

# **The Political Economy of Informal Events, 2030**

Written and edited by  
James Woudhuysen

# **The political economy of informal events, 2030**

**Access All Areas**

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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 Centre](#) 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 round 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 whole month. 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 of London, 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.

Lastly, 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, and then made a fresh leap 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, 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, Mash Media, publishers of Access All Areas*



*Alan D Miller, 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 allows audience reactions to events to be both very personal and completely instantaneous.

In the 21st century, **creating branded locations through events is also 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 more or less 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 and disparate British literature and statistics on events. Such an exercise has not been done before, and further research will be needed to cover some of the more obvious omissions. The range of sources drawn upon is varied, and 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 them, but also the challenges – particularly around licensing – that are likely to emerge for informal events 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 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, the headline band The 1975 took to the stage at [Parklife Festival](#), Manchester, along with the mayor of Greater Manchester, Alan, and many of those professionals – police, firefighters, nurses, ambulance workers and others – who had had to make the first response to the terrorist murder of 22 people at the Ariana Grande concert held at the Manchester Arena the previous month. 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**

*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 the benefits that 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.*

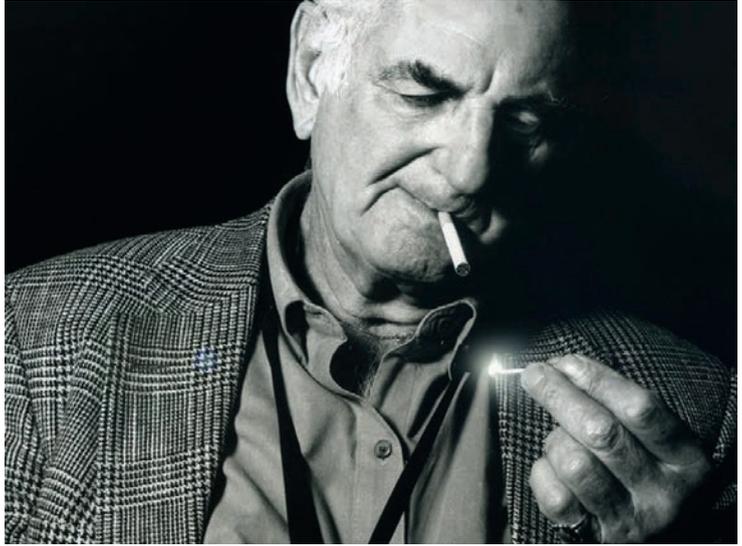
*Reconceived by organisers and taken more seriously by all levels of government, events could, by 2030, be even more dynamic than they are now.*

*They could form a new, cohesive and distinctive wealth-making sector for Britain, with a worldwide renown for creative, technological and social innovation.*



# **Chapter one**

## **Introduction**

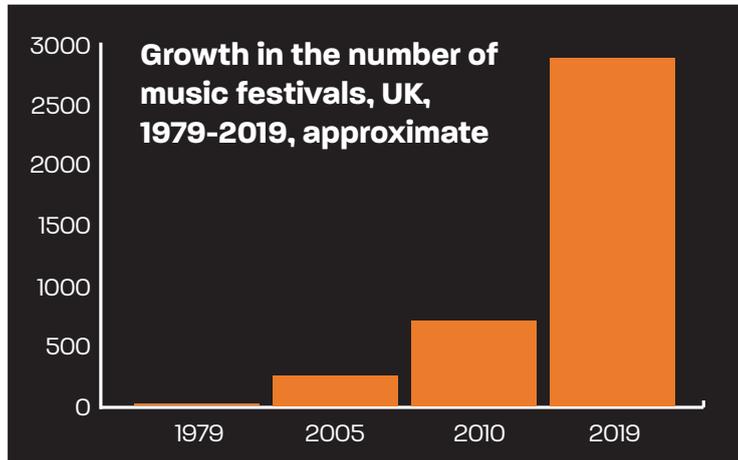


*Three great innovators in UK consumer services: saxophonist and jazz club entrepreneur Ronnie Scott (1927-96); Harvey Goldsmith (born 1946), events producer and promoter, and Kanya King, CEO of the MOBO (music of black origin) Awards, which since 1996 has provided a performance platform and prize-giving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



*Chart 1*

Source: Chris Anderton, [Music festivals in the UK: Beyond the Carnavalesque, 2018](#); [Find Festival](#); [UK Rock Festivals](#); Access All Areas estimates – noting that reporting in 1979 was less thorough

**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 outdoor festivals. That category has become more elastic over time – many firms now claim to run a festival of one sort or another, in a way that few did 30 years ago. At the same time, festivals of all sizes have multiplied, and have attracted larger, more diverse audiences. Altogether, Chart 1 above, though rough, has a force that cannot be denied.

*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 practically the entire audience!'. Jane Simmons, The Official Jimi Hendrix Fan Club Of Great Britain, newsletter, April/May 1969*



**In events there is an unrepeatable confluence of people, 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.**

Put all these factors together, and it's easy to see why events held in green fields in the past 10 years have transformed Britain's festival scene. Similarly, 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 some respondents telling it that [over-zealous regulation](#) was to blame. Nevertheless, since that date 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 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 focuses on consumer events, and especially on *informal live music events*. These have mushroomed in recent years. Yet in its broader category of 'informal events', this White Paper also takes in *relatively casual gatherings around sport, as well as around art, design, computer games, fashion, flowers, food and performing arts beyond music*.

*When The Boss (born 1949) triumphantly completed more than a year of five-nights-a-week gigs at the at the Walter Kerr Theatre in New York City (capacity 975), 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 events held in giant stadia*



Mass events at big, fixed, 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, in 2019, some of what we read in the media or on social media is held to be fake. So it's a fair bet that, in the more contingent world of 2030, still more of everyday experience will be thought [untrustworthy or even illegitimate](#). Conversely, too, it's a fair bet that *authenticity will be highly prized*.

That augurs well for informal live events.

Informal live 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 less than €50m turnover. The good news is that the current and future demand for authenticity in British society looks set to give such events – informal, live events great prospects. Indeed, the rise of what is today described as ‘fake news’ may open up real opportunities for SMEs that are in the business of informal events – events where, to quote John Lennon, ‘All I want is the truth’.

At the same time, however, the very informality of live events, and their natural association with alcohol and with 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 should always be well founded; for the evidence suggests that the current incidence of crime and terrorism at informal events in the UK is, pretty small.

Judicious and proportionate regulation of event [safety](#) and [security](#) is right. But if informal events are booming in 2030 but still subject to the formalities of the [Licensing Act 2003](#), initiatives are now urgently needed around better partnership, clarity and consistency in the licensing process – and around better education, too. One of those initiatives should be to **ensure that future assessments of the risks surrounding events take more account of both the long-term as well as the immediate benefits of letting them go ahead.**



# **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 consumer events. The government's Office for National Statistics, 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.

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 is more straightforward than that. First, as Chart 2 shows, *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, *the number of UK enterprises directly providing cultural, recreational and sporting services – and goods – is impressive.* Not all of the enterprises in Chart 3 were, in 2017, directly in the business of events, but we can be sure that very many of them were.

Chart 3 shows that the UK has nearly 10,000 enterprises in performing arts, more than 21,500 in sport, and one or two thousand more, perhaps, in other events-based leisure. By contrast, the UK's B2B events sector, in the shape of conventions and trade shows, is relatively concentrated, with only 3,885 enterprises.

The total of about 33,000 enterprises in B2C events compares with [about 170,000](#) VAT- and/or PAYE-based enterprises in what the Office for National Statistics (ONS) describes as UK 'arts, entertainment, recreation and other services'. So: events enterprises in performing arts and sport make up a respectable 18 per cent of enterprises in arts, entertainment, recreation and the like.

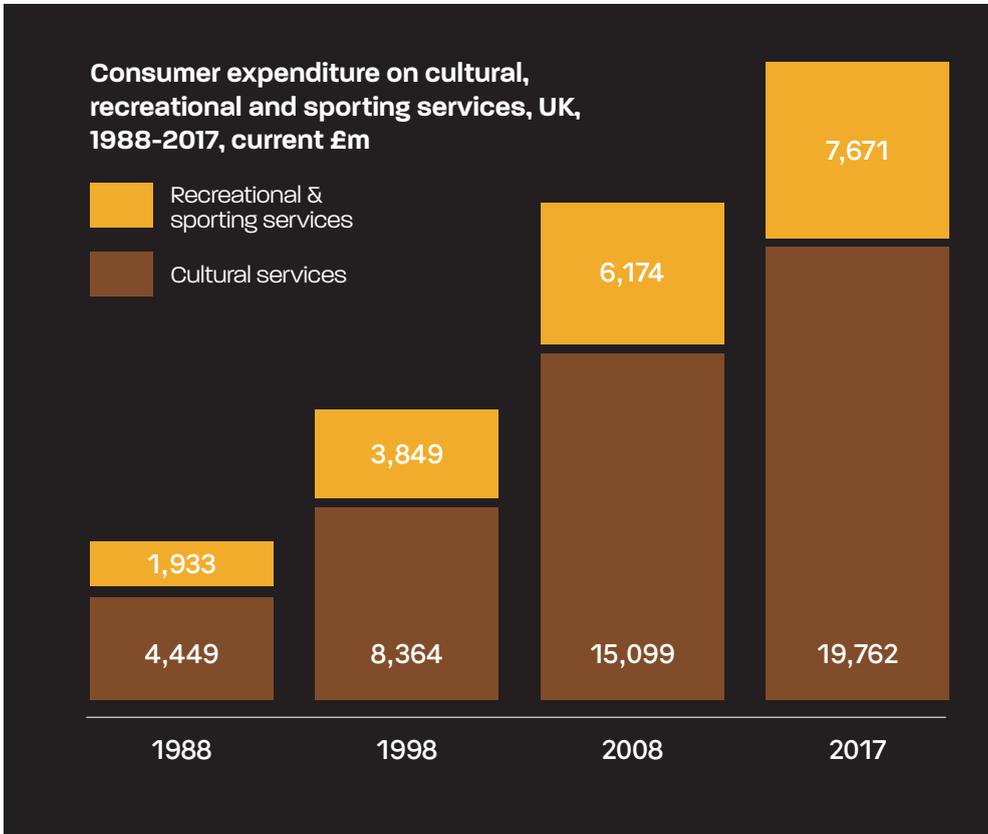


Chart 2

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

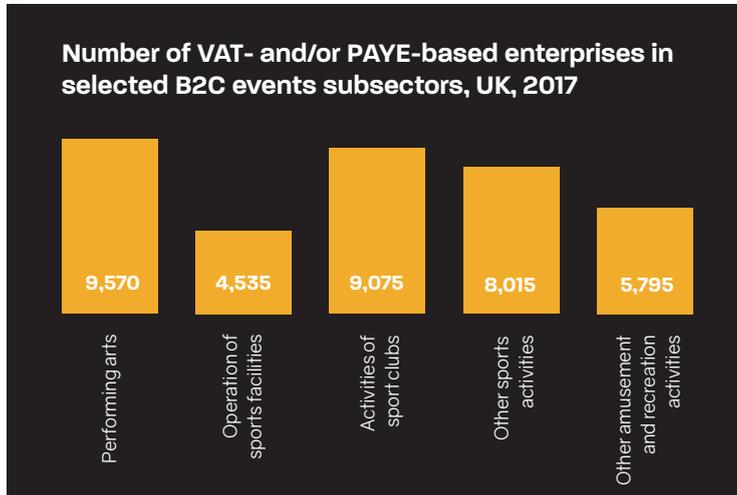


Chart 3

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

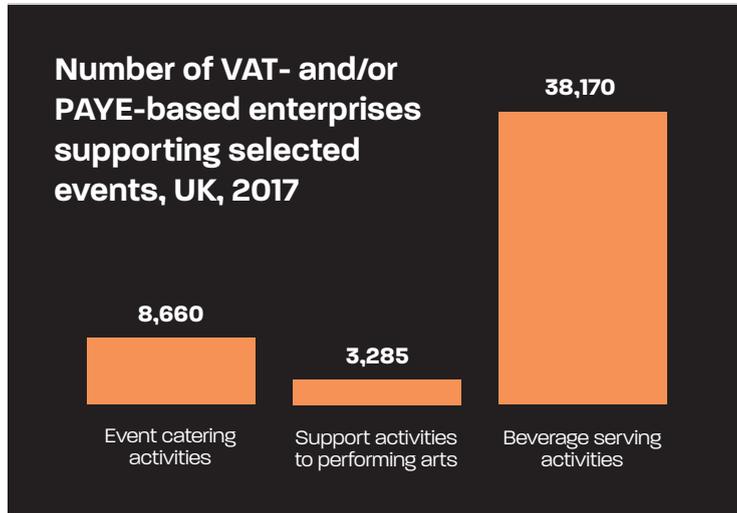


Chart 4

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 33,000 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 won over 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, yes, '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 revenues 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** – 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 the jobs in transport and security that are supported by events. Altogether, then, **the number of UK companies directly in and indirectly supporting events in culture and sport exceeds 40,000**. Clearly informal consumer 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 sector doesn'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 this chart, which is based on research done by the [Association of Independent Festivals](#) (AIF). Chart 5, overleaf, details the ownership of large UK music festivals.

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 bad news: 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 the microscope over their ticketing arrangements.

# Music festivals: a highly concentrated sector

65 independent festivals

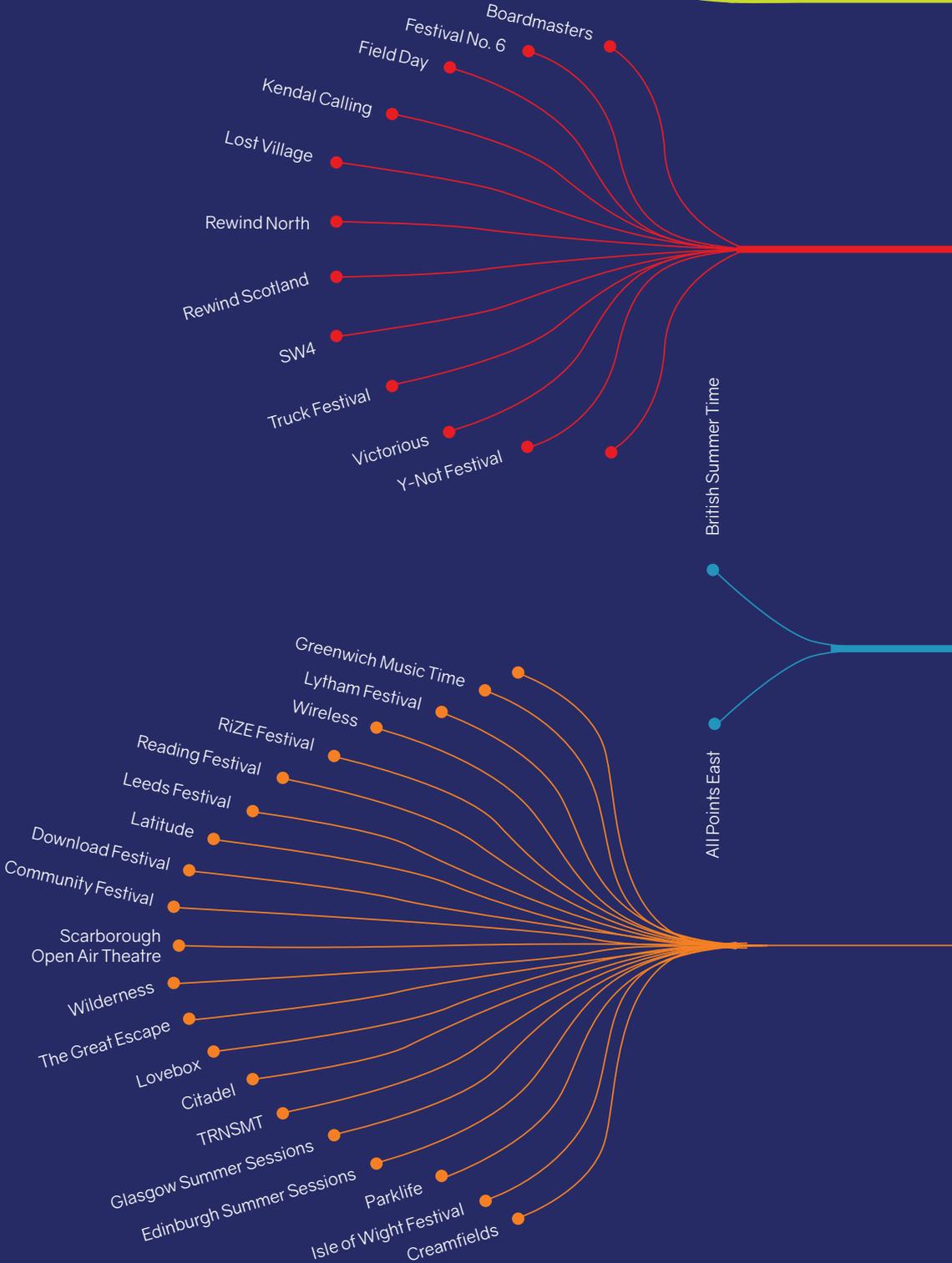
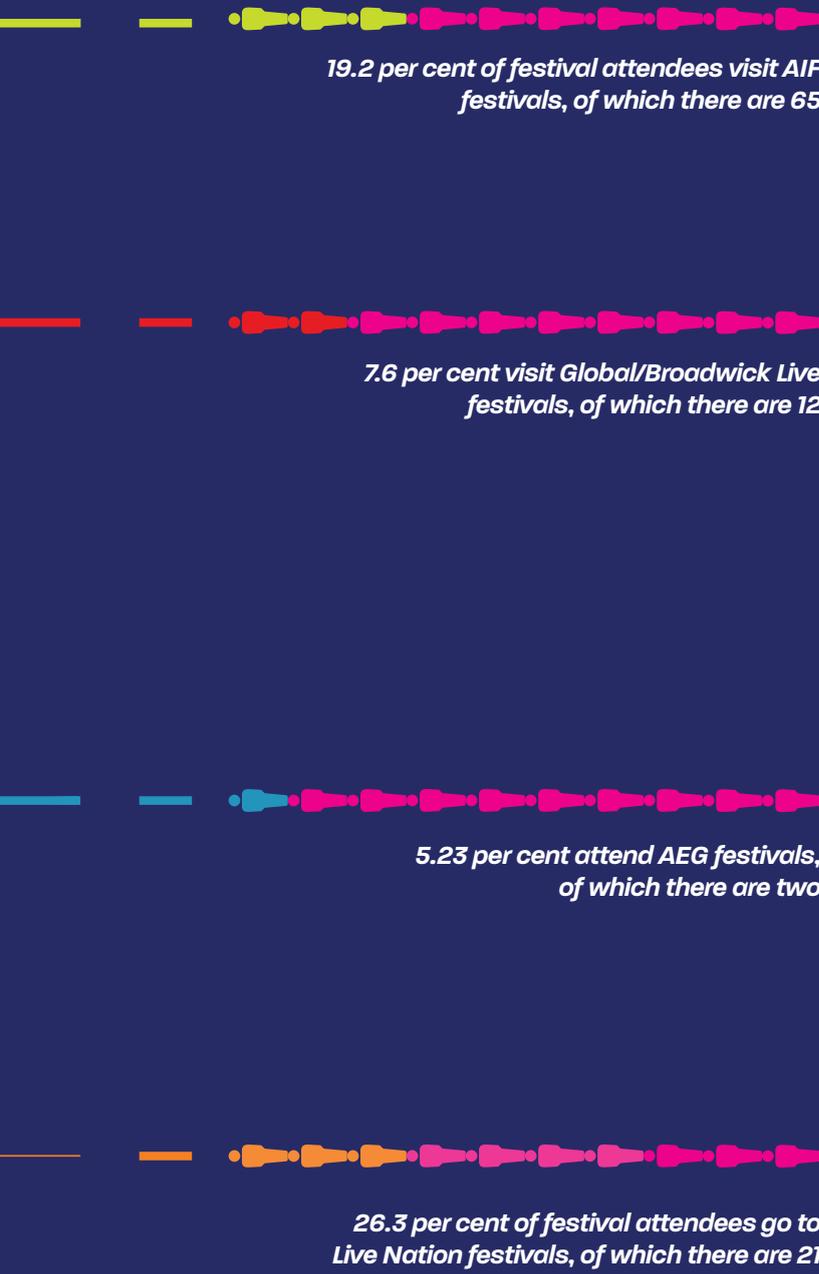


Chart 5

Source: Adapted from AIF statistics



**19.2 per cent of festival attendees visit AIF festivals, of which there are 65**

**7.6 per cent visit Global/Broadwick Live festivals, of which there are 12**

**5.23 per cent attend AEG festivals, of which there are two**

**26.3 per cent of festival attendees go to Live Nation festivals, of which there are 21**

***“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*





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

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.



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 MBE, 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. Audience stands in a darkened room and the performance takes place mainly over their heads.

#### **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 mayor 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**. Later this year, a [Barbican exhibition](#) and set of performances will reinforce this, by highlighting how the world's avant-garde artists have long gained the creative inspiration from cabarets and clubs. Clearly 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 it; it is also why 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](#). Scotland recently held its [first conference](#) on the NTE. Yet bringing better leadership and organisation to the NTE is 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 are [about to name one](#), and [Dublin](#) may follow suit.

**These developments are all good news. But in the UK the need now is to ensure that official reports and recommendations about the NTE are acted upon urgently, so that by 2030 the night-time economy can truly 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 visitors.”*



*Mayor of Greater Manchester, on getting 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***

# **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 all, 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 is 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 the live acts at musical festivals. The website [Music Festival Wizard](#) lists 97 of these 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 – all with audience sizes 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 audience sizes below 1000
15. Greco-Roman or freestyle wrestling between 08.00 and 23.00 with audience sizes below 1000, and with both wrestlers and audience wholly inside a building
16. Morris dancing and accompanying music, or similar
17. Garden fetes 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 18-25-year-old men and women with a heady mix of rugby, netball, dodgeball, hockey and volleyball mixed in with DJs, bands and beer.

Often, innovation is [much more](#) than a simple combination of what has gone before. At the same time, however, **it’s a fair bet that informal events will likely be even more eclectic in 2030 than they are today.**

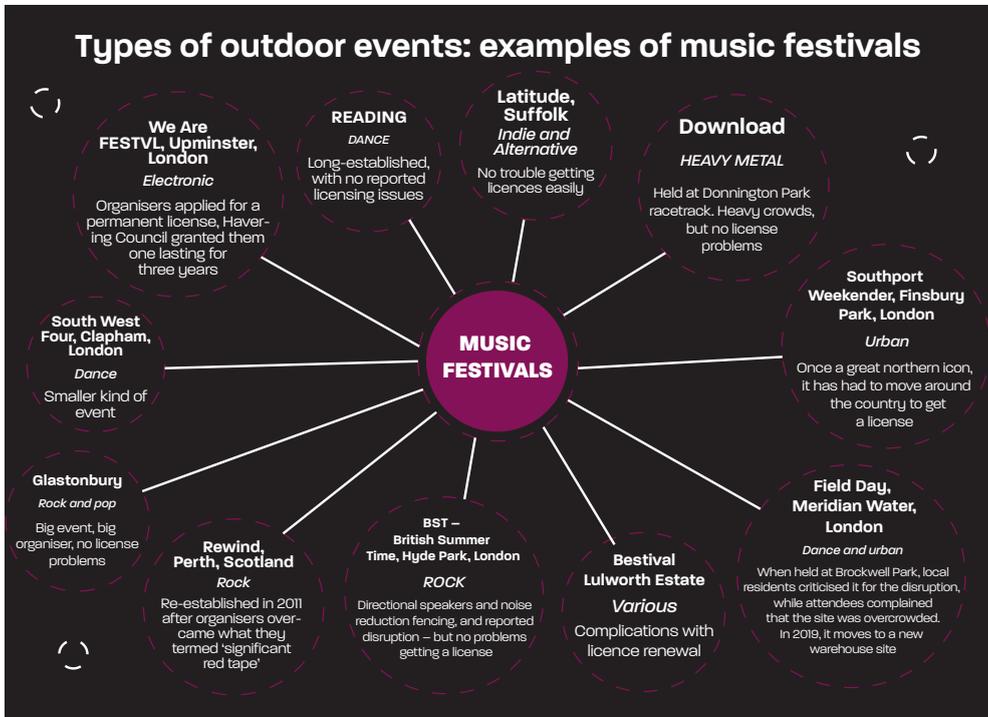


Chart 6

## 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 require licences and those that don't, but between those which can obtain licences easily and those which cannot. Indeed, one way such a distinction works today is the trend for clubs to apply for day licences for outside areas, car parks and the like, because late-night licences have become so hard to get.

That can't be right. When [Yuri Gagarin](#), the first man in space,

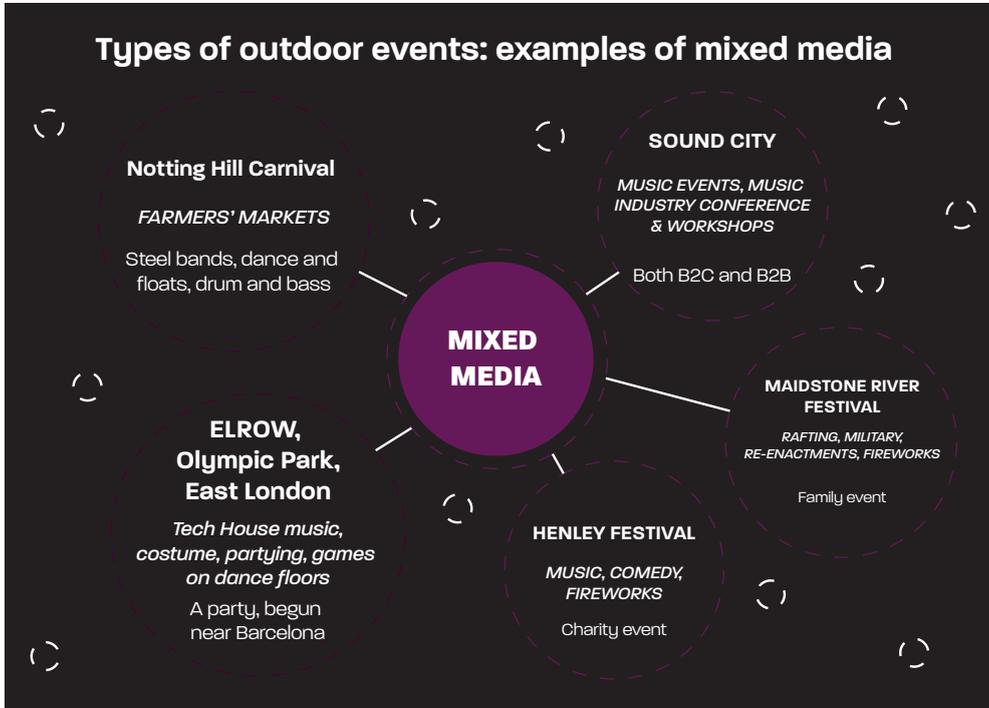


Chart 7

flew to Manchester in July 1961, thousands mobbed him and crowds broke through a very large police presence. Now there was an event; but the Russian was forced to address more than 5000 Trafford Park workers from... a car park. Has Britain's reverence 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 gets a licence.

What the charts show is that, **in Britain, 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 events are too easily stigmatised.

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

# Types of outdoor events: sport at dedicated venues, and on the streets

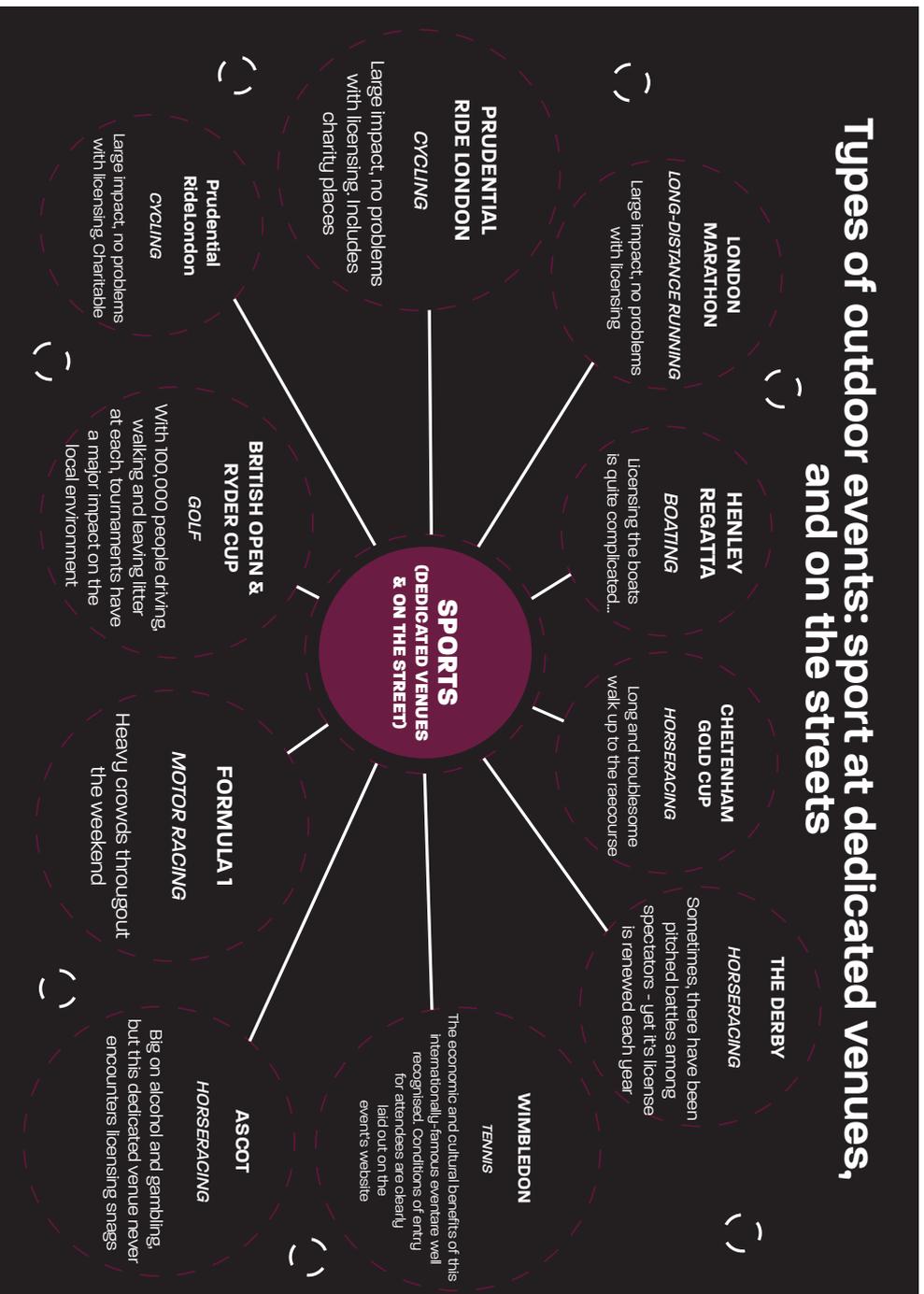


Chart 8

# examples around food, culture and other activities

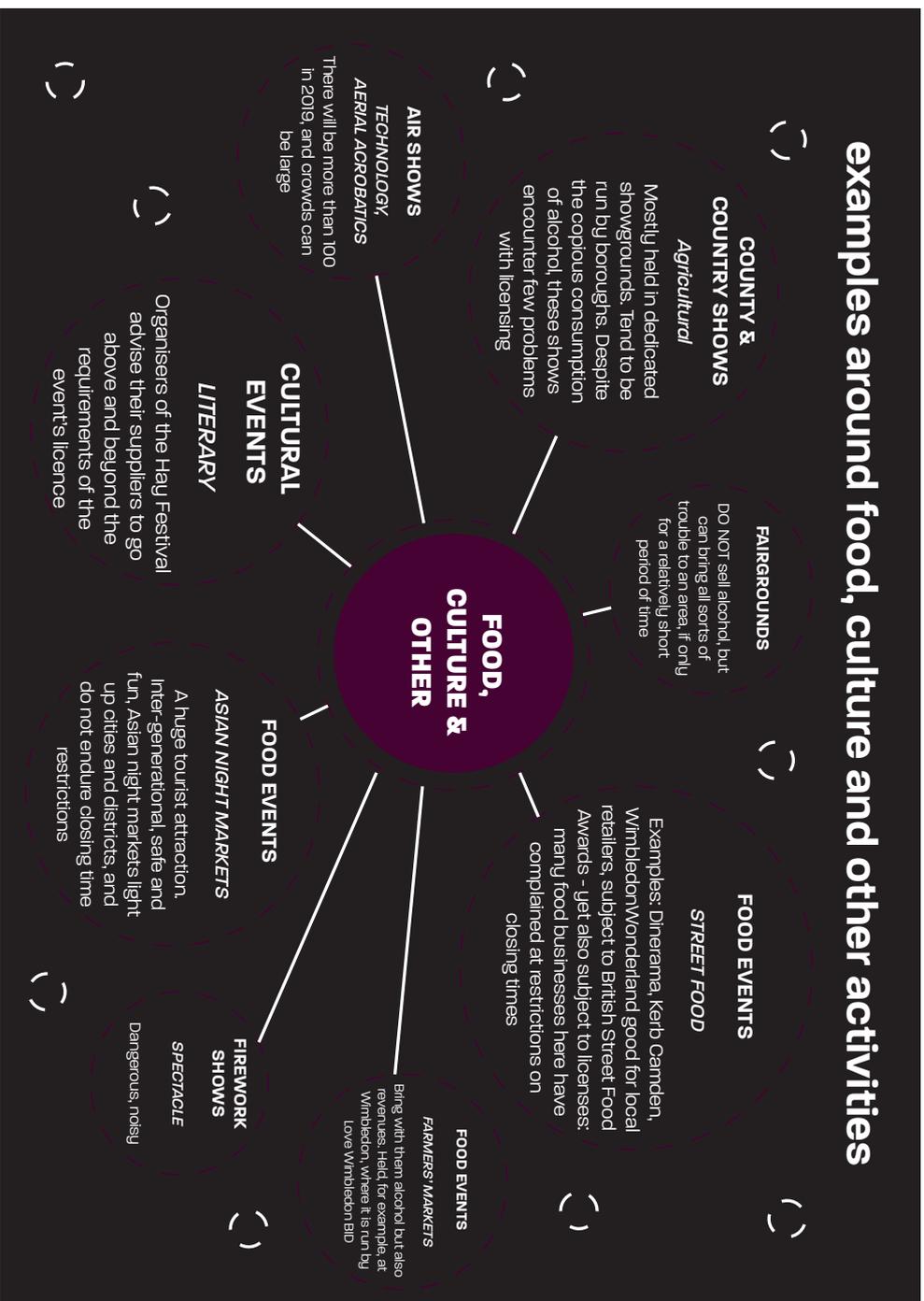


Chart 9

# Chapter four

# The economics of informal music and sport events

### **1. FORECASTS FOR THE UK EVENTS MARKET**

Like many other institutions in 20th century Britain, forecasting particularly economic forecasting – has been widely [discredited](#). That doesn't mean, however, that informal events should just ignore the forecasts that are out there in the public domain, or that the sector should avoid forming its own view. In events, as elsewhere, balanced research on the future remains a good idea.

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 suggests that “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.

**There are three kinds of upheaval that people in informal events need to keep a look-out for:**

- 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 June 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 sort might bring, 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.

Of course, online sales only account for the majority of music event sales, not all of them. And if forecasts of such sales can be thought

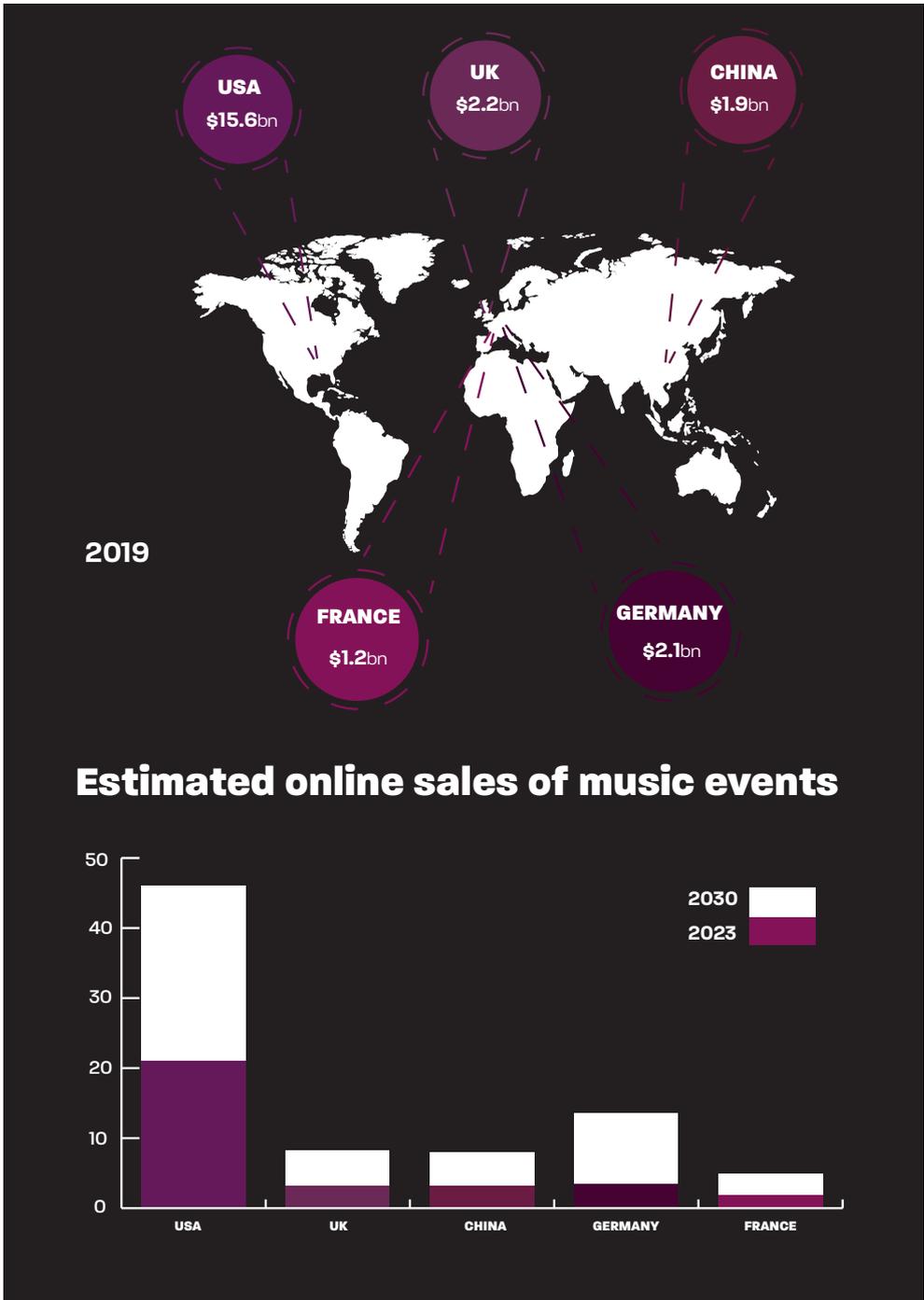


Chart 9

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

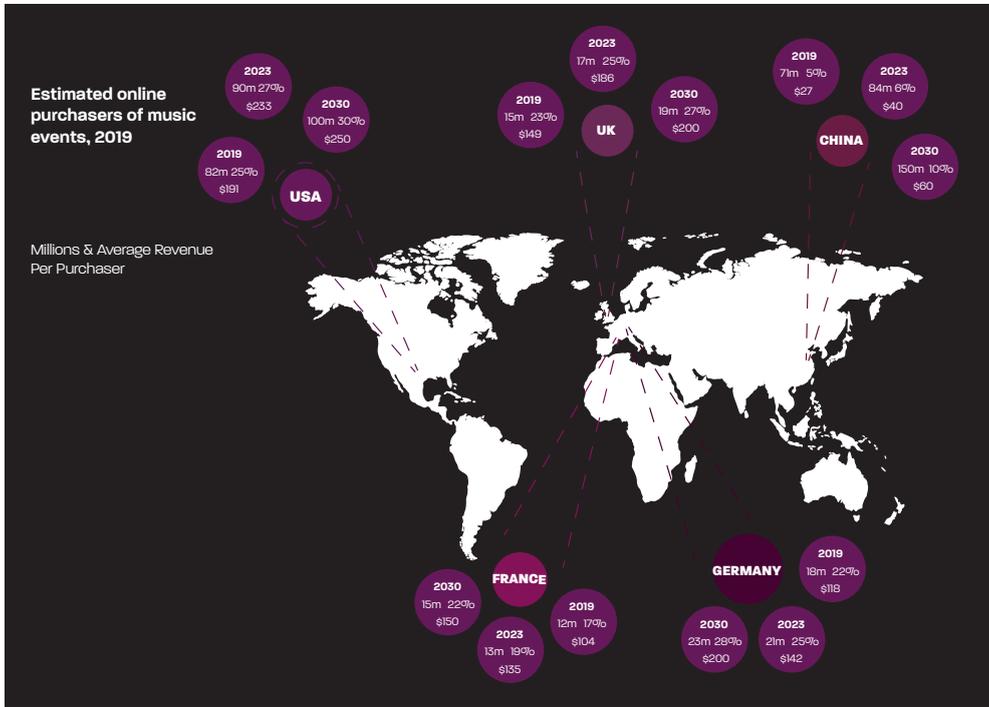


Chart 10

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

accurate to within a billion dollars or two, those for the number and proportions of people attending music events, and their 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 and increased spending around them look like relatively 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 UK's Association of Independent Festivals, average overall spending rose from £364 to a hefty £483. Expenditure on tickets was up by only £32 to £186 (somewhat higher than Statista's \$149 estimate for UK online sales of general music events in 2019, Chart 10); 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

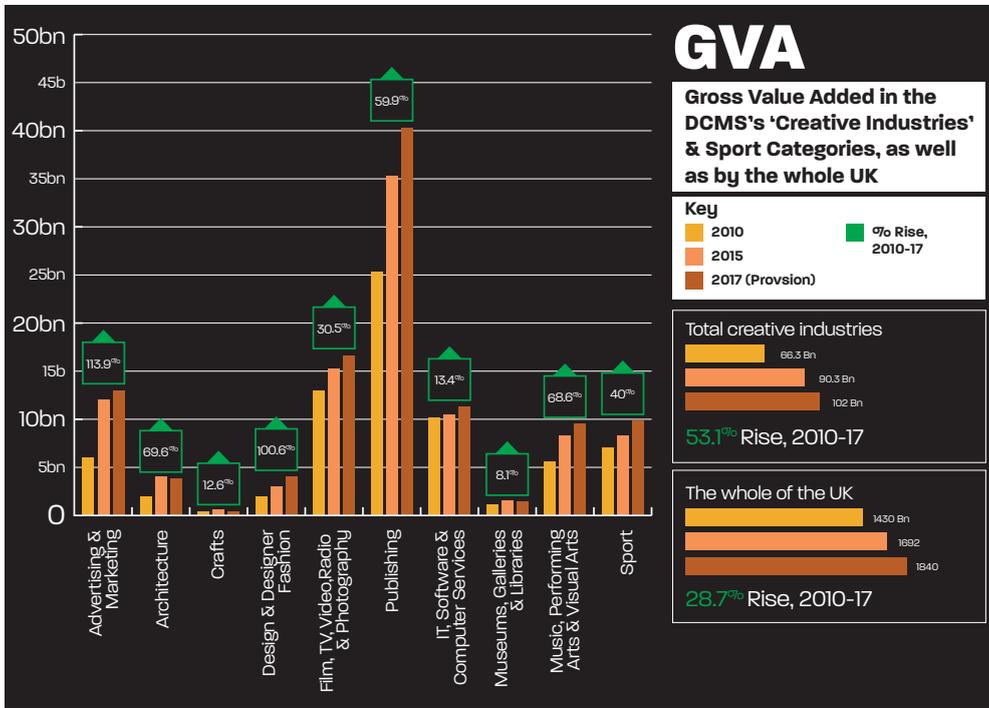


Chart 11

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

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. Either way, events won't necessarily always get dearer and 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 (GVA), JOBS AND PRODUCTIVITY**

It is hard to put a definite figure on the Gross Value Added to the UK economy by events. According to UK Music, an umbrella group for commercial music, live music contributes a GVA of £1bn. As Chart 11 shows above, this amounts to a good 10 per cent of the broader DCMS figure of about £10bn for the value added by music, performing and visual arts, whether through events or not.

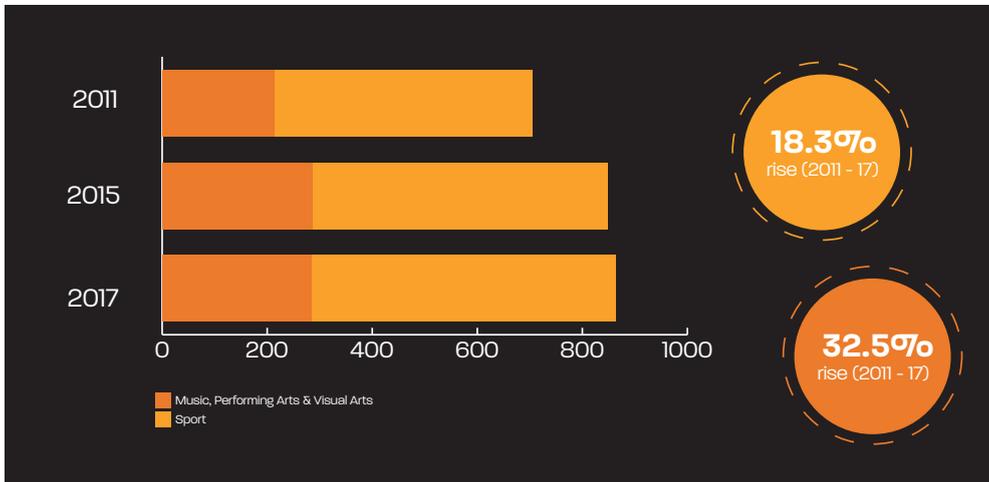


Chart 12

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

Chart 11 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.**

The main point to arise from Chart 11 is that **while sport, music, performing arts and visual arts contribute a total of just one per cent of the UK’s GVA, the contribution of all these sectors has risen at a respectable pace since 2010.** In the case of music, performing arts and visual arts, GVA has risen by nearly 70 per cent, more than twice as fast as UK GVA; for sport, the rise is 40 per cent – still well above the all-UK figure of 28.7 per cent.

How much of this laudable expansion in GVA is based upon the value added by events? That’s difficult to answer. But the evidence on jobs in Chart 12, above, shows that **if in music, performing arts and visual arts, and sport, GVA has grown more rapidly than employment, but employment in these three sectors has grown faster than that for the UK as a whole.**

Admittedly DCMS statistics for GVA cover 2010-17, while those for jobs growth cover 2011-7 – a shorter period. Still, the point holds good.

Now consider productivity growth, which can be roughly estimated by comparing GVA growth by jobs growth. 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. In each case it appears that GVA growth has been about double jobs growth.

That’s striking. While not every job in the arts and sport is necessarily about events, it seems likely that, **since the start of the past decade, events in music, performing arts and visual arts, together with events in sport, have fully participated in the dramatic rise in productivity that has marked the arts and sport as a whole.**

Now, with overall UK GVA growth not double, but triple UK jobs growth, the country’s GVA-vs-jobs performance seems to have improved even more than that of arts and sport. But another way of looking at the data is that **sport and especially music, performing and visual arts have not only increased their GVA faster than UK**

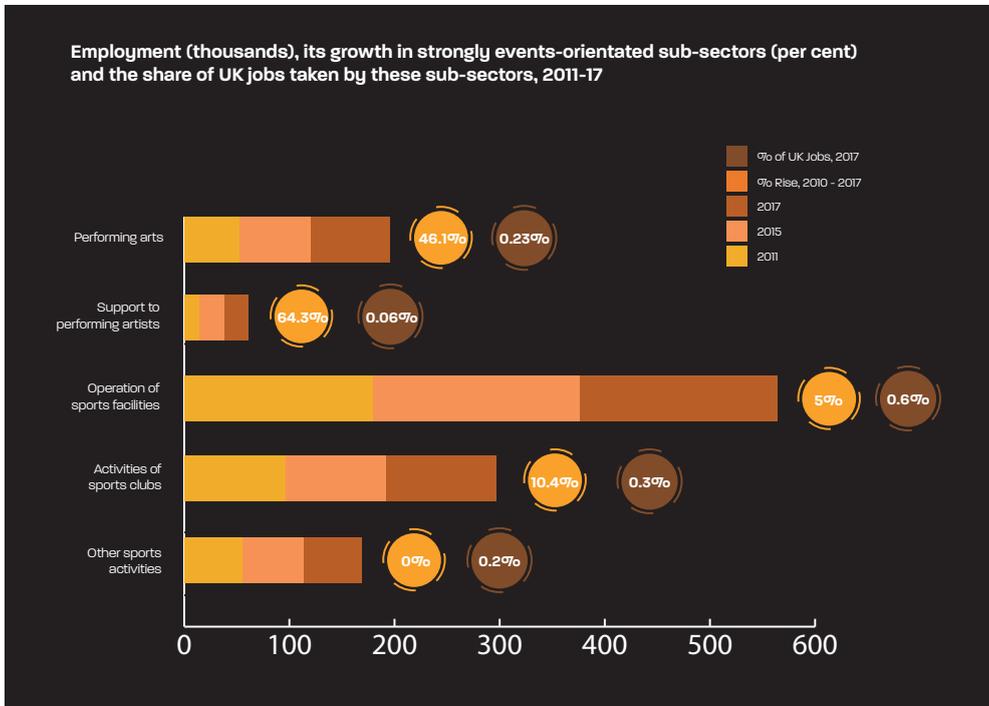


Chart 13:  
DCMS, Table 55:  
[Employment by Standard Industrial Classification \(SIC\), 2018](#)

plc, but also – very much faster – their payroll. It is hard to automate sport and music, performing and visual arts, especially in the case of events, which are labour-intensive compared with, say, manufacturing or financial services. In the UK’s recovery since the financial crisis of 2008, such automation as has been brought to sport and the arts, for example in ticketing, appears to have been correlated, at least, by an increase in jobs, not a decrease. In fact, [that’s been the pattern for jobs in general in the UK – and elsewhere.](#)

For the narrower, still more events-orientated subsectors that we have already met – performing arts, their support, the operation of sports facilities, the activities of sports clubs and other sports activities – Chart 13, above, 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 13 hints at important trends, which are in line with those in Chart 12.

Between 2011 and 2017, UK jobs grew, though modestly, around the operation of sports facilities and the activities of sports clubs. And around performing arts, jobs rose by nearly half, while in the smaller sector of support for performing arts, they rose by nearly two thirds.

### 3. EVENTS AND EXPORTS

If, in events and beyond, GVA and jobs have grown in performing arts and sport, the growth of exports has been more astonishing still. Chart 14, overleaf, goes back to the broad sectors of music, performing arts and visual arts, as well as sport. These, as we have said, go much further than just events. Still, what strikes is how much exports have risen – especially for music.

People abroad appreciate British music, and British sport too. Of course, much of the export figures above do not relate to events. Still, it is possible to get a better handle on exports of the musical sort.

For the year 2017, UK Music has [estimated](#) that exports of live music – not playing it, but organising it – were just £80m (a small bit of this figure is accepted statistically as sales to tourists coming to events in the UK). However, 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 – in other words, that such tours give British musicians revenues of about £500m. Alternatively, note that, in 2018, just the following seven British acts [grossed enormous revenues from tours](#): 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 sum as stemming from simply from the foreign gigs played by these seven acts: call that £400m, which compares reasonably with our guess of £500m of live exports from all

Chart 14

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 IN SELECTED EVENTS-RELATED SECTORS, 2010-16, £M

Sub-sector	2010	2016	Rise, per cent, 2010-16	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	40.9	100.0

British musicians. 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.

**But 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 blind them to the overwhelmingly positive effect of events. In misguided attempts 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.**

What about exports? It is striking that, since the 2008 financial crisis, UK musical and performing arts events have soared fastest not in domestic GVA, employment and productivity, but abroad. That also chimes with the fact that in Europe and elsewhere, the licensing climate is often more tolerant than it is in this country. Altogether, the statistics imply that **the UK could see events GVA, jobs and productivity 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, the justification for resisting events is actually much weaker than it first appears.

Thinking about what events could do for Britain between now and 2030, the most pressing 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.**

# 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) claimed to have attended an arts event in the previous 12 months. Just as striking is the relatively high proportions of adults who claim to have been to events held around the centenary of the First World War: in 2017/8, 16.3 per cent of English adults said they had attended a local or national commemorative event around WW1, and another 10.3 per cent said they had been to an event marking or remembering the conflict.

**2. PARTICIPATION BY CHILDREN**

Despite the popularity of events, official data that specifically examines participation in them is hard to come by. However, if we look at the involvement of children in events, data on their participation in general sport is plentiful and suggestive. It implies that children, and especially those who are 11-15 years old, are doing marginally less sport than they were about a decade ago, and therefore probably engaging in fewer sports events:

The data is even more vivid in relation to competitive sports, where events are much more at issue than in general sport. Charts 15 and 16 show that over much less than a decade, the involvement in competitive sports events of boys and girls, and especially of

*Chart 15*

Source: DCMS, Taking part 2017/18: annual child report tables, 2018

<b>Percentage of boys and girls doing school sports, 2008/9-2017/8</b>		
<b>Those doing any sport in the previous four weeks</b>		
	<b>2008/9</b>	<b>2017/8</b>
<b>Boys 5-10</b>	86.9	87.1
<b>Girls 5-10</b>	82.0	79.2
<b>Boys 11-15</b>	97.0	91.5
<b>Girls 11-15</b>	94.9	90.3
<b>Those doing any sport in the previous week</b>		
	<b>2008/9</b>	<b>2017/8</b>
<b>Boys &amp; Girls 5-10</b>	74.1	73.9
<b>Boys &amp; Girls 11-15</b>	88.6	81.9

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?

It is not just that being part of 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. There’s a broader issue.

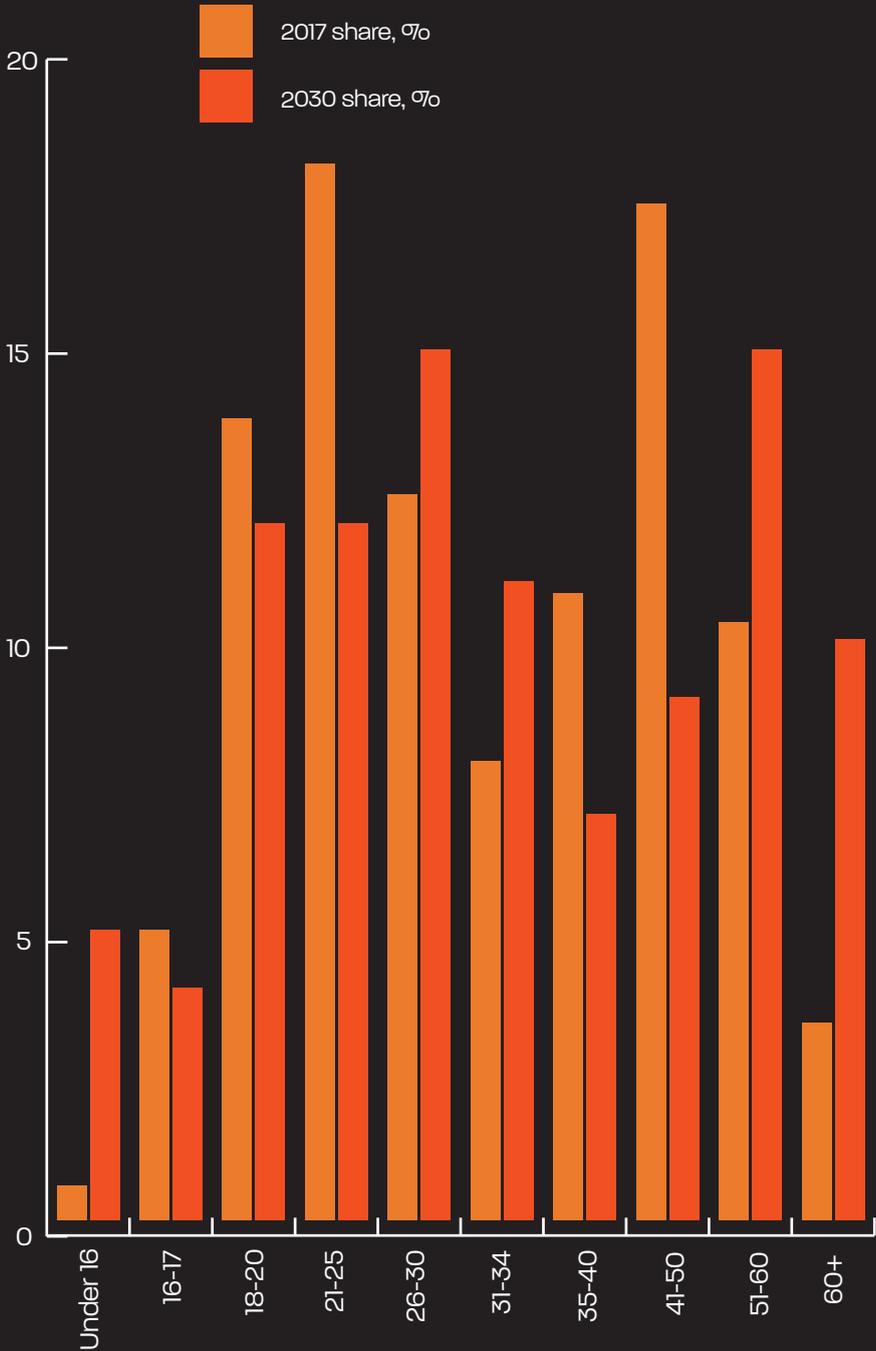
We live in a cultural climate that generally reveres exercise and teamwork, and which pays occasional lip-service, even now, to the skill of leadership. So: it can only be sad that children and adolescents are less engaged in sport, including competitive sport, than in the past. No doubt many causes lie behind the disengagement. But 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,

Chart 16:

Source: DCMS, *Taking part 2017/18: annual child report tables, 2018*

<b>Percentage of boys and girls doing competitive school sports, 2011-2017/8</b>		
<b>Those playing sport in their school in organised competitions (for example, a school sports day)</b>		
	<b>Q1 2011</b>	<b>2017/8</b>
<b>Boys 5-10</b>	66.9	24.8
<b>Girls 5-10</b>	60.6	17.3
<b>Boys 11-15</b>	50.0	30.0
<b>Girls 11-15</b>	30.0	21.1
<b>A sports competition or one-off event outside school</b>		
	<b>Q1 2011</b>	<b>2017/8</b>
<b>Boys 5-15</b>	26.4	21.1
<b>Girls 5-15</b>	10.9	11.1
<b>Played sport against other schools in organised competitions</b>		
	<b>Q1 2011</b>	<b>2017/8</b>
<b>Boys 5-15</b>	38.6	24.8
<b>Girls 5-15</b>	22.0	17.3

Percentage shares of music festivalgoers, by age, 2017 and forecasts for 2030



*Chart 17*

*Source: UK Festival Awards, Market report 2017, 2018. Forecasts for 2030 are indicative only, and are those of the author*

local authorities sold 242 playing fields. According to Department for Education statistics issued in 2019, indeed, 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 outdoor events of every description.

### **3. THE INTERGENERATIONAL NATURE OF INFORMAL EVENTS**

Managed right, events can and do appeal to all ages. Indeed, the view taken of, say, music festivals by some – that they are simply large loud events that cater mostly for single men swigging too much beer – is very far from the truth.

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. Moreover, if such participation is taken as a snake, there’s a bulge before and after the life-stage that runs from 21 to 25 years old – that of students; but the snake also has a bulge before and after 41-50 years. Indeed, if we simply age the bulges by 11 years in the belief that they will still be loyal to music festivals 2030, and also factor in the recent trend toward ‘family-friendly’ music festivals, the demographics of music festivals in 2030 may prove even more balanced than they are today. Chart 17 gives a rough forecast of the ageing process.

### **4. PROSPECTS**

While adult participation in informal cultural events could well keep on increasing, 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, perhaps even slightly 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, just as events alone can't produce urban regeneration, so they cannot by themselves produce 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 fairly contends that, while any study of a city 'can never be developed in purely cultural terms', event-management entities 'are often criticised for adopting a predominantly economic approach to events which aims at reaping short-term profit, more often than not neglecting the medium and long-term benefits that events may bring to local communities'. Gonçalves is also entirely accurate 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' – and when she agrees that the early integration of local communities into the running of events makes such events more likely to succeed.

Yet it would be wrong to 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, events can magically deliver cohesion. Truly lasting cohesion comes from a resilient consensus around political ideas, not from being in the moment together at an event. Indeed, since the Brexit referendum, all the signs are that managing the unity of events could become more of test over the decade to come.

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 GIVING LOCAL AUTHORITIES INCOME**

Chapters two and four of this White Paper 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.

As local authorities are forced to earn more of their keep themselves, so they may come to regard events not just something to be endured, but as useful sources of income. Since they are also now required to prepare a formal investment strategy at least once a year, council initiatives around events, and the returns they reap from them, will be more public, and more publicly accountable.

That's a good thing. It means that local authorities will be able to review each other's successes and failures, and learn from them. It will mean that successful local authority innovations around events can be learned from nationally. For example, in turning a large local prison into a business park, Rutland County Council was clever enough 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 B2B 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 Local Government Association (LGA), one of the 'key learning points' from Rutland's exercise is simply this: 'Be brave'.

In the future, councils will need daring everywhere if they are to use events to help diversify their sources of income.

## **2. EVENTS WILL BREATHE NEW LIFE – AND MONEY – 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 between 10,000 and 50,000 participants to each event. Straight into local authority coffers, the company pays rates of up to £5 per participant (up to more like £8 for a weekend visit). UK festival companies, then, pay local authorities an average of something like £50,000 per event.

Now take just 800 of Britain's annual total of 1000+ festivals as being staged on land owned by local authorities. That gives UK councils an annual total minimum of £40m 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 £40m 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 like London's Haringey Council hires out green spaces to event organisers to the tune of £1m, a year, over perhaps 10 events. The UK has more than 400 local and unitary authorities. Therefore, if not just one or two dozen urban authorities, but a full 100, quickly geared up to match the performance of Haringey and other councils in the realm of events, that would give British local government total revenues of £100m. A local authority like London's Haringey Council hires out green spaces to event organisers to the tune of £1m, a year, over perhaps 10 events. The UK has more than 400 local and unitary authorities. Therefore, if not just one or two dozen urban authorities, but a full 100, quickly geared up to match the performance of Haringey and other councils in the realm of events, that would give British local government total revenues of £100m. This kind of money could make a significant contribution not just to keeping green spaces in good condition, but also keeping streets swept and local rate rises suppressed.

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 – innovative events spread to even more councils, local government might be able to offset its funding hardships by £200-300m.

That's not to be sniffed at. But perhaps an equally important point is that revenues from events in urban green spaces represent, even now, 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 from green spaces to fund those activities (what policy wonks call 'hypothecation'). Yet local authorities could do much more to convey to residents the size of the cash cushion local government already obtains from events – a cushion that, by 2030, could make a significant contribution not just to keeping green spaces in good condition, but also keeping streets swept and local rate rises suppressed.



*Back in early 1960s America, the renowned writer and urbanist Jane Jacobs (1916-2006) saw 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....”***

*Jacobs, The death and life of great American cities [1961], Jonathan Cape edition, 1962, pp 107, 109, 110*

### **3. INFORMAL EVENTS WILL HELP REVITALISE 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 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 will form a vibrant 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 retailers to reinvent themselves to fight a new and very different war. Retailers 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* should 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 and Wi-Fi that works.

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 human beings – musicians, singers, dancers, DJs, science demonstrators, teachers, sports people, fitness trainers, debaters, painters, poets, cooks, jugglers, clowns – retailers and city

centre managers can make shopping hubs into destinations that are more compelling and memorable than those of the past. The idea: to persuade individuals and families that their journey into the city centre is worthwhile, because half a day there will include live attractions which are unavailable on social media, TV or the Web, and which 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 money could be spent on, say, new spaces for events – let alone how much money Edinburgh will spend on bringing informal events more firmly to the centre of its mainstream, year-round retailing.

Taxes on tourists may not be the most effective way to fund a major reorientation of the country's High Streets toward informal events. The best result would be for them 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, Birmingham. On tomorrow's High Street, indeed, there might even be room for book-and-walk-in flight simulators. Already a main road off Putney High Street, 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 they want to see the shops there 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 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 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 in the capital, 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 closely 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 of accommodation.

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 for certain do 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 city 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, MORE OF 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 the 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 to capture the tourist pound.

Of course, events-based tourism doesn’t just benefit big cities. In golf, the 2018 Open Championship at the small coastal town Carnoustie, generated £120m for the whole Scots economy, with half of the 172,000 spectators coming 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 Stonehenge on the map among fans in Italy, Latin America and Thailand. Yet it is urban tourism that’s most underpinned by events. Here are four examples:

1. *Hull’s year as 2017 EU City of Culture* attracted no fewer than 5.3m people to more than 2,800 events, cultural activities, installations and exhibitions. That programme also pulled in £1bn of investment and perhaps £300m of tourism. An evolving 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 may, in an intriguing move designed for

*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*



the early 2020s, elect to combine their own city of culture year with a major sporting event. Already, with the same daring eclecticism, the city centre will this summer host a 50-piece symphony orchestra from Opera North playing the soundtrack of 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 with a programme

for culture that would celebrate '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 to give a substantial uplift to domestic and international tourism. They establish cities as brands in the minds of potential and actual first-time visitors (Hull),

strengthen city personalities by innovating new combinations of events (Leeds), and consolidate 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. But in some ways, it's hardly needed, for many foreigners studying in the UK are naturally likely to build up a fondness for their 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 are older, events give cities the chance to capture overseas students' loyalty for life.

Yet between now and 2030, there are no guarantees that overseas students 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 numbers of overseas students 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, are also likely to feel that more stigma attaches to their visit..

So, if cities like the boost to tourism that events can offer, the two face tough markets for tourism in future. All the world's major cities have long engaged in inter-urban competition, and have long used events as a weapon in this. Now the struggles look like getting a lot more desperate.

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: BOTH CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY**

When a music festival means camping in the countryside, few fans really quarrel with the difficulty of getting to it or getting home from it. However, when informal events are more urban, and are designed to be visited and returned from all in one day, public transport becomes very important – especially because parking near an event can be prohibitive.

***“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 level of vibrancy of a city’s culture.***

***“Events are good for trade and business, but they also publicise a city 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**

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 frequently ill-served by public transport. That will be a continuing, most likely 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 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 the app'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 controversy, around events as elsewhere. But at the London Film Festival, London Fashion Week and the South by Southwest Conference and Festivals (SXSW), Austin, Texas, minivans put on by the festivals themselves provide people with transport. In the future, cities, towns and boroughs will probably buttress 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.

Altogether, transport for informal events will, like transport generally, become more of a political hot potato as we move toward 2030. At the same time the transport of event *equipment* is likely to become more problematic. The technologies of live entertainment and sport look set to become more extensive and expensive in future. Everyone around informal events will have to think through the logistical challenges here.

Despite all this, transport to and from events is not just a challenge, but also an opportunity. Events increase demand for transport, giving transport the opportunity to develop, and so make a difference to overall audience satisfaction. Even the humble 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. 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, and, looking toward 2030, for a congestion-busting, vibrant but 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.**

**“In the future, Crossrail and its newbuild successors will run overnight, and, as London’s old tube lines get refurbished, so by 2030 they’ll likely join the five Night lines in working Fridays and Saturdays.**

**“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: more people on the street at night, because of vibrant nightlife, can make it safer than an empty street.”**



**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 important to Glasgow. We have many agencies and volunteers who act as a team across the city to deliver a great night-time experience for everyone, and partnership around keeping our city safe is at the centre of that. We all work well together.*”**

***“Often, part 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***



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

***seen the success that Taxi Marshalls have brought: they’ve ensured safer waiting areas for cabs, and have shortened the time to get home for many. 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 the 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 home. 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 as we move through the next decade?

To make a difference to CO2 emissions and to 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 cars 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 more exotic automotive technologies previously touched on, will barely affect informal events, the technologies of electricity generation, air quality, noise reduction and litter removal give more grounds for optimism.

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 aluminium towers, seven metres tall, capable of stripping the air surrounding them of particulates. Similarly, London, Glasgow and Watford have adopted CityTrees – four metre high outdoor walls of moss that remove nearby dust, nitrogen dioxide and CO<sup>2</sup>. 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, technology is moving ahead in the domain of litter removal.

It is important to realise that the amount of waste generated by informal events, while some-

times problematic at local level, is likely to be very modest compared with year-round national figures for waste in the UK. Chart 18 gives those figures.

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



Chart 17 shows that, at a national level, everyday household waste is much smaller than business waste, and that packaging and plastics waste are, relative to other forms of waste, smaller still. So, the national impact of waste from informal events is probably negligible – even if the detritus left after, say, a music festival can be a real pain.

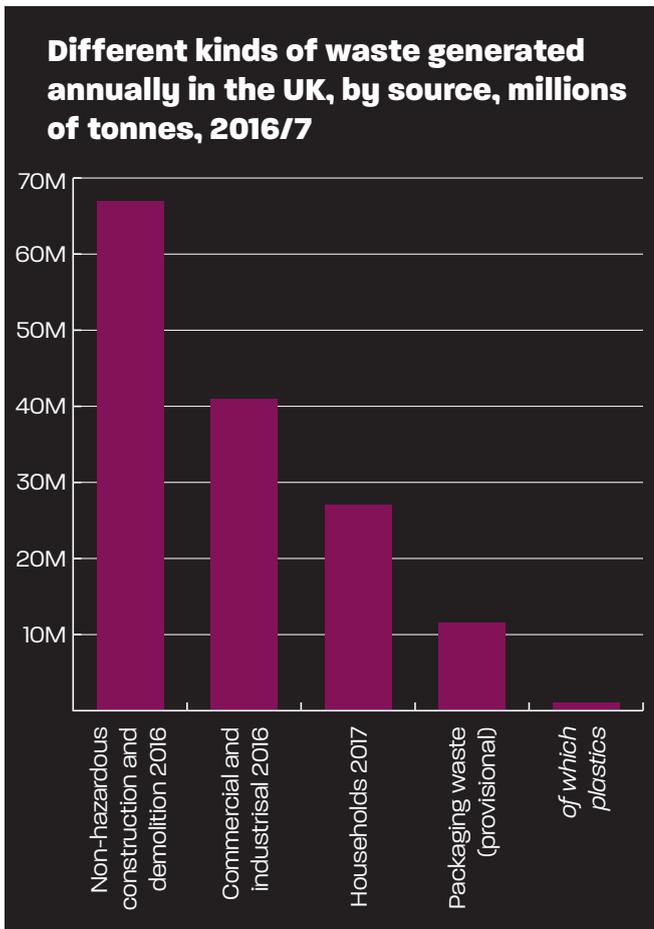
Still: how should informal events deal with that detritus? Take plastics. With that material, it might be easy for event organisers to signal virtue by adopting the United Nations Global Plastics Platform, backed by the elite World Economic Forum (WEF, Davos), or by teaming up with WEF, Coke, Pepsi and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

True, these biochemical techniques may be rather long and dear in commercialisation. That 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 technological approaches seem to us more pragmatic than endless moralising to eventgoers about their environmental misdeeds at events. And until inexpensive waste technologies arrive, there's another, very simple fix that improves matters: feature more litter bins on-site – bins that are cleared frequently enough for them not to overflow.

Chart 18

Source: DEFRA, UK statistics on waste, 14 February 2019



### 8. IT AS AN IMPROVER OF EVENTS, NOT AS 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 guarantee that more personal 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 is also likely to move into 'events' that, one way or another, are based on Virtual Reality.

Yet in fact the relationship between IT and informal events, like that between IT and many other social phenomena (for example, transport), only very rarely turns out to be 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, IT will play a big role in helping organisers of informal events up after they are over, helping people get more out of them.

Already social media help popularise events before they occur. Then 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 advent of fifth-generation mobile networks, or 5G, will allow incidents to be reported to the authorities, and alerts to

signalled to audiences, more effectively.

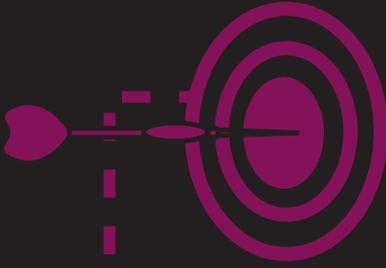
In stage performance, the use of screens, lighting and lasers will obviously be the subject of continuing innovation. What, however, might turn out to be more significant to live acts as we move toward 2030 is a recent IT advance in Japan. There, Chiba university has now made a long-awaited hardware breakthrough that enables 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

*A Chinese policewoman uses sunglasses with built-in facial recognition*



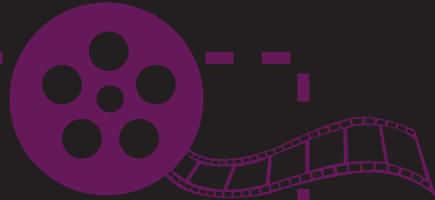
## How IT has already created new kinds of events



### 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.*

*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.*

#### Box 4

*How IT has already created new kinds of events*

## 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 onto a wristband*
- 6** A wider selection of beers
- 7** A wider selection of cocktails
- 8** A wider selection of wines

*Chart 19*

Source: UK Festival Awards, Market report 2017, 2018

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.

With audiences, IT will both complicate and perhaps enhance acoustics. More 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 the voice-operated interfaces as the popular default means of controlling 'smart speakers' and, most relevantly for events, mobile phones may pose difficulties for concert-goers. These are problems and opportunities for the future. Right now, however, it is striking that basic IT provision at informal events still needs to be got right. At the moment, as Chart 19 shows, Wi-Fi, different ways of paying for things and phone charging are among the changes that those going to music festival bars would most like to see.

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, while 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 in 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 those who go to events that their data and their privacy are safe.

# Chapter

**er 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.

Local councils grant Premises Licences. While councils are required to publish a Statement of Licensing Policy at least every five years, so as to anticipate issues and guide 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 local authority'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 being able to be supplied with and to 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 no fewer than 75,000 words.

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

### **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 the Licensing Act 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.***

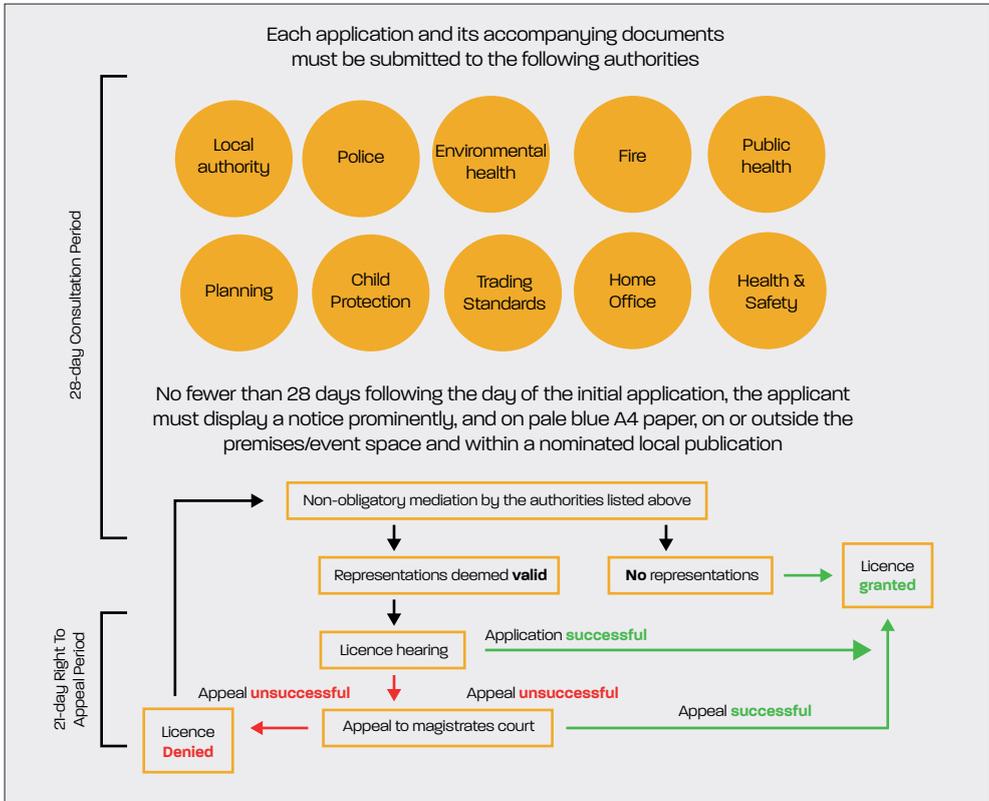
***“But there are other benefits to be had, too. Creating vibrant events and experiences in town centre locations can also boost wellbeing, improve mental health and help tackle social isolation.***

***“Of course, councils have to make sure that the benefits 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**



The diagram above gives an overview of the parties and processes that surround the submission of a Premises Licence Application

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 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 unnecessarily lengthy 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’ of it. The issue, rather, is getting regulations right 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 in some cases 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 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, 360 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 the avoidance 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, also 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 something that is also something to be considered.

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 around a table with the relevant authorities sooner rather than later. This matters also in relation to Safety Advisory Groups (SAGs) – indeed, if the application is for an event or festival, the local authority will often want it referred to a Safety Advisory Group (SAG) at least six or 12 months before the event or festival takes place. 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 to are likely grow in significance and, perhaps, controversy. The list below 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

#### **BOX 3: 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

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 real risk actually being realised out of proportion with that risk's likely prevalence.

The actual prevalence of realised risks is crucial. Rules for everyone at events cannot be organised around a vanishingly small proportion of actual incidents. Everybody can be run over by a car, but few propose to end driving as a result. What is important is not to rush to glib recommendations, but to scrutinise the character and exact number of the incidents. 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 the major biomedical databases and conducted by Cambridge health specialists Cairiona Callan and Adrian Boyle, looked at 15 studies.

Though the quality of evidence in the studies was poor, they were revealing. Three found increased rate of violence after implementation of the Act, five found no significant change and seven found a decrease. Among nine papers about the distribution of violent incidents by time, no fewer than eight said that such incidents have 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 run them.

Britain needs a similar 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*

**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.”***



**Cornerstone Barristers'**

# **Philip Kolvin QC**

Now, 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, wider forebodings about the risks of the future, however much they are justified or keenly felt, can easily spill over to visceral apprehensions about events in the present.

#### **4. A CAREFUL LOOK AT CRIME STATISTICS**

Informal events, particularly those around musical sub-genres like grime, dubstep and drill, have had plenty of bad publicity. Yet while some legitimate worries have surrounded crimes and misdemeanours at such events, there's also a need to delve carefully into the statistics that relate to general 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.

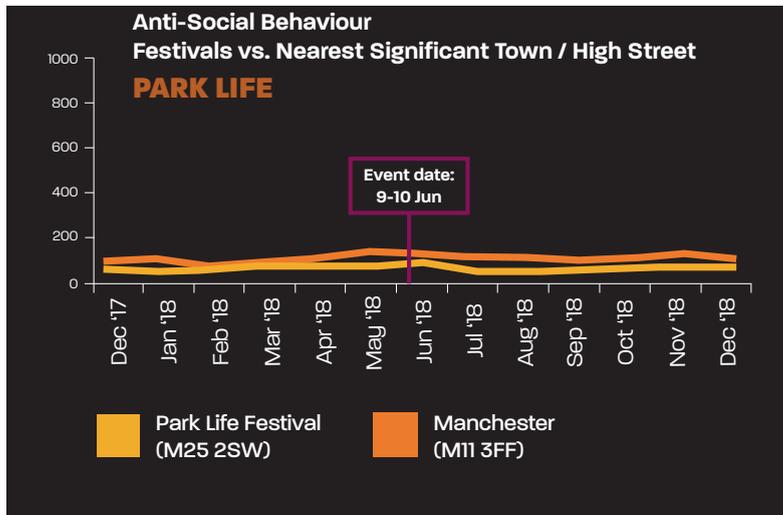
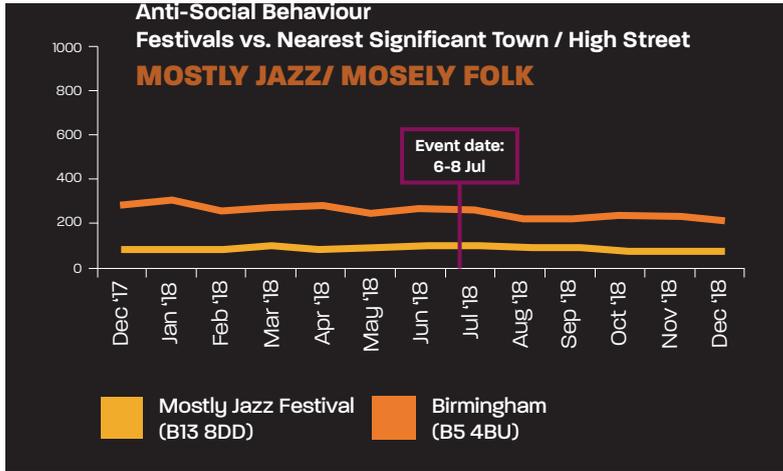
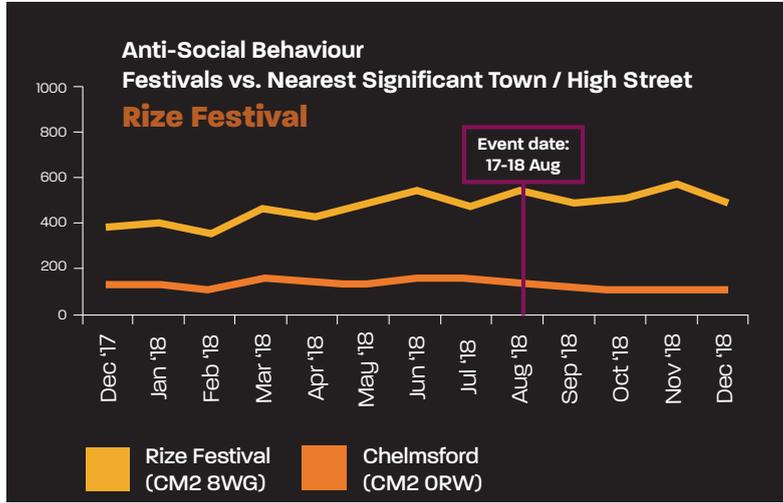
First, in Chart 19 on the next page, we present data from the Home Office, sourced from [data.police.uk](http://data.police.uk) using [ukcrimestats.com](http://ukcrimestats.com). The data concerns the monthly number of recorded crimes for England and Wales between the start of 2014 and the end of 2018. In each year, Chart 19 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. On the other hand, to give an unvarnished picture of informal events, we have included violent crime, anti-social behaviour, criminal damage and arson, 'other theft', vehicle crime, public order offences, drug offences, theft from the person, 'other crime', thefts of bikes and 'other theft' and weapons offences.

Now, over the five years between 2014 and 2018, a certain acceleration in the monthly number of recorded crimes does appear to take place in the May-October period in the case of violent crime, anti-social behaviour (ASB). In the case of criminal damage and arson, as well as vehicular crime, peaks tend to be reached around October; but with violence, ASB, other theft and public order offences, the key month seems to be July. This seasonal effect is visible on a gently

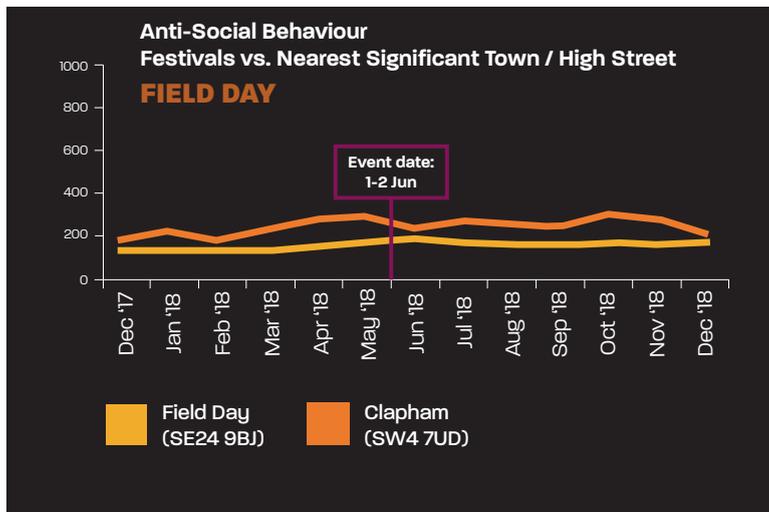
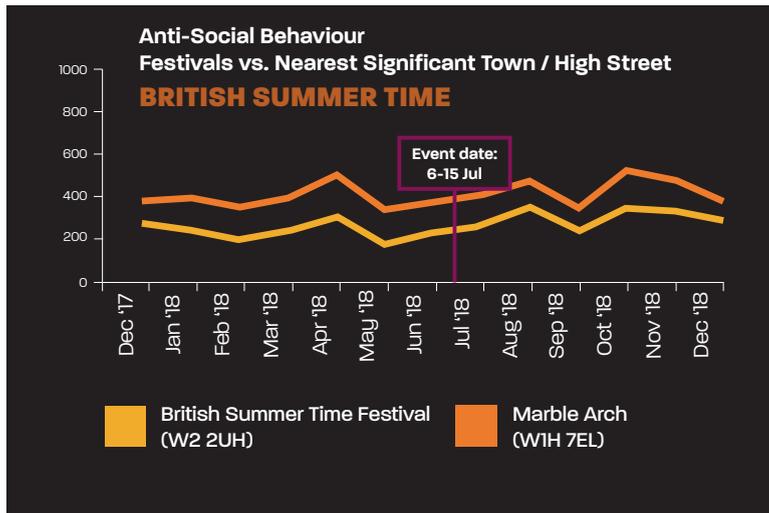
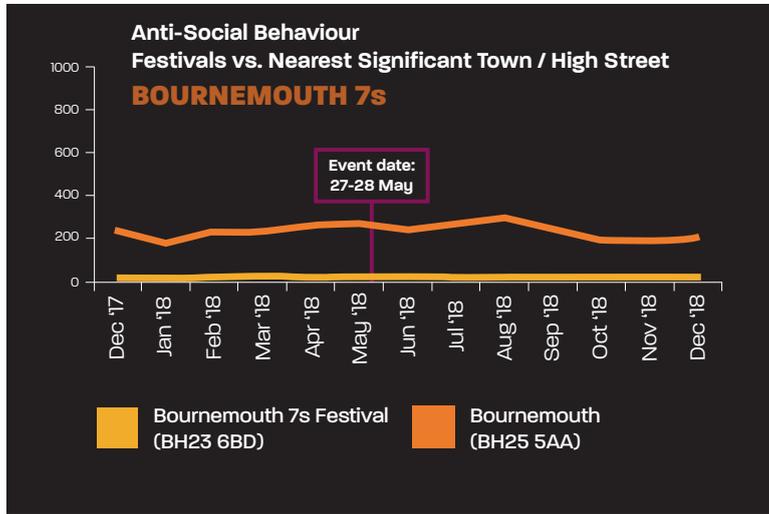
Charts 20–22

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



Charts 23–25

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



rising plot, 2014-2018, for most categories of reported crime. In the case of violence and public order offences, it occurs on more steeply rising plots, but with ASB, the overall trend has been downward.

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, to say the least.

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 tells in favour of 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 that we are here dealing with recorded crime. The overall rising trends shown in the chart may relate not just to a rising incidence of crime, but also to a rising proclivity, not just on the part of the public to report it, but 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 reflect changing attitudes to the category. On the other hand, how do we explain the perceptible rise in public order offences? One might be perplexed, given the relative absence of serious riots, strikes and other disturbances in the past five years, at that rise; but when we recall that sections 4 and 5 of the Public Order Act are about the perpetrator's intent to cause fear and provocation, and the victim's feelings of alarm and distress, it's clear that a growing public willingness and ability to make reports of offensive behaviour, hate

crimes, abuse and the like have probably brought about much of the rise in public order offences since 2014.

Last, we need to remember what is 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 incidence of crime per capita a more modest, if still regrettable, phenomenon.

Altogether, it's impossible to strip out a distinctive 'festival effect' operating to increase crime in England and Wales. This applies both to the 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. That recorded crime in England and Wales seems to curve modestly upward, 2014-8, and especially from May to July in each of those years, can barely be correlated with festivals, let alone be said to have been caused by them.

To investigate further, we now move on to examine a fairly arbitrary selection of specific informal outdoor events in England, comparing the incidence of ASB within a quarter-mile radius of the postcode in which these events are held with the ASBs occurring within a quarter-mile radius of 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 20 to 25 record the pattern of crimes over the whole of 2018, as well as the particular month in which each festival took place.

On the face of it, V Festival, Chelmsford, held in August, is a musical event that's possibly associated in some way with some of the 100 extra ASBs 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 gets in August is probably as much to do with time and place as it is to do with V Festival.

Mostly Jazz/Mosely Folk, held in Birmingham, held in July, makes no impression on ASB figures.

For Parklife, Manchester, held in August, the postcode at which the music festival is held boasts an even lower incidence of ASB than the nearest High Street. In August, ASBs in the festival district are

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 is bothered by virtually no instances of ASB.

British Summer Time, Hyde Park, London, held in July, is a music event that appears to have no impact on ASB. Year round, Marble Arch is more prone to ASB.

Field Day, Clapham, London, held in June, does seem to approach the number of ASBs occurring in the nearest High Street during that month, but the inflexion is very, very modest.

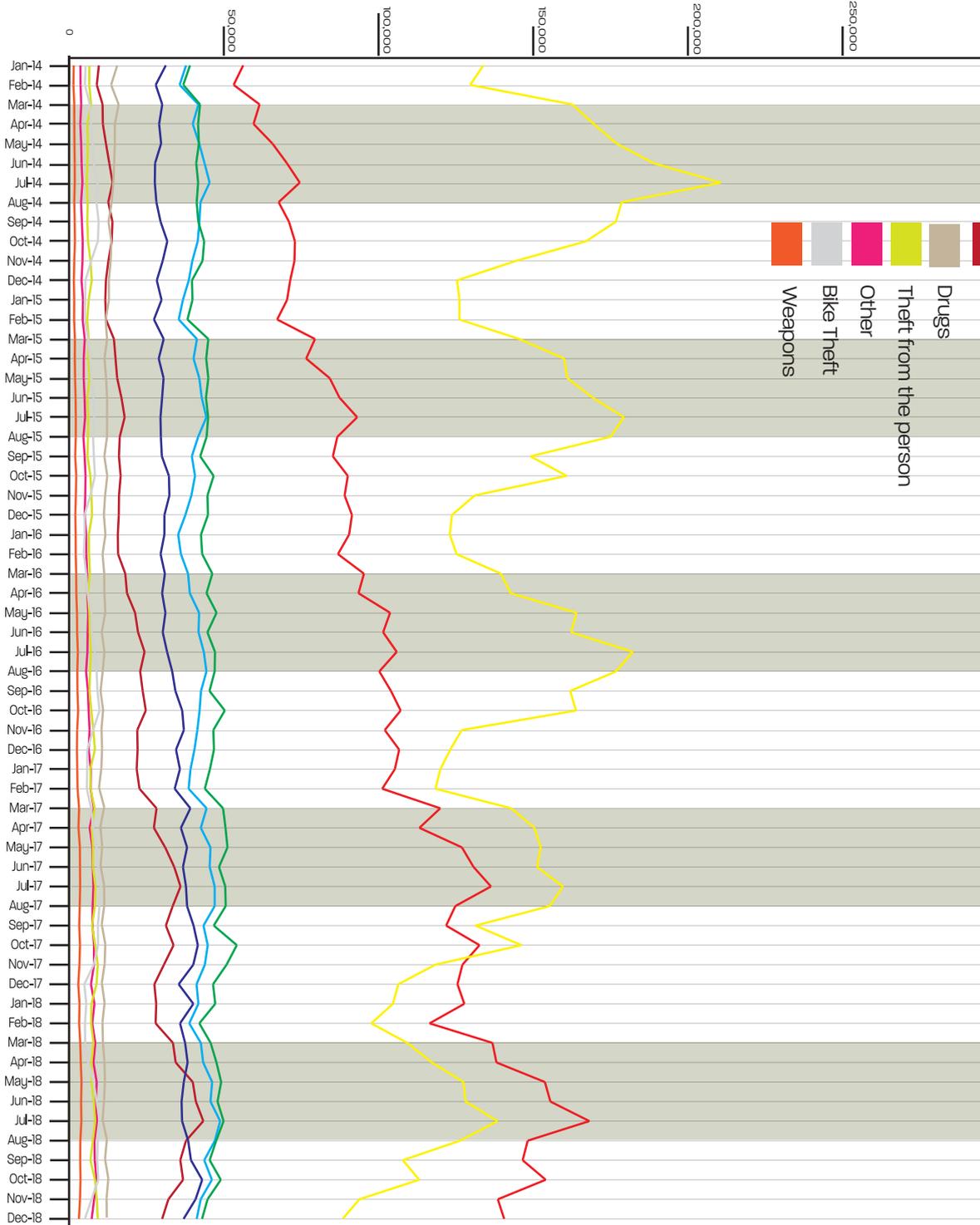
Altogether, these charts make only a very weak case, or next to none, in favour of the idea that outdoor informal events have a palpable and negative effect on local rates of ASB.

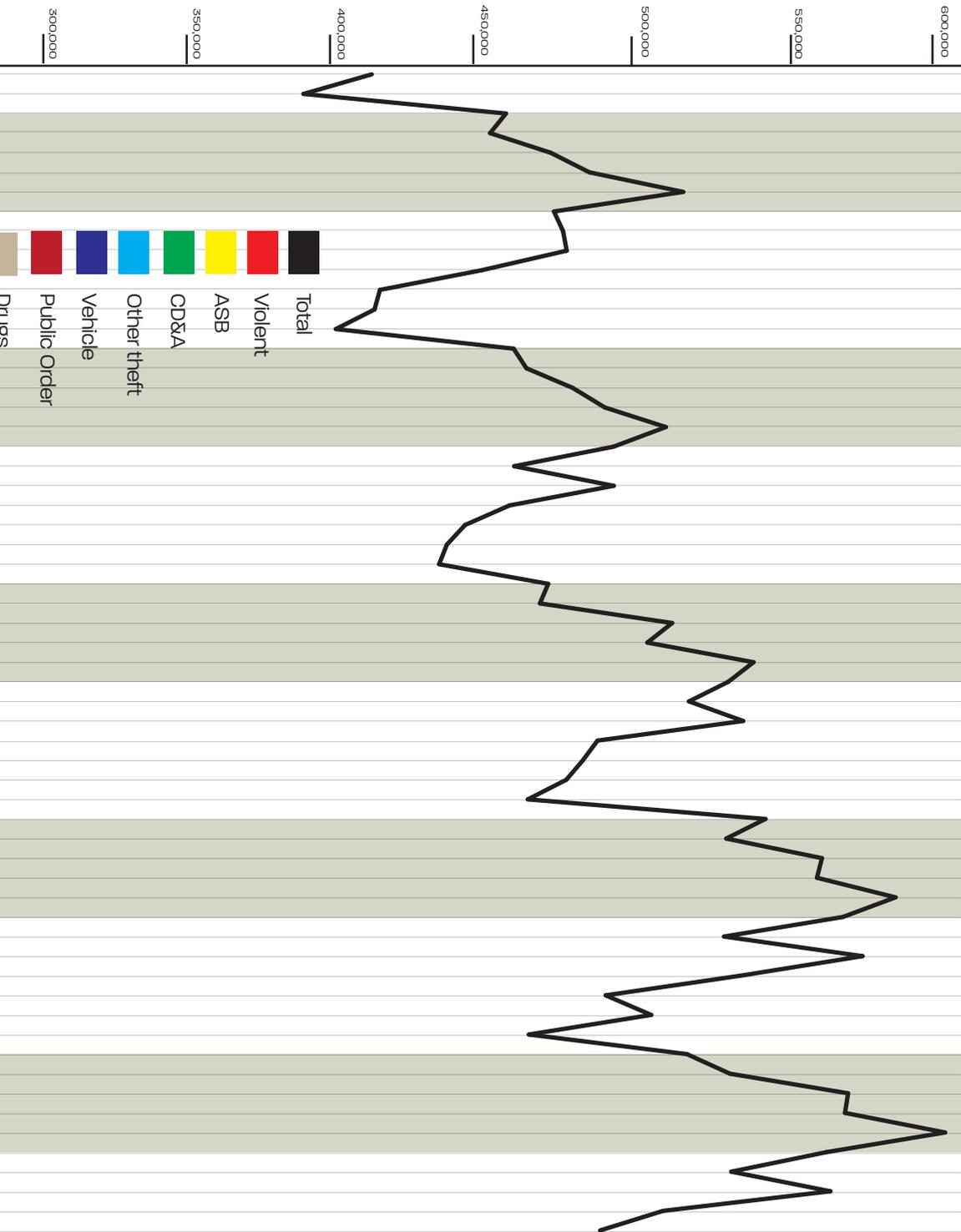
Of course, people at informal events aren't all angels, and one cannot be starry-eyed about them. It is true that alcohol, like illegal drugs, is psychoactive – even if served in a Church. As such, alcohol may increase risks. This White Paper therefore fully supports, for example, a tough line against underage 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?

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 – or, we add, from brandishing crime statistics in a cavalier manner. Nowhere is this clearer than around the increasingly politicised discussion on alcohol and drugs.





Reported crime, England and Wales, by type relevant to outdoor events, 2014-2018; grey tints for each May-October season

### 5. EVENTS, ALCOHOL, DRUGS – AND GANGS

Historically, it is remarkable how much prejudice has been mixed into the formation of British public opinion on alcohol. Once, it was felt that the changed character of the workplace, in which workers were ‘under less supervision and discipline’, made them ‘more constantly open to the temptations’ of pubs (Philip Snowden MP, *Socialism and the drink question*, Independent Labour Party, 1908, p66). Today, 111 years on, **it could be argued that the decline of deference, the rise of student numbers and the rise of social media makes young people more constantly open to the temptation of getting drunk or stoned at clubs and music festivals. Such sweeping statements about contemporary societal trends, though, do not convince.**

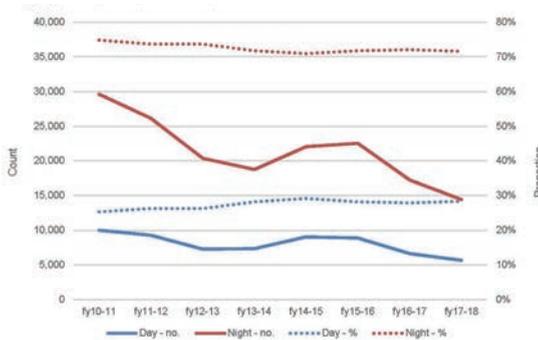
The evidence rarely supports them. Take London at night. It is true that alcohol-related recorded offences run at about 4.3 per cent of offences at night, against only 2.5 per cent during the day. Worse: at night, half or more of those kinds of offences are violent. Yet for general recorded crime in London, the proportion that is violent at night is the same between 6pm and 6am as it is in the day. In fact, 57 per cent of violent crimes in London happen in daytime, and only 43 per cent at night. More important, **between 2010/1 and 2017/18, night-time alcohol-related offences in London fell for all boroughs, by an astonishing 51 per cent, from just under 30,000 to about 14,400.**

## CHART 26

Yet right away it must 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, it is widely [suggested](#) 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 can be said to be vulnerable in the first place, and just how much does that condition increase with alcohol? If the Licensing Act rightly demands, of event organisers, oversight and stewardship of alcohol use, common sense also tells us that personal character and personal experience with alcohol in the past are important factors that affect people’s 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?



Source: Metropolitan Police

*“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 ensure the vibrancy of 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

***“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 vibrant night-time economy is a key part of our urban culture. Indeed, all live entertainment events, large or small, tend to nurture 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 acceptable to local communities. To succeed in that, everyone around licensing needs to search, relentlessly, for joint solutions that are themselves creative.”***



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

# **Daniel Davies**

In Britain we have reached a point where more and more elements in society interpret every development in line with their own preconceptions, and those preconceptions alone. Take young people and alcohol in general. In its latest report on [adult drinking](#), the Office for National Statistics [suggests](#) that, on their heaviest drinking day of the week, more young men exceed eight units of alcohol than do older men, just as more young women go over six units than do older women. But the ONS also [suggests](#) that the proportion of British 16-24 year-olds who report that they don't drink at all, which stood at 19.0 per cent in 2005, rose to 22.8 per cent by 2017.

**In events as elsewhere, there's an urgent need to take a balanced view of young people and alcohol. Earlier, we contended that future recessionary trends might cheapen the market for events just as much as they broaden it. Similarly, if alcohol consumption among British youth continues to decline, there could be a race to the bottom among event organisers. 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, eight-or-six-units-and-more men and women.**

That's certainly possible. But is it inevitable? **Are we really saying, in 2019, that all the professionals around informal events in Britain, with all their experience and ingenuity, will only be able to prevent mass inebriation at them through draconian measures and laws? Might it not be the case that abstinence from drink turns 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?**

**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. That is why, with drugs at events as with alcohol, the right future lies not in media-worthy 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 on site, and spreads the word about their results to emergency services, event staff on site and, where appropriate, to the wider public – through on-site signage and social media. At events, it also gives eventgoers advice on reducing the harms associated with drugs and alcohol, and works with paramedics and security staff to help those eventgoers in need

*“Those active on licensing within 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 at the outset. Event organisers should be liaising with 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, establish the 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

Third, **councillors will need a firmer, fuller grasp of the licensing process – not least, through formal training.** In 2018, 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 in knowledge, education and standards around licensing, not only regarding police licensing officers but [also] around the licensing committee members’.

About police training, the Select Committee 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, it should be possible for all sides in the event licensing process to understand each other, and to agree fewer but better conditions on each license. 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 in balancing up all the factors around an event – something which is, as we have seen, required by the law when assessing any event's likely impact.

***“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

*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*



*Organiser of music festivals, on partnership: the need to persevere*

# Geoff Ellis

Fifth and last: **all parties around the events licensing process need to work together, in partnership, for a reform of the 2003 Act and a much more coherent and consistent system of licenses – one that clearly takes account of informal events, their benefits, and the need to speed their way through faster, smoother licensing processes.**

In this light, there are three simple reasons why the Act needs an overhaul.

**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.

As we have seen in our look at noise pollution and at IT, acoustics are likely to become a major issue with informal events. Now at present, 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 Safety Advisory Group. 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, raising hackles.

**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 tens of thousands of pounds in legal fees, some event organisers have been known to mount a smokescreen and 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 to the prejudices of a few vociferous residents in the hopes of easy re-election.

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

**Few systems in life, it's true, cannot be gamed in some way or another. But as currently formulated, the 2003 Licensing Act too frequently allows event organisers with financial vulnerabilities to be done down by the recalcitrant. Reform is needed.**

*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 the future, it won't be enough for any council just to respond quickly and sympathetically to applications for event licenses. Events have become too important for that. Councils need to take a proactive stance toward them.**

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

Being proactive is vital. Yet as Aitken observes, a strategy for events is essential. For when a local authority licenses and otherwise assists a particular event, it adopts a *tactic*. However, if they're to prepare properly for 2030, all Britain's local authorities will now need a *coherent strategy with regard to events, plural*.

Nowadays, of course, every job-seeker and every kind of consultant claims to be 'strategic' in their thinking; nobody boasts about being just tactical. Yet that rather skewed vision of capabilities 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], OUP edition, 2007, p74). Of course, events aren't war (though, very rarely, licensing processes can seem to portend it). Yet Clausewitz still has lessons for councils today.

As the old Prussian pronounced of military strategy, so a local authority's strategy with events is both harder to theorise, and more testing of the will, than are its 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*. It's imperative that councils don't take a discriminatory attitude to events, but they should certainly discriminate between them. In what way can each specific event be genuinely helped in its content, organisation, technology or control, but in ways which contribute to wider objectives?

What then should an event strategy consist of? Each local authority is different from the next. However, **one thing common to the best event strategies of tomorrow will be that they cover not over just the next electoral cycle, but the whole period till 2030.**

As it happens, a useful starting point for event strategies can be found in [the World Bank's web pages on urban regeneration](#) – a field by no means identical to events, but certainly relevant to it. The pages contain a World Bank [decision tool](#) for urban regeneration, and also a brief guide on how, within that process, to draw up a [master plan](#) for any particular site.

A master plan for urban regeneration in a single district isn't the same as a strategy for a distinctive series of events in different locations. Yet since, in regeneration, the World Bank's concept of master plans is that each should form 'a conceptual layout to guide future growth and development', and be about 'the connection between buildings, social settings, and their surrounding environments', there is much here for



Carl von Clausewitz (1780-1831). Though Clausewitz's *Vom Kriege* 'seemed outdated' to him, a young Bob Dylan pronounced the old man as in some ways a prophet: from him, one could 'understand a lot about conventional life and the pressures' (Bob Dylan, *Chronicles, Volume One*, 2004, p45). Local authorities should follow Mr Dylan's advice

local authority event strategy to begin from – and obviously to adjust to the world of events, as well as to local conditions.

First, in moving to prepare its event strategy for 2030, the progressive local authority will tap the creativity of all its departments – and of its citizens. It is in the nature of events to involve many considerations. Taking them all into account isn't a chore, but a chance to synthesise a distinctive and compelling narrative around events.

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; local authorities need to know more than ever before how to help bring them about.

Between now and 2030, in what used to be the fairly quiescent world of British politics, great events are no longer excluded. 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.

*“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.”*



*Leader of Glasgow City Council*

# 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 in Britain. It 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**.”***



***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***

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

# John Simidian



# Appendices



## APPENDIX A

### *Fears of The Crowd*

Writers have long given vent to fears of crowds, often basing themselves on 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.

Charles Mackay (1814-1889) is best known for his *Extraordinary popular delusions and the madness of crowds* (1841), and its assault on financial 'bubbles' that attracted legions of speculators. But, away from economics, 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

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



possibility of financial gain, though unmentioned, 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; 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, for Le Bon, 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, it opened in less than two years 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, p1).*

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 Brunel design for the Exhibition hall. 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 regardless of 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**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>NAME, LOCATION</b>	<b>GENRE</b>	<b>REMARKS</b>
1967	Monterey International Pop Music Festival, US	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 and Jethro Tull

<b>DATE</b>	<b>NAME, LOCATION</b>	<b>GENRE</b>	<b>REMARKS</b>
1969	Woodstock, US	Rock	Landmark moment for the peace and hippie movements, immortalised in Martin Scorsese's film
1969	Altamont, US	Rolling Stones	Within just four months after Woodstock, the death of Meredith Hunter at the hands of Hells Angels dissipated many hopes
1970	Glastonbury, UK	Rock	In 2019, 135,000 tickets sold out in 30 minutes
1971	Reading, UK	Rock, then punk, then heavy metal	Started earlier as National Jazz Festival. Second festival in Leeds added, 1999. Audience size, 2016: 90,000

<b>DATE</b>	<b>NAME, LOCATION</b>	<b>GENRE</b>	<b>REMARKS</b>
1979	Bristol International Balloon Fiesta, UK	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 attracted 'tabloid outrage, government hostility and police suppression'
1980-1996	Monsters of Rock, UK	Heavy metal	Held at Castle Donington Park, Leicestershire; re-launched in 2003 as Download Festival
1997	<i>Ibiza Uncovered</i>	Sky One documentary and Virgin CD	Series that bought the party island into notoriety

<b>DATE</b>	<b>NAME, LOCATION</b>	<b>GENRE</b>	<b>REMARKS</b>
2001	Isle of Wight Festival, UK	Rock	The festival, which hosted Jimi Hendrix in 1970, was relaunched in 2001, attracting acts that included Fleetwood Mac and REM
2004	Bestival, UK	Various	By 2010, DJ Rob da Bank's event had attracted 55,000, setting a Guinness World Record for the number of people in fancy dress at an event
2009	Boomtown Fair, UK	Dance/ alternative	Responsible for ground-breaking advances in event production. Now attended by about 60,000

<b>DATE</b>	<b>NAME, LOCATION</b>	<b>GENRE</b>	<b>REMARKS</b>
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 the cost of the most elite accommodation began to move into tens of thousands of dollars

## APPENDIX D

### Cities that have made events work for them

*Tom Hall writes:* Internationally, cities have tried various ways of using events to boost their economies. They've made a particular focus on hotel room revenues and visitor numbers – in each case, covering both consumer and business visitors. Austin, Texas; Tallinn, Estonia; Portmeirion, Wales, and Gothenburg, Sweden have all gone far with event strategies. However, in several cases, local events professionals had to fight hard to be listened to.

Austin's annual conference and festival, South by Southwest (SXSW), is credited with helping to double the population of the city, as well as with helping to attract inward investment from Google. SXSW's economic impact on the Austin economy in 2017 is also reckoned to have been worth nearly \$350m. Austin-based promoter Graham Williams, 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 worked on the inside for a decade just to have a conduit between us and the city to get things done. There's a lot of politics involved."

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."

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.

The quirky backdrop to the cult 1960s television series *The Prisoner*, Williams-Ellis, and Italophile and a visionary, designed and built Portmeirion between 1925 and 1975. His was 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 more than 37,000 visitors to more than 30 venues all around the centre of the town.

The Tallinn festival improves Estonian tourism in more than once. 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 boons have come to Tallinn from its embrace of festival culture. They include recognition from Skype, a local employer that has praised the benefits of 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, Gothenburg and Co. CEO Camilla Nyman says that holding events in the city has been central to its 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) 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 time after WOW, makes use of the various venues surrounding the event, opening up the city for tourism and making way for 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 venue entrance as part of an SEK5bn injection to improve the venue by 2030, is owned by a financially independent foundation. Nevertheless, the recent upswing in Gothenburg's exhibition and congress visitors has made the business case for further expansion irrefragable.

*FKA Twigs at Stay Out West*



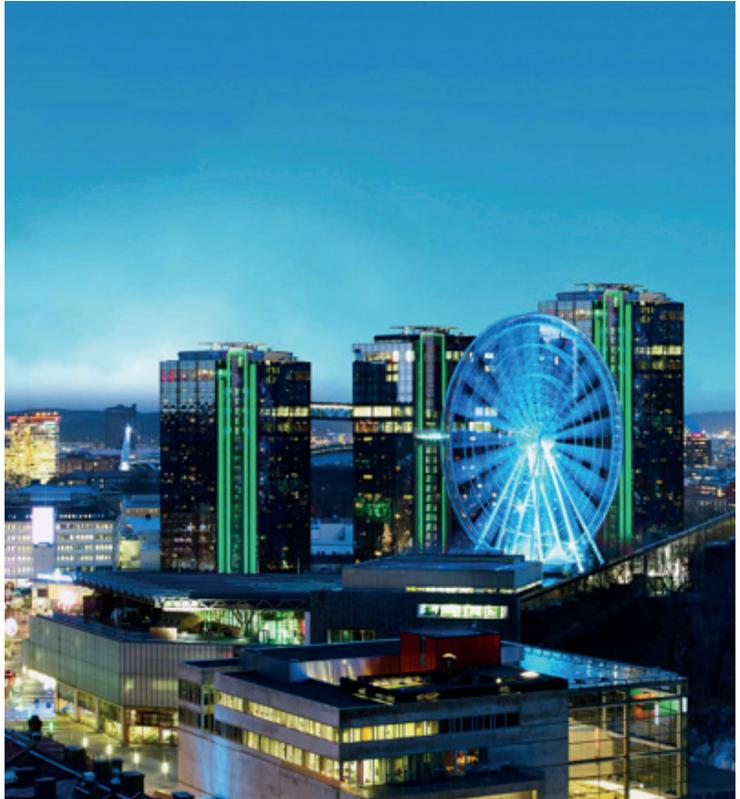
*SXSW festival*



Tallinn Music  
Week



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. 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. Visiting professor of forecasting and innovation at London South Bank University.

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

*Photo: Karen Harvey*

