



Neath Port Talbot Event Strategy 2024 – towards 2035

WELCOME, GROW & THRIVE

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1. Introduction

Neath Port Talbot lies at the heart of South Wales, where east meets west, linking two city regions and surrounded by some of Wales' most spectacular tourism icons. Events and festivals have long been acknowledged to improve the quality of life for local residents and we have the ambition to build a ten-year strategy to deliver a vibrant all-year-round outdoor events and festivals programme across the area, providing the foundations to enable the 'Vision' to be realised.

This Strategy has to be ambitious and transformational and engage collective commitment and generate excitement of all stakeholders. Developed by Neath Port Talbot Council through extensive research, consultation and public engagement the implementation of the strategy, whilst being led by the Council is entirely dependent on the belief and enthusiasm of everyone within the private, voluntary and public sector over what can be achieved and that the challenges can be overcome and resourcing is achievable. The Strategy will look to find new ways to celebrate the amazing place that is Neath Port Talbot, bringing people together to ensure that all communities benefit from events and festivals and invest in projects across the borough.

Demonstrated through its brand values, Neath Port Talbot is a place of contrasts and extreme diversity with multiple assets including beaches, ancient natural and planted woodlands, uplands and river valleys and is home to fourteen sites of scientific interest (SSSIs) and five local nature reserves and country parks. Born out of the mining and steel traditions the people of Neath Port Talbot have a strong sense of belonging and are proud of their part of the Borough with its easy connections to the world via the deep-water port and airport.

Neath Port Talbot has an inherent creativity with an abundance of dance groups, bands, amateur theatre and operatic societies. This creativity will help drive the area forward introducing a wider ranging portfolio of events and festivals which will contribute to building a greater sense of pride in communities in the longer term, generating economic benefits to the area and creating social pride for residents.

As well as bringing additional visitors to the area this Strategy aims to increase the quality of events, attracting higher spending markets and delivering a national and international profile for Neath Port Talbot, highlighting the area as a destination for events and holidays, boosting the local economy and paving the way to growing prosperity and sustainability.

2. Why events and festivals are so important

It is widely acknowledged that the impact of events and festivals on an area is far-reaching, improving not only the quality of life for residents but strengthening the identity and pride of a local community, impacting positively on health and wellbeing and encouraging a greater appreciation of an area's unique natural environment.

Global research has shown that a properly resourced events programme can provide that 'additional reason' for tourists to visit a particular location or choose one destination over another, helping to significantly raise the profile of the 'destination' and deliver substantial economic benefit promoting the area as a vibrant place to visit, invest and create jobs, both directly and indirectly, across a number of creative and supplier sectors.

At a more local level events provide opportunities to spend time with family, friends and neighbours encouraging communities to celebrate what makes them unique and create a sense of pride and belonging through their shared customs, beliefs and values. Offering opportunities for people to get involved in events and festivals by volunteering can help develop skills and enhance employment opportunities

Providing a programme of events in the quieter times of year – e.g. the winter months when accommodation occupancy is relatively low, can help support year-round employment and the encouragement of events in less visited parts of the county can spread the benefits of tourism by supporting local infrastructure, businesses and communities.

Outlined below are the key social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits in staging events and festivals for residents, visitors and businesses:

Social	Cultural	Economic	Environmental
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve health & wellbeing of residents• Foster a sense of community unity and togetherness• Opportunity to participate in local events• Promote inclusivity, diversity & equality• Build skills through volunteering• Enhance civic pride• Stimulate community participation in sporting activities to improve health and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Celebrate cultural heritage & tradition• Foster a sense of community, local pride and cultural identity• Preserve cultural heritage• Introduce new challenging cultural ideas• Foster a culture of imagination and innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attract visitors from a wider geographical area• Enhance national profile• Provide increased employment opportunities• Maximise income generation & visitor spend• Encourage economic growth opportunities by developing local supply chains• Support local businesses• Support the creative sector• Extend the tourism season into quieter periods	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage & motivate event organisers & suppliers to adopt high environmental standards• Make recycling as easy as possible• Educate attendees on eco-friendly practices to protect local ecosystems• Promote sustainable travel options and include Events in any future transport strategy• Use local businesses wherever possible• Improve on-site infrastructure/facilities to reduce impact on environment• Make sustainability a requirement for sponsors & partners

3. Developing this Strategy

The Neath Port Talbot Events Strategy builds on the recently agreed NPT Event Policy outlining our commitment to welcoming event organisers and providing clear guidance and support for holding an event on Council land. It also supports and aligns with other major council and national strategies.

Desk Research

The main focus of desk research was to look at the strategies and plans already in place locally nationally and regionally that reinforce the vital social, cultural and economic role events and festivals can play in delivering a thriving and vibrant place to live, work and visit. This is demonstrated in Diagram 1.

A number of exemplar events across Wales and the rest of the UK were researched to help demonstrate the different opportunities and possibilities that could be developed to create a vibrant all year-round events programme both for social and economic benefit. The Exemplars focused on how successful events can be developed by the community with themes based around the unique cultural and natural environment. A list of these events can be found in Appendix 1 under 11 different themes:

- Fusion Events
- Music Events
- Arts Events
- Food Events
- Community Events
- Sustainability Events
- Craft Events
- Wellbeing Events
- Heritage Events
- Sports Events
- Seasonal Events



Diagram 1



Field Research

The key for a successfully delivered strategy is ownership by the community. We have made the commitment at the earliest possible stage to engage with a diverse range of groups, organisations, neighbouring local authorities, residents, visitors and event organisers to seek their views on what they wanted to see and the challenges in both accessing and delivering existing and new events and festivals. This was achieved through a public questionnaire, workshops and 1 to 1 meetings. The results of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix 2.

This has not been an exhaustive approach. There is a clear need to reach out continually, seek feedback and engage and involve more people and groups in the community to support, help develop, create and participate in a diverse range of events and festivals across the Borough and throughout the year.

The key messages from the questionnaire, workshops and 1 to 1 meetings were:

- the importance that events play in bringing the community together, supporting local business, attracting new visitors and celebrating local culture and improving people's quality of life
- the need to see more events spread across the year, in particular on Aberavon Seafront, Margam Country Park, Neath Town Centre and Gnock Country Park
- the need for more frequent public transport, in particular trains in the evening
- the need for improved disability access
- the challenges for event organisers in relation to funding, increased regulatory demands, council red tape, need for more volunteers and experienced staff
- the desire from young people to see events that are connected to Welsh traditions and celebrations
- the need for the use of more relevant social media platforms
- the need for low cost and free events to help people on low incomes/excluded groups
- the need for a collective approach in developing and delivering events and festivals with neighbouring authorities and creation of a lobbying group for support and funding bids

Aspirational events

The workshops and 1 to 1s highlighted the aspiration for a wide variety of different themed events including special interest, art and culture, community, heritage, beach based and food and drink (see Appendix 3). Some of these events were imaginative new ideas that

were unique and reflected the local heritage and landscape and some were the development of existing events and the adoption of similar themed events across the UK.

Event Classification - Type and Time of Year

We have adopted the classification of events below to focus on the key gaps to be filled and priorities to address based on the research and feedback.

<p>Community Events (CE) These events (usually up to 1000 attendees) are primarily held in local parks, gardens, seafront and civic space and are organised by the community close to the site. Examples include fetes, sponsored walks, fun runs, family fun days etc.</p>	<p>Special Interest Events (SIE) These are events and festivals that attract residents and visitors with particular specialist/niche interests. Examples include vintage car rallies, 10k Run, Half Marathon, Mountain Bike Championships, rugby tournaments etc.</p>
<p>“Our Own Events” (OOE) These are events predominantly for the benefit of the local town/borough residents. They can be small or large in scale (1000+) and they can be added value experience events for visitors. Examples – parades, food and drink festivals, Christmas Switch Ons, Pride, family fun days etc.</p>	<p>Destination Events (DE) These are high profile events and festivals drawing large numbers (5000+) with people coming specifically to take part or spectate in the particular event. They have an economic impact and raise the profile of the area. They would include multiple day music festivals, Eisteddfods, Air Shows, Tour of Britain</p>

Time of Year

New Year	January / February
Spring (inc. Easter Holidays)	March / April / May
Summer (inc. half term and holidays)	June / July / August
Autumn (inc. half term)	September / October
Christmas (inc. school holiday)	November / December

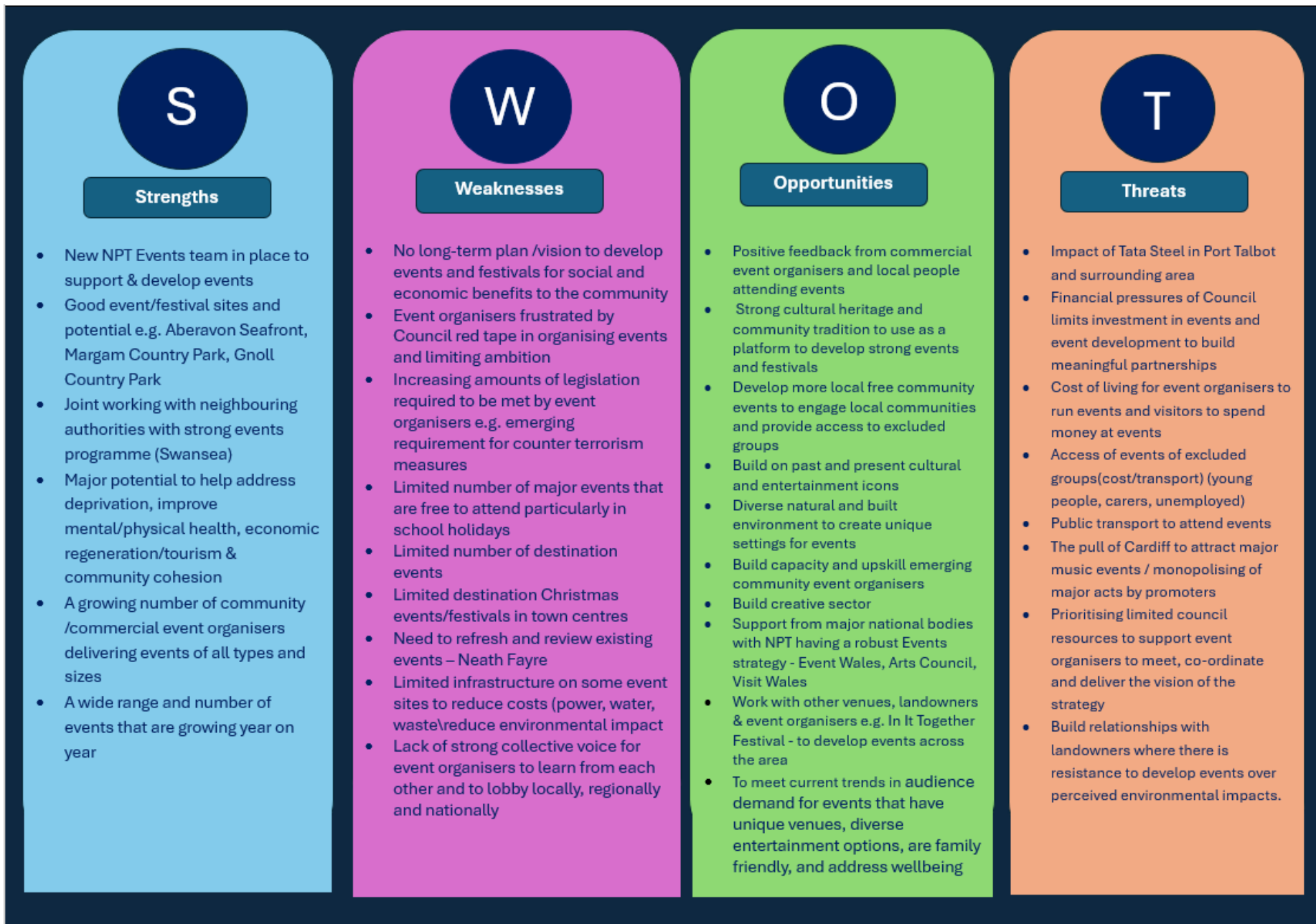
Events in 2024

In 2024 (March – December) there were approximately 93 events and festivals (excluding NPT community events) across Neath Port Talbot and neighbouring authorities. A detailed analysis and breakdown of these events by classification and time of year is provided in Appendix 4.

The key conclusions from the analysis were:

- A reasonable amount of destination events within the region providing strong base to attract visitors and promote the area during the summer and autumn.
- Develop more of the Christmas offer at both regional and local levels for all classifications
- Few Destination events within the Neath and Port Talbot area.
- Develop more of Our Own/Destination events at Margam Park and Aberavon Seafront and secondly Neath town centre including the Gnoll Sport Ground, Gnoll Country Park, Walter's arena and Pontardawe.
- The opportunity to build on 'Our Own' events particularly within the Borough and to develop them to make them more destination events
- The opportunity for the Borough to support existing Destination events organised by neighbouring authorities, e.g. Swansea Air show and the development of a separate but distinctive component during the evening.

The SWOT analysis below has summarised the key points from the desk and field research and provides the development of the 6 strategic interventions that will provide the direction to affect change maximising on the strengths and opportunities and minimising the weaknesses and threats.



4. The Vision – what it looks like in 2035

Our Vision is ambitious. With the collective commitment and passion from the business and public sectors, community organisations, groups and individuals, it can be achieved and will bring significant benefits to people's quality of life and economic prosperity.

It is 2035 and the Neath Port Talbot area is one of the best places in Wales to visit, live and work, with a vibrant diverse and sustainable exciting calendar of outdoor events and festivals that showcase the rich culture, heritage and community spirit. We are a welcoming place where events grow and thrive, all set in a dramatic landscape.

Local communities, businesses, commercial and community event organisers, public bodies, community leaders and champions have come together and have innovatively and creatively promoted, supported, and organised, an all-year-round colourful and vibrant programme of events and festivals.

Their contribution has been recognised in playing a vital role in creating a greater sense of community cohesion, reducing inequality, improving people's mental and physical well-being and driving economic growth. Working with our neighbours in central South Wales the area now has a strong reputation for holding regional, national and international events and festivals

5. Strategic interventions to realise the Vision

Five strategic interventions, shown below, provide the direction to affect change and will challenge existing thinking and practices to achieve the Vision for events and festivals in the Borough. The five interventions do not stand alone but are interdependent on each other and the identified actions will take place simultaneously.

The Five Key Strategic Interventions
1. Fostering collaboration and partnerships
2. Enhance Community Engagement, Cohesion and Participation
3. Innovate and Adapt Events and Festivals
4. Drive economic Growth
5. Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship

INTERVENTION 1: Fostering Collaboration and Partnerships - develop, co-create and plan events

One of the foundations for success in delivering the vision and aspirations of the strategy, with limited resources and capacity, will be to create strong, resilient partnerships and joint working with public and private organisations and community groups at a local, regional and national level. This will enable us to share knowledge, resources and experience to improve the capacity and capability to deliver and market a wide range of events across Neath Port Talbot. Collaboration and partnerships will also enable a strong collective voice to address major barriers and challenges and lobby to affect transformational change. Greater knowledge sharing can also help overcome the perceived risk adverse approach from public sector bodies.

National Partnerships

The development of the Cultural and Heritage strategies and the Destination Management Plan has highlighted good relationships with the Arts Council, Visit Wales, Cadw and Natural Resource Wales. Relationships are also being built with Event Wales, Creative Wales and Sport Wales.

The Priorities

The development of the Event Strategy has identified the need to:

- build on current relationships specifically around how each organisation can help fulfil the aspirations of the Vision to meet their objectives and offer support for a variety of opportunities
- identify forums or groups and engagement opportunities at a national level that will enable promotion of the ambition and vision for the NPT area and any opportunities for collaboration.

Regional & Local Partnerships

At a regional level good relationships are building with neighbouring authorities as a consequence of the development of the Event Strategy. Local and regional partnerships will include neighbouring local authorities, local and regional businesses, promoters and event organisers, educational establishments, cultural and heritage sectors and sports organisations.

The Priorities

- On a regional level more work needs to be done to develop a collective vision for the region. As an example, collaborating with other Local Authorities and landowners such as Swansea and National Resource Wales will present a joined up regional offer to attract national commercial event organisers and international promoters to invest and put on destination scale events in the region.
- Mapping existing partnerships and collaborations will identify gaps in skills, knowledge, resource and delivery capability to put on events. Mapping will also help to identify any duplication of resources so that they may be better targeted and collaborate to greater effect. It will also identify the mutual benefits of working closely together to meet joint objectives.
- Working with local and regional education and training providers for example through the regional learning and skills partnership for Southwest Wales, universities and colleges, will support local skills and talent development within the events sector with a particular focus on business skills, health and safety, sustainability and accessibility.

- Working with local businesses - particularly in the hospitality and retail sectors – working collaboratively to identify ways to support each other in the development of events.
- Working with partners across the industry to identify pockets of excellence and knowledge and develop a programme of mentoring, placements and shadowing in order to facilitate knowledge transfer and upskilling across the sector.

INTERVENTION 2: Enhancing Community Engagement, Cohesion and Participation

Three key areas within this intervention look at how to address limited resources, the need to make planning, delivering and participating in events as simple as practicably possible, with good supportive networks

i. Getting the basics right and reducing barriers

The key message and conclusion coming from both community and commercial event organisers was to improve the application and approval process for events on council land to be as smooth as practically possible. The growing legal health and safety requirements to deliver events can be a significant barrier particularly to community event organisers where organising the event is often not their full-time job.

Our Events Policy now provides a clear guide to what is expected in applying for an event, what the legal requirements are for the type of event/activity being planned and how decisions are made.

The creation of a single point of contact and support from pre to post application through a dedicated Events Team will ease communication between the organiser and different council departments and help the organiser address any significant challenges early on in the application process.

This will provide a good foundation for the second stage of support that is required to further upskill and empower both new and existing event organisers to enhance existing events and festivals and ensure support for the creation of new ones.

The Priorities

Sector led networking forums for event organisers. Event organiser forums have proved an effective way of bringing event organisers, suppliers and content creators together to share experiences, discuss collaboration and ideas and look at how organisers can overcome common challenges and lobby public bodies.

- Pre and post season council organised workshops. These will provide the opportunity for the Events Team to get feedback from event organisers on both what is working and the key challenges being faced. These workshops can also bring in experts in different areas of event planning and event organisers from exemplar events and festivals to advise and support. They would cover the basics (e.g. general risk assessments, and Licensing Act activities) as well as requirements for larger events (e.g. road closures, traffic management arrangements, crowd management tools to assess capacity, site design and management and counter terrorism measures).

ii. Building Volunteering Capacity

One of biggest challenges identified through feedback from event organisers was the scarcity of community event organisers who plan on a limited budget and volunteer themselves to help run the event.

The development and promotion of a comprehensive events volunteering strategy and programme is essential in building capacity and requires understanding the different reasons why people are motivated to volunteer and effectively communicating those bespoke messages to create a personal connection and a sense of purpose.

The Priorities

- Clarify the impact - supporting the community, raising awareness of an issue/cause
- Appeal to personal interests - assign roles that reflect interests/passion and how they can build new skills and competencies
- Create a sense of community - meeting new people, having fun, finding new friends
- Offer incentives - free admission, give public recognition and awards
- Identify champions, community leaders and celebrities to lead and endorse the benefits of volunteering

iii. Celebrating and seeking out a diverse range of talent

Appendix 1 - provides a range of exemplar events and festivals that were referenced during workshops and 1 to 1 meetings as a stimulus for what people in Wales and the UK want to see and get involved in supporting.

The success of these events and festivals is firmly based around enhancing community pride and participation through celebrating the unique culture and heritage of an area and telling that story by showcasing local artists, musicians, performers and people and demonstrating traditional and contemporary skills and crafts.

Engaging local talent in a community event or festival to ensure it reflects the local culture will need to be achieved through collaboration with a range of local and cultural groups and organisations.

The development of the Cultural and Heritage Strategies involved engagement with a wide number of groups and organisations that have knowledge and understanding of the talent and skills within their local communities. We also work with a number of specific groups including young people, minority ethnic groups, and disability groups some of which have already been involved in the development of this strategy.

The Priorities

- Highlighting the talent that is already within the area and engaging with existing events and festivals organised by ourselves, commercial and community event organisers and public bodies (e.g. FE and HE establishments, charities)
- Actively supporting event organisers who already have events that showcase local talent and would like to enhance those existing events or who are looking to introduce a new event. The support would be in many forms and could include:
 - accessing funding streams and advice on resourcing the event and raising funds
 - working with local, up and coming and traditional performers
 - providing ongoing support through the event application process
 - setting up a grant funding programme for new events and festivals and enhancing existing festivals. Funding could come from major business Industry donors.

INTERVENTION 3: Innovating and Adapting Events – leveraging local and regional strengths, showcasing the region

The approach taken for this intervention will fall under a number of different themes:

Showcasing the region.

This will primarily focus around leveraging local and regional strengths and showcasing the region as a vibrant, culturally rich and economically stable destination. This intervention looks at how to find new ways to celebrate the amazing place that is Neath Port Talbot by building unique events and festivals highlighting its natural beauty, history and cultural heritage alongside its iconic and community locations and trails, to attract tourists, businesses, and investors alike.

Adapting existing and creating new events.

Building and enhancing a year-round events programme will entail adapting existing events and developing new events.

The SWOT analysis points towards focusing in the key areas of developing more 'Destination' and 'Our Own' events whilst at the same time building and enhancing a sustainable base of community events across the Borough. It also identified the need to balance the programme across the Borough and in particular the three towns Neath, Port Talbot and Pontardawe.

The Priorities

The initial focus will be on adapting existing events in the short term whilst in the long term building on the aspirations of event organisers to develop new and exciting events.

Further work will have to be undertaken in talking to existing community and commercial event organisers about their ambitions to enhance their current festivals and events and to understand what the current limitations are and the best ways to support them. One example highlighted was the well-established and renowned Pontardawe Folk Festival. Part of the development of new events, whatever their nature and size, will be to support and encourage some of those event organisers to become community event champions, helping other communities, groups and individuals to create new events and develop existing ones.

Curating a wide range of events, working with local groups and organisations, including music festivals, food and drink fairs, cultural celebrations, sports events, nature activities, and wellness retreats that appeal to various demographics (e.g. families, young people, seniors and tourists) will include identifying any ethnic, cultural events and celebrations that have a wide appeal and could be developed to enhance existing events and create new events.

One of the key opportunities is to build on existing action plans within specific strategies where new events are being planned and where a significant destination festival is coming to the area as a one-off event -e.g. The Richard Burton Centenary and Urdd Eisteddfod. Both provide a significant opportunity to leverage the work undertaken in curating and developing a programme around Welsh culture to act as a springboard for the development of further similar events in the future as part of their legacy. Work is already underway to take this forward with the event organisers.

The suggestions below provide a stimulus for ideas for events and festivals that could be developed and delivered over the next 10 years taking on board the themes and further opportunities identified within the workshops and highlighted in the SWOT analysis.

Suggestions for Destination Events

- **Vintage Steam and Gaming Festival** - fusion of industrial past and digital future.
- **Metal Festival** – industrial heritage, heavy metal music, metal crafts & sculpture,
- **Roman Festival** – a programme of re-enactments, music, food, storytelling and performance
- **Splashdown** - 2-day water-themed fusion festival on the seafront (music, water sports, street food,)
- **Festival of Air/Fire & Flight** – e.g. Hot Air balloons, Drones, night air flying displays, fireworks and ticketed music event

Suggestions for Our Own & Community Events

- **Festival of Running** ½ marathon 10k Fun Runs.
- **Rugby 7's Festival** - fusion of Rugby and music
- **Art Trail Adventure** - with giant themed sculptures depicting local iconic symbols
- **'Celebration of Welshness'** – inc. Food & Drink promoting traditional Welsh dishes and local produce, farm-to-table experiences partnering with restaurants & local producers, Welsh music, Welsh icons
- **Multi-cultural Festivals.** E.g. based on concepts of Frome Festival and World Of Love.
- **Christmas events** - pre and post in urban areas. Content could include lighting trials, ice rinks, Christmas markets, parades
- **Dark Skies and Star Gazing Festival**- in the mountains with storytelling walking winter trials, wildlife walks and heritage walks,

Suggestions for Special Interest events

- **Car and motorbike meets** in key urban areas.
- **Vintage Festivals** 50s, 60s and 70s
- **Mind & Body Festivals** – Yoga, meditation, writing, poetry, sport, running, walking, cycling trails fishing, healthy food and diet, beauty therapy
- **Winter Wheels Festivals** – off road cycling, car rallies, off road motorcycling.

Attractive and Flexible Event Spaces

A key part of attracting new events and enhancing and sustaining existing events is to provide venues and locations that :-

- adapt to different types and sizes of events across the year – not just spring and summer
- are more cost effective for event organisers with good infrastructure – e.g. electrical supply for single to 3 phase, standpipes
- have accessible, hardstanding car parks, disabled access, public transport links
- meet new key legislative requirements - counter terrorism and hostile vehicle mitigation measures

The Priorities

A comprehensive survey will need to be undertaken at event locations.

Primary locations for ‘Destination’ and ‘Our Own’ events

- Aberavon Seafront
- Margam Country \park
- Gnoll Country park
- Port Talbot Town centre and transport hub
- Neath town Centre
- Pontardawe town centre / Parc Ynsdedrw

Secondary locations for ‘Community’ events

- Neath Abbey
- Vivian Park
- Neath Sports centre/sports field (Cwrt Herbert)
- Victoria Gardens
- Afan Forest Park

NB: Special Interest Events have not been specifically identified. However, events will vary in size and impact and will base themselves across all different venues or locations sizes and in some cases the event will take place away from the venue – running events, cycling event, triathlon

The survey will be based around whether they are all year-round or seasonal venues, infrastructure in relation to electrical supply, water supply, accessibility (parking- soft or hard standing), public transport infrastructure/disability access, licensing requirements other regulatory and statutory implication e.g. proportionate counter terrorism/ HVM

INTERVENTION 4: Driving Economic Growth - supporting the local and regional creative, tourism, retail and events sectors

One of the key recognised benefits of having a year-round outdoor events and festivals programme is the economic benefit it gives particularly to the tourism sector, retail and hospitality businesses within town centres and the creative and entertainment sector.

Our Destination Management Plan drives the economic benefit of tourism and recognises the need to develop a programme of signature events at Gnoll Country Park and Margam Country Park as well as those sites managed by private sectors and Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and ensure that these sites have adequate infrastructure to support events.

Events and festivals have both a direct and indirect commercial benefit on the area. Direct benefits are through stay visitors, increased spend in hospitality and retail, local contractors' employment, infrastructure, local suppliers/traders at the event, content providers e.g. musicians/entertainers. Indirect benefit is through secondary support businesses, e.g. accountants, solicitors, tradesmen, food suppliers, recruitment agencies, industrial laundrettes.

The specific economic impacts of events and festivals on the NPT area would be through:

- Further investment in local creative industries – providing a platform for the development and showcasing of local talent and creative work such as film/arts/music festivals as well as the opportunity for collaboration.
- Enhancing the unique tourism identity of NPT – focusing on the area's natural beauty, cultural heritage and traditions
- Collaborative marketing campaigns – between the creative industries, tourism, retail and events sectors. Strengthening the brand and collaboration with national and UK agencies – Visit Wales, Visit Britain
- Upskilling and training the local workforce –specific and general skills in event management and marketing. Networking and mentoring.
- Partnerships and collaborations between private sector, local government and community groups to provide efficient ways of resourcing and funding and supporting economic growth.

By integrating these strategies, Neath Port Talbot can create a thriving ecosystem that supports creative industries, boosts tourism, strengthens retail, and maximizes the impact of events. This approach can encourage both local participation and attracts external investment, driving long-term economic growth for the region.

The Priorities

The above strategies are already addressed within the plans for other interventions – with the exception of collaborative marketing campaigns. The main focus of activity is therefore to work with partners to establish a marketing strategy and plan that specifically builds around events and festivals both within Neath Port Talbot and also, where relevant, neighbouring authorities – focused around the ‘Dramatic Heart of Wales’ brand but with a clear theme and message around the area being an eventful place to visit, live, work and play.

INTERVENTION 5: - Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship

Sustainability is at the heart of the Well-being act and policies such as “Our Net Zero Wales Plan” and “Beyond Recycling Strategy” set out how everyone can work towards a more sustainable Wales. In order to achieve the ambition for Wales to produce zero waste and zero carbon emissions by 2050 event organisers will need to proactively plan events to ensure unnecessary waste is prevented and products are re-used. Working with partners across the public and private sectors will enhance connections in the valleys and rural communities.

The Priorities

The approach will be to build on the current event environmental policy to create a long-term programme that moves from ‘desirable’ outcomes to ‘essential’ requirements and create a vision within the policy of where we want to be within 10 years.

- **Local Area** – Look after the local community by reducing the amount of litter, congestion and noise at your event by educating attendees on eco-friendly practices and the importance of protecting local ecosystems.
- **Energy & Water** - Look at inventive and alternative ways to reduce energy and water usage during the event e.g. solar power, cycle power, biofuel generators. Consider charging contractors/exhibitors directly for the power they use as an incentive to keep usage to a minimum.
- **Responsible sourcing** – support local businesses by using them to provide services and products during the event where possible
- **Transport** - Include events in any forthcoming transport strategy. Promote sustainable travel to the event, including walking, cycling and public transport. Consider promoting the use of any existing schemes e.g. bike hire.

- **Waste** - Only buy what equipment is really needed for the event and reuse or borrow where possible. Utilise biodegradable products and use green catering services where possible to reduce food waste. Ensure that any 'keepsakes' /freebies are valued so not quickly thrown away and that they are recyclable.
- **Paperless** - go paperless and discourage use of leaflets and handing out of paper promotional materials at the event.
- **Recycling** - Make recycling as easy as possible by providing clearly labelled recycling bins as well as general refuse bins. The aim should be to get as near to a zero waste-to-landfill policy for the event as is possible.
- **Sponsors & Partners** – make sustainability a requirement for sponsors and partners.
- **Other** – Include environmental impacts in assessment criteria and encourage the adoption of ISO 20121. Promote events that have a strong eco-focus.

6.Resourcing and Funding Approach

The Vision has to be ambitious and transformational and engage collective commitment and generate excitement of all stakeholders. Whilst this strategy has clear pathways, identified through the delivery plan in section 8, the success of this Strategy is entirely dependent on the belief and enthusiasm of everyone over what can be achieved and that the challenges can be overcome and resourcing is achievable.

The interventions provide the direction to bridge the strategic gap between the current availability of skills, expertise, partnership, and funding to get where we need to be in 10 years' time.

Building the Foundations

In the short-term resources will focus around actions related primarily to Intervention 1 (Fostering Collaboration) and Intervention 2 (Enhancing Community Engagement) but will also include some specific areas in the other interventions.

Resource requirements at this stage are around staffing in community and event development –

- to build networks, communicate and get buy-in and commitment to the Vision
- to uncover hidden resource opportunities, and reduce areas of duplication of roles
- to understand the role the Council currently plays in delivering its events and its future role working with commercial and community event organisers,

- to identify early on national and UK Funding initiatives to support the strategy
- to create a better overall picture of leaders and innovators and of the current capacity across all key stakeholders

Offering a more welcoming environment to take advantage of any early ambitions by event organisers to create new or develop existing events and festivals will help fulfil the approach for more “Destination” and “Our Own” events.

Building staff capacity is well underway as a result of the Cultural and Heritage strategies, with the development of a small and effective Events Team. The formation of a Cultural Compact for the Borough with representatives with a strong strategic and cultural background will create a cohesive network of cultural leaders and event organisers who can support and help facilitate and deliver cultural events and festivals. Wider support can come from other Council teams (Youth, Community and Economic Development) in working with their networks to facilitate and achieve mutually beneficial goals of the strategy and their economic and social ambitions.

Developing the Aspirations & Delivering the Vision

Our resources will initially have to be focused on event development activities, working with event organisers and stakeholders to create innovative and aspirational partnerships that will prioritise and focus how we can develop and deliver over the next 10 years, more Destination and Our Own Events and Festivals that have the greatest economic and social impact. The Exemplar Events highlighted in this strategy show a range of resourcing approaches to achieve this ambition including:

- ones that are purely commercial that could support other community events
- ones that are a mix of commercial ticketed content with free to enter content
- ones with funding from local, regional, public and third sector organisations delivering both social and economic objectives.

Also emerging from initial plans will be activities around Interventions 5 (Driving Economic Growth) and 6 (Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship). The main focus for Intervention 5 will require a collective approach across commercial and public sector and potentially economic development funding sources to deliver a marketing plan. Initial funding will be to create an events brand within a framework of brands. A logo or strapline could be used by event organisers initially as a badging exercise to begin to promote a more eventful place. A more detailed plan would need to be developed and delivered in the long term.

With Intervention 6, we will initially drive up high sustainability standards for event organisers by asking them to outline different measures they are undertaking to reduce the footprint of the event. Over the 10 years of the Strategy we will review the measures and

agree minimum standards that must be met for an event to go ahead, and will have developed an ambitious charter for change. This would be resourced through the event team, our officers and regional representatives responsible for promoting sustainability, as well as event industry groups and forums.

7. Outputs and Outcomes

The table below shows the Outputs and Outcomes to be measured in relation to the strategic interventions and their economic, social and environmental impacts that are fundamental to the success of the Strategy

Economic Impact		
Strategic Interventions	Outputs	Outcomes
<p>Fostering collaboration and partnerships to develop, co-create and plan events</p> <p>Enhancing community engagement, cohesion and participation</p> <p>Innovating and adapting events - leveraging local and regional strengths, showcasing the region</p> <p>Driving economic impact - supporting the local and regional creative, tourism, retail and events sectors</p>	<p>A. Increase in number of visitors and residents attending events and festivals</p> <p>B. Effective delivery of a targeted annual marketing campaign promoting events as a key tourism offer throughout the year</p> <p>C. Increased visitor dwell time and spend across the area</p> <p>D. Increased number of Destination, Our Own and Special Interest events</p> <p>E. Increased effective engagement in existing and regional networks and forums</p> <p>F. The establishment of a specific local events forum for event organisers</p> <p>G. Greater number of training and mentoring opportunities related to event management and delivery</p> <p>H. Increased amount of grant funding secured for events in the region</p> <p>I. Increased investment in infrastructure at key event sites</p>	<p>1. Raised regional and national profile and reputation of the NPT area as a unique event destination in South Wales</p> <p>2. Employment creation and investment in the tourism events and creative sectors</p> <p>3. More and higher skilled local events specialists (increased local capacity to deliver events)</p> <p>4. Greater capacity within local supply chain</p> <p>5. Extension of the visitor season and attracting new audiences</p> <p>6. Higher turnover/profitability for hospitality, accommodation and retail businesses</p> <p>7. Reduced complaints leading to improved relationships between event organisers and the Council,</p> <p>8. NPT is a more attractive destination for event local, regional and national event organisers to deliver new events</p> <p>9. More cohesive and coherent relationships with national bodies, aligning strategic benefits and opening up resource opportunities to deliver more events</p> <p>10. Improved quality of event management, marketing and diverse, innovative content</p>

Strategic Interventions	Social & Environmental impact	
	Outputs	Outcomes
<p>Fostering collaboration and partnerships to develop, co-create and plan events</p> <p>Enhancing community engagement, cohesion and participation</p> <p>Innovating and adapting events - leveraging local and regional strengths, showcasing the region</p> <p>Sustainability and environmental stewardship</p>	<p>J. Ease of application for events and increased support to event organisers by the Council</p> <p>K. Increased number of people taking part in sporting and active lifestyle events and festivals to improve health and wellbeing e.g. Fun runs, Walking events, Yogo retreats, cycling events</p> <p>L. Increased community participation in events to improve health and wellbeing</p> <p>M. Improved satisfaction of visitors and residents with the programme of events and festivals being offered in the area</p> <p>N. Increased number and diversity of organisations, groups and people engaged with events including an increased number of volunteers</p> <p>O. Increase in amount of heritage, history, culture and Welshness reflected in the content for events and festivals</p> <p>P. All events on Council land complying with sustainable initiatives e.g. local suppliers, bio-degradable products</p>	<p>11. More local, free-to-attend events</p> <p>12. Improved health and well-being of local residents and visitors</p> <p>13. Greater sense of pride and belonging amongst residents</p> <p>14. Greater all-round awareness and understanding of Welsh culture, heritage and traditions</p> <p>15. Minority social groups and excluded, ethnic and vulnerable groups have improved access to events and festivals.</p> <p>16. Reduced carbon footprint of individual events</p> <p>17. Events better reflecting and representing the local communities they serve</p>

The above table provides the basis to develop an Evaluation Toolkit to measure the delivery of the Strategy and its social and economic impact.

8. Delivery Plan

The Delivery Plan identifies the actions within each of the strategic interventions, the lead organisation, group or individual and the timeframe. The actions in the Short Term Delivery Plan are focused around the 1st Stage in Building the Foundations whilst the actions in the Medium and Long Term Delivery Plans are focused on the 2nd stage in delivering the Aspirations and the Vision.

Short Term Delivery Plan 1 – 3 years			
Intervention	Priorities	Actions	Lead
Fostering Collaboration and Partnerships	To build and improve engagement with national organisations – Arts Council, Visit Wales, Cadw, National Resources Wales, National Trust, Event Wales, Creative Wales, Sports Wales, Local Authorities,	Promote the Events Strategy to the key organisations. Launch and set up online seminars and 1 to 1s	NPT Council
		Identify current networking forums and new opportunities for engagement in delivering the Strategy. Seek feedback & support	NPT Council
Fostering Collaboration and Partnerships	To identify gaps in skills, knowledge and resources in delivery of events and identify any duplication of resources	Map existing partnerships and collaborations with community groups, event organisers, landowners, neighbouring local authorities, cultural, heritage and sports organisations	NPT Council
Fostering Collaboration and Partnerships	To work with regional and local education providers to support local skills and talent development	Audit current opportunities.	NPT Council

Fostering Collaboration and Partnerships	To work with local businesses (e.g. hospitality/retail) to support development of events	Engage with existing networks and business organisations to identify ways to prioritise key events and how they can be delivered and supported	NPT Council BID District Councils Trade associations
Enhancing Community Engagement, Cohesion and Participation	To create effective mechanisms for the Events Sector to overcome common challenges, exploit opportunities and lobby public bodies.	Organise pre and post season council led workshops with event organisers. Agendas around improving application process and provide key basic information on latest legislation, event organisational basics and training & development opportunities.	NPT Council
		Development of new application process for events on council land to simplify the process and provide clear guidelines and transparent decision making	
Enhancing Community Engagement, Cohesion and Participation	To highlight talent in the area to be promoted through events and festivals	Work closely alongside the culture and heritage strategies to better understand the current landscape of local talent and actively encourage event organisers to use a diverse range of local talent including young people, minority ethnic and disability groups.	NPT Council
		Provide updates and information to event organisers on government and other external funding opportunities	NPT Council
Innovating and Adapting Events	To adapt and enhance existing outdoor events,	Review Council organised events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neath Spring and Autumn Fairs – review current programme and work with local businesses and communities to look at future options for delivery to reinvigorate the events. 	NPT Council

		Neath Food & Drink – review future organisation and delivery options and potential enhancement of the festival	
		<p>Set up meetings with organisers of the existing events, and where applicable private landowners, to explore their aspirations for the future, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In It Together • Luminare • Pontardawe Folk Festival • Neath Food & Drink • Neath Fair • Christmas parades & Switch ons in the 3 towns • Neath Spring & September Fairs • Viva NPT Food Festival • NPT Pride • Ferry Fest • Richard Burton 10k • Enduro events 	NPT Council Viva BID Event organisers
Innovating and Adapting Events	To leverage one-off major events in 2025 to develop future similar events - Richard Burton Centenary and the Urdd Eisteddfod	Continue dialogue with organisers pre and post event to identify legacy events.	NPT Council Event organisers
Innovating and Adapting Events	New 'Destination' Event development	Margam Park to continue to seek out promoters of new major ticketed events with footfall in excess of 30,000. Target of 3 events by 2027	NPT Council
Innovating and Adapting Events	Development of 'Our Own' and 'Community' Christmas events	Liaise with local town councils, business organisations, businesses and Christmas commercial operators to look at the feasibility and	NPT Council Town & community councils

		options of a pre-Christmas offer e.g. ice rink attraction, markets, fun fairs with enhanced themed Christmas lighting trails building on any existing activities e.g. Switch-ons/parades	Christmas event operators Local Hospitality & Retail businesses
Driving Economic Growth	Integration of Event Strategy with other Council strategies	Ensure the Event Strategy Evaluation tool (to be developed) links to specific measures of other economic council plans e.g. Destination Management Plan and Economic Development Plan	NPT Council
Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship	To reduce the carbon footprint of all events and ensure that they are as eco-friendly and sustainable as possible in line with the 'Our Net Zero Wales Plan'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insist organisers charge contractors directly for fuel to incentivise reduced usage • Ensure compliance by event organisers in relation to litter, noise, congestion, waste, no leafleting • Ensure that a specific percentage of contractors/suppliers are local. Weighting in relation to specific items and market conditions • Organisers must have a transport plan to promote sustainable transport options 	NPT Council

Medium Term Delivery Plan 2 – 6 years

Intervention	Priorities	Actions	Lead
Fostering Collaboration and Partnerships	To work with regional and local education providers to support local skills and talent development	Collaborate and bring together education and training providers to develop a one stop shop for direct and indirect training opportunities for event organisers.	NPT Council FE and HE establishments Learning & Skills partnership
Enhancing Community Engagement, Cohesion and Participation	To build volunteer capacity	Develop a volunteering strategy that looks at any existing volunteering organisations, identifies champions and community leaders to establish a volunteer programme that promotes the benefits and incentives of volunteering at events	NPT Council Event Organisers Volunteer organisations and charities
Enhancing Community Engagement, Cohesion and Participation	To highlight talent in the area to be promoted through events and festivals	Review the delivery of the culture and heritage strategies and take into consideration any changes in actions and delivery. To continue to encourage event organisers to use a diverse range of local talent. To prioritise and identify any hard to reach cultural groups & performing groups.	NPT Council
		To provide online and social media platforms targeted at specific groups to provide information to event organisers on government and other external funding opportunities	NPT Council
		Establish a grant funding programme for community events to support new events that promote and celebrate local and traditional performance – seeking support from the Council and the private and voluntary sector.	NPT Council Culture and heritage groups and organisations

Innovating and Adapting Events	To adapt and enhance existing outdoor events	Meet with local landowners of outdoor venue sites to discuss and explore their aspirations for the sites e.g. Walter's Arena, Natural Resources Wales, Gnoll Sports Ground	NPT Council Event organisers Private landowners Town Council Local landowners Event organisers
		Identify the priority of events & sites for development and enhancement over the short and medium term with the preference of establishing a balance across the Borough and mixture of commercial and free events. Agree the planned timeframe for delivery, resourcing and potential support.	NPT Council Event organisers
		Establish a programme of at least 5 – 10 events across the Borough in 2026/2027 linked to grant funding support	NPT Council Event organisers
Innovating and Adapting Events	To leverage one-off major events in 2025 to develop future similar events - Richard Burton Centenary and the Urdd Eisteddfod	Prioritise aspirational new Destination events based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> location gaps and ability to cater for large numbers. E.g. Aberavon Seafront, Margam Park creating a balanced programme of events where profitable commercial events help support less profitable ones that are accessible to all Commission a feasibility study to identify those events to take forward for further development and delivery options	NPT Council Events Forum (once established) Event organisers

Innovating and Adapting Events	New 'Destination' Event development	Margam Park to review their current programme and adapt and develop where required to meet any emerging gaps in theme and seasonality.	NPT Council Event promoters
		Identify and liaise with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specific expertise • specific clubs and organisations both locally, regionally and nationally • specific event organisers to seek interest in supporting and running Special Interest events. Consider priorities around: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • existing events taking place locally that could be brought together • Clubs, organisations and groups that may wish to participate in a themed event • event organisers providing similar themed events within a regional geographical location • events that are low cost and self-sustainable 	NPT Council Relevant specialists, clubs, organisations and event organisers
Innovating and Adapting Events	New 'Special Interest' event development	Agree the planned timeframe for delivery, resourcing and potential support for each of the events	NPT Council Relevant specialists, clubs, organisations and event organisers
		Work with professional officers, community leaders, cultural and ethnic champions to identify existing Welsh heritage, traditions and cultural celebrations and events that take place within the community that could be developed or amalgamated into wider cultural events.	NPT Council Community leaders Local Champions

Innovating and Adapting Events	New 'Our Own' and 'Community' Event development	Create a multi-cultural forum/online hub or event that provides the opportunity for bringing people together to share ideas and create awareness of cultural events and groups	NPT Council Community leaders Local Champions
		Working with local town councils, business organisations, businesses and Christmas commercial operators to develop and identify funding mechanisms to deliver a pre-Christmas offer within a 2 – 3 year period	NPT Council Town & community councils Christmas event operators Local Hospitality & Retail businesses
Innovating and Adapting Events	Development of 'Our Own' and 'Community' Christmas events	Commission surveys to be undertaken at primary locations (as identified in the Strategy) to identify costings and return on investment and reductions in environmental impact.	NPT Council
Innovating and Adapting Events	To create attractive and flexible events spaces	Develop a Marketing Group for events made up of representatives from businesses to establish annual marketing objectives, activities and funding support. Liaise with Event Wales and Visit Wales.	NPT Council Event organisers Local businesses
Driving Economic Growth	Development of a Marketing Plan for Events	Agree short, medium and long term objectives of a collaborative strategic marketing plan that raises the profile of the area under the Dramatic Heart of Wales brand. Campaigns would be linked to seasonal themed stay and day packaged experiences where events are marketed as either an added value or a specific reason to visit.	NPT Council Event organisers Tourism & Hospitality businesses Town centre retailers & businesses
		Agree a marketing campaign each year to deliver on the objectives of the marketing plan.	NPT Council Event organisers

			Tourism & Hospitality businesses Town centre retailers & businesses
		Create a logo or strapline to be used by event organisers initially as a badging exercise to begin to promote a more eventful place.	NPT Council
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of electrical power at key sites to reduce the use of generators • Increase percentage of local contractors/suppliers at events • Support & prioritise events that have a strong environmental focus & low carbon footprint per visitor Suppliers and sponsors to have sustainable policies	NPT Council
Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship	To reduce the carbon footprint of all events and ensure that they are as eco-friendly and sustainable as possible in line with the 'Our Net Zero Wales Plan'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	

Long Term Delivery Plan 5 -10 years

Intervention	Priorities	Actions	Lead
Enhancing Community Engagement, Cohesion and Participation	To highlight talent in the area to be promoted through events and festivals	Work closely to actively encourage event organisers to use a diverse range of local talent including young people, minority ethnic and disability groups.	NPT Council
		Continue to develop a grant funding programme for community events seeking 3 – 5 year commitment from public, private and third sector organisations to enable funding for new events. that promote and celebrate local and traditional performance	NPT Council Culture and heritage groups and organisations
Innovating and Adapting Events	New ‘Destination’ Event development	From the feasibility study identify up to three Destination events to take forward for development and funding mechanisms to have delivered by 2035	NPT Council Events Forum (once established) Event organisers
Innovating and Adapting Events	New ‘Special Interest’ event development	Continue to work with specialist event organisers as new events emerge and can be developed and delivered. e.g. night mini-drone racing	NPT Council Relevant specialists, clubs, organisations and event organisers
Innovating and Adapting Events	New ‘Our Own’ and ‘Community’ Event development	Identify potential cultural and heritage traditions and performances that can be developed into a multi-cultural events at a community/our own level. Undertake feasibility of progressing to delivery and funding of those events	NPT Council Community leaders Local Champions
Driving Economic Growth	To ensure all the priorities and actions are delivering on the economic growth	To review the success of the outputs and outcomes from the strategic evaluation tool including the effectiveness of the marketing campaigns	NPT Council

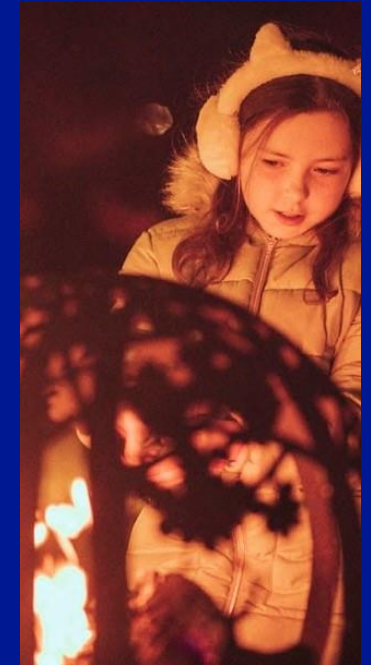
Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship	To reduce the carbon footprint of all events and ensure that they are as eco-friendly and sustainable as possible in line with the 'Our Net Zero Wales Plan'	<p>Develop a sustainable transport plan for events in the area to address issues around frequency of public transport and lack of access routes to key locations</p> <p>Refuse any events that do not fully comply with all environmental requirements</p>	NPT Council
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Delivery Plan – Annual Strategic Review

An annual review will look at what actions have been undertaken and their success in delivering the outcomes of the strategy and it's social and economic impact. It is inevitable that due to the fast changing and volatile environment in which we work and live, there will be challenges and opportunities that may lead to a change in the priorities and future actions that are part of the Strategy.

NPT Events Strategy

Appendix 1



Exemplar Events



Selection of UK exemplar events

- 1: Fusion Events**
- 2: Music Events**
- 3: Arts Events**
- 4: Food Events**
- 5: Community Events**
- 6: Sustainability Events**
- 7: Craft Events**
- 8: Wellbeing Events**
- 9: Heritage Events**
- 10: Sports Events**
- 11: Seasonal Events**



1:1 Fusion Events:

Green Man - Brecon Beacons

- Annual, week-long, independent music, science and arts festival
- Held in mid-August
- Founded in 2003 by Fiona Stewart following her experience working at Glastonbury and The Big Chill, on concept of a 'boutique festival'
- 25,000 capacity. Always sold out months in advance
- Predominantly showcasing live music but site also has 10 areas hosting literature, film, comedy, science, theatre, wellness and family acts
- Contributes around £10.4m to Welsh economy



1.2: Fusion Events:

The Big Feastival – Cotswolds

- Annual music and food festival
- Launched in 2012 by Alex James (Blur) in partnership with Jamie Oliver. Originally a two-day event with 10,000 capacity held on Alex James' Cotswolds farm in Kingham.
- Jamie Oliver is no longer involved but the event has gone from strength to strength and now takes place over 3 days with a capacity of 25,000 per day.
- Brings together music from UK's biggest artists, Michelin star chefs, onsite dining experiences, boutique bars and award-winning street food alongside an array of family activities and entertainment.
- Very family friendly event with a variety of activities specifically for young children.



1.3: Fusion Events:

Love Trails Festival – Gower Peninsula

- 4-day ticketed running, adventure and music festival in mid-July.
- The idea was hatched following a party held by Theo Larn-Jones and George Restall for 28 friends who shared a passion for music festivals and running.
- Grew to 270 attendees in 2017 following which Larn-Jones left his full time job to devote everything to the ‘festival’ and attendance grew to 2000 in 2019.
- The festival has historically struggled financially to make ends meet and following the covid pandemic and potential losses of £127,000 launched a crowd-funding campaign to save the Festival.
- Love trails returned in 2022 and is now going from strength to strength.



1.4: Fusion Events:

The Big Feastival – Cotswolds

- Annual music and food festival
- Launched in 2012 by Alex James (Blur) in partnership with Jamie Oliver. Originally a two-day event with 10,000 capacity held on Alex James' Cotswolds farm in Kingham.
- Jamie Oliver is no longer involved but the event has gone from strength to strength and now takes place over 3 days with a capacity of 25,000 per day.
- Brings together music from UK's biggest artists, Michelin star chefs, onsite dining experiences, boutique bars and award-winning street food alongside an array of family activities and entertainment.
- Very family friendly event with a variety of activities specifically for young children.



2.1: Music Events:

Boomtown Fair - Winchester

- Annual music festival
- Founded in 2009 by Chris Rutherford & 'Lak' Mitchell to rectify what they saw as a lack of atmosphere and under-representation of minority groups/genres.
- Moved to current site at the Matterley Estate in the South Downs National Park near Winchester in 2011
- Capacity 66,000
- Centered around common beliefs and principles supporting environmentalism and social equality.
- 6 week build
- Since 2022 has become an over 18s event.



2.2: Music Events:

Camp Bestival – Lulworth, Dorset

- **Bestival** was a 4-day music festival founded in 2004 by Rob de Bank and wife Josie. By 2016 attendance had risen from 210,000 to around 50,000 in 2016.
- In 2008 they launched **Camp Bestival** as a family friendly 'little sister' festival to Bestival.
- In 2016 both Camp Bestival and Bestival moved to Lulworth Castle in Dorset but in 2018 the Bestival organization went into administration.
- The brand was bought up by US/Irish Entertainments group Live Nation/Gaiety but only Camp Bestival survived and continues to be organized by Rob and Josie de Banks with attendance of around 10,000.
- Very much a family friendly festival



3.1: Arts Events:

First Light Festival – Lowestoft

- Developed out of vision to rejuvenate seafront. a free 24 hour multi-arts festival celebrating one cycle of midsummer sun setting and rising over the beach in Britain's most easterly town.
- Organised by First Light Festival Community Interest Company (CIC) based in Lowestoft the Festival aims to shine a light on their part of the world, celebrating the heritage, talent and creativity of the area.
- 30,000 attendees. East Suffolk Council invested £90k which has converted into £700-900k direct spend at the festival.
- As well as the Festival they oversee a year-round programme of arts and events and secured Arts Council NPO (National Portfolio Organisation)
- 2025 will be the 5th year of the Festival.



3.2: Arts Events:

Frome Festival

- Annual Community Arts Festival in mid-July
- Conceived and run by Martin Bax, former mayor of Frome, from 2000 to 2007 when he handed over to Martin Dimery.
- Involves 200 events taking place across 10 days in event venues, galleries, pubs and parks.
- Programme of ticketed classical music, jazz, folk to indie, literature and drama, film, dance and workshops.
- All tickets sold through individual venue box offices not the organisers.
- Has a small programme of free or low-cost activities, talks etc.
- Not particularly family friendly but there is a separate Frome Children's Festival at the end of July with 40 different free activities for children.



4.1: Food Events:

Abergavenny Food Festival

- Annual, ticketed food festival taking place towards end of September.
- Founded in 1999 by two local farmers in the aftermath of the BSE crisis.
- 2019 festival was attended by more than 35,000 people.
- Run by non-profit organization with an unpaid Board of Directors and small core team of year-round part time staff.
- Any profits go towards funding future festivals.
- Six venues in the centre of town with 180+ exhibitors and caterers and guest chef demonstrations



4.2: Food Events:

Christchurch (Dorset) Food Festival

- Annual 3 -day free food festival at the end of May
- Attracts around 60,000 visitors
- Launched in 2000, the festival was the vision of Mary Reader a local resident and run as a Community Interest Company (CIC)
- The Festival has a wide family appeal and in 2007 the Christchurch Food Festival Education Trust (CFFET) was set up as a registered charity and beneficiary of the CIC, offering education, training and guidance on healthy eating in partnership with local schools.
- In 2019 two separate independent businesses – Real Food Festivals and World of Events - took over management of the event. Real Food Festivals is run by the original founder, Mary Reader thus ensuring continuity.



5.1: Community Events:

Portsmouth International Kite Festival

- Free annual 2-day family friendly kite festival on Southsea Common held in July.
- Has been running since 1990 and features kites flown by some of the world's most internationally renowned flyers.
- Displays featuring single line kits, cellular kites and stunning 3D soft kites in a range of shape and sizes.
- Demonstrations showcasing the art of kite flying and making.
- Special kite-making workshops for children
- Activities available including craft stalls and local amusements alongside dedicated kite traders with a wide range of equipment to browse and buy.



5.2: Community Events:

World of Love – Bournemouth

- Two-day, annual festival celebrating culture and communities.
- 3-4 August 2024
- Founded in 2019 as a small event in a local school.
- Organised by Bea Sieradzka with the aim of bringing together ethnic minority communities to share their diverse lifestyles, arts, cultures, food, sports languages and more.
- Has grown year on year and now takes place in Kings Park, Bournemouth welcoming in excess of 3,000 visitors with participants from 35 diverse heritage backgrounds.



6.1: Sustainability Events:

Festival of Thrift - Billingham

- A free festival celebrating sustainable living by combining culture, sustainability and style
- Founded in 2013 and taking place in September the festival attracts over 50,000 people.
- Takes pride in celebrating its northern roots.
- The Festival aims to represent everyday folk and encourage change in affordable realistic ways to encourage people to consume thoughtfully and ethically ensuring their actions benefit, not harm, the planet.
- Includes music, performance talks, workshops, food and drink, market stalls



7.1: Craft Skills Events:

National Festival of Making – Blackburn Town Centre

- Founded in 2016 by the Festival of Making CIC the ambition was to celebrate the unique manufacturing heritage and contemporary characteristics of the town of Blackburn and the wider region.
- In 2022 they were selected as an NPO by Arts Council England for 2023 – 2026 enabling them to develop more long term plans for the Festival.
- National and international artists are commissioned to create world class works through a year round programme culminating in the **free family festival** in July.



8.1: Wellbeing Events:

The Big Retreat – Pembrokeshire

- A 4-day family friendly ticketed wellbeing and adventure festival in Pembrokeshire National Park. Usually held in early June.
- Founded through the Big Retreat Community CIC in 2017 by Amber Lort-Phillips to “use the great outdoors to enhance people’s connection to nature, biodiversity, arts and science to improve people’s overall wellbeing.
- 2000 attendees in 2023.
- Curated ‘feel good’ experiences include fitness, yoga, talks, workshops, cookery demos, foraging, feasting, arts, bushcraft and live music.
- Dedicated ‘Little Retreaters’ area and timetable of activities for children



9.1: Heritage Events:

Vintage by the Sea - Morecambe

- Free, annual, family friendly event providing a programme of arts and culture inspired by the 20th century from the 20s to the 90s.
- This year Morecambe Town Council awarded a £16,000 grant to extend the free programming and accommodate growing visitor numbers.
- There is currently a crowdfunding campaign running which has raised over £25,000 to date from 161 backers.
- Vintage by the Sea is the largest free vintage festival in the UK and celebrated its 10th anniversary last year welcoming over 50,000 people to Morecambe and contributing an estimated £1.5m to the local economy.
- Includes music, pop-up theatre, dance, classic cars, vintage marketplaces, fashion parades, heritage fairground attractions, workshops and street food.



9.2: Heritage Events:

Great Dorset Steam Fair – Tarrant Hinton

- Founded in 1966 by Michael Oliver supported by a local enthusiasts' group set up following the closure of the rural Dorset railways.
- Until 2022 GDSF was run as a family business, from the Oliver's family home in Child Okeford, Dorset and had grown to a 5-day event with attendance of 200,000 per day across a 600 acre site. .
- Originally in September it moved to the August bank holiday weekend in 2016.
- In 2022 following the pandemic, costs of running the event escalated to £4,2m (up £700,000 on 2019). This increase could not be absorbed and as a result the 2023 event was cancelled. Earlier this year, with continued rising costs the decision was taken to put the event up for sale in the hope of someone taking it on for 2025.



10.1: Sports Events:

Bournemouth 7s

- Annual 3-day sports and music festival taking place over Spring bank holiday.
- Founded in 2008 by Dodge and Fleur Woodall as a 2-day multi-sports and music event focusing on rugby the first event saw 8000 people attending and 96 teams competing.
- 2017, its 10th anniversary saw attendance reach its current capacity of 30,000 with over 300 teams competing in rugby, netball, hockey, cheerleading, basketball, fitness games and dodgeball, spread across 25 pitch;es.
- Bournemouth 7s is still privately owned by Dodge (CEO) and Fleur Woodall (Financial Director) and is curated and delivered by a small team of 8, based in Bournemouth.



10.2: Sports Events:

Ironman – Tenby part of an international brand

- Dating back to 1978 the **Ironman** brand is a worldwide series of mass participation races. Beginning as a single race the Ironman Group has grown into a global brand with hundreds of events across 55+ countries.
- Today the brand is run by the Ironman Group, a sports event promotion company owned by Advance, a private, family business and Orkila Capital, a growth equity firm focused on building great brands.
- Based in Tenby **Ironman Wales** consists of a 2.4 mile sea swim, a 112 mile bike ride around Pembrokeshire and a 26.2 mile run around Tenby.
- The 2024 event on 22 September is already sold out with over 2000 athletes having registered with an entry fee of over £550.



11.1: Seasonal Events:

Christmas Tree Wonderland – Bournemouth

- Created to fill a growing gap in the market for a pre-Christmas attraction to raise footfall and encourage stay visitors.
- A free unique festive trail featuring spectacular Christmas trees from around the world alongside festive installations.
- USP was the setting of listed Gardens in the Town Centre leading down to the Seafront.
- Two BID companies eager to invest
- Two operators eager to invest in commercial activities linked to Christmas attraction – Ice Rink and Christmas market.
- Tourism industry wanted an attraction that would draw confirmed bookings – particularly group travel.
- Town Centre businesses wanted to draw locals into the Town Centre in the lead up to Christmas.



11.2: Seasonal Events:

Lewes Bonfire Festival

- Annual ticketed event(s) normally held on 5th November (unless 5th is a Sunday)
- Has evolved over the centuries, originally being more of a riot than a planned event.
- As well as Guy Fawkes it marks the burning of 17 protestant martyrs in Lewes High Street from 1555– 1557.
- Has a chequered history particularly involving religious disagreements and politics.
- There are now 7 societies putting on 6 separate Lewes Bonfire celebrations in different parts of the town with their own processions, traditions, fire sites etc. In addition 25 – 30 societies from across Sussex come to Lewes to march the streets.
- Safety is a concern with up to 5000 people taking part and around 80,000 spectators. Lewes population is only 17,000.



Appendix 2 : Public Engagement

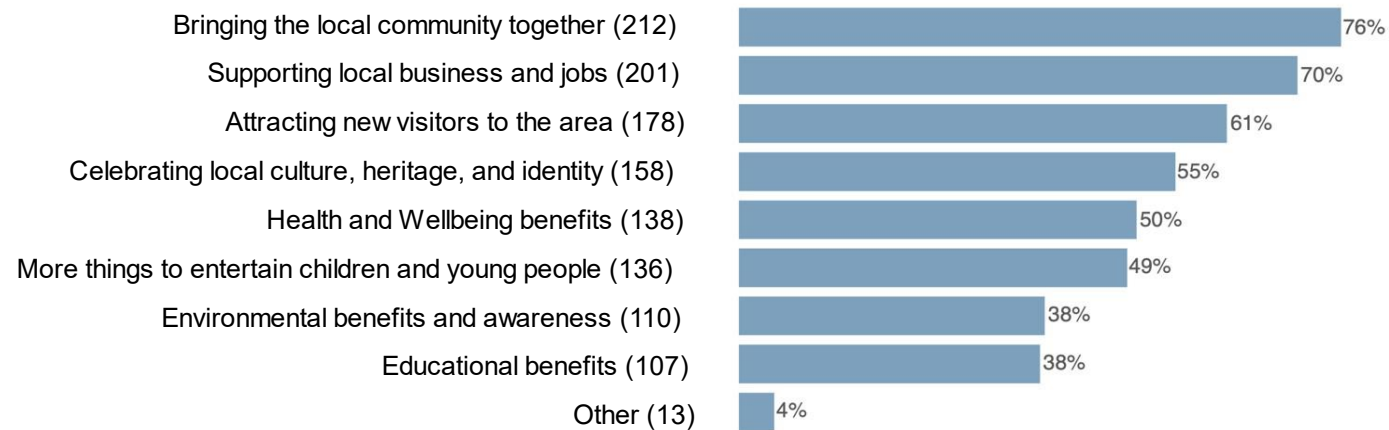
An online & hardcopy survey was issued by Neath Port Talbot Council between 27th June – 24th July:

- Total responses: 349
- Place of residence: 92% NTP residents
- Key demographic:
 - 66% female
 - 72% in employment
 - 12% retired
 - 2% students
 - 14% with a disability
 - 49% aged 40 – 59
 - 23% aged 60 – 74
 - 7% under 29 years of age
- Key interest:
 - 93% event spectators
 - 27% event volunteers
 - 19% event organisers
 - 3% event sponsors



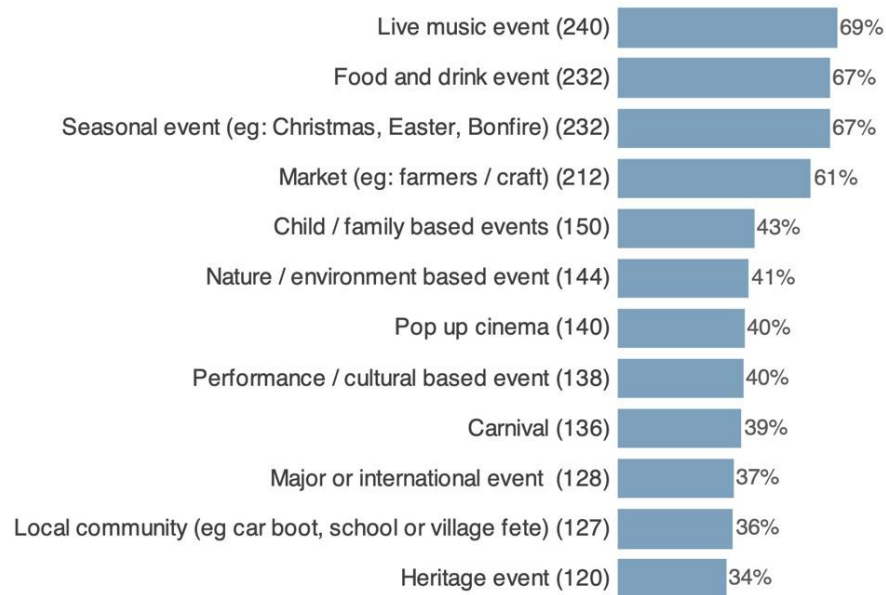
1: Events survey. Why?

Priority focus for new events in Neath Port Talbot:



2: Events survey. What?

What types of events would you or your family like to see more of within Neath Port Talbot? (select all that apply)



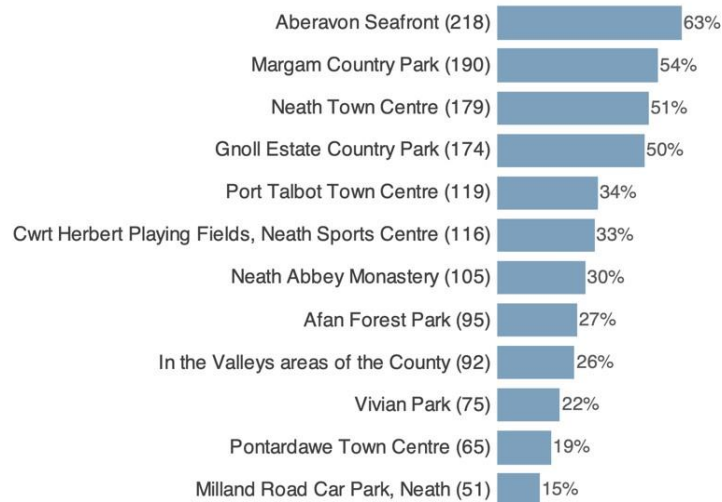
- **Current range of events in NPT:** 73% satisfied or very satisfied
- 64% attend more than 3 paid for outdoor events, any location, per year (26% more than 5)
- 58% attend more than 3 free outdoor events, any location, per year. (28% more than 5)
- 25% attend events with children; 39% attend as part of a couple

Other comments:

- More additional needs friendly events.
- Do more to be inclusive and value diversity (multicultural events) Display NPT values in actions

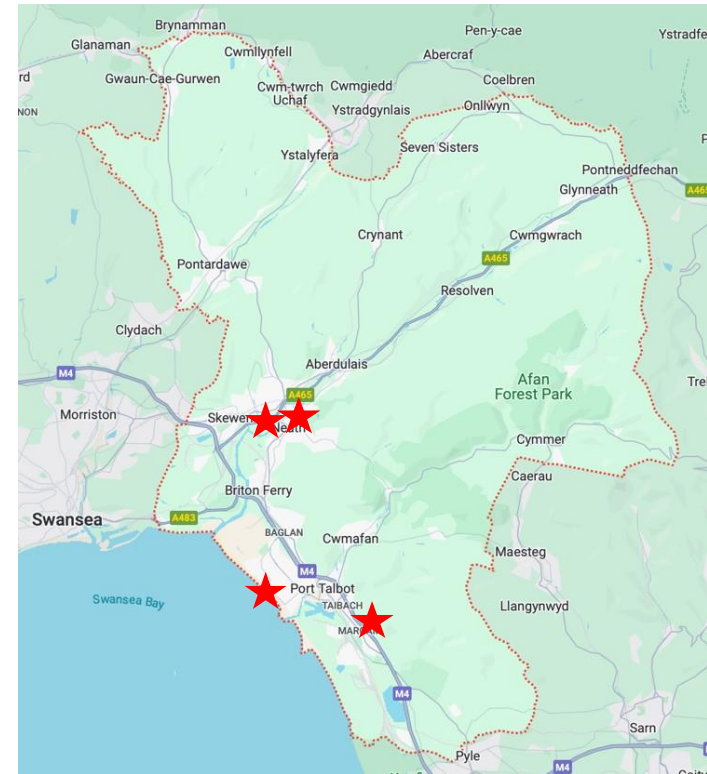
3: Events survey. Where?

Where, within Neath Port Talbot, would you like to see more events (appropriate to the scale of the location)? Tick all that apply.



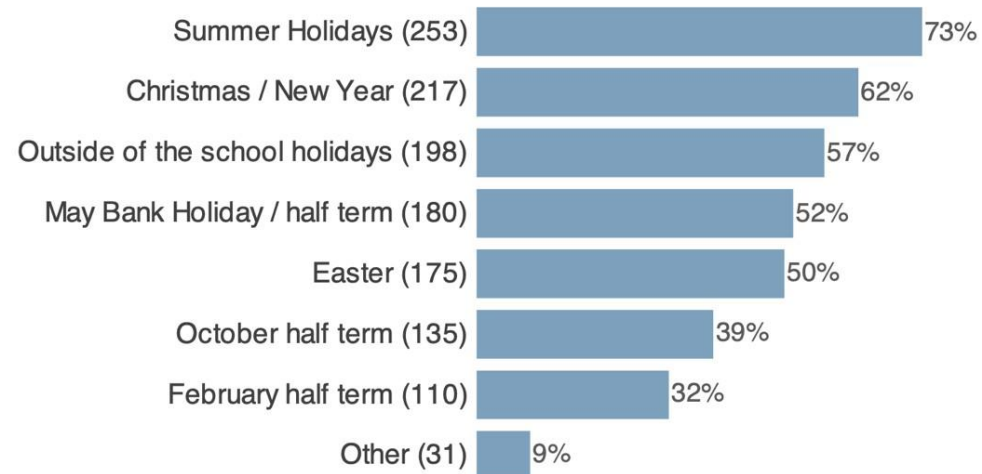
Other sites suggested:

- Briton Ferry
- Resolven
- Cwmafán
- Glantawe riverside park
- Ystalyfera
- Skewen Park
- Victoria Gardens
- Caewern Park
- Tollgate Park
- Port Talbot Memorial Park
- Tailbach



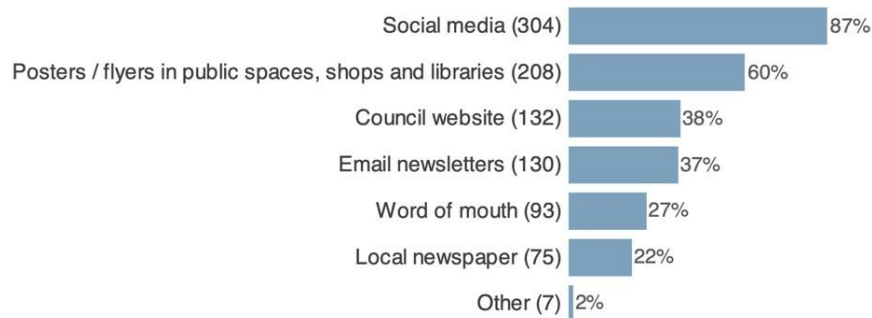
4: Events survey. When?

When would you like to attend more events in Neath Port Talbot.

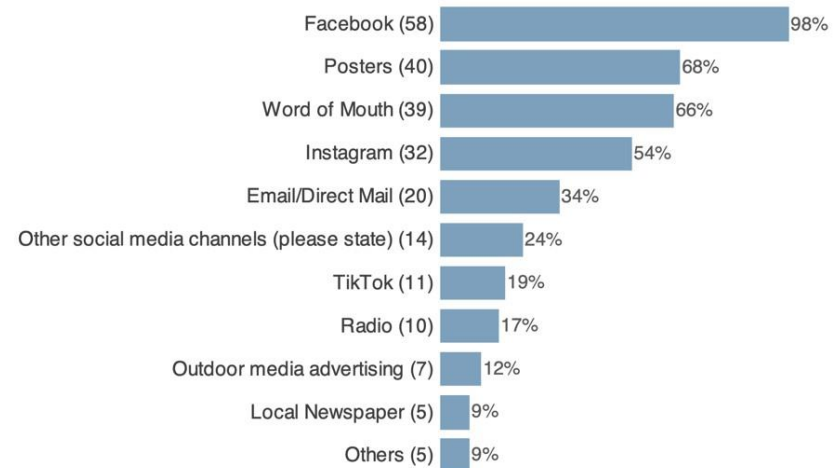


5: Events survey. How?

How would you prefer to find out about upcoming outdoor events in Neath Port Talbot? (Select all that apply)

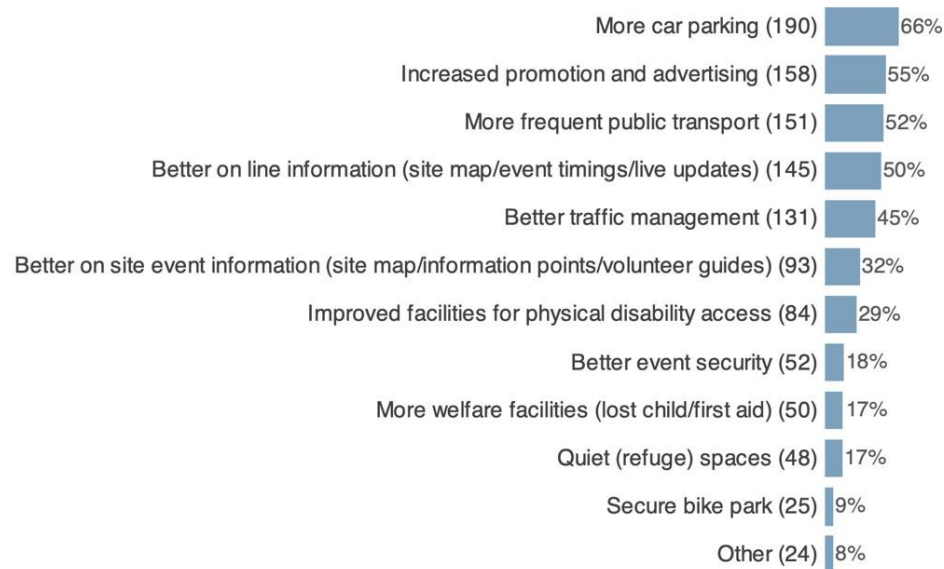


Where do local event organisers prioritise resources to promote their events? (Select all that apply)



6: Events survey. Visitor priorities

What improvements to facilities do you think would encourage you to visit more local events in the future?

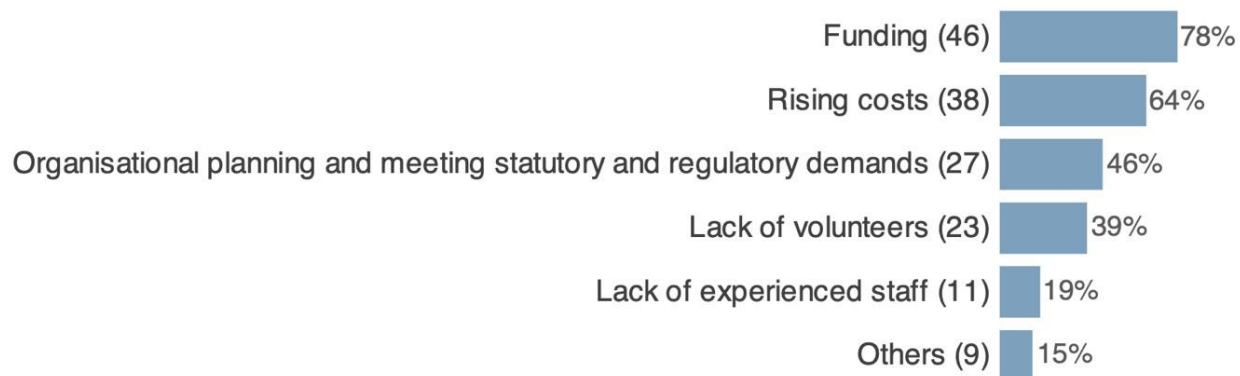


Other comments:

- Free parking
- More / better quality / cleaner toilets
- No fireworks/ pet friendly

7: Events survey. Organiser priorities

What challenges do you face organising your event and putting on more events?



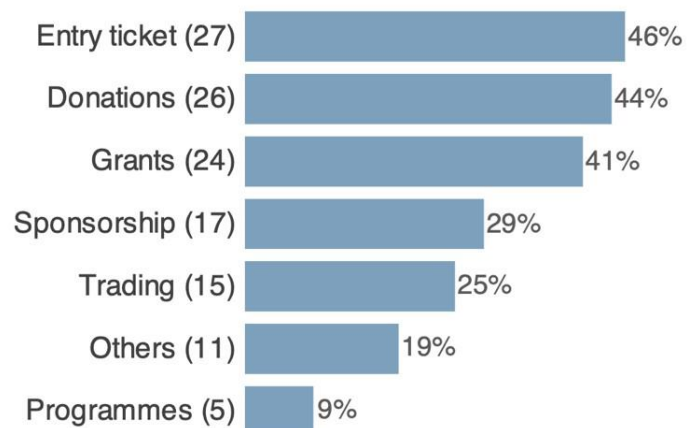
Other comments:

- Cost of bonds required by the Council for events in public locations
- Lack of NPT contacts
- Red tape & unnecessary road closures



8: Events survey. Organiser funding

What are the funding sources for your event(s)? Tick all that apply.



Other sources:

- BID levy
- College funding
- Town Council
- Self funded



Appendix 3 : Workshop aspirations

Specialist Interest

- Outdoor silent disco
- Car Fest / Bike Nights / Car nights
- LGBTQ friendly festival – The Big Queer Picnic
- Canal trips
- Outdoor comedy festival
- Swansea Bay Air Show (partnership Swansea)
- Raver Tots - kids festival (Margam Park)
- Camp Kindling Escape – family camp
- Drone or Firework displays
- Under 30s dance/electronic festival
- Neurodiversity/disability arts festival
- Homelessness event – break down barriers

Food & Drink

- Weekly fresh food festival
- Support for Neath Ale & Cider Festival
- Seafront food festival
- Improve Neath Food & Drink to include greater variety of stalls – create difference. Learning from Cardiff

Fusion

- WOMAD International festival across area
- Fusion add ons to existing festivals
- Sport and music festival (Margam/Aberavon?)
- Large ‘alternative’ subculture festival – music, art, Goth, metal skater

Arts & Culture

- International arts festival
- Sculpture art type event (Gromet in Bristol)
- Outdoor theatre – Neath Castle
- Welsh literary book festival

Makers

- Makers Fair - STEM /technology
- Craft market – Neath

Community

- Model Airshow (Cwrt Herbert)
- Busker Festival (Neath town)
- Carnival
- Children’s reading festival
- Outdoor cinema – Groll Park / PT Civic Square
- Glamping or Camping family festival (Afan Forest)
- Aquapark – like Cardiff
- Creative Play (Dragon Festival)
- Splash park party for dogs
- Events staged around Transport hub
- Not large events but ones organised by small groups for better variety

Heritage

- Neath Abbey Ironworks – industrial heritage festival or Medieval festival
- Festival of industry – beach actors
- Roman heritage festival – Marching Camp (Tonna)
- Heritage Trail around the borough/ mountains
- Culture & heritage festival – local artists
- Brunel Trail 5/10k around landmarks
- Heritage events at Neath Castle
- International Folk Festival – Pontardawe
- Local history projects for different areas culminating in one big display
- Metal themed festival – industrial heritage, metal music, metal craft metal sculpture trail
- Roman Festival (Nidum Fort, Coelbren)
- Vintage festival

Beach Based

- Sandcastle Festival – Aberavon
- Beach festival – DJ, stalls, fun fair etc.
- Fishing festival – Aberavon beach
- Sand art
- Ice Cream festival
- Aberavon Fest / Music Event
- Big Top Music Fest on beach
- Kite festival on the beach
- Drone displays
- Annual carnival
- Beach Food & Drink festival
- Firework display on the beach
- Full Pride beach festival

Workshop aspirations

Seasonal

- Christmas parades /festivals/ floats/switch ons.
- Original Christmas festival over a week or more. Christmas markets
- Halloween event / Scare fest
- Electric light carnival (like Bridgewater)
- Street based Pontadawe Winterfest-parades
- Winter wonderland with parade (Briton Ferry)
- Autumn renaissance fair at Margam Park with fantasy/role play
- Medieval Christmas Fair- Neath Abbey or Castle
- Expand Neath Christmas

Well-being

- Wellbeing retreat festival with mental health activities(therapies), physical health activities (yoga/fitness) & workshops
- Sea dipping, mindfulness. running- similar to Love Trails

Other comments

- Smaller groups to be encouraged to stage their own events – not large events
- Utilise Transport hub more
- Extend attendance at Ferry fest. Larger venue, suitable for fair rides etc
- More evens for under 18s. More youth events
- Multigeneration events – walks, sensory, immersive events
- More support for town, traders, business
- Pop up plays events in parks and beach- remove obstacles
- Support for small business set ups – regular support networks
- More events in Victoria Gardens
- Events must benefit local food & drink venues
- More family friendly events with regular calendar of events
- Evens to encompass whole Port Talbot town centre
- Push focus toward natural environment
- Make NPT more of a destination to encourage people from Swansea to come rather than go to Cardiff
- Lots of smaller, low-cost events that cater for all
- Balance events across the 3 towns – Neath, Pontadawe and Port Talbot. Themes
- Event organisers need to be made to feel welcome. Include in Strategy

Music

- Town Music Festival – Neath
- Gnoll Park large music festival
- Music Festival in Neath churches
- Springsteen in Margam Park
- Jazz competition (Aberavon beach)
- Local musicians festival (no big bands)
- World music /multi culture festival (Cwrt Herbert/Aberavon beach)
- Tier 1 music festival (50,000 attendees)

Sport

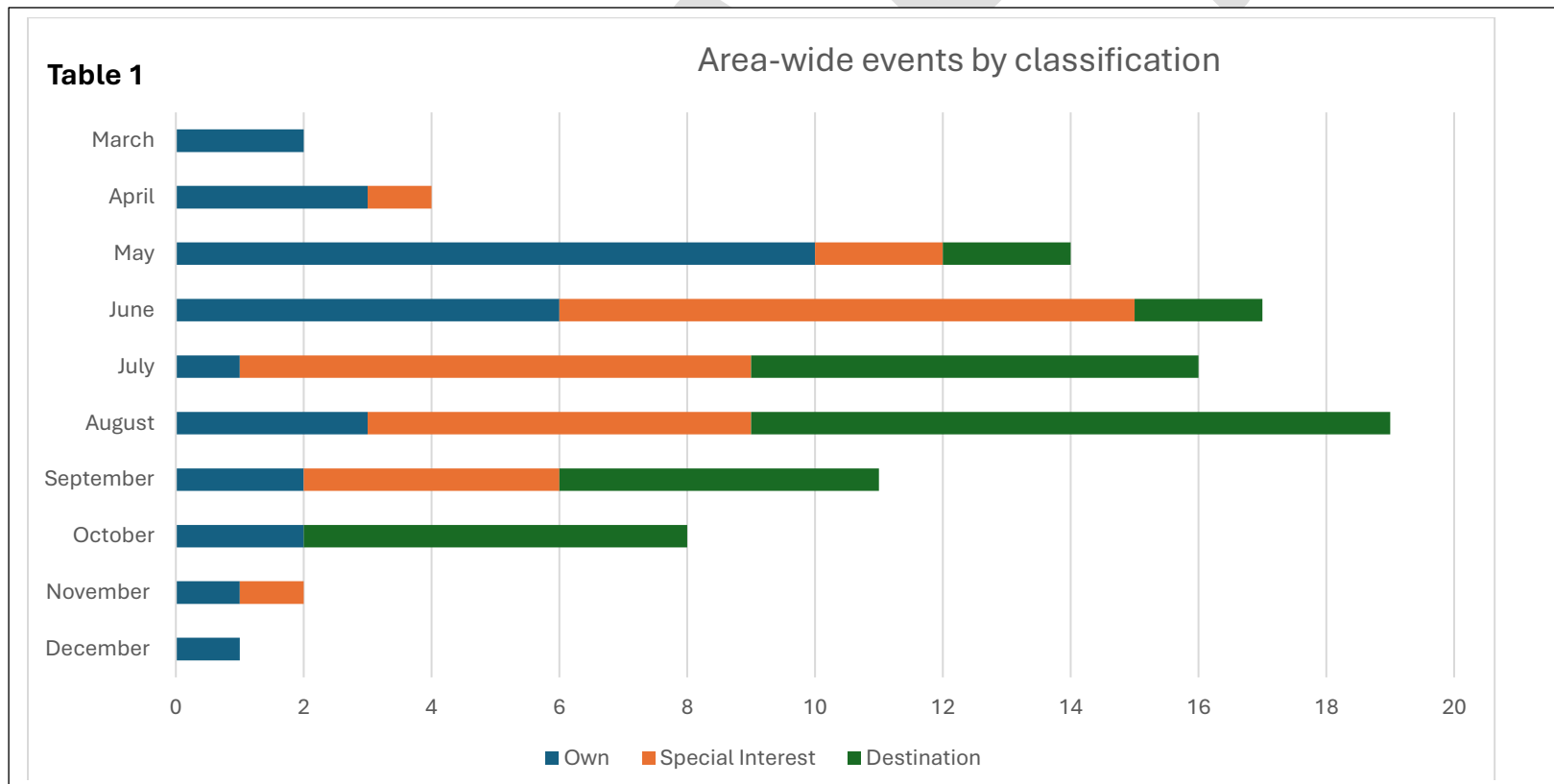
- Tour de France – start
- Tour de Wales
- Focus on extreme sports – use hub for cycle / triathlon etc.
- Neath (birthplace of WRU) festival of rugby. Also cricket
- Encourage national sporting events
- Small club sports events
- Credible Rugby 7s including music – 10,000 attendees
- Isle of Man TT in Swansea valley
- Festival with sports tournaments
- Sporting heritage events
- Build on national cycling profile

Appendix 4 – Events in 2024

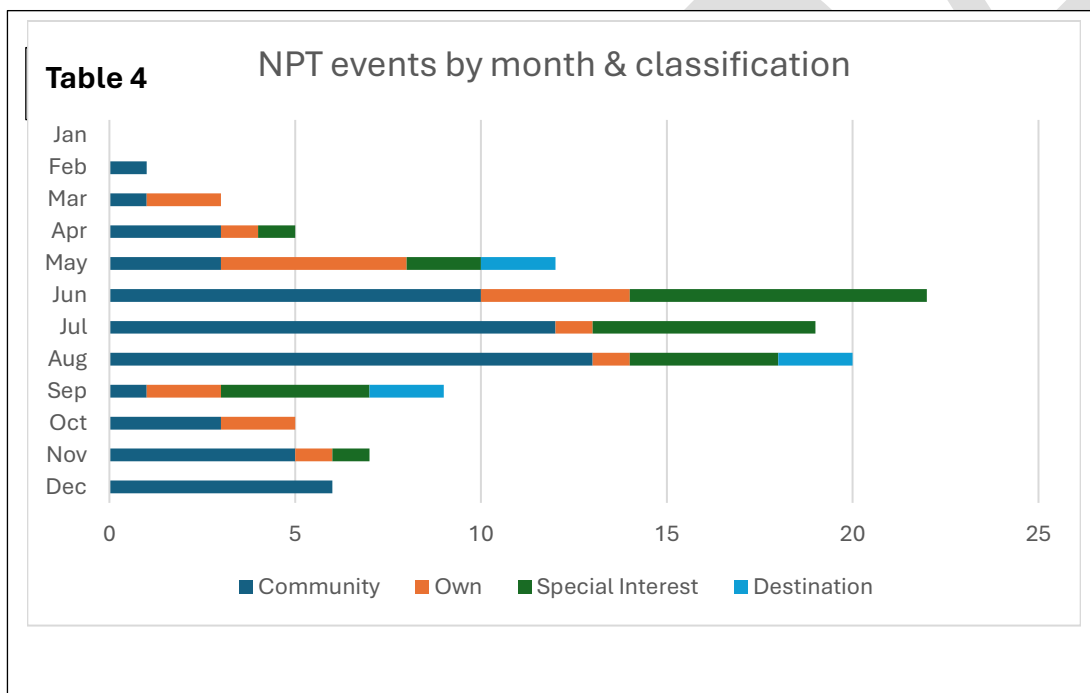
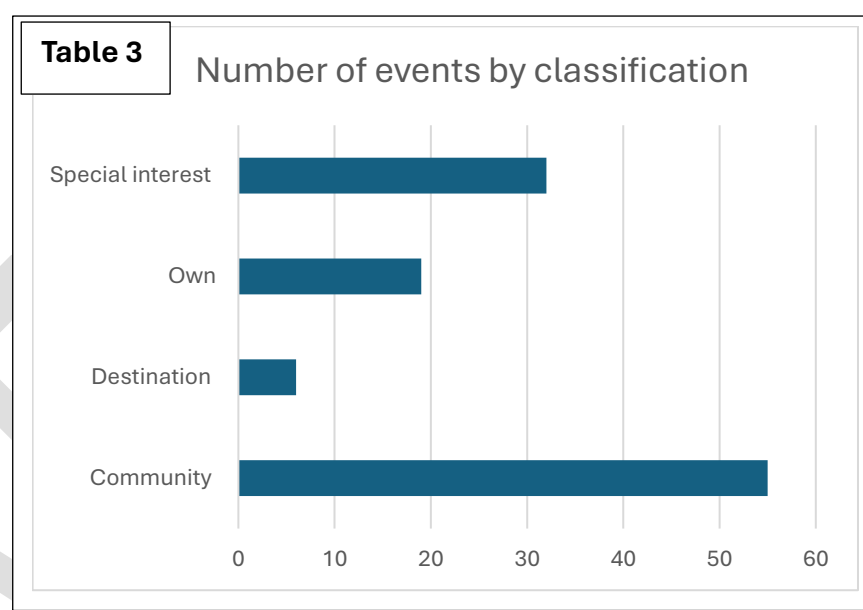
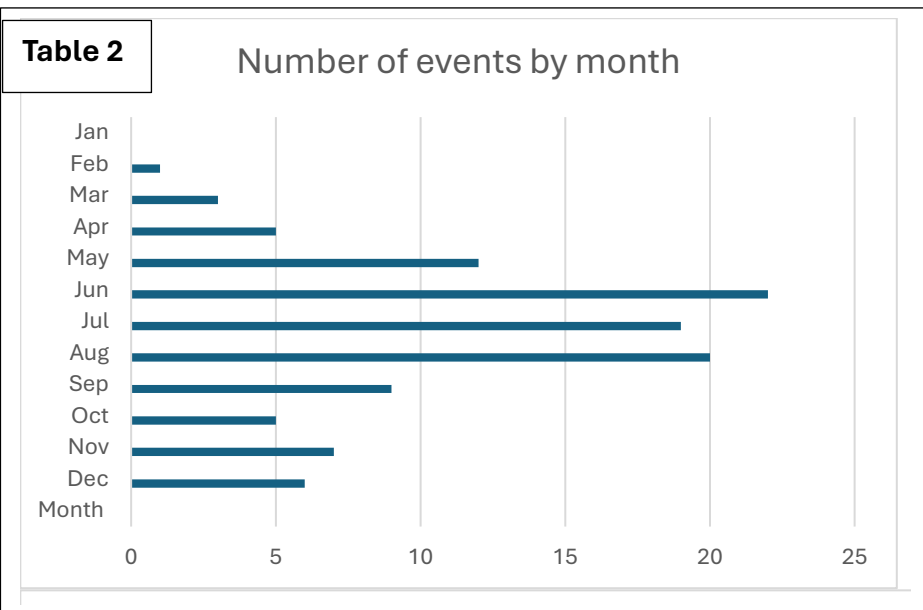
Neath and Port Talbot and Neighbouring Authorities

In 2024 (March – December) there were 93 events and festivals (excluding NPT community events) across Neath Port Talbot and neighbouring authorities.

Table 1 below breaks down these events by classification for each month.



Tables 2 & 3 show the total number of events taking place **within the Borough** during 2024, including community events, broken down by month and by classification. Table 4 shows how the different types of events are spread across the year.

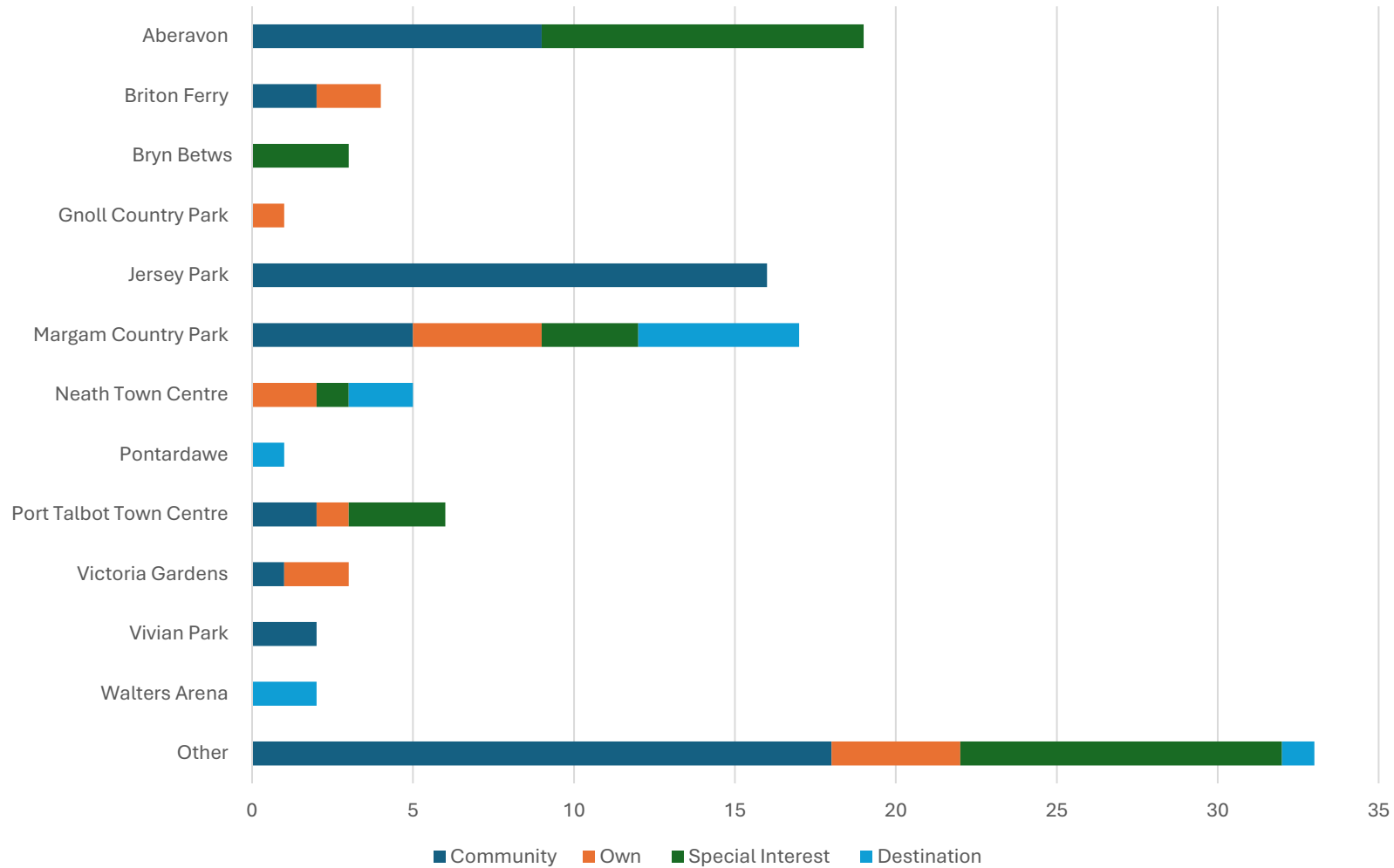


Analysis Tables 1 to 5 -

- A reasonable amount of destination events within the region providing strong base to attract visitors and promote the area during the summer and autumn.
- Develop more of the Christmas offer at both regional and local levels for all classifications
- Few Destination events within the Neath and Port Talbot area.
- Develop more of Our Own/Destination events at Margam Park and Aberavon Seafront and secondly Neath town centre including the Gnoll Sport Ground, Gnoll Country Park, Walter's arena and Pontardawe.
- The opportunity to build on 'Our Own' events particularly within the Borough and to develop them to make them more destination events
- The opportunity for the Borough to support existing Destination events organised by neighbouring authorities, e.g. Swansea Air show and the development of a separate but distinctive component during the evening.

Table 5

NPT events by location & classification



NB: Location 'Other' represents 34 separate small community spaces each hosting one event

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