA Sub-sectors, 2018,
and DCMS, DCMS Sectors
Economic Estimates 2017
(provisional): Gross Value
Added, 2018

been raising the value of what they produce twice as fast. And while not every job in the arts and sport is necessarily about events, it seems likely that **events have fully participated in the dramatic rise in productivity that has marked the arts and sport as a whole.**

In fact, with GVA growth for the whole UK economy not double, but triple total UK jobs growth, the GVA-vs-jobs trajectories of the arts and sport are actually not quite as brilliant as that of the whole UK economy. But what the data still confirm is that the arts and sport can, as a sector, square an important circle: they're able to improve their productivity at the same time as adding jobs, just not as fast as UK plc.

That's important for two reasons. First, **while it's hard to automate the arts and sport – especially in the case of events, which are labour-intensive compared with, say, manufacturing or financial services – the two broad sectors have undoubtedly become more efficient.** Moreover such automation as has been brought to the arts and sport, for example in ticketing, appears to have been accompanied by an increase in jobs, not a decrease. In fact, **that's been the pattern for jobs in general in the UK – and elsewhere.**

Second, the record shows that **the arts and sport have the capacity to re-invent themselves.** They not only change their 'output' more frequently than many other sectors; the events that arts and sport put on have the potential, at least, to carve out for themselves a whole new wealth-creating sector in its own right, with high productivity, durable jobs, plenty of customer demand, and new skills in the making.

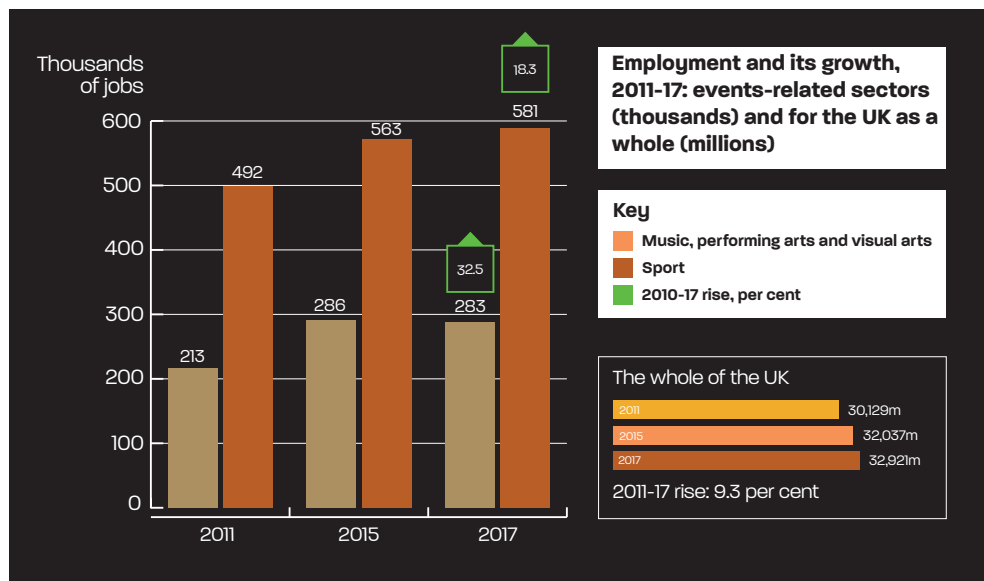


Chart 13

Source: DCMS, [Tables 20-30: Employment by Creative Industries sub-sector, 2018](#), and DCMS, [DCMS Sectors Economic Estimates 2017: Employment, 2018](#)

What about jobs in the narrower, still more events-orientated sub-sectors that we have already met – performing arts, their support, the operation of sports facilities, the activities of sports clubs and other sports activities? Chart 14, overleaf, presents DCMS figures on employment.

Figures for jobs do vary somewhat. For example, UK Music suggests that in live music alone there are now nearly 29,000 people employed – and that doesn't include the 91,000 jobs it says are held by Britain's musicians. Also, self-employment is broadly the rule in performing arts and their support, but not in sport. Either way, however, Chart 14 evokes important trends, which are in line with those in Chart 13.

Between 2011 and 2017, UK jobs grew, though modestly, around the operation of sports facilities and the activities of sports clubs. But around performing arts, jobs rose by nearly half, while in the smaller sector of support for performing arts, they rose by nearly two thirds. So Britain's events-based performing arts have been creating jobs rapidly, directly, and in secondary industries too.

3. EXPORTS

If, in arts and sport, UK GVA and jobs have grown, the growth of these two sectors' exports has been more exemplary still. Chart 15, overleaf, goes back to the broad sectors of music, performing arts and visual arts, as well as sport. These, as we have said, do much more than just events. Still, what strikes is how much exports have risen – especially for music.

People abroad appreciate British music, and British sport. Once again, much of the exports picture presented in Chart 15 does not relate to events. Still, music exports are worth a further look.

For the year 2017, UK Music has estimated that exports of live music – not playing it, but organising it – were just £80m. However,

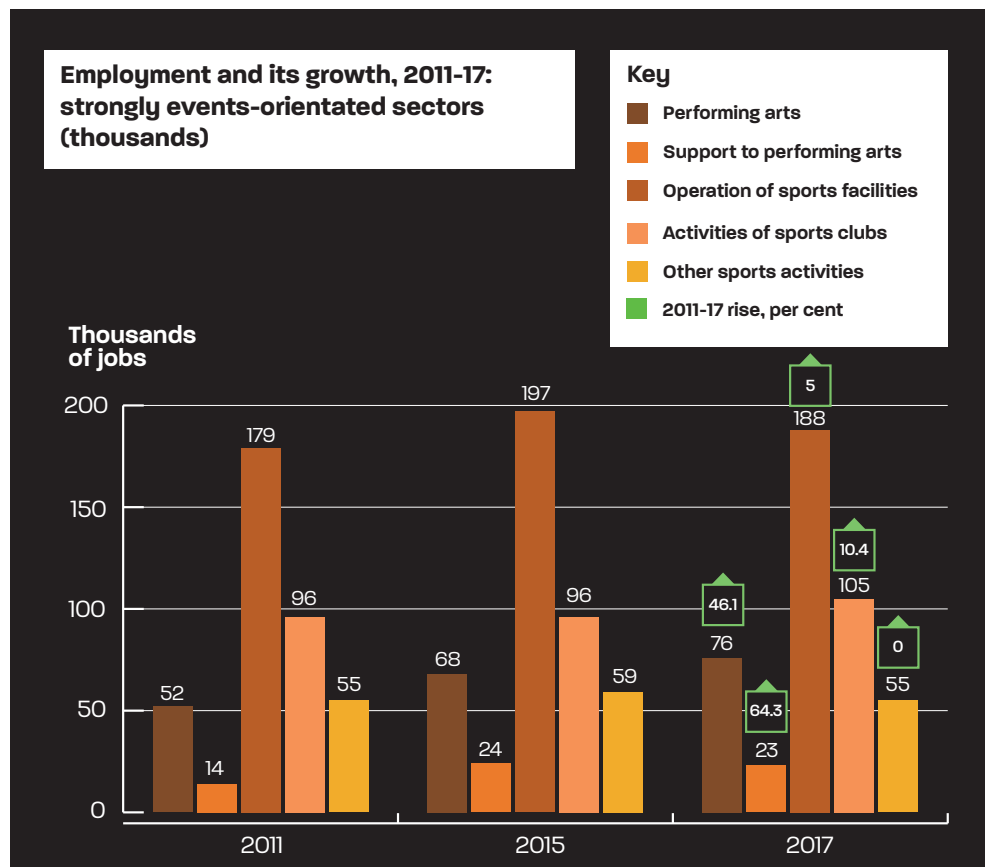


Chart 14
DCMS, Table 55:
[Employment by Standard
Industrial Classification
\(SIC\), 2018](#)

once we factor in UK Music's estimate of musicians' exports, £978m, the picture improves.

That figure covers both the sale of music rights abroad, but also live events abroad. Now, suppose that *foreign tours* supply all British musicians with just over half of their total export revenues. That would give British musicians foreign tour revenues of about £500m.

Alternatively, note that, in 2018, just seven British acts grossed enormous revenues from tours done both in Britain and abroad: Ed Sheeran (£332m), Roger Waters (£101m), the Rolling Stones (£91m), Sam Smith (£65m), Depeche Mode (£61m), Harry Styles (£47m) and Elton John (£43m). That makes a total of £740m of business through tours. Now take just over half of that total tours business as stemming from simply the foreign gigs played by these seven acts: call that £400m, which compares reasonably with our guess of £500m of live exports from all British musicians.

In summary, then, the broad evidence suggests that **UK export revenues from both organising live music gigs (£80m) and playing them (£500m) already run at getting on for £600m. Indeed, the real figure could be considerably higher.**

4. PROSPECTS

In Gross Value Added, jobs, productivity and exports, events need be ashamed of nothing. Nor, as we have seen, do music events face a saturated market. Yet though the snags that events face in the future will include economic ones, it is politics, and the regulation of events, that could prove more problematic. Some parts of officialdom could deepen their distrust of the general public at events. They could allow the conduct of a tiny minority of eventgoers to divert them from the overwhelmingly positive effect of events. In an attempt to shore up their public legitimacy and their jobs, they could choose to pander to those tiny, shouty minorities of residents that refuse always to see anything good in events.

That would be a mistake.

The export record shows that an alternative can be found. Since the Crash of 2008, UK musical and performing arts events have soared fastest not in UK GVA, employment and productivity, but abroad. That may be because the licensing climate in Europe and elsewhere is often more tolerant than it is here. Altogether, the statistics imply that **UK events GVA, jobs and productivity could rise as fast as events exports in future, if this country had a more liberal licensing regime.**

Sometimes a Not In My Back Yard (NIMBY) attitude to a local event is justified. When, back in 2002, DJ Fatboy Slim's set drew more than 250,000 attendees to Brighton beach, locals had every right to complain about the resulting disruption. Yet more often, and especially in the longer and wider economic view, to frustrate events is the wrong course to take.

In terms of what events could do for Britain between now and 2030, **the most urgent task is to raise the level of debate about them, and to broaden its scope. That alone would be an innovation.**

One final point here. **Exaggerated fears of The Crowd have a long and rather iffy history** (see Appendix A). Such fears should not now be allowed to dictate the future policy, regulation and licensing framework for events.

Chart 15

Source: DCMS, Tables 7-24: Exports and imports of services by sub-sector, 2018, and DCMS, Tables 1-6: Exports and imports of services by sector, 2018

Exports of services, the arts and sport, 2010-16				
	2010 sales, current £m	2016 sales, current £m	2010-16 rise, per cent	Per cent of total UK exports of services
Music, performing and visual arts	357	1119	213	0.5
Sport	938	2340	149	1.0
UK	174,121	245,406	41	100

Chapter five

The sociology of informal events

1. ADULT PARTICIPATION

Events are popular. In 2017/8, 68.6 per cent of English adults (16 years old or more) said they'd attended an arts event in the previous 12 months. Just as striking are the relatively high proportions of English adults who say they went to events held around the centenary of the First World War: in 2017/8, 16.3 per cent said they'd attended a local or national event to commemorate WWI.

2. PARTICIPATION BY CHILDREN

Events are popular, but data that examines participation in them is hard to come by. However, data on the participation of children in general sport is plentiful and telling. Chart 16 shows that while 5-10 year old children are hardly doing less sport than they did a decade ago, 11-15 year olds are doing palpably less. It implies that fewer children are engaging in general sports events than they used to.

The data is even more vivid in relation to competitive sports, in which events are much more central than in general sport. Chart 17 shows that **over much less than a decade, the involvement in competitive sports events of boys and girls, and especially of those just 5-10 years old, has endured some important declines.**

Why are lower rates of child participation in sport events important for the adult world of informal events? Yes, such events can form a significant rite of passage for children – one that young organisers of and attendees at events will need in the years to 2030. But there's more at stake here.

Chart 16
Source: DCMS, [Taking part 2017/18: annual child report tables, 2018](#)

Boys and girls doing school sports, 2008/9-2017/8, per cent

Those doing any sport in the previous four weeks

	2008/9	2017/8
Boys 5-10	86.9	87.1
Girls 5-10	82.0	79.2
Boys 11-15	97.0	91.5
Girls 11-15	94.9	90.3

Those doing any sport in the previous week

	2008/9	2017/8
Boys & Girls 5-10	74.1	73.9
Boys & Girls 11-15	88.6	81.9

We live in a cultural climate that generally reveres exercise and teamwork, and which pays occasional lip-service, even now, to the skill of leadership. So: it can only be sad that children and adolescents are less engaged in sport, including competitive sport, than in the past.

No doubt many causes lie behind this disengagement. However, one thing that may well be both a producer and a product of it is that, when closing, redeveloping or amalgamating schools, local authorities have been under budgetary pressure to sell off school playing fields. **Between November 2001 and April 2010, local authorities sold 242 playing fields.** Worse, Department for Education [statistics issued in 2019](#) show that local authorities have sold a further 205 playing fields since May 2010.

Yes, playing fields can occasionally become the site for much-needed housing. But from the perspective of events, local authority ‘disposals’ of green fields look short-sighted. Each field that once witnessed children’s games can now be a site for events.

Chart 17

Source: DCMS, [Taking part 2017/18: annual child report tables, 2018](#)

Boys and girls competing in school sports, 2011-2017/8, per cent

Those playing sport in their school in organised competitions (for example, a school sports day)

	Q1 2011	2017/8
Boys 5-10	66.9	24.8
Girls 5-10	60.6	17.3
Boys 11-15	50.0	30.0
Girls 11-15	30.0	21.1

A sports competition or one-off event outside school

	Q1 2011	2017/8
Boys 5-15	26.4	21.1
Girls 5-15	10.9	11.1

Played sport against other schools in organised competitions

	Q1 2011	2017/8
Boys 5-15	38.6	24.8
Girls 5-15	22.0	17.3

Share of all music festival-goers. UK, by age, 2017, and forecasts for 2030

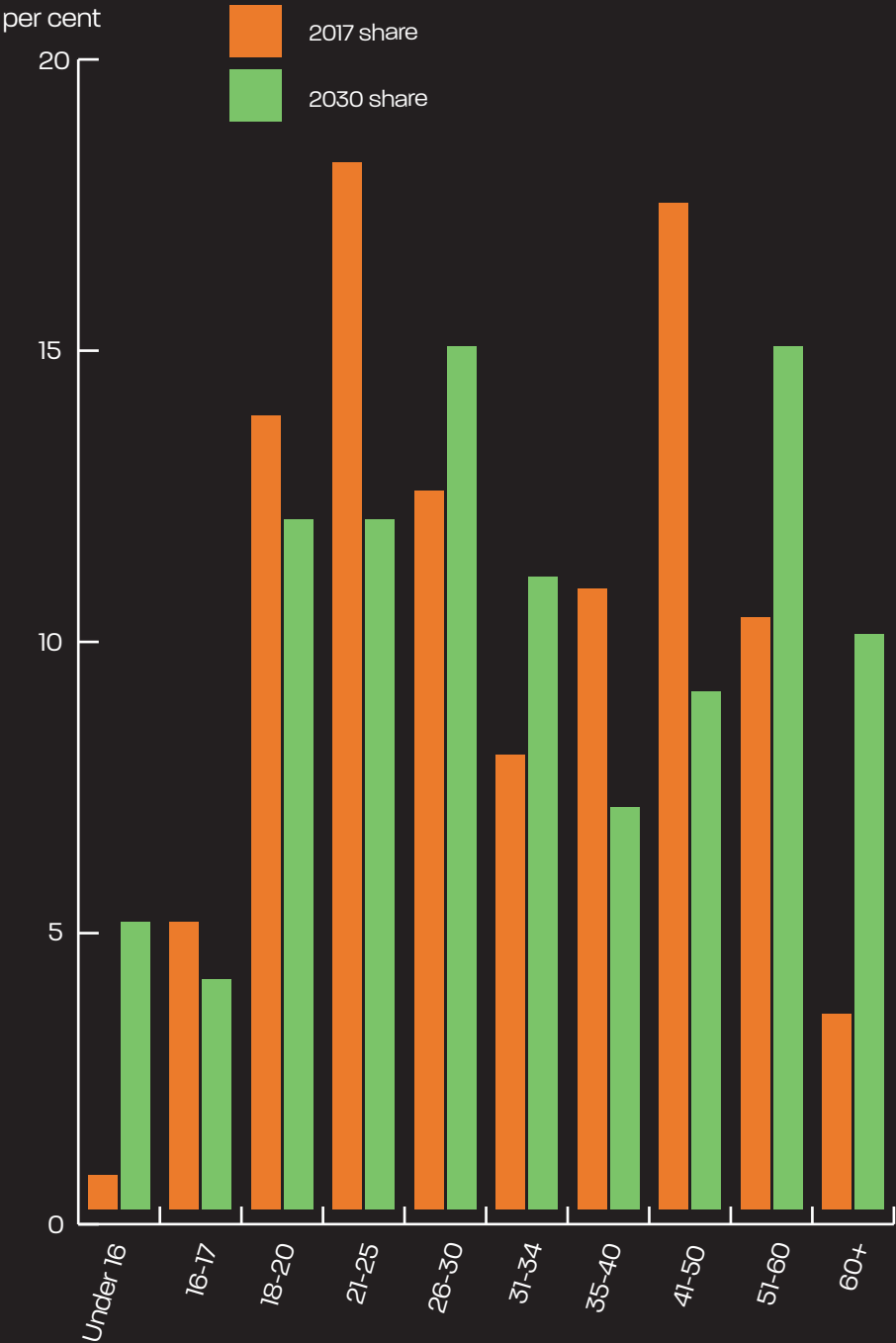


Chart 18

Source: UK Festival Awards, Market report 2017, 2018.

Forecasts for 2030 are indicative only, and are those of the author

3. INFORMAL EVENTS CAN HAVE UNIVERSAL APPEAL

Managed right, events can and do appeal to all ages. Some people still imagine that music festivals, for instance, are simply large loud events that cater mostly for single men swigging too much beer. But such perceptions of informal events aren't always just.

According to a report by [UK Festival Awards](#), about 60 per cent of people at music festivals are women, and/or are in relationships or married. Demographically, there's an attendance bulge around the life-stage that runs from 21 to 25 years old – that of students; but there's also a bulge before and after 41-50 years. With the reasonable twin assumptions that the recent trend toward 'family-friendly' festivals continues and that today's fans stay loyal to the festival scene, Chart 18, opposite, gives a rough forecast of the ageing process. It suggests that **the demographics of music festivals in 2030 may prove even more balanced than they are today.**

Take, too, the example of disability at music festivals. Between 2017 and 2018, the charity [Attitude is Everything](#) says, more than 170,000 deaf and disabled people attended 160 UK venues and festivals that had signed up to AiE's Charter of Best Practice. Not for nothing has AiE also trained almost 7,000 music industry professionals: it [estimates](#) that deaf and disabled people, along with people with chronic health problems, now comprise fully 10 per cent of live music attendees in the UK. At 20 Charter venues and festivals aided by the AiE over 2014-18, deaf and disabled numbers [increased](#) by a commendable 151 per cent.

As accessibility improves still further by 2030, so will customer demand. By their nature, informal events tend to embrace all groups in society. And it's the same story with the NTE. As the sociologist Frank Furedi has [written](#):

"Powerful social trends and global economic forces continue to drive the 24-hour city, throughout the modern world. The NTE provides a socially inclusive forum through which different groups of society can interact... although it is frequently argued that the NTE contributes to the polarised lives led by generations, it has in fact considerable potential for providing a bridge between generations. Across Europe, people in their 40s and 50s engage with the NTE alongside younger generations."

4. PROSPECTS

While adult participation in informal *cultural* events promises to stay buoyant, the decline in children's participation in *sports* events is worrying and needs to be reversed. In events as elsewhere, organisers and local authorities need the physical and social skills that junior sports events impart. Still, the likely convergence of all age-groups on the music festivals of tomorrow, and a more relaxed, Mediterranean attitude to children and the NTE, could do much to turn things round.

As Clare Coghill argues on the page opposite, **events often provide an indispensable social dimension for cities, a fillip to locals and visitors, and a chance to uphold a humanist kind of universalism.** At the same time, though, **just as events alone can't regenerate cities, so they cannot by themselves produce real social cohesion.**

It's important to get the balance between the economic and social sides of events right. In a 2016 study of the 'small, worldly city' of Cardiff, the Portuguese geographer Ana Gonçalves is right to contend that any study of a city 'can never be developed in purely cultural terms'. She's also right to note that urban event-management entities often adopt 'a predominantly economic approach' to events, one which aims at reaping short-term profit and neglects the medium and long-term benefits that events may bring to local communities. She's accurate, too, when she says that the spin-off from urban events is felt not just in economics, but also 'in more subjective and difficult to assess ways which correspond to people's perceptions of a given city and how they feel in it and about it'. Finally, this White Paper fully agrees with her that **the early integration of local communities into the running of events makes such events more likely to succeed.**

Unlike Gonçalves, however, **we do not believe that events should simply seek out the fashionable but also over-familiar favourites of social policy – local inclusiveness and diversity, local quality of life, local entertainment and play – in the hope that, in the process, they can magically deliver local cohesion.** In the cold light of day, cohesion is more likely to come from a resilient consensus around beliefs than it is from being in the moment together at an event. Indeed, since the Brexit referendum of 2016, all the signs are that managing the unity of events in the UK could become more of a test in the years to 2030.

That, however, should prompt professionals around events to be still more professional in their stewardship of them.

“Blackpool without the Illuminations switch-on? Unthinkable. Walthamstow without its markets? That wouldn’t be Walthamstow.

“Events breathe life, energy, excitement and fun into our cities, towns and communities. Above all, they bring people together. Especially at a time when the British economy faces headwinds, we need constantly to remind people that they have more in common with each other than they have dividing them. Events are a huge part of ensuring we get that message across.”



Leader of Waltham Forest Council and executive member for Business, Europe and Good Growth at [London Councils](#), on the uplifting character of events

Clare Coghill

Chapter six

Benefits, challenges and opportunities

1. EVENTS WILL GO ON BOOSTING COUNCILS' INCOME

Chapters two and four outlined the benefits of events to SMEs and to the UK economy. We now turn to the wider and deeper benefits that events could offer localities in 2030, and to the major challenges and opportunities they present.

Cities benefit from events more easily than counties or regions. Over any year and in any one area, rural events will tend to bring revenues in just once, while urban ones, and certainly urban clubs, will bring them in more continuously. That is a tangible support to local authorities.

The more local authorities are forced to earn more of their keep themselves, the more they may come to regard events not just as something to be endured, but as useful sources of income. Since, as the [Local Government Association](#) (LGA) reminds us, councils are also now required to prepare a [formal investment strategy](#) at least once a year, **council initiatives around events, and the returns reaped from events, will be more public, and more publicly accountable.**

This new municipal transparency around events could be useful. It means that people will be able to review the successes and failures of their own and other local authorities, and learn from them. It also means that successful local authority innovations in events can be systematised nationally. For example, in turning a large local prison into a business park, Rutland County Council made sure to add leisure facilities and an 'events zone' to the site, so taking advantage of its old security features and architecture. Today, [Oakham Enterprise Park welcomes sports clubs](#) in to what might otherwise be a purely business environment. In achieving 100 per cent occupancy, it has also given space to events and film companies. The result is a welcome £250,000 annual surplus, for Rutland to use as it sees fit.

According to the LGA, one of the key lessons from Rutland's exercise is simply this: 'Be brave'.

In the future, councils will need daring everywhere, if they're to use events to help diversify their sources of income. Yet local democratic oversight of council events initiatives could, handled properly, increase that daring

2. EVENTS WILL BRING NEW MONEY AND BREATHE NEW LIFE INTO URBAN GREEN SPACES

How much income are events likely to generate for local authorities between now and 2030? The example of urban music festivals held in

green spaces is useful here.

Over about a dozen festivals a year, the festival organiser We Are The Fair, one of the co-publishers of this White Paper, pays local authorities a total of more than £1m to hire green space, bringing in anything from 10,000 to 50,000 participants to each of its events. Straight into the coffers of several local authorities, the company pays rates of up to £5 per participant per day (up to more like £8 for the whole of two-day event). UK festival companies, then, pay local authorities an average of something like £50,000 per event, and quite often lay out more.

Now take just 2000 of Britain's 2019 total of 2,850 music festivals (Chart 1) as being staged on land owned by local authorities. In total, that would give them an annual total *minimum* of £100m in hiring fees. Moreover, this total does not include the other, indirect revenues local authorities get from events – through parking charges, for example.

A cynic might argue that £100m is peanuts against what the LGA reckons will be a shortage of funds for local government amounting to £5.8bn in 2019/20. But that would miss the point. A local authority such as London's Haringey Council hires out green spaces to event organisers to the tune of £1m, a year, over perhaps 10 events. Therefore **if just 200 of the UK's more than 400 local and unitary authorities matched the events revenues of Haringey and other councils, that would bring them in £200m.**

Perhaps every council, like the towns and cities of the ancient Greeks and the Romans, needs its own amphitheatre, or something like that. Anyway: **if, by 2030, more, bigger and – above all – very innovative events spread to a clear majority of councils, they might be able to offset their funding hardships by £300-400m.**

That's not to be sniffed at. But perhaps an equally important point is that **revenues from events in urban green spaces represent, even today, quite a lot of money as far as the planting, maintenance and supervision of those spaces goes.**

Local authorities are unlikely ever to hive off events revenues reaped from green spaces so as to fund their upkeep directly (what policy wonks call 'hypothecation'). Yet **councils could do much more, and will anyway be required to do much more, to convey to residents the size of the cash cushion they already get from events – a cushion that, by 2030, could help keep green spaces in good shape, streets swept, and local rate rises suppressed.**



Back in early 1960s America, the renowned writer and urbanist Jane Jacobs (1916-2006) on how events could help parks

Jane Jacobs

“From the standpoint of a park, what are ‘demand goods’?...

“Music (including recorded music) and plays... serve as demand goods. It is curious that relatively little is done with these in parks, because the casual introduction of cultural life is part of the historic mission of cities... Universities with drama departments (and, so often, with dead, problem parks in their vicinities) might try putting two and two together...

“Cities [also] lack minor park activities

that could serve as minor ‘demand goods’. The Puerto Ricans who come to our cities today... [do park-based] pig roasts, and the parties that follow can be as much fun as the Italian street festivals many city dwellers have learned to love. Kite flying is a minor activity, but there are those who love it... Artificial rinks have permitted the rediscovery of city ice-skating in our time...

“All this takes money.”

Adapted slightly from Jacobs, The death and life of great American cities [1961], Jonathan Cape edition, 1962, pp107, 109, 110

3. INFORMAL EVENTS WILL HELP REVIVE THE HIGH STREET

For how much longer will the High Street imagine that it can carry on in the old way? It likes to blame outside factors – business rates, parking spaces and parking charges, Amazon – for its plight. But it needs to make radical innovations itself, or it will die.

A conscious strategy with events, and in the first place with informal events, could allow the High Street to stage happenings in real life that form a thrilling alternative to the virtual fare offered by screens. In the process, informal events could help transform the High Street into a place with skilled, well-paying jobs, high productivity, and a very dynamic impact on entertainment, education and technological innovation.

Yes, UK retailing needs a new regime of highly-trained, informed customer service. And yes, it also needs automation. Here Zara has brought in robots to handle back-office deliveries to a click-and-collect store at Westfield, Stratford, while both Tesco and China's JD.com have been experimenting with autonomous vehicles for delivering goods to the home. However, the main thing retailers need is stronger *footfall*.

Without more footfall, the High Street will die. But informal events can help build that footfall.

Retailers cannot and must not keep trying to win the last war. The crisis on the High Street will force them to reinvent themselves, so that they get into a position where they can fight a new and very different war. They need to make a carefully costed but decisive turn toward mounting the kind of attractions that work best in person, and which shopping online can never provide.

Sales will still be important. But, on their way to 2030, shopkeepers will also have to ask themselves: what calibre of experience per square metre can I offer this month?

Of course, the High Street needs better architecture, design, street furniture, signage, maps, lighting, security and all the rest. And of course, shops themselves need excellent hygiene, great acoustics, fast payment systems, good security, Wi-Fi that works and good facilities for staff and for logistics.

Yet just as important as the physical and digital architecture of the High Street is what Nick Morgan calls its Live Architecture – the flesh-and-blood, see-and-be-seen elements of human performance, participation and improvisation.

Through real, live musicians, singers, dancers, DJs, science demonstrators, teachers, sports people, fitness trainers, debaters,

painters, poets, cooks, jugglers, clowns – retailers and city managers can make shopping hubs into destinations that are more compelling than those of the past. The idea: to persuade individuals and families that their journey to the High Street is worthwhile, because half a day there will include live attractions that they cannot get on social media, TV or the Web, and that are often free.

Who will pay for informal events in and around the High Street? Edinburgh Council wants to be able to collect up to £14.6m from a room tax on tourists – Airbnb users included – of £2 a night. Yet it is far from certain what, if any of this rather modest sum of money might be spent on, say, new spaces for events – let alone how much Edinburgh Council might want to spend bringing informal events more firmly to the centre of the city's mainstream, year-round retailing.

Taxes on tourists are unlikely to be the most effective way to fund a major reorientation of the country's retailers toward informal events. The best result would be for High Streets to generate enough footfall to pay for themselves.

With the right sounds, sights, displays, air quality, tastes and smells, tomorrow's High Street will bring communities continual innovations around performing arts and sport. It will find room, too, for 2D and 3D printing, laser cutting and Virtual Reality: Birmingham City University's STEAMhouse facilities already provide these things on Digbeth High Street. On tomorrow's main drag, indeed, there might even be room for book-and-walk-in flight simulators. Already a main road into Putney, South London, boasts one of these.

The High Street needs to take informal events seriously. The Association of Town and City Management (ATCM) certainly does: it believes that night-time entertainment is a vital part of helping the High Street. What's more, many local authorities today have a direct interest in using events to shape a new kind of retailing. Having bought up shopping centres from Shrewsbury through to Bolton, Wigan and Surrey Heath, local authorities now need to build up a whole culture of events at places like these – if, that is, they really want to their shopping thoroughfares to survive.

In the future, the anchor tenant of new retail developments won't always be Marks & Spencer. That key role will often also be played by informal events, held in the public realm. In the years to 2030, every kind of shopping centre in the UK should contain and continually develop a space that's devoted to such events.

4. MANAGED RIGHT, EVENTS WILL GO ON MAKING TOWNS AND CITIES ATTRACTIVE

Britain needs more houses; but, in turn, new housing will need amenities – including arenas for events.

Take London, where restaurants can be dearer than elsewhere. To people moving in to new housing there, pop-up street food markets and farmers' markets can be an inexpensive way of trying new tastes, without going to the formalities and bills of a restaurant.

There is no necessary contradiction between events and housing. New York City provides perhaps the clearest example of how **stalls, launches and events based on food can help transform local areas for the better.**

As Tom Paine hints in this White Paper, tomorrow's events could well see more and more branded suppliers of electronic hardware collaborate with events providers. Supermarket product suppliers, retailers, banks and general leisure operators are likely to join in. Together, these forces will manage sites, stages, sounds, lighting, interactive screens, tents, canopies, decorations, street furniture, street planting, smells, fireworks, food, beverages, and – above all – crowds. And they'll do that in ways that fit in with and add to localities, and that adroitly blend the physical environment, the social nexus, and the paraphernalia of IT: apps, devices, Augmented Reality.

It won't all be plain sailing. With the rise of IT, popular means of accessing music have changed, making life for music venues more complicated. Meanwhile, property development in certain cities has seen some clubs squeezed out from their premises.

Still, **the successful events of the 2020s will no longer be just temporary productions with little spatial impact, contoured by the weather and light that comes with certain moments. Handled imaginatively, events will become more of a defining fixture of towns and cities, known as much for their lasting, constructive effects as for their ephemeral pleasures.**

Places will never be known just for being places. They will go on being known for bull runs, horse races, human parties, and for particular sounds, dances and gustatory delights. The towns and cities that can reliably pull these things together, for the long term, will do much better than the towns and cities that can't.

"In recent years, Bristol has changed its approach to events. In the past, there was not enough coordination, management or leadership. That has now all changed, which is very encouraging."

"New and additional events are in development. Today there is a queue of event organisers approaching the City Council, who are very positive and in the mood for partnership working around events."

"Ironically, now that local authority funding is such an issue, the different players involved in making an event happen are working together more closely than they did in the past. That should make for better events, as well as happier visitors and event organisers."

"Tourism is very important for the Bristol region, and events are one of the key attractions for many of our visitors. Yet the truth is that we have only tapped into a very small percentage of all the people who have still to experience Bristol. In the evenings, the city still needs more and better events, as we aim for a centre that's active 20 hours a day."

"In assisting events, we always need to respect the requirements of businesses and residents. With the correct level of consultation and discussion, that can nearly always be done effectively. The trick is to hold the right kind of events, at the right times, and in the right locations. We need to keep everyone informed and involved, constantly and throughout the whole process."

"In Bristol, events have a great deal of potential. They can grow visitor numbers and spend. On top of that, given the crisis of local authority spending, some of the revenue from future events may well be used directly to upgrade infrastructure and safety in the city, and bring the whole community other rewards, too."



**CEO John Hirst, of the public/
private sector tourism agency
Destination Bristol, on the
potential of events to improve
the fabric of the city**

John Hirst

5. INFORMAL EVENTS AS BOOST TO URBAN TOURISM: STILL AN OPPORTUNITY, BECOMING QUITE A CHALLENGE

For about a year after the Brexit referendum of June 2016, the numbers and especially the spending of holidaymakers in the UK continued with their reliable ascent, aided by a weak pound. But in 2017 there was a sharp contraction, even if tourists from outside Europe and North America set, in 2018, a new June record for visits to the UK.

So: will UK inbound tourism revive between now and 2030? That partly depends on Britain improving the quality and quantity of events it offers.

Whatever the upshot with Brexit, everyone working in UK tourism will want informal events to be still more unmissable to the overseas visitor than they are today. According to Market report 2017, published by UK Festival Awards in 2018, 10 per cent of UK music festivalgoers are tourists. That makes a crucial difference to tourism numbers and spend – and to event organisers, too. However, as Mintel coolly observes, the UK music concert and festivals sector

'can't rely on international visitors to keep the market afloat. If music fans begin to cut back, or Brexit negotiations negatively impact music tourism, it may begin to struggle.'

For 2030, events of all sorts need to work harder if they're still to capture the tourist pound.

Of course, events-based tourism doesn't just benefit big cities. In golf, the 2018 Open Championship, held at the small coastal town Carnoustie, Scotland, generated £120m for the whole Scots economy, with half of its 172,000 spectators hailing from outside Scotland. Similarly, when English Heritage special adviser and events guru Alon Shulman brought his business partner Paul Oakenfold to do the first ever DJ performance at Stonehenge, it helped put Britain's giant stones on the map among fans in Italy, Latin America and Thailand. Yet, on the whole, it is urban tourism in the UK, not the rural sort, that is most underpinned by events. Here are four examples:

1. Hull's year as 2017 UK City of Culture attracted no fewer than 5.3m people to more than 2,800 events, cultural activities, installations and exhibitions. Once Hull won the contest to be the UK's cultural capital, it pulled in £1bn of investment and perhaps £300m of business from tourism. A series of events began to transform the city, allowing it to make a decisive break from the time when it was once voted one of the worst places to live in the UK.

2. Riffing off Hull, the local authority, the Chamber of Commerce and local businesses in *Leeds* will hold its own city of culture year in

2023. Already Leeds city centre hosted, in 2019, a 50-piece symphony orchestra from Opera North playing sounds from the famous local club Back to Basics; the event will also feature guest appearances by well-known club artists.

3. The successes of *Liverpool* range from the Creamfields and Sound City festivals, through the Liverpool International Music Festival, Braintree, and on to the Invisible Wind Factory (immersive theatre and music) and the Rock n Roll Music Marathon (bands all the way to the finishing line). In the 2017 Liverpool city-region mayoral election, one of the key points in the winner's manifesto was the creation of a city-region strategic economic review – complete with a programme for culture that favoured 'every expression' of creativity, including fashion, music, dance, design, film, sport, art and architecture.

4. *London* thrives on events that draw a worldwide audience. For instance, Hyde Park Winter Wonderland and the Chelsea Flower Show attract strong contingents from overseas.

Altogether, individual events in cities, and the more durable club culture that cities offer, have reinforced each other. That has given a substantial uplift to domestic and international tourism. It has also established cities as brands in the minds of potential and actual first-time visitors (Hull), strengthened city personalities by innovating new combinations of events (Leeds), and consolidated world-class reputations (Liverpool, London).

All this is good news. Yet the future is rarely a simple extrapolation of the past. Take the 430,000 overseas students enrolled in the UK – not quite tourists, but here for longer than tourists. Study Links, an organisation which helps overseas students with their stays, has the good manners to offer them a guide to British events. However in some ways, it's hardly needed, for many foreigners studying in the UK are naturally likely to build up a fondness for their chosen city's events and clubs. So, because an important minority of foreign students elect to stay in a UK city after their study, and because many more like to return to that city out of affection when they're older, events give cities the chance to capture overseas students' loyalty for life.

Between now and 2030, though, there are no guarantees that overseas students

The Cavern Club, Mathew Street, Liverpool.
Using the basement of a fruit warehouse, the club was founded in 1957 to the sound of jazz, blues and skiffle, and is thought to have seen Ringo Starr's first gig that same year. By 1960 Beat Music in Liverpool had made the club 'the most publicised pop music venue in the world', and in 1961 an early version of the Beatles played there. Ever since, it has been a key factor in making Liverpool one of world tourism's most valued destinations



will go on coming to British cities in the numbers they have done. Both the finances and international reputation of UK universities today invite questions. Visa problems are unlikely to ease. And while overseas student numbers have lately flatlined in the UK (up just 0.7 per cent, 2012-5), its Anglophone rivals have seen theirs soar (between 18 and 43 per cent).

Altogether, between now and 2030, **events in UK cities may well see a drop in the numbers of overseas students attending them.**

More broadly, **tourism as a whole has become more controversial.** Travel conditions continue to test the patience of tourists, hotels and some cities are now hostile to Airbnb, and a media furore has broken out about the dangers of over-tourism. Young tourists, in particular, may come to worry more about the overall impact of their holidays.

So, **if cities like the boost to tourism that events bring, both cities and events face tough markets for tourism in future. All the world's major cities have long engaged in fierce inter-urban competition, and have long used events as a weapon in this. Now that competition could get a lot more intense.**

If events have to work harder for tourists in future, cities will have no choice but to work more closely with events.

6. TRANSPORT TO AND FROM INFORMAL EVENTS: A BIG CHALLENGE, BUT AN OPPORTUNITY, TOO

When a music festival requires that fans camp in the countryside, few really quarrel with the snags getting to it or getting home from it. However, when informal events are urban, and designed to be visited and returned from all in one day, public transport becomes vital – especially because parking near an event can be prohibitive.

The snag is that, throughout the UK, public transport faces difficulties. Council bus services lack funds, and have suffered major cuts. Rail services are in a mess, most obviously in the North. So it's little surprise that informal events are today often ill-served by public transport. Indeed, **transport looks set to be a worsening challenge for events to beat in the years to 2030.**

By that date, though, won't today's new automotive technologies change transport to and from events? Sadly, the answer here is no. The driverless car, the flying car, even the driverless taxi or the

“A city thrives when it can boast an active business centre, when people decide to feature its heritage – and when it holds events.

“The thing about events is that they tend to reveal the overall health of a city’s culture.

“Events are good for trade and business, but they also publicise cities in ways which then draw many visitors. London has always held events that have turned into magnetic attractions for hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. The New Year’s Eve fireworks at Westminster, the BST events in Hyde Park and the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition all brighten up the capital, and bring in hundreds of thousands of fans from overseas.

*“Nor is London alone in this. The market for events is international. **Barcelona** is very active in festivals. New York is famous for its massive concerts in Central Park; Paris, for events on the Champs de Mar. These occasions bring in a lot of visitors – visitors who spend time and money well beyond the event itself.”*

On events, London and tourism

Harvey Goldsmith

autonomous scooter: sadly, these won't, in 2030, be around in enough numbers really to change the business of reaching an informal event or returning home from one.

So how, outside London, will people hit by poor public transport get to informal events? Part of the answer may lie with the private sector providing new, ingenious, IT-based transport solutions.

In London, Citymapper's Smart Ride runs a fleet of eight-seater Mercedes Viano buses on fixed routes. Meanwhile, Uber has come to like the Night Tube in London, because most of Uber's business relates to the last mile of a journey home, and the Night Tube provides plenty of passengers who could use a car for exactly that last mile.

Wherever it emerges, privately organised ride-sharing will no doubt continue to meet with dissent, around events as elsewhere. But at the London Film Festival, London Fashion Week and the South by Southwest Conference and Festivals (SXSW), Austin, Texas, themselves put on minivans to ferry people from place to place – and with little opposition. In the future, cities, towns and boroughs will probably build on that kind of approach. **To underpin events, local authorities will use IT to mesh, for the event-goer, the best combinations of public, private and festival transport.**

Like transport generally, the transport of people around informal events will be a political hot potato. At the same time, the transport of event *equipment* is likely to get trickier. The technologies of live entertainment and sport will be more extensive, but also more expensive in future. Everyone around informal events will have to think through the logistical challenges here.

Despite all this, **transport to and from events will not just be a challenge, but also an opportunity. Events raise demand for transport, giving it the opportunity to develop and so improve overall audience satisfaction. Even the scrappy festival car park, already an arena for drum improvisations by audiences in the US, could be made a site for fun, rather than for navigational confusion.**

*“Transport, and obviously the **Night Tube** on Fridays and Saturdays, is a key enabler for night events in London. However, the converse also holds: night events benefit transport operators. In London, they’ve already helped raise usage of night buses.*

“The extra transport demand created by night-time events can grease the wheels for 24-hour transport generally. After all, a third of Night Tube users are workers. Nightlife and night transport therefore make for timetables that help get shift workers to and from work. Looking toward 2030, they could also usher in a congestion-busting, quiet culture of London deliveries in the small hours.

“The Docklands Light Railway (DLR), for instance, doesn’t presently run at night. But say it did, and really linked up entertainment hubs. Then East London night workers, currently ill-served by public transport, would also gain.

“Crossrail and its newbuild successors will run overnight, and, as London’s old Tube lines get refurbished, so by 2030 they’ll likely join today’s five Night lines in working Friday and Saturday nights.

“In fact, night events don’t just boost demand for transport. As

amenities, they make new, local housing developments more attractive. They also increase revenues for retail and hospitality firms that are open around local transport nodes at night. So for 2030 we need to be thinking about how nightlife, housing, the High Street and hospitality can work together to make a stronger, more successful 24-hour economy – good sleep for residents included! And we need a planning and licensing framework that supports that.

“Unfortunately, many boroughs still see nightlife as a problem to be managed, rather than an opportunity. But let’s remember: a street at night that’s full of people because of an event can be safer than a street at night that’s empty.”



*Executive director in charge of economy and tax at business campaigners **London First**, on transport – and London as a truly 24-hour city*

Dr David Lutton

“The night-time economy is really vital to Glasgow. We Many agencies and volunteers act as a team across the city to deliver a great night-time experience for everyone. Partnership around keeping our city safe is at the centre of that. We all work well together.

“Often, a fair bit of the challenge is getting people home at the end of their evening. I feel it would be useful to develop better bus services from the centre to the suburbs – right through the night. We have seen the



***Superintendent, North West Operations
Glasgow City Centre Police Station, on
transport – the lessons from Glasgow***

success that Taxi Marshalls have brought: they’ve ensured safer waiting areas for cabs, and, for many, have shortened their journeys home. More transport opportunities would enhance this.

“Glasgow is becoming a city of choice for big events: Hampden, for example, hosts a number of concerts each year. In planning for large numbers of attendees, we always consider how everyone can get home as easily as possible, and we involve both train operators and bus companies in this. After all, the concert experience covers the whole night – arrival, the build-up, the gig itself and the trip back. As a city, we need to ensure that the final part of the night is as memorable, for the right reasons, as the first.”

Dr Richie Adams

7. ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT: TECHNOLOGY TO THE RESCUE!

In recent years, many organisers of events – not just informal ones, but also B2B conferences and exhibitions – have taken more seriously the effect of their operations on the environment. How then is the environmental impact of informal events likely to evolve up to 2030?

To cut CO₂ emissions and local levels of exhaust and noise pollution, it would be good, in principle, if people got to events by electric car, rather than by using the petrol-driven sort. The problem is that we will have to wait till way past 2030 before the electric car accounts for, say, a quarter of Britain's fleet of 32 million cars on the road. Already the subject of both confused government targets and wider doubts, **electric cars will only arrive at UK music festivals in 2030 in small numbers, and will mostly be driven by rich show-offs.**

However: if electric cars, as well as the driverless technologies touched on earlier, will barely affect informal events, **the technologies of electricity generation, air quality, noise reduction and litter removal will significantly improve informal events by 2030.**

First, diesel and gas electricity generators, the first standby for rural events and the first fallback in case of power cuts anywhere, face tougher emissions targets, and are anyway moving toward using and storing renewable energy.

Second, China, Poland and the Netherlands have begun to install outdoor towers, seven metres tall and made of aluminium, capable of stripping the air surrounding them of particulates. Similarly, London, Glasgow and Watford have adopted CityTrees – outdoor walls of moss, 4m high, that remove nearby dust, nitrogen dioxide and CO₂. Solutions more mobile than these will no doubt come into play around the informal events of tomorrow.

Third, by 2030 we can look forward to some useful technological advances in acoustics and noise reduction. The software modelling of sound will be more sophisticated. Better measurement and management of sound on-site – heavy metal bands such as Metallica included – will obviate problems.

Last, the technologies of litter removal are moving ahead.

Let's get litter at informal events in context. Note at the outset that general household waste in the UK is quite modest compared with that generated by building sites and by business. Chart 19, overleaf, shows this; it also confirms that the

amount of household *plastics* waste, while a problem, is still more modest – to be precise, 2.26 million tonnes out of a national total of 145.7 million tonnes, or just 1.5 per cent.

Shape of air quality devices at events to come? This CityTree helps cut pollution in Killermont Street, Glasgow



So waste from informal events, and especially plastics waste, is absolutely negligible compared with the waste that the UK generates, year-round, from all sources. While the detritus left after, say, a music festival can be a real pain at a local level, it's hardly a national menace.

Still: how should informal events deal with that detritus? Take plastics. With that material, it might be easy for event organisers to signal virtue by banning single-use plastic bottles, adopting the United Nations Environment's Global Plastics Platform, backed by the elite World Economic Forum (WEF, Davos), or teaming up with WEF, Coke, Pepsi and Dow Chemical in the Global Plastic Action Partnership. But wiser and more practical, for 2030, would be to see how new technology might deal with waste. In Pakistan, scientists have found that the enzymes associated with certain fungi can digest plastics waste. Similarly, UK and US scientists have engineered an enzyme – an aromatic polyesterase – to digest PET, the chief material for single-use plastics bottles and the like, as well as PEF, a newish plastic now used as a substitute for PET.

True, these biochemical techniques may prove hard to commercialise. Such a snag may also apply to robots collecting litter; and, while it's admirable that a French theme park has trained six crows to pick up cigarette butts and other small pieces of rubbish, that example may not provide event organisers with the kind of mass collection technique that the big events of the future will require.

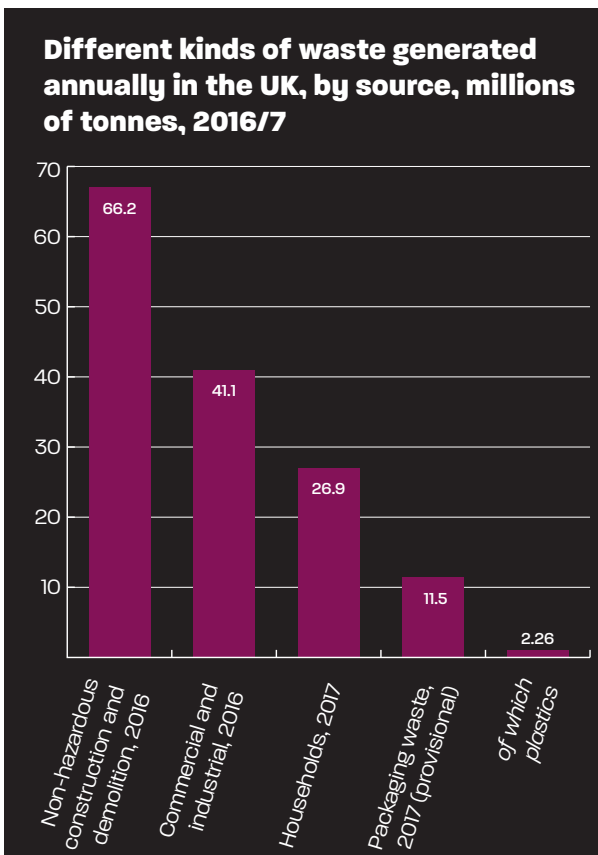
Yet **bold technological approaches** seem to us more pragmatic than endless moralising to event-goers about their environmental misdeeds at events. And until cheap waste technologies arrive, there's another, very simple fix that improve matters: feature more litter bins on every site – bins that are cleared frequently enough for them not to overflow.

Chart 19

Source: DEFRA,

UK statistics on waste,

14 February 2019



8. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AS AN IMPROVER OF EVENTS, NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR THEM

Young people today do show some signs of social media fatigue, and of wanting face-to-face interactions. Yet there is no reason why still more use of screens in the future will automatically be accompanied by more fondness for live informal events. Take computer games, for instance. That activity, which regularly involves tens of millions of young people, will still stage live, in-the-flesh gamer events of different sorts. But it is also likely to move into ‘events’ that, one way or another, are based on Virtual Reality.

In fact the relationship between IT and informal events, like that between IT and many other social phenomena (for example, transport), is hardly ever a simple substitution of the virtual for the real. It’s subtler than that. IT will reach more people in new ways to tell them about informal events. It will make security around events easier, and the entertainment itself more varied and surprising. And, as with today’s exhibitions, data collected through IT will help event organisers reach people after the show is over, and helping those people derive more pleasure from it.

Already *social media help popularise events before they occur*. Thus, in the future, events can expect more use of software-enabled wristbands, and – within certain limits – of airport-style baggage checks, biometrics (including face recognition) and drone surveillance. Hopefully, too, the slow rise of fifth-generation mobile networks, or 5G, will allow incidents to be reported to the authorities, and alerts to signaled to audiences, more effectively.

In *stage performance*, the use of screens, lighting and lasers will obviously be the subject of continuing innovation. What, however, might turn out to be more significant to live acts as we move toward 2030 is a recent advance in IT made by Japan. There, Chiba

university has now made a long-awaited hardware breakthrough: the projection of high-quality 3D holography as video, where computing powers with more than 10 frames per second and one trillion pixels per frame are required. We can expect animated holography to be a significant part of dozens of informal events by 2030.

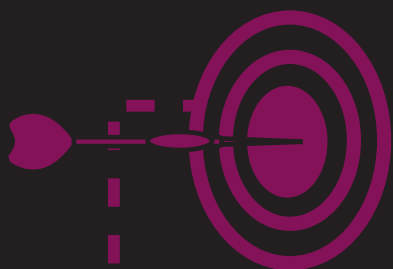
What about *after the show*? Already electronic proximity beacons track people’s individual movements from stage to stage – so that promoters can send them timed, personalised lists of all the acts they saw. More inventive IT-based methods of audience follow-up will no doubt emerge before long.

By 2030, IT will both complicate and enhance acoustics. More

A Chinese policewoman uses sunglasses with built-in facial recognition



BOX 2: HOW INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY HAS ALREADY CREATED NEW KINDS OF EVENTS

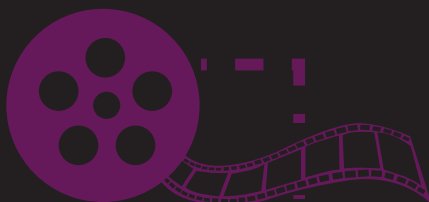


Social darts

Here tablets and clever dart-tracking technology are used to allow five kinds of darts games to be played by up to 400 players. Food and drink are part of the entertainment mix.

Event cinema

In event cinema, cinemas host the live streaming of theatre, opera, ballet or boxing events or the relaying of recorded performances. The UK boasts more than 20 active distributors of event cinema content, as well as its own Event Cinema Association.



Music festival bars: the top eight improvements attendees would like to see

Those related to IT in italics

- 1** *Free public Wi-Fi in the vicinity of the bar*
- 2** Discounts on group orders (six or more drinks)
- 3** *The ability to pay with your debit / credit card*
- 4** *Phone charging facilities*
- 5** *The ability to pay with funds loaded on to a wristband*
- 6** A wider selection of beers
- 7** A wider selection of cocktails
- 8** A wider selection of wines

Chart 20

Source: UK Festival Awards,

Market report 2017, 2018

old people at events will bring more hearing-aids. At the same time, people may well be wearing more 'earables' – ear-based wearable devices that have functionality beyond music. Last, the advent of voice-operated interfaces as the popular default means of controlling 'smart speakers' – and, most relevantly for events, of controlling mobile phones – may pose difficulties for event-goers.

These are problems and opportunities for the future. Right now, however, it is striking that **basic IT at informal events is weak**.

At the moment, better Wi-Fi, better ways of paying for things electronically and better phone charging are among the changes that those going to music festival bars would most like to see. Chart 20, above, shows that.

The point about using IT to simplify payments at informal events is obvious enough. In China, face recognition has been in use since 2017 to speed customer exits from KFC and 7-Eleven outlets. Meanwhile, Alibaba has developed a tablet-based camera and face recognition system to give retail SMEs the chance to offer their customers faster payment.

Whatever ambivalence Britain has about Chinese IT today, we're likely to see more of it around the informal events of 2030. At the same time, though, event organisers will need to develop both responsible defences against cyber-attack, and ways of reassuring event-goers that their data and their privacy are safe.

Chapter

seven

**Licensing:
get risks in
perspective,
up everyone's
game**

1. THE LICENSING PROCESS NEEDS TO BECOME MUCH LESS BUREAUCRATIC

To sell alcohol or provide live and/or recorded music to more than 500 people after 11pm, one must get a Premises Licence and, in the case of alcohol, appoint and gain the formal written consent of a Designated Premises Supervisor (DPS) to act as the key person responsible for the day to day management of the premises.

Councils grant Premises Licences. While they're obliged to publish a Statement of Licensing Policy every five years, so as to anticipate issues and guide licensing decisions, such decisions are also shaped by the written representations of other statutory responsible authorities (principally the police and Environmental Health) or of the public, and by the adjudication made by the council's licensing sub-committee.

To the uninitiated, the legally-required Premises Licence Application (PLA) forms that event organisers fill out to meet the requirements of the Licensing Act 2003 (Premises licences and club premises certificates) Regulations 2005 – these look daunting. At first sight, they would seem to make getting a licence to hold a festival or a club night, and to be supplied with and retail alcohol there, nearly impossible. The whole forms document, complete with a long series of long prefatory clauses, consists of 132 pages, 42 parts, 13 Schedules and well over 4000 words. An Explanatory Note adds another 800 words; an Explanatory Memorandum on the purpose of the Act, 'accessible to readers who are not legally qualified', adds a further 18,000. The 2003 Act itself? It runs to 75,000 words.

With the PLA, those applying for a licence must submit: written steps to be taken to promote the four Objectives of the Act; detailed layout plans of the premises or site and perimeters (with campsites and car parks best included); a consent form signed by the DPS, and the right licensing fees.

Nevertheless, and – as Lou Reed used to put it – 'despite all the complications', thousands of licenses are issued each year. Indeed, the phrase 'licensed premises' covers not just buildings or shops for which

BOX 3: THE FUTURE EVOLUTION OF LICENSING FEES

Sixteen years on from the 2003 Licensing Act, licensing fees may change before too long. As the House of Lords Select Committee on the Act observed in 2017, the costs of administering it vary from place to place, and between local authorities. Sooner or later, therefore, licensing fee levels may become a matter for local licensing authorities, and stop being set as a national, one-size-fits-all thing.

Second, the influential Local Government Association wants fees changed. For while the LGA favours the localisation of licensing fees, it also wants that complemented by

a reasonable increase in licensing fees nationwide. Its logic: although the current process of licensing is meant to pay for itself, that doesn't always happen. On many occasions, local authorities find that licensing fees don't fully cover the time spent handling a license, or the costs incurred.

To this White Paper, modestly higher licensing fees seem like a reasonable price for organisers of informal events to pay, if that will help make councils come to regard informal events with greater goodwill.

“Councils know that festivals provide a host of economic benefits; they create new jobs and attract new visitors to local towns and cities. In turn, these things support the growth of local businesses.

“But there are other benefits to be had, too. Creating vibrant events and experiences in town centre locations can also boost wellbeing, improve mental health and help tackle social isolation.

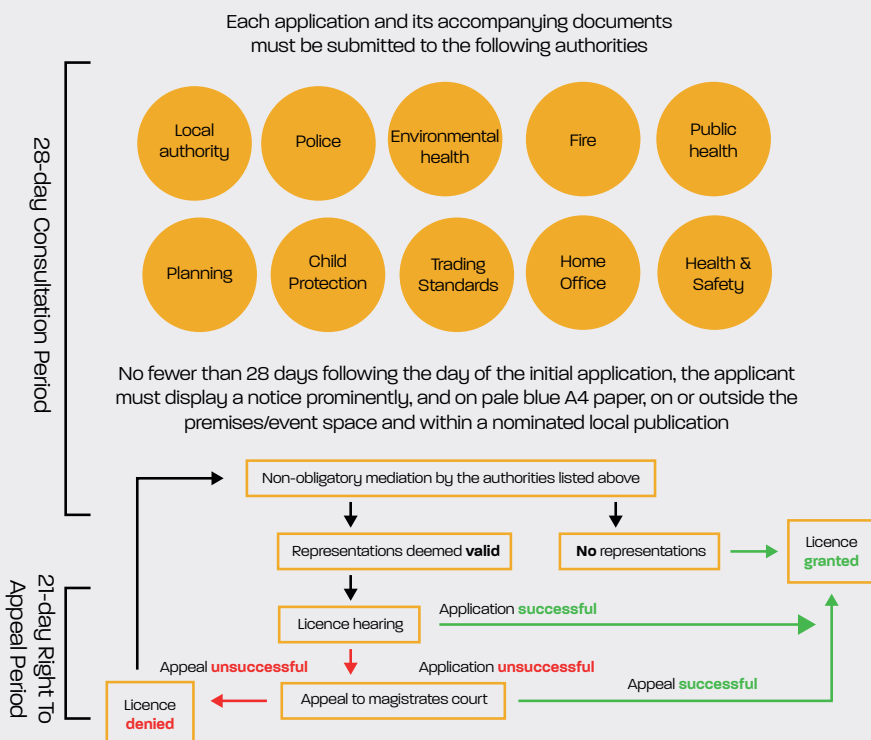
“Of course, councils have to make sure that the benefits that festivals can bring are balanced with the needs of their communities, and with keeping residents safe. That’s a responsibility they share with festival organisers. Still, councils can and do offer advice and support to organisers, so as to ensure that events are conducted safely – and for the most part, this works really well.”



Chair of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board at the Local Government Association, on the benefits of festivals – and of collaboration around licensing

Cllr Simon Blackburn

BOX 4: OVERVIEW OF THE PARTIES AND PROCESSES THAT SURROUND THE SUBMISSION OF A PREMISES LICENCE APPLICATION



the licensing authorities have issued a licence to conduct business, but other areas, too – parks, fields, courtyards, castles: the very locations where the explosion of outdoor festivals has taken place.

The diagram gives only a hint of the slowness of the licensing process in practice. **Despite some recent improvements, event organisers can still wait six months for a hearing. Appeals to Magistrates' Courts also take an inordinate amount of time – for everyone.** There undoubtedly needs to be further discussion, among all parties to the licensing process, on how best to expedite the authorisation of events.

Indoors or outdoors, one point holds good. As with all regulation, the issue with Premises Licences is not simply that there is 'too much' or 'too little' regulation around them. The issue, rather, is getting regulations appropriate and clear, as well as backing them up with formal good practice and education.

This White Paper fully backs the democratic right of residents, through locally elected councillors, to object to and even halt events. At the same time, the decision whether or not to allow an event to get a licence should be made by taking all factors into account, and pursuing a rounded evaluation of each factor and its interaction with others. That, after all, is what the law insists upon.

“Local authority decision-makers have to arbitrate between different interests when looking at an application – whether for licensing or planning. Applicants seek to change the status quo somehow, whether it’s a Christmas market or a rock festival. But the only representations about events that Councillors are likely to see are the negative, doubtful ones. If they have concerns about these, the Police, Environmental Health officers or local residents are highly likely to write in to the Licensing Authority. To Councillors, then, it can look like there’s a mountain of resistance to the event in question. Yet there may be significantly more people – a silent majority – who enthusiastically support the proposed event, but would not be minded to write in to the local authority to say so.

“Often, Councillors proceed on the basis that the majority of their constituents oppose the application – something that can be a very skewed conclusion. They’re unlikely to provide the balance themselves, which is what they ought to do.

“In 2011, Lord Justice Toulson underlined how the licensing decision-maker must consider all the competing factors, including if there’s a demand for the event, if it will boost the local economy and draw in visitors and so on. Unfortunately, all too often, the perspective of the Committee will be excessively myopic, and focused exclusively on the potential negative impacts, which may or may not come

about in reality. If the proper balancing exercise can be conducted, measuring potential negative outcomes against potential positive ones, then a more reasonable decision could be reached. Yes, local residents oppose many applications for premises, such as those for local shops, service stations, supermarkets, music venues and so on, because they’re fearful of the trouble that could result. Yet though residents, like the responsible authorities, can call for a Review if those fears come to pass, that power is very seldom used. Once the licence is established, the reality is mostly that the power need not be wielded, and that fears were unfounded.

“In the future, licensing decision-makers need to have a more open mind toward applications, especially for short-term, temporary events. They need to apply a holistic approach to all the potential detriments and benefits of grant, as the Court of Appeal clearly requires them to do.”



Barrister, Kings Chambers, on the need to see the bigger picture in licensing

Sarah Clover

“Licensing decisions often involve weighing a variety of competing considerations: the demand for licensed establishments, the economic benefit to the proprietor and to the locality by drawing in visitors and stimulating the demand, the effect on law and order, the impact on the lives of those who live and work in the vicinity, and so on. Sometimes a licensing decision may involve narrower questions, such as whether noise, noxious smells or litter

coming from premises amount to a public nuisance. Although such questions are in a sense questions of fact, they are not questions of the ‘heads or tails’ variety. They involve an evaluation of what is... reasonably acceptable in the particular location. In any case, deciding what (if any) conditions should be attached to a licence as necessary and proportionate to the promotion of the statutory licensing Objectives is essentially a matter of judgment rather than a matter of pure fact.”



In the Court of Appeal case of Hope and Glory Public House Ltd, 26 January 2011

*On the need to weigh up conflicting pressures
– and make a judgment call on each*

The late Lord Justice Toulson

2. STARTING OUT RIGHT: THE FOUR OBJECTIVES OF THE 2003 LICENSING ACT

It's vital for event organisers to grasp the Objectives of the Act. As discussed at length in the Home Office's *Revised Guidance* to the 2003 Act, the Objectives are as follows:

1. **Prevention of crime and disorder**, where the police form the main source of advice but the local Community Safety Partnership (CSP) should also be involved. Apart from preventing illegal working, this Objective means working with the Security Industry Authority to ensure that door supervisors are properly licensed, and that security firms are bona fide. It often means CCTV inside and immediately outside the premises, to deter disorder, nuisance, anti-social behaviour and crime generally, plus radio links and ring-round phone systems so as to gain a rapid police response in an emergency.

2. **Safety**. This covers all performers, and deals with immediate harms to audiences such as accidents, injuries, unconsciousness or alcohol poisoning. The 2003 Act does not cover hygiene, but the *Revised Guidance* does mention 'appropriate and frequent waste disposal, particularly of glass bottles'. Issues include:

1. *Fire safety*, not least in relation to the permitted capacity of the premises as recommended by the relevant fire and rescue authority
2. *Access for the emergency services*; presence of trained first aiders and kit
3. *Safety of people on departure* – adequate outside lighting, lights on paths to and from premises and in car parks; proper information on late-night transport
4. *Safety of equipment*. Licensing authorities may make it a condition that regular checks of equipment are made and evidenced, or that equipment must maintain particular standards to be maintained on the premises
5. *New safe capacities* issued by local authorities if no legal limit has been imposed by other legislation, and if, for example, overcrowding might lead to disorder.

3. **Prevention of public nuisance**. This is about avoiding noise and light pollution, 'noxious smells', litter and any bad effects to health from dust, insects or other factors; generally, it is about avoiding a deterioration in the amenity value and environment for people living and working in the area. The main issue under this objective is the prevention of noise, both from music and from customers.

4. **Protection of children from moral, psychological and physical harm**. Event organisers are expected to set out how they will prevent sales of alcohol to children, as well as wider harms, such as exposure to strong language, sexual expletives or sexual exploitation. Restricted, too, are child access to certain films, or to adult entertainment (the latter, the Home Office helpfully explains, 'would broadly include topless bar staff, striptease, lap-, table- or pole-dancing, performances involving feigned violence or horrific incidents, feigned or actual sexual acts or fetishism, or entertainment involving strong and

offensive language'). In the case of plays specifically for children, there must be enough adult staff present. Counting against an event organiser are knowledge of children gaining access unaccompanied, or of a premises' association with drugs; the fact that his or her premises are used primarily for the sale and consumption of alcohol; or evidence, such as ambulance or A&E data, that links the premises with harms. Advertising events at times when children at nearby schools and youth clubs are likely to be close to the premises is also something to be considered.

BOX 5: TOWARD 2030 – SOME KEY LICENSING ISSUES

1. A tougher legal crackdown on illegal working, particularly in relation to immigration. This could present problems both for employers and employees
2. A growth in the use, at events, of CCTV, and in particular its migration to cloud-based IT, with which the excuse 'the tape didn't come out' will be less and less acceptable
3. After the Grenfell disaster of 2017, a tougher attitude to fire safety and access by the emergency services
4. More complaints about noise, given an ageing population for whom event noise may make hearing other sounds – conversation, for example – harder
5. Greater media and other concern about litter, plastics and waste
6. Public health objectives possibly being embedded 'more robustly in alcohol policies', or possibly being given formal status as a fifth licensing Objective
7. More partisan debate about the night-time economy, involving planners, alcohol charities and alcohol lobbyists
8. The use of Wi-Fi outside premises, particularly by underage girls who might be sexually exploited – online and offline.

The above summary of some of the main points around the Objectives of the Licensing Act does not at all pretend to be exhaustive. But two things are clear from it.

First, for organisers of events, and particularly of informal events, the formal complexity of the law makes early partnership with the relevant authorities essential. The vital thing with licences is to start out right: to get round a table with the relevant authorities sooner, rather than later. This matters also in relation to council-coordinated Safety Advisory Groups (SAGs) – indeed, if the application is for an event or festival, the local authority will often want it referred to a SAG six or 12 months before the event or festival takes place, and perhaps for a longer period. With SAGs, last-minute applications tend to be met not with sympathetic support, but with especially vigorous enforcement. By contrast, early applications build confidence among those looking at them, and invite fewer added conditions, guarantees or time restrictions (for example, the licence to last for a three-year term but be subject to annual review).

Second, a glance just at this summary of licensing Objectives suggests that certain issues will likely grow in terms of significance and, perhaps, controversy. Box 5, on the left, is drawn from the summary, but goes further than it.

3. PERCEPTIONS AND REALITIES AROUND EVENT RISKS AND BENEFITS

Informal events are growing. Their regulation is complicated and involves important sensitivities – sensitivities which are likely to increase. So it's important to

calibrate the risks around each event very accurately, and to get them in perspective.

Even the most enlightened and experienced local authorities and event organisers don't always fully grasp the implications of putting on a particular event and how to beat risk. However, it is also easy for the media, in particular, to focus on sensational risks, rather than the real ones. Last, it's easy to get the impact of a genuine risk actually being realised out of proportion with that risk's likely prevalence.

The actual prevalence of realised risks is crucial. Rules for events cannot be organised around a vanishingly small proportion of actual incidents. Anyone can be run over by a car, but few propose to end driving as a result. It's vital not to rush to glib recommendations, but instead scrutinise the character and exact number of the incidents that happen. Only that is truly conscientious; only that can begin to inform a proper and combined response – not just operationally, but also in terms of training – from event organisers, the police, ambulance staff and those in charge of pastoral care.

So have the more liberal provisions of the 2003 Act – ending set closing times, and granting local authorities control over premises licensing – had the effect of allowing levels of violence to rise? A [short but systematic review of hospital and police studies in England and Wales](#), based on major biomedical databases and conducted by Cambridge health specialists Caitriona Callan and Adrian Boyle, looked at 15 studies.

Though the quality of evidence in the studies was poor, they were revealing. Three found increased rates of violence after implementation of the Act, five found no significant change and seven found a decrease. Among nine papers that concerned the distribution of violent incidents by time, no fewer than eight said that such incidents had been pushed into the early hours of the morning – a significant trend, and one which event organisers and everyone around the licensing process must certainly address. But the authors insist that **'there is no evidence for the Act having a significant or consistent effect on community violence rates, either in emergency departments or policing'**.

The Cambridge review was about the general impact of the Act, and not specifically about its consequences for violence around informal events. But let's stand back from clubs, festivals and events for a moment.

When crime and violence occur around shopping centres, transport routes and nodes, or a prison, nobody demands that these facilities be closed down. Society takes the view that the real and wholly regrettable damage caused by crime and violence at these facilities is mitigated by the long-term merit of continuing to operate them.

Britain needs that approach in dealing with informal events.

“Licensing authorities need to remember that the public loves coming together for a live experience to listen, dance and make new friends. The world often knows itself through its music, events and culture!”



DJ, promoter and radio presenter, on the joy of informal events

Norman Jay MBE

“Cities and regions overlook the social, cultural and economic benefits of events at their peril. Forward-thinking administrations know that popular, thoughtful, well-managed events can underline the values of a community, build social cohesion, attract investment, set the tone for regeneration and form a statement of the community’s aspirations.

“It’s only to be expected that a mass of people in an urban space leads to more crime than a family picnic in a field. So it is wrong-headed to prevent events or, equally sad, overload them with restrictions so burdensome that they deter them

altogether. Events are short-lived, and bring a host of benefits to the community: more often than not, their temporary impacts should be tolerated as a fair price to pay.

“There’s no more a reason to stop an event because of feared crime and disorder than there is to stop the building of a new housing estate because it might attract burglaries. In each case, the issues are simply what steps are reasonable to prevent the feared impact, and by whom the costs should be borne.”



Head of Cornerstone Barristers, on reasons to back events

Philip Kolvin QC

Monthly number of reported crimes, England and Wales, by type relevant to outdoor events, 2014-18.
Grey tints indicate each May-October season

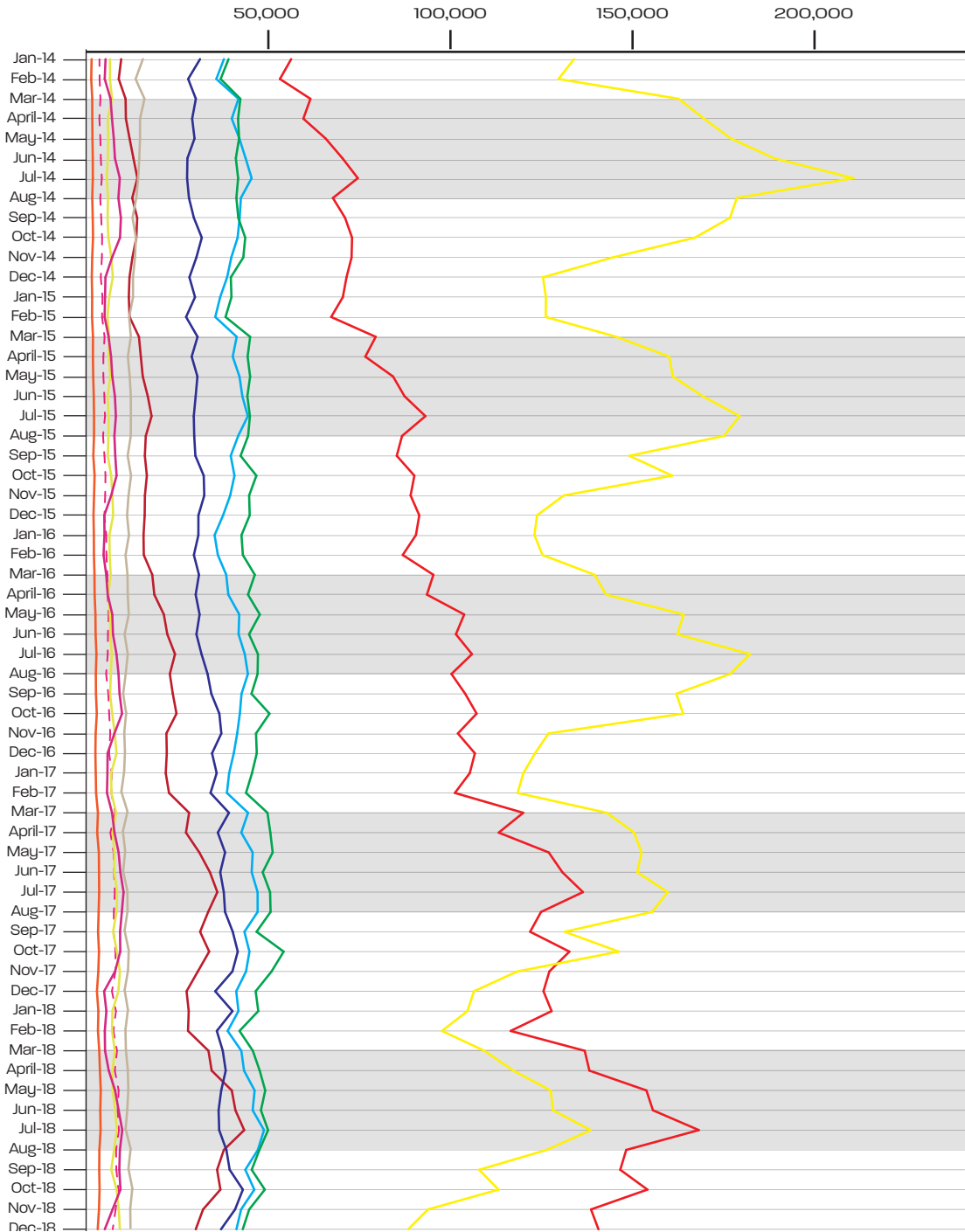
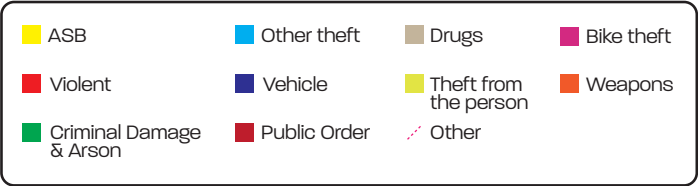


Chart 21

Source: Home Office
data, derived from
data.police.uk using
[UK Crime Stats](#)

Sadly, in recent times, various parts of the country have seen a palpable rise in knife crime and gang violence among youth, as well as violence on the part of those who have problems to do with mental health. London in particular has suffered a major increase in the murder rate.

Each of these developments has had devastating consequences, and, put together, the trends represent an ill wind. But how much are they really to do with informal events? **In Britain, general forebodings about the future have grown. So, however much they are justified or keenly felt, these forebodings can all too easily morph into visceral apprehensions about events in the present.**

4. CRIME STATISTICS: HANDLE WITH CARE!

Informal events, particularly those around musical sub-genres like grime, dubstep and drill, have had plenty of bad publicity. Yet while some legitimate worries surround crimes and misdemeanours at such events, there's also a need to delve carefully into wider statistics about crime in the UK – both at national and at local level. That way we can begin to establish the real salience of event-related crime.

First, in Chart 21 on the facing page, we present data on the monthly number of *recorded* crimes for England and Wales between the start of 2014 and the end of 2018. In each year, Chart 21 tints in grey a five-month interlude lasting from May to October – the months in which most informal events take place.

We have excluded burglary, robbery and shoplifting from the chart, because these crimes are not directly related to outdoor informal events. Still, to give an unvarnished picture of informal events, we *have* included: anti-social behaviour (ASB), violent crime, criminal damage and arson, 'other theft', vehicle crime, public order offences, drug offences, theft from the person, 'other' crime, bike theft, and weapons offences.

Well: Chart 21 shows that, between 2014 and 2018, several categories of recorded crime showed only modest changes in their incidence. In the case of ASB, the overall trend was sharply downward, and incidents involving drugs also showed a decline. However, especially with violence, public order, theft from the person, 'other' crime and weapons offences, the plots show that incidents have risen.

Overlaid on that picture, a certain acceleration in the monthly number of recorded crime does appear to take place in the May–October period. With ASB, violence, 'other theft' and public order offences, peaks tend to be reached around July. By contrast, with criminal damage and arson, as well as vehicular crime, the key month seems to be October.

So how much of this seasonal effect, which is appreciable but not enormous, is the fault of outdoor informal events? Perhaps a little – although a well-managed informal event gets police out in the

public view, making opportunist crimes less attractive to those who perpetrate them.

Overall, **the evidence suggesting that the informal events season really raises the level of crime is sketchy at best.**

First, there is more life outdoors in summer, and days are longer then. That presents more opportunities for crime – not just at informal events, but in general. The salience of July in the statistics lends credence this point, just as, for criminal damage and arson, the salience of October may say something about more of these deeds being done under cover of darkness.

Second, we need to remember once again that we are here discussing *recorded crime*. The overall rising trends shown in Chart 21 may relate not just to a rising incidence of crime, but also to a growing proclivity, not just on the part of the public to report it, but also on the part of the police to record it. The rise of easy-to-use online methods of reporting and recording may also be a factor here.

Third, precisely what constitutes a crime, both in the public mind and in law, changes over time. The overall decline in ASB is striking, and could well reflect changing attitudes to the category. On the other hand, how do we explain the perceptible rise in public order offences? We might be baffled, given the relative absence of serious riots, strikes and other disturbances in the past five years, at that rise; but we do need to recall that sections 4 and 5 of the Public Order Act concern not just the perpetrator's intent to cause fear and provocation, but also the victim's feelings of alarm and distress. Once we recall that, it's clear that a growing public willingness and IT-assisted ability to make reports of offensive behaviour, hate crimes and abuse have probably brought about much of the rise in recorded public order offences.

Last, we need to do the maths around what's happening with outdoor informal events on the ground. Chart 1 in this White Paper highlighted Britain's tendency to hold a growing number of festivals. Attendee numbers at today's festivals are also bigger than ever. Therefore to trace a link between outdoor informal events and rising levels of crime, one must also factor in a widening popularity for those events, making the actual incidence of crime per head at them a more modest, if still regrettable, phenomenon.

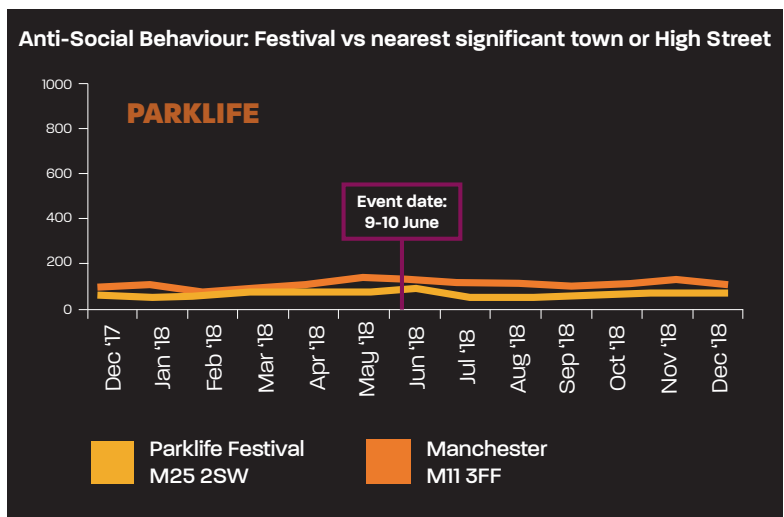
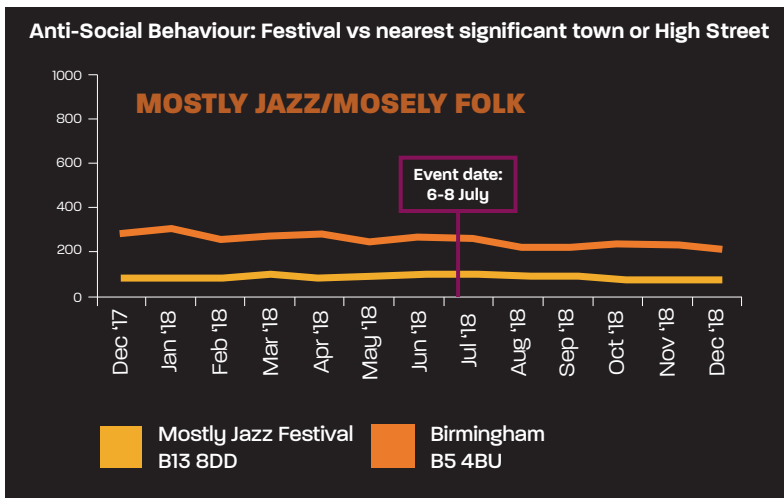
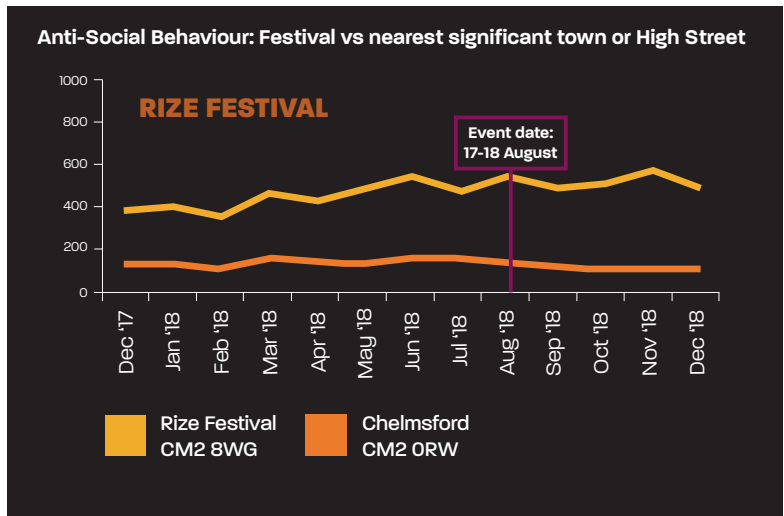
In sum, it's impossible to strip out a distinctive 'festival effect' operating to increase crime in England and Wales. This applies both to general trends in different kinds of crime, and to the seasonal effect. There is simply too much white noise around the data for anyone to quantify the precise impact of outdoor informal events upon crime. **In England and Wales between 2014 and 2018, specific types of recorded crime curved upward, and especially between May and July. But that pattern can barely be correlated with festivals, let alone be said to have been caused by them.**

To investigate further, we now examine a fairly arbitrary selection of six informal outdoor festivals held in England in 2018. We compare the recorded incidence of ASB occurring (1) within a quarter-mile radius of the postcode in which each event are held, with (2) that

Charts 22–24

Source: Home Office data, derived from data.police.uk using ukcrimestats.com

7. Licensing: get risks in perspective, up everyone's game



occurring within a quarter-mile radius the town or High Street nearest to each. Again we use data from the Home Office, sourced from data.police.uk using ukcrimestats.com. Charts 22 to 27 record the profile of crimes over the whole of 2018, as well as the particular month in which each festival took place.

On the face of it, RIZE Festival, Chelmsford, which was held in August 2018, was a musical event that could be associated with some of the 100 extra recorded incidents of ASB for the whole of that month. Yet if we look at the district of Chelmsford where V Festival is held, it is anyway, year-round, much more exercised by ASB than the local High Street. So the impetus that ASB received in August 2018 was probably as much to do with time and place as it was to do with RIZE.

Mostly Jazz/Mosely Folk, held in Birmingham in July, made no impression on figures for recorded instances of ASB.

For Parklife, Manchester, held in August, the postcode at which the music festival was held boasted an even lower recorded incidence of ASB than the nearest High Street. In August, the recorded incidence of ASB in the festival district was actually at rock-bottom levels.

The Bournemouth 7s, held in May, is another informal outdoor event focused on both sport and wider entertainments. Like Parklife, it was bothered by virtually no recorded instances of ASB in 2018.

British Summer Time, Hyde Park, London, held in July, is a music event that appears to have had no impact on recorded ASB. Throughout 2018, Marble Arch was more prone to that than BST.

Field Day, Clapham, London, held in June 2018, did seem to approach the recorded incidence of ASB occurring in the nearest High Street during that month, but the inflexion was modest.

Altogether, these charts make only a very weak argument, if that, for the idea that outdoor informal events have a discernibly negative effect on local rates of ASB.

Of course, people at informal events aren't all angels, and one cannot be starry-eyed about them. It is true that alcohol, like illegal drugs, is psychoactive – even if served in a Church. As such, alcohol may increase risks. This White Paper therefore fully supports, for example, a tough line against under-age drinking: what applies to pubs must apply equally to clubs and other events.

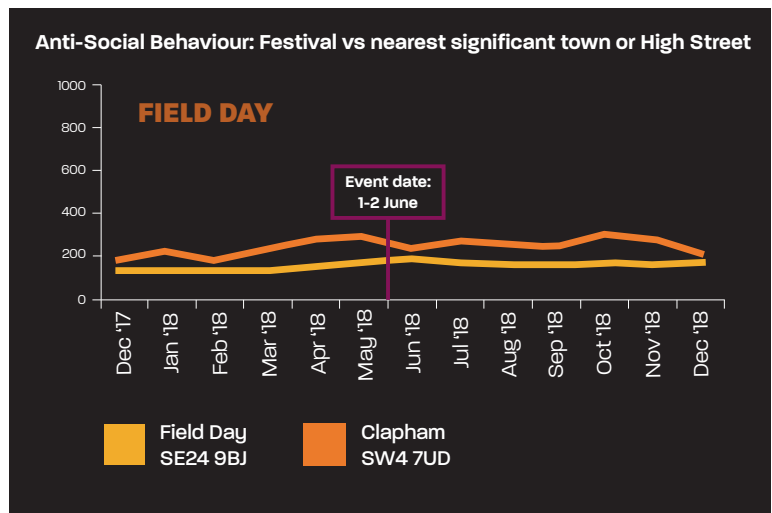
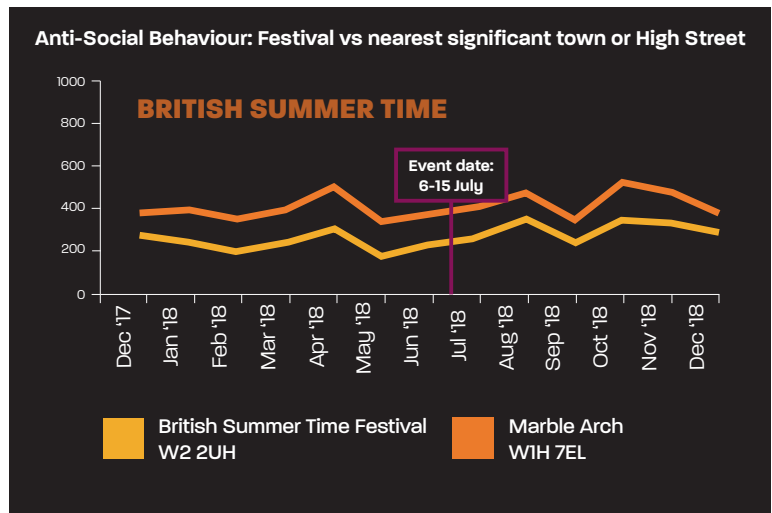
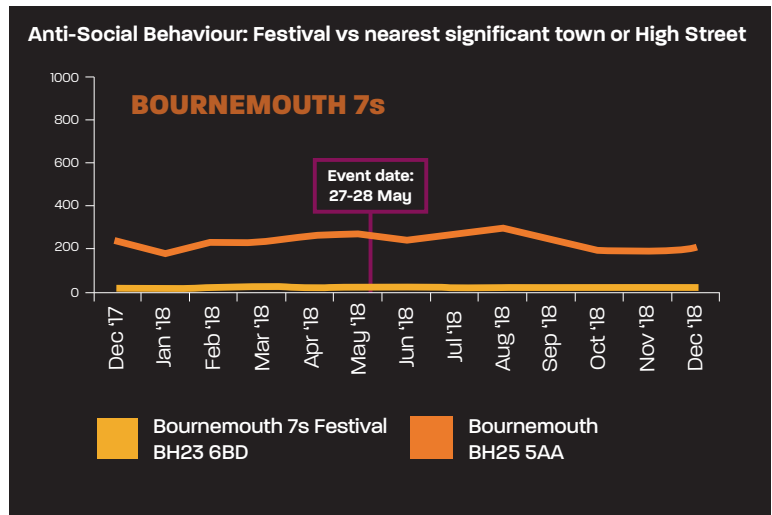
Despite the very real tragedy that crimes at events can very occasionally end in, however, it's still vital to avoid sensationalism and instead keep a cool head – especially when attributing individual crimes to very large social trends.

With every incident at an event, root cause analysis is certainly essential. What time of day or night did it take place? How many people attended? Did the event organiser fail to plan ahead? If new to events, did the organiser think to ask more experienced colleagues about what might go wrong – with pickpockets, or thefts of mobiles? If the event looked like being big business, might it not also attract big crime? Above all, when real harms began to loom, did the organiser fail to intervene, given that intervention is required by the four Objectives of the Licensing Act?

Charts 25–27

Source: Home Office data, derived from data.police.uk using ukcrimestats.com

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Yes, to pursue a sober, searching and ruthless root cause analysis after each particular event incident is essential. However, such an exercise is very different from applying superficial sociology to event crime in general – and very different, too, from brandishing crime statistics in cavalier style.

5. ALCOHOL, DRUGS – AND GANGS

Historically, much prejudice has been mixed into the whirlpool of British public opinion on alcohol. Once, it was felt that the changed character of the workplace, in which workers had come to enjoy less supervision and fewer disciplinary measures from employers than before, made them ‘more constantly open to the temptations’ of pubs (Philip Snowden MP, *Socialism and the drink question*, Independent Labour Party, 1908, p66). **In 2030, might a continued decline of deference and a continued rise of social media make young people more constantly open to the temptations of getting drunk or stoned at clubs and music festivals?**

The evidence hardly supports such a sweeping hypothesis. Going beyond drink at clubs and festivals for a moment, take alcohol and crime in [London at night](#). There, it's true that *alcohol-related* recorded offences run at about 4.3 per cent of recorded offences at night, against only 2.5 per cent during the day. Worse: at night, half or more of those kinds of offences are violent. Yet for *general* recorded crime in London, the proportion that is violent at night is the same between 6pm and 6am as it is in the day. In fact, only 43 per cent of recorded violent crimes in London happen at night, against 57 per cent during the day. Indeed as Chart 28 shows, **in London between 2010/11 and 2017/18, alcohol-related recorded offences fell by 51 per cent, from just under 30,000 to about 14,400.**

That kind of decline shows the need for a sense of perspective when considering events and alcohol. But right away, it must also be noted that ‘**alcohol-related crime**’ is not a legal category. As a catch-all phrase, it can cover every different kind of case in which alcohol is alleged to have been involved: it doesn't have the legal status of, say, hate crime, but is certainly as amorphous, emotive and debatable as that category.

For example, some authorities have it that alcohol ‘increases vulnerability and leaves young people at serious risk of becoming either a victim or a perpetrator of crime’. But what, exactly, is vulnerability? Just how many event-goers are really vulnerable, and just how much does vulnerability increase with alcohol? If the Licensing Act rightly demands, of event organisers, stewardship of alcohol use, common sense also tells us that personal character and experience with alcohol in the past are key factors affecting conduct with drink. And didn't the 2012 Olympics remind us that most event-goers, British or foreign, are pretty decent people most of the time?

In its latest report on [adult drinking](#), the ONS [suggests](#) that, on their most alcoholic day of the week, more young men exceed eight units of alcohol than do older men, just as more young women go

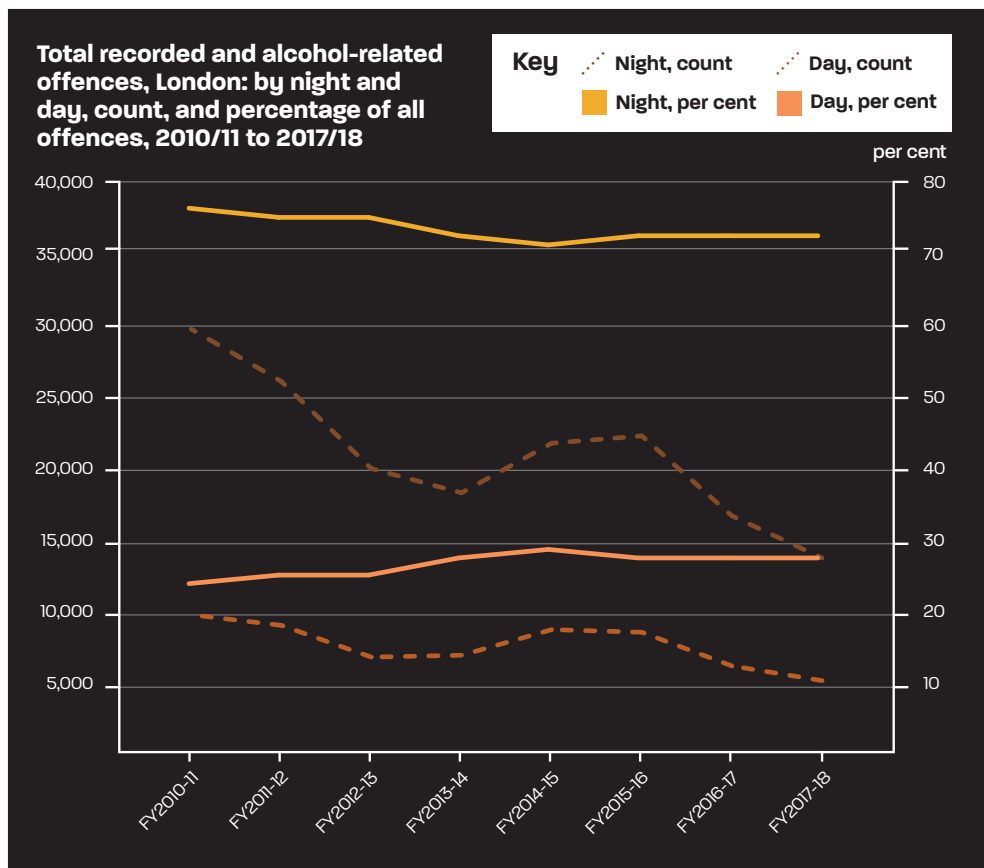


Chart 28

Source: GLA Economics, [London at night: an evidence base for a 24-hour city](#), November 2018, using Metropolitan Police data

over six units than do older women. But the ONS also suggests that the proportion of British 16-24 year-olds who say they *don't drink at all*, which stood at 19.0 per cent in 2005, *rose* to 22.8 per cent by 2017.

This kind of evidence confirms that, **in events as elsewhere, there's an urgent need to take a balanced view of young people and alcohol.**

Earlier, we argued that a future recession might cheapen the market for events as much as broaden it. Similarly, if alcohol consumption among British youth continues to fall, there could be a race to the bottom in the informal events business. The spread of teetotal habits among event-conscious young people might send unscrupulous event organisers, worried about declining drink sales, to cheapen prices and turn a blind eye to young, too boozy men and women.

That's certainly possible. But is it inevitable? Will events professionals everywhere, with all their experience and ingenuity, only be able to prevent mass drunkenness through draconian measures and laws? Might not abstinence from drink turn out, in 2030, to characterise perhaps 25 or even 30 per cent of British 16-24 year-olds – making conduct at informal events actually *easier* to handle than it is now?

“Licensing should focus not just on the detriment that events occasionally cause, but also on the greater social good they nearly always create.

“Town and city-centre schemes such as Glasgow’s NiteZones, which are well-lit and always watched by CCTV, have benefited not just local residents and communities, but also those businesses which operate in the leisure sector and provide so

much by way of jobs and social opportunity.

“One of the key ways to buoy up our late-night economies is to ensure that there is sensible partnership, communication and cooperation between regulatory bodies, the licensing authorities and the trade.”



***Partner and head of licensing (Scotland),
TLT Solicitors, on the merits of partnership***

Stephen McGowan

Alcohol is a lucrative business which also generates revenue for Her Majesty's Treasury. Illegal drugs are lucrative, not least because no tax is paid on them. But with both alcohol and drugs, the right future for informal events lies not in media-friendly acts of direct repression, but in that more difficult thing, applying the law both firmly and fairly.

It is also why the right future around drugs at events lies in organisations such as [The Loop](#).

The Loop is a not-for-profit community interest company which tests the safety of drugs available at events and conveys its findings to emergency services, event staff on site, and the wider public – through on-site signage and social media. At events, The Loop also gives event-goers advice on reducing the harms associated with drugs and alcohol, and works with paramedics and security staff to help those in distress after taking drugs. Last, The Loop offers training courses, both general and bespoke, for events staff.

The Loop, and organisations such as [Festival Safe](#), are not the only way to go, but they are inspiring examples of what can and must be done. For as festival attendees rise in the years toward 2030, the risks to public safety from drug abuse will rise too. Already, 2018 saw two high-profile deaths at – and more than a dozen people taken to hospital from – the Mutiny Festival, Portsmouth, causing the event to be cancelled.

Again, however, a sense of proportion here is vital. To repeat: about 2850 music festivals will be held in 2019. If we take, once again, the average attendance per festival as being about 10,000 people or more, then we can suppose that, sooner or later, 30 million visits will be made to UK music festivals each year.

Now suppose that, in the course of a year, a dreadful six deaths occur at these kind of informal events.

Quite obviously, that would be a tragic six deaths too many. But such a horrendous toll would still amount to a fatality rate of one per five million visits. It would be ridiculous to generalise, from such a statistic, that 'music festivals lead to lethal drug overdoses'.

In considering how risky music festivals are in terms of dangerous drug abuse, we need also to factor in the price, strength and variety of drugs available. As this century started, the average amount of MDMA, the active ingredient in the drug Ecstasy, was 50–80mg per pill. Today, for a slightly lower price, Ecstasy pills in Europe contain an average of about 125mg, with super-strength pills holding more than 270mg. Meanwhile, the variety of synthetic drugs mimicking traditional substances has also soared. As early as 2015, the number of substances tracked by the [European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction](#) passed 450.

Music festivals cannot be held responsible for the fact that drugs have grown cheaper, stronger and more varied over time. The truth is that, because of the growing professionalisation of informal events, the incidence of dangerous, life-threatening drug abuse remains and is likely to remain very small.

“I’ve always promoted partnership working – collaboration between everyone that’s involved in the licensing process. This is crucial with entertainment events in town and city centres.

“A cracking night-time economy is a key part of urban culture. Indeed, all live entertainment events, large or small, tend to breed talent, innovation and jobs – not least, in their effect on tourism and the whole visitor economy.

“Licensing is about how to enable creative activity and manage it in ways that are acceptable to local communities. To succeed in that, everyone around licensing needs to search, relentlessly, for joint solutions – and for solutions that are themselves creative.”



***Chair, Institute of Licensing, on
licencing as a creative activity***

Daniel Davies

Gangs at events also need thinking about – but in a sober manner. For a long time now, a tiny minority of musical artists has had to count a still tinier criminal element as being among their followers. Yet the police's National Intelligence and Operations Unit already exists to guard against developments such as this actually leading to trouble. For the planning of nearly all UK festivals and large-scale music events, the Unit contributes problem profiles, and acts as a clearing-house for intelligence. It has brought about significant cuts in crime and disorder at large events.

Britain needs rounded, concrete measures to protect people at informal events – measures based on research, foresight and insight. A rush to conclusions, and yet more impediments to the licensing process, won't cut it.

6. PARTNERSHIP AND THE PROFESSIONALISATION OF THE LICENSING PROCESS

Ever since the end of the Cold War (1989-91), there's been a trend toward partnership between large companies – toward joint ventures, strategic alliances, shared R&D. As early as 1989, the top US management gurus Gary Hamel, Yves Doz and CK Prahalad told US corporations: 'Collaborate with your competitors – and win'. That same year, in his airport self-help bestseller *The seven habits of highly effective people*, another management guru, Stephen Covey, devoted a whole chapter to his gospel of Win/Win.

Thirty years later, and particularly after the tensions that erupted, in 2018, over the Tokyo arrest of Carlos Ghosn and the alliance between car giants Renault and Nissan, it's wise to interrogate the frothier, more feelgood aspects of partnership.

With partnership around the licensing process, a breezy, 'spread the love' philosophy is unrealistic, and wrong. Around licensing, conflicting interests exist, and cannot be denied.

Yet there's also a new, very real development to consider. Even before the Brexit referendum of 2016, there emerged a widely noted lurch toward adversarial conduct and language in British public life: not only in social media, but in politics generally. Of course, in a democracy, a fierce clash of ideas, and the freedom to express them, are always healthy. But problems can surface if different sides of an argument are unprepared to listen to each other, and sometimes unprepared even to concede any legitimacy to views different from their own.

Between now and 2030, informal events can neither afford a revival of past, unnecessarily entrenched attitudes toward licensing, nor a collapse into the 'if you're not with us, you're against us' echo chambers that are coming to dominate discourse today. A cold eye toward partnership in the licensing process certainly makes sense; but so, too, does a grown-up and professional desire to make it work.

In a 2018 survey of senior councillors and officers in English local government, the Local Government Information Unit found that 79 per cent of its 111 respondents held that formal ways of partnership – what, since around the turn of this century, the government has termed partnership working – to be an essential means of supporting a successful night-time economy. Similarly, Britain's Institute of Licensing has an annual award that recognises the historical contribution, to licensing, made by partnership working.

“Those active on licensing in the police agree that collaborative working is the best way to achieve positive outcomes. The primary role of the police is to keep the public safe, but we do understand that businesses need to prosper from events. If the safety aspects are fulfilled and town centres make offerings that appeal to a wider demographic, that’s all good news.

“The not-so-very-secret point is for all parties and stakeholders to work together to mitigate any risk from the outset. Event organisers should be liaising with the police and the Local Authority at the earliest opportunity – before they commit to bookings. That way, they can ensure that any concerns are identified and dealt with at the outset.

“If things go wrong at an event, the task is to respond to any immediate risk and, afterward, both to establish it causes and consider appropriate remedial action. A formal Review of a licence is usually a last resort – although a fast-track Summary Review may be needed after a

serious incident, to allow the licensing authorities to think about what interim steps should be taken to mitigate risk.

“As the police, we have to be risk-aware. We seek to reduce the risk of harm to the public. At the same time, we are mindful that not all events are problematic, and that we need to consider each and every risk in the light of the best available information and intelligence.

“Licensing is all about checks and balances. Ultimately, compliance with the rules and regulations and working in partnership are the best ways both to keep the public safe, and to build successful businesses.”

*Chairman of the National Police Chiefs
Council Licensing Group, on the right kind
of licensing processes*

Ian Graham

Not only the spirit of partnership, but also the formalities of it are key. In the years to 2030, professionals around the licensing process need to redouble their efforts on both fronts. In the first place, event organisers – especially those new to the business – need a full and firm grasp of the full range of interests with which local authority event teams have to work in every phase of the licensing process.

These interests include not just councillors and residents, but also council officers charged with boosting inward investment. Under pressure to meet targets, local authority experts in economic development are often the first officials to be interested in a projected event; but they often find themselves in isolated local authority silos, and so possessed of little clout, in the licensing process, with councillors – let alone residents.

Event organisers need to know these facts of life, ally themselves with officers in economic development, and improve their arguments in this domain.

Second, event organisers need a better understanding of where the police are coming from, and the conditions they face.

The police face conflicting pressures, and that can make the process of agreeing a licence seem of lower priority than responding to hate crime, domestic abuse, burglaries, violent crime or the newly-noised possibility of civil unrest. Under financial pressure, too, recent improvements in the skills of police specialists around licensing could in future slow down – especially if their jobs are cut altogether. Event organisers need to know these things.

Third, councillors will need a firmer, fuller grasp of the licensing process – not least, through formal training. In 2017, in its [post-legislative scrutiny](#), the House of Lords Select Committee on the Licensing Act was pretty caustic about this:

*‘Our evidence shows that, while most members of licensing committees no doubt attempt to apply the law justly and fairly, too often standards fall short. **Many councillors have insufficient training; all should undertake compulsory training.** We were told of cases of clear inadequacies in fulfilling their functions, resulting in a haphazard decision-making process.’ (emphasis added)*

Fourth, police and council officers need a tighter grasp of the licensing process. Training will help here.

At present, the British Institute of Innkeeping’s Awarding Body, the BIIAB, does not currently deliver a licensing qualification for the police. However, its [BIIAB Level 2 Award for Licensing Practitioners \(Alcohol\) Handbook](#) offers just such a qualification for Local Authority licensing officers; and, back in 2016, Assistant Chief Constable Rachel Kearton, when giving [oral evidence to the Select Committee](#), told it that police forces should aspire for their licensing officers to meet that national standard of training.

Not just the police, but everyone involved in the licensing process needs to up their game. ‘There is’, Chief Superintendent Gavin Thomas also told the Select Committee, ‘a space or gap at the moment

“We moved our Eastern Electrics festival to Morden in 2017 (capped at 17,000 people). After some difficulties around the licensing process, we paid for a large police presence and there were no arrests. Since then we’ve expanded the event to two days and 20,000 attendees. Now, after further efforts, we have a very harmonious relationship with the police and all the other responsible authorities.”



Organiser of music festivals, on partnership – the need to persevere

Rob Star

in knowledge, education and standards around licensing, not only regarding police licensing officers but [also] around the licensing committee members'. In the same vein, about police training, the Select Committee itself concluded:

'A single day of non-compulsory national training per year, given to a limited number of attenders, on a national basis is clearly insufficient for a complex and nuanced area of policing, while an accreditation scheme is welcome but is unlikely to achieve its objectives unless the underlying programme of training on offer is improved and extended. The task of delivering this training should fall to the [Hendon] College of Policing, not to local forces.'

Around police and local authority officers, there's plenty of room for debate on what would be the best way to improve skills. For the police it could well include national accreditation. For environmental health officers and the like, an NVQ in licensing might be wise. And yes, the informal events sector needs to develop its own standard of training around licensing.

With better training, all sides in the event licensing process may come to understand each other more, and to agree fewer but better conditions on each licence. A genuine and concerted initiative among professionals here will also help residents. Residents are now often expert in making formal representation against events; but many are not so expert, when assessing any event's likely impact, in balancing up all the factors around it – something which is, as we have seen, required by the law.

Fifth and last: everyone around events licensing needs to work together, in partnership, for a reform of the 2003 Act and a much more coherent and consistent system of licences – one that clearly takes account of informal events, their benefits, and the need to help them through faster, smoother licensing processes.

In this light, the Act needs an overhaul for three reasons:

1. Across local authorities, inconsistencies in and widely differing interpretations of licensing exist, and can lead to lengthy and challenging licensing processes. Even just between different parts of London, there are big differences in the licensing process. In one borough, it's possible for an event organiser to submit, to the licensing authorities, a simple drawing of a red boundary around a site. But in another London borough, the same organiser can be required to issue full site plans, complete with details of each Temporary Demountable Structure (TDS) – and to do this a fair few months in advance of an event, which is something anyone would find difficult.

Interpretations of licensing vary enormously from place to place. It is possible for an event organiser to put together two very similar events, with very similar attendances, and find that one is subject to just 20 licence conditions, while the other has no fewer than 150.

2. The conditions attached to licences aren't always clear. Lack of clarity on license conditions leads to disputes. The example of noise illustrates this.

Geoff Ellis has been pivotal to promoting large-scale events in Glasgow. For many years, officialdom there took a vexatious approach towards clubs. Thankfully, that's all now begun to change



***How perseverance pays: Geoff Ellis,
CEO, DF Concerts & Events***

Geoff Ellis

As we've seen with noise pollution and at IT, acoustics are likely to become a major issue with informal events. Now today, many of London's parks, a maximum sound level of 75dB is deemed acceptable if it is linked to a Noise Management Plan as reviewed by the local SAG. But otherwise noise restrictions are often made only on a very subjective basis; and, when specially defined as a nuisance, noise can too simply be made into an onerous licensing condition.

3. It's too easy to game the system and increase resistance and delay to informal events. Legislation, as everyone knows, can have unintended consequences. Licensing is no exception to this rule. Different interests can manipulate it.

During their lengthy wait for a court hearing that can cost them a great deal in legal fees, some event organisers can behave like saints in their local community – only, sadly, to turn into anti-social sinners the moment the hearing decides to give them the go-ahead. Yet it is probably truer to say that it is ward councillors who are better at gaming the licensing system. Too often, some don't so much respond democratically to genuine local grievances as pander, in the hopes of re-election, to the prejudices of a few vociferous residents.

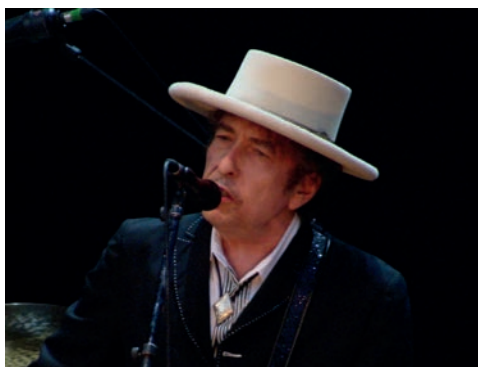
Events held annually also confirm the need for reform of the Licensing Act. With them, a time-limited Premises Licence, which permits an event to be held at the same spot each year, broadly obviates the need for repeating an application annually. However, informal events often have to endure extra conditions being imposed – conditions that can, in certain circumstances, require them to go through the whole licensing procedure all over again, each year.

Of course, most systems in life can be gamed. But as currently formulated, the 2003 Licensing Act too often allows event organisers to be done down by the recalcitrant. Reform is needed.

Reform of the Act is needed for another, still more important reason. **The right to free expression and the right to free assembly are, after all, the indivisible foundations of democracy. Yet in the years to 2030, these rights could well come under challenge, in part by official recourse to the more ambiguous, opaque and manipulable features of the Act.**

Every events professional and enthusiast should resist that challenge. Indeed, because the freedoms to express oneself and to assemble with other people are universal, everyone who has ever been to an event – in short, everyone – has a duty to uphold them.

Bob Dylan on...
not going through
all these things twice



*An' here I sit so patiently
Waiting to find out what price
You have to pay to get out of
Going through all these things twice*

Bob Dylan, *Stuck Inside of Mobile with the Memphis Blues Again*, 1966

Chapter eight

**Strategy for
tomorrow's
events**

In 2030 councils won't just respond quickly and sympathetically to applications for event licenses. Events will be too critical for that. Councils will have a whole and forward-looking policy on events.

In Glasgow, City Council Leader Susan Aitken has already done much here, opening her own talks with events leaders and fostering a climate in which the City of Glasgow Licensing Board has proposed a pilot scheme in which local nightclubs can stay open till 4am.

For councils, being proactive like this is the way ahead. Yet as Aitken observes, a *strategy* for events is also essential. **For when a council licenses and helps a particular event, it adopts a tactic. However, if they're to prepare properly for 2030, Britain's local authorities will now need a coherent strategy with regard to events, plural.**

Nowadays, of course, everyone in business claims to be 'strategic'; nobody boasts about being just tactical. Yet that skewed vision only underlines just how clear councils need to be, when thinking about events, about the difference between strategy and tactics.

For Clausewitz, the historic theorist of war, tactics were the use of force in a particular engagement; strategy, the use of engagements for the object of the war (*On war* [1832], Oxford University Press edition, 2007, p74). Of course, events aren't war – even if, very occasionally, licensing processes can be a bit warlike. Yet just as Clausewitz is still relevant to defence matters today, so councils can still learn from him.

Strategy is harder to theorise, and more testing of the will, than tactics. Moreover, *strategy involves the selection of engagements, and assigning an aim to each – all in the higher purpose of winning a longer-term goal.*

In this light, **the need is for councils to:**

- 1. Discriminate between different events, and help each event in content, organisation, technology and control**
- 2. Give that help in ways which contribute to wider objectives.**

What then should *event strategy* consist of? Each council differs from the next. However, **good event strategy shouldn't just cover the next electoral cycle, but rather the whole period till 2030.**

One starting point for event strategy lies in the World Bank's web pages on urban regeneration. The pages contain a World Bank decision tool for urban regeneration, and a brief guide on how, within that process, to draw up a master plan for any particular site.

Of course, regeneration around a single site isn't the same thing as a strategy for a series of events in different locations. Yet since the World Bank's master plans are meant to guide future growth and development and concern 'the connection between buildings, social settings, and their surrounding environments', local authority event strategy can properly begin from them – even if, obviously, it will need to adjust them to the world of events, as well as to local conditions.

From this start, in its event strategy for 2030, the progressive council will, first, tap the creativity of its citizens, and of all its departments – including that charged with economic development. It is in the nature of events to involve many considerations. Learning about all these, from every quarter, isn't a chore, but a chance to synthesise a compelling narrative around events.



Carl von Clausewitz (1780-1831). Though Clausewitz's *Vom Kriege* 'seemed outdated' to a young Bob Dylan, the older singer has since written of Clausewitz as a prophet, from whom one could 'understand a lot about conventional life and the pressures' (Dylan, *Chronicles, Volume One*, 2004, p45)

Second, local authorities will need to improve their forecasting of social and cultural trends – not just local ones, but national and international ones. They'll also need better intelligence on competitor events, as well as intelligence about how event technologies are likely to evolve.

Last, each local authority will have to learn how to knit its events strategy into the centre of its wider plans. Successful events are no longer nice to have; it's actually imperative that local authorities perfect their knowledge of how to help bring such successful events to fruition.

Between now and 2030, in what used to be the fairly quiescent realm of British politics, great events will undoubtedly take place. Whatever happens, local authorities must now make sure that, in their own way, entertainments in their area try to match the grandeur and the excitement of the upheavals to come.

In fact, the need is not just for councils, but also for event organisers and all levels of government to take events more seriously. Much will always be improvised in events; but better planning and more ambition on the part of organisers will surely improve them. So, too, in government and politics, would more readiness and backing for the achievements that events are likely to chalk up by 2030.

This White Paper has shown some of the creativity that already surrounds informal events in Britain. Our discussion of tourism and events, and of the impact of transport on them, suggests that support for events in these difficult areas is not just a local question, but of national importance. The same is true of the reforms needed to the Licensing Act 2003.

Yet if the tasks with Britain's events sector and the licensing around it need thinking about on a national scale, that also means that the potential payoff, for events in 2030, could be a great one.

We have shown that IT will likely play an even bigger role in festivals and indoor events than it does today. Advances in electricity generation, air quality, noise reduction and litter removal will also make informal events more efficient. **The opportunity, then, is for the informal events business not just to go on expanding the employment it offers, but also to raise its productivity – something that doesn't happen enough in the British economy today.**

Aided by ambition and new technologies, as well as by a more rounded licensing regime, informal events can join with formal ones to form a new, cohesive and unique wealth-making sector for Britain – events tourists into the UK, and events exports out of it, very much included. For 2030, British events could win worldwide acclaim for their creative, technological and social innovation.

That's a prize worth winning.

“Glasgow is internationally famed for its culture, for music, art and sport. We’ve become synonymous with hosting events – from upcoming bands cutting their teeth at small city clubs, through to international, multisport events with global audiences running into hundreds of millions.

*“We have a rich and varied events ecosystem. To support it, we’ve made landmark additions to the city. Since 2013, at our Scottish Event Campus, we’ve had the 12,000-seat **SSE Hydro**, which hosts music megastars as well as global entertainment and sporting events. But we’ve also backed iconic venues such as **Barrowlands**, a ballroom which takes nearly 2000 people, and **King Tuts**, a club with a world-beating record of live acts. In fact, live music alone is worth about £160m to Glasgow, whilst the Scottish Events Campus already generates £400m for us.*

“Our citywide NTE is worth more than £2bn and employs the equivalent of more than 16,000 full-time staff. So, taking a lead from some comparator

cities in the UK and Europe, and working in partnership with event industry leaders, the City Council recently established the Glasgow Night Time Economy Commission to advise on how our NTE should best develop in years to come.

“We’re clear that today’s events play a key role, every day and every night, in Glasgow’s future employment, tourism and general economic development. That’s why having a fully articulated strategy for events is nothing less than essential.”



The Leader of Glasgow City Council on the need to go out and make events happen

Susan Aitken

"In Bristol we know that events have had a lot to do with us emerging as one of the best European cities – not just to visit, but also to move to. Every year for the past three years, 4000 people have moved out of London to come to Bristol. They've moved, in part, because of the vibe, to celebrate their lives with their families. In that sense, events help build community.

"It's important to work with partners to develop events, especially whole-day events, to improve the fabric of the city. That means holding events in our parks and green spaces – the [Downs Festival](#), for instance – and holding other open-air events too: the [Bristol Harbour Festival](#), events in Queen's Square, the [St Paul's Carnival](#).

"In Bristol we've also raised the visibility of the NTE in our urban

master-planning. We've done that by working with UK Music to launch the [Bristol @ Night Advisory Panel](#), to ensure that changes to policy are not just put upon people in the NTE at the last moment, but thought about much earlier, when we're shaping Bristol's strategy for the future.

"Take clubs. So far, most have been located in old premises, in basements and the like. But how might we now design purpose-built clubs from scratch? If nights in Bristol are to continue to be inviting in our fast-changing city, we need to come up with imaginative answers to that question."



Cabinet member with responsibility for spatial planning and city design, Bristol City Council, on event development as a civic duty for local authorities

Councillor Nicola Beech

“My skills reflect my experience of Acid House and the Rave movement in the 1990s. Britain does independent gigs, promotions and festivals very well. Having since moved to the US and gone on to organise some pretty big shows around the world, I believe, along with most promoters, that the greatest thrill comes when you look out on an ocean of happy, singing and jumping heads. All the pain and sleepless nights before the gig seem worth it at that point.

“Music events in particular touch people’s hearts. Of course there are issues that

come with big events; but that’s all about planning. Whenever you put big numbers of the public together, there’ll be some bad eggs. That’s just the law of averages.

“The more ambitious the UK is in events – and the more magnanimous local authorities are in granting licenses – the better for everyone. The outstanding aspect of the original space race in the US was the can-do outlook, and JFK’s vaulting vision – the desire to go the moon not because it was easy, but because it was hard.”

Simidian has partnered with Richard Branson’s Virgin Galactic to put on the world’s first Live Music Concert in space – complete with Lady Gaga. Approximate launch: 2020

From northern dancefloors to the most out-of-this world gig ever: John Simidian, CEO of Zero G Colony, on the need to think big

John Simidian

Appendices

APPENDIX A: FEARS OF THE CROWD

Writers have long given vent to fears of crowds, often basing themselves on some pretty dubious sociology. It's worth reviewing the work of two key authors here: the Scots sensational journalist Charles Mackay, and the French anthropologist Gustave Le Bon. Why? Because in the future, prejudices like theirs – suitably modernised, no doubt – may come to be aired about the crowds that attend informal events.

In nineteenth-century Britain and France, Charles Mackay (left) and Gustave Le Bon (right) pioneered the idea that crowds are by nature irrational



Charles Mackay (1814-1889) is best known for his *Extraordinary popular delusions and the madness of crowds* (1841), in which he ridiculed financial 'bubbles' and the speculators they attracted. But Mackay was also fascinated by what is today loosely termed *crowd psychology*.

Famously, he maintained that *people think in herds – and go mad in herds, too*. Reviewing the conduct of angry crowds in Paris in 1720, he held that no mob, the world over, was as given to derisive singing as a French one. About the South Sea Bubble of 1718, Mackay felt that the people's credulity, avarice and 'extraordinary infatuation' with the possibility of financial gain, though unmentioned in public discourse, were in fact just as culpable as the widely-hated conduct of the South Sea Company. Madness, he said, 'infected' the people of England.

Mackay harped on about the gullibility of the crowd, its anger, and its capacity to throw stones when incensed. In all countries, he wrote, the mob was 'easily moved'. Yet Gustave Le Bon (1841-1931) was even more hostile to crowds.

Disturbed by the Paris Commune of 1871 and the subsequent emergence of mass society, Le Bon's short book *The crowd: a study of the popular mind* (1895) was a lesson in *hauteur*. Crowds, Le Bon argued, were little adapted to reasoning, but quick to act. The worldwide rise of powerful crowds marked, in his view, a complete return to past periods of confused anarchy.

Crowds, Le Bon held, 'do not admit doubt or uncertainty, and always go to extremes – their sentiments always excessive'. They were guilty of intolerance and dictatorial positions, reasoning that was 'always of a very inferior order', and thoughts that ran as a series of disconnected images. They were primitive, even animal; they were fickle and destructive, and too easily impressed by the marvellous. They placed themselves 'instinctively' under leaders, who in turn were often 'half-deranged'. Their 'mental unity' was for Le Bon a law. They tended to attract criminals. As a factor, the *race* or *nationality* of a crowd had, Le Bon wrote, to be 'placed in the first rank, for in itself it far surpasses in importance all the other factors'.

Today Le Bon's ideas would meet with ridicule. Yet it took two world wars and the Holocaust for them really to pass out of fashion. Only in 1962 did they really come in for severe attack, when George Rudé published a widely acclaimed rehabilitation of crowds, *The crowd in history: a study of popular disturbances in France and England, 1730-1848*.

In 2019, crowds are still never entirely composed of angels. Yet, should debate about crowds grow weightier in the run-up to 2030, let's remember just how easy it is – and how facile it can be – to make sweeping generalisations about crowd behaviour.

APPENDIX B: IN PRAISE OF BIG FESTIVALS AND CROWDS GONE BY

Previous generations of the British were somewhat divided over the merits and demerits of large displays likely to draw large crowds. However, on two seminal occasions, the 'can do' attitude properly and politely prevailed against doubters.

1. The 1851 Great Exhibition: objections crushed

The Great Exhibition was 'of the Works of Industry of all Nations'. Conceived, planned and built by Prince Albert and Henry Cole, less than two years in the making, it opened, to huge acclaim. The three-volume illustrated catalogue of the show begins with the boast:

'It may be said without presumption, that an event like this Exhibition could not have taken place at any earlier period, and perhaps not among any other people than ourselves. The friendly confidence reposed by other nations in our institutions; the perfect security for property; the commercial freedom, and the facility of transport, which England pre-eminently possesses, may all be brought forward as causes...'

(Official Descriptive and Illustrated Catalogue, Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations, 1851, pl).

With this degree of élan, enthusiasts for the Exhibition could shrug off those who complained about it.

Still, whingeing ran high in the summer of 1850, when the *Illustrated London News* unveiled an early design for the Exhibition hall by Isambard Kingdon Brunel. Soon the *Times* joined the chorus of disapproval, predicting that Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens would become ‘a bivouac of all the vagabonds of London’.

However, on 4 July the Commons rejected, by 166 to 46, a call for a Select Committee enquiry into the Exhibition. Two days later, Paxton’s alternative design, dubbed the Crystal Palace by *Punch*, was judiciously leaked to the *Illustrated London News*. At once public opinion swung behind the project. Later that year, as the Crystal Palace went up, it became one of the sights of London, attracting thousands.

Before the century was out, the success of the Great Exhibition led to a further dozen similar expos around the world.

2. The 1951 Festival of Britain: objections overruled

Churchill and the Beaverbrook *Daily Express* and *Evening Standard* hated the idea of a Festival of Britain. The President of the Royal Academy warned that crowds would turn the South Bank into a death-trap/ Evelyn Waugh and Noel Coward also reacted against the idea, in predictable style. But by May 1951, when the Queen opened the Festival, the critics fell silent:

‘For the first time for ten years, people saw freshly applied coloured paint, saw new furniture that was not utility, saw buildings that were both new and also very different to anything constructed on these shores before, and had fun that was, in austerity jargon, “off the ration”.’

(Adrian Forty, ‘Festival politics’, in Rayner Banham and Bevis Hillier, editors, *A Tonic to the Nation*, Thames & Hudson, 1976)

The Festival was planned and implemented despite the Cold War, the Berlin airlift, mobilisation for a war in Korea, three currency crises, shortages of timber, steel and skilled labour, and rationing. Opponents used this genuine adversity as ammunition against it; but, from 1947 to 1951, the Festival’s director of architecture, Hugh Casson, never wavered.

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Adapted from Penny Lewis, Vicky Richardson and James Woudhuysen, *In defence of the Dome: the case for human agency in the new millennium*, ASI Research, 1999

APPENDIX C: KEY MOMENTS IN THE HISTORY OF MUSIC FESTIVALS, UK AND US, 1967-2018

Date	Name, Location	Genre	Remarks
1967	<u>Monterey International Pop Music Festival, US</u>	Rock/pop	First major US appearances made by the Jimi Hendrix Experience, the Who and Ravi Shankar
1968-71, 1974-6	Hyde Park, UK	Rock	Free concerts; began with Pink Floyd, Tyrannosaurus Rex, Roy Harper, Jethro Tull – and busker Lol Coxhill
1969	Woodstock, US	Rock	Landmark moment for the peace and hippie movements, immortalised in Martin <u>Scorsese's</u> film
1969	Altamont, US	Rolling Stones	Just four months after Woodstock, the death of <u>Meredith Hunter</u> at the hands of Hells Angels dissipated many hopes
1970	<u>Glastonbury, UK</u>	Rock	In 2019, 135,000 tickets sold out in 30 minutes
1971	<u>Reading, UK</u>	Rock, then punk, then heavy metal	Started earlier as National Jazz Festival. Second festival in Leeds added, 1999. Audience size, 2016: 90,000
1979	<u>Bristol International Balloon Fiesta, UK</u>	Air show	This free event sees 150 hot air balloons set sail. In 2017 an estimated 500,000 watched
1989	Hacienda, Manchester, UK	Acid House	After the summer of 1988, Acid House <u>attracted</u> 'tabloid outrage, government hostility and police suppression'

Date	Name, Location	Genre	Remarks
1980-1996	<u>Monsters of Rock</u> , UK	Heavy metal	Held at Castle Donington Park, Leicestershire; re-launched in 2003 as <u>Download Festival</u>
1997	<i>Ibiza Uncovered</i>	Sky One documentary and Virgin CD	Series that brought the party island into notoriety
2001	<u>Isle of Wight Festival</u> , UK	Rock	The festival, which hosted Jimi Hendrix in 1970, was relaunched in 2001, attracting acts that included Fleetwood Mac and REM
2004	<u>Bestival</u> , UK	Various	By 2010, DJ Rob da Bank's event had attracted 55,000 people, setting a Guinness World Record for the number of people in fancy dress at an event
2009	<u>Boomtown Fair</u> , UK	Dance/alternative	Responsible for ground-breaking advances in event production. Now attended by about 60,000
2018	Burning Man, US		Founded in 1986, this avowedly radical art and music event, held in a temporary city in Nevada, will try to return to its roots after <u>the cost of the most elite accommodation</u> began to move into tens of thousands of dollars

APPENDIX D: FOUR CITIES THAT HAVE MADE EVENT STRATEGIES WORK FOR THEM

Tom Hall writes: Internationally, cities have tried various ways of using events to boost their economies. They've put a particular focus on hotel room revenues and visitor numbers – in each case, covering both consumer and business visitors. Examples of successful **event strategies** include Austin, Texas; Tallinn, Estonia; Portmeirion, Wales, and Gothenburg, Sweden. Yet even in these enlightened cities, local events professionals have sometimes had to fight hard to be listened to.

South by Southwest (SXSW), an annual conference and festival held at *Austin*, is credited with helping to double the population of that city, as well as with helping to attract inward investment from Google. SXSW's impact on the Austin economy in 2017 is also reckoned to have been worth nearly \$350m. Austin-based promoter Graham Williams, a founder of the city's Transmission Entertainment group, says the city wanted the creativity, tourism and culture that a festival could bring. However, he adds: 'They wanted new people to move here, but getting those doors open was a lot harder than you'd expect'.

To persuade Austin's key influencers, its local music industry formed a lobby group to get its voice heard. 'The manager of the company we hired to talk to politicians was himself a former city official', Williams says. 'We had to hire someone who had worked on the inside for a decade – to have a conduit between us and the city to get things done. There's a lot of politics involved'.

In *Tallinn*, Helen Sildna, director of Tallinn Music Week, undertook efforts that were equally Herculean. She founded Estonia's combined annual talent showcase, festival event and music industry conference in 2009, but also faced significant obstacles. 'There was no openness at first, and it took us campaigning for years,' she recalls. 'The tourist board in Estonia told us, "This is music, not tourism". They were only interested in bringing over journalists who write about tourism – but I am a tourist, and I don't read any tourism magazines'.

Once the Tallinn event got the go-ahead, it grew year-on-year, and is felt to have helped revive areas of the town that were previously abandoned. 'A creative centre started developing in Tallinn and creative companies moved into an old factory house, which housed our main film festival, and attracted bands and a nightclub as permanent additions'. Sildna says. 'With new restaurants and a vibrant scene, young families started buying property in the area, and within ten years it was rebuilt because of the influx of artists and events'.

Tom Hall at Austin's
SXSW festival



Tallinn Music Week



FKA Twigs at Gothenburg's
Way Out West



By contrast, the founding of Festival No. 6 at the Welsh village of *Portmeirion* was far smoother. Co-founder Gareth Cooper, of Broadwick Live, says that the event was all but given the go-ahead following a jovial lunch meeting with Robin Llewellyn, grandson of Portmeirion's eccentric founder, Sir Bertram Clough Williams-Ellis.

Williams-Ellis, an Italophile and visionary, designed and built Portmeirion between 1925 and 1975. Famous worldwide after it figured as the quirky backdrop to the cult 1960s television series *The Prisoner*, it was actually intended as a tribute to the atmosphere of the Mediterranean. 'The village is designed as a great place to have a party', Cooper says. 'Robin was on board with the vision for our festival from the start, because it was in keeping with the original spirit of his grandfather, who meant Portmeirion to be enjoyed'.

Festival No. 6's economic and cultural benefits were immediately appreciated. On the other hand, going back to Tallinn's experience, events can also take a little time to be valued. It took a while for events to be recognised as a vital part of Estonian tourism. Now, however, Tallinn Music Week brings upwards of 37,000 visitors to more than 30 venues all around the centre of the town.

The Tallinn festival improves Estonian tourism in more ways than one. In 2015, the festival surveyed 2000 visitors and found that 40 per cent had never been to Tallinn. 'But we discovered that the festival provided a reason for young people to come to Tallinn', says Helen Sildna. 'We also determined that the overall spend from 2000 people over three days is about two million Euros', she adds.

Other, less predictable benefits have come to Tallinn from its embrace of festival culture. They include recognition from Skype, a local employer that has praised the city's festival and cultural scene. Sildna: 'Skype told us that they couldn't attract the talent to Tallinn by salary alone; there needed to be more motivations. Having a festival in the town provides a crucial draw for the right kind of employees.'

Like Sildna and Williams, Camilla Nyman, former CEO of the destination agency Göteborg & Co, says that holding events has been central to Gothenburg's success. 'As the city has always been aware, Gothenburg's events scene attracts business and employs young people. In a global context, city planners know that you need to create a great environment for the people that live there. What's easily forgotten is that maintaining residents' continued approval takes work', she says.

Gothenburg's Way Out West (WOW) festival is part of a wider cultural celebration that attracts 30,000 visitors a day over three days, with 70 per cent of them coming from outside the city. WOW runs alongside Gothenburg Culture Festival and Way Out West Music Conference. Meanwhile, Stay Out West, which occurs at night after WOW is over, makes use of the various venues surrounding the event, opening up the city for tourism and extended hotel bookings.

Often referred to as Sweden's 'second city', Gothenburg has made a virtue of its compact size and outsider status. Government, hotels, private businesses and venues have banded together to make events work for the collective cause of rejuvenating the city.

In December 2014, the Swedish Exhibition & Congress Centre complex, known as Gothia Towers, opened its third hotel skyscraper. Today, plans are being finalised to erect two adjacent structures by 2025. It is true that the SECC, which is currently revamping its entrance as part of a €500m injection to improve the whole venue by 2030, is owned by a financially independent foundation. Still, the recent upswing in Gothenburg's exhibition and congress visitor numbers has made the business case for further expansion irrefragable.



Gothia Towers,
Gothenburg



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Attended farewell concert, Cream, 1968, and the two final European concerts of The Jimi Hendrix Experience, 1969, all at the Albert Hall, London. Hyde Park Free Concert, also 1969. Addressed 200 dockworkers, Portslade, Sussex, 1973, and 100 French miners, Pas-de-Calais, France, 1974.

Played and sung a Lou Reed song in a Hanover bar, 1979. Interviewed Malcolm McLaren, 1981. In Prague, witnessed Lanterna Magika's multimedia production of Odysseus in 1988, just a year before Czechoslovakia's Velvet Revolution.

Bought drinks for Shakin' Stevens at Dingwalls, Camden, and for Commander Cody, California. Researched the clubbing scene in Ibiza for *The Times*. Journal article, 'Play as the Main Event in International and UK Culture', *Cultural Trends*, 2003. Critical article in advance of the 2012 London Olympics, 2008.

Professional speaker at major conferences. Visiting professor of forecasting and innovation at London South Bank University.

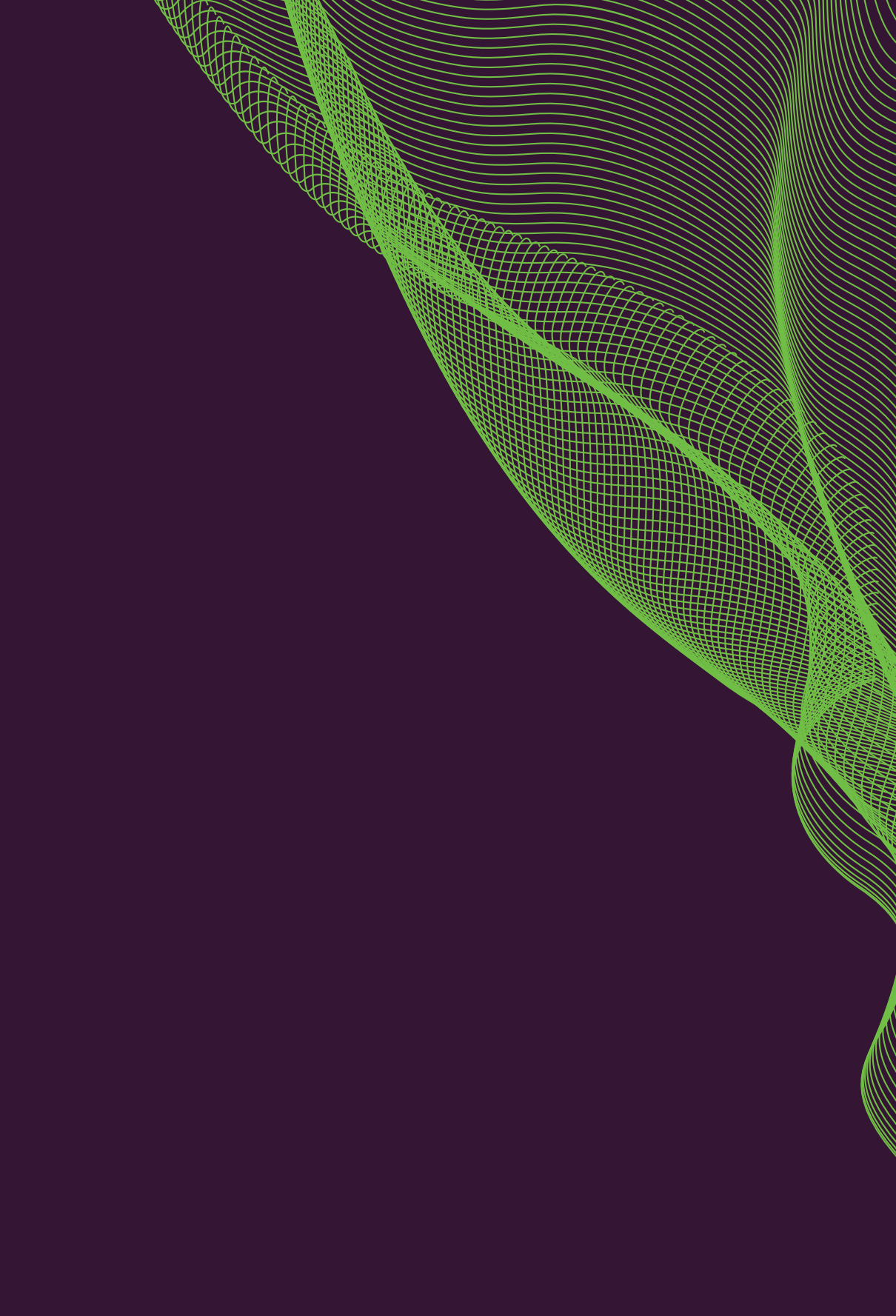
Website: www.Woudhuysen.com

*All the way from Ohio:
American youth practices
for London's New Year's
Day Parade, 2019*

Photo: Karen Harvey



The Political Economy of Informal Events, 2030





The Political Economy Of Informal Events, 2030

Written and edited by
James Woudhuysen

Casual gatherings that are crafted, not mass-produced, informal events will shine through much of UK entertainment and retailing in 2030. This is a 360° forecast of future demand for them, and of how they could and should work – creatively, economically, legally, and around technology, transport and the environment.

Today's popular quest for authenticity bodes well for informal events. However, while some are licensed as 'People Like Us', more plebeian ones are easily stigmatised. This White Paper argues that the value added, jobs created and productivity increases made by informal events in Britain, already impressive, could match the explosion in our exports of live music, if only this country had a more liberal licensing regime.

By 2030, informal events will boast more balanced attendances, demographically, and could provide the UK's cash-strapped city halls with revenues of up to £400m a year. Contributions by Andy Burnham (Mayor of Greater Manchester), Susan Aitken (leader of Glasgow Council) and others confirm the substantial and varied benefits of informal events. Indeed, if they're professionalised in ways that are outlined here, informal events could help form, by 2030, a new, cohesive and unique wealth-making sector for Britain, renowned worldwide for its innovation.

Free expression and free assembly are rights fundamental to democracy. Close analysis of crime statistics for England and Wales shows that fears about informal events, and about The Crowd in general, are rarely justified. This White Paper is a powerful call for event organisers, local authorities and all levels of government to professionalise their handling of informal events. That way, informal events in Britain will come to be even more dynamic than they are now.

Published by:

Access All Areas

ISBN 2019:

978-0-9576478-7-9