

JOURNEY TO CHANGE

Magazine

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Welcome to the first issue of the Journey to Change Magazine, a digital magazine issued for IMEX Frankfurt 2024 that celebrates Scotland as a premier destination for business events. Many journeys begin in Scotland and we are thrilled to share some of the incredible innovations and social transformations our partners are undertaking to build a more sustainable future.

In a world of constant evolution, where innovation drives progress, we find ourselves on a journey to integrate the essence of Scotland into the business events industry. Within the pages of this magazine, we invite you to explore the many facets of Scotland's business event landscape. We've handpicked content

that delves into the experiences, the stories and the people that define Scotland's position as a top-tier destination for business events.

Throughout this magazine you will learn from our expert team on the changing trends in the events industry and how authenticity can be found within high-end luxury and how to make your event budget work even harder. Explore our rich heritage as we offer recommendations and insights on the best places to visit in Scotland. Learn more about what some of our incredible partners have been doing and how you can get involved.

The Journey to Change magazine is a testament to Scotland's commitment to progress and excellence. It's a celebration of its warm hospitality, its thriving arts scene, and its breathtaking landscapes. It's an invitation for you to consider Scotland as a destination and as a partner in crafting transformative experiences that leave a lasting impact.

Neil Brownlee
 Head of Business Events
 VisitScotland

EMBRACING AUTHENTICITY



VisitScotland Business Events' Heather McNee and Emma Richards discuss changing trends in the events industry, but how authenticity is the new 'must-have'

Business events serve as more than just gatherings for professionals and organisations: they are integral components of collaboration, education, advancement, and cultural exchange. These occasions bring people together and leave behind a lasting social and economic legacy in their wake. However, as trends in the industry evolve, businesses must demonstrate resilience to adapt to changing preferences and priorities.

Heather McNee, Corporate & Incentives specialist at VisitScotland Business Events, says that there is evidence of the growing importance of authenticity in the industry. She notes: *"There is a significant shift towards memorable experiences that prioritise authenticity. Delegates seek immersive experiences that engage their senses and connect them with local cultures."*

"The desire to engage with local communities and leave a positive impact has become paramount for event attendees."

Sustainability as Standard

Emma Richards, Business Development Manager at VisitScotland Business Events, sheds light on the shifting landscape of event planning, where sustainability has become a standard consideration. She says: *"Venues are now expected to outline their sustainability practices, including environmental initiatives and social responsibility efforts such as partnerships with local charities. Event planners are increasingly educated on making sustainable choices, from selecting suppliers with low emissions to minimising food waste."*

Moreover, there has been a notable shift towards larger events. She adds. *"This is being driven in part by the rise of hybrid working environments. Companies seek opportunities to bring their workforce together to foster camaraderie, reinforce company culture, and to roll out new policies. The desire for shared experiences that reflect company values has become a priority in event planning."*

In addition to instilling a sense of community within organisations, wellbeing has emerged as a key component of event proposals. Prioritising the mental and physical health of attendees has

become standard practice, with activities ranging from outdoor adventures to mindfulness exercises incorporated into event agendas.

"These initiatives not only benefit employees but also contribute to the local community, often involving partnerships with charitable organisations," adds Emma.

Furthermore, leaving a positive legacy in the host community has become a central focus of event planning. Companies aim to make meaningful contributions to the areas where they hold their events, whether that's through volunteering initiatives, environmental conservation projects, or economic support for local businesses.

Heather adds: *"By leaving a lasting impact, businesses can enrich the event experience and contribute to the social and economic development of the host region."*

"The landscape of business events is evolving rapidly, driven by shifting preferences towards authenticity, sustainability, and wellbeing. As businesses navigate these changes and aligning event experiences with the values and priorities of attendees."

Embracing authenticity, sustainability, and wellbeing are at the top of event planners' minds and are guiding strategies within the industry. Business events continue to serve as catalysts for meaningful connections, lasting legacies, and positive social change.



NEWS IN BRIEF



Glasgow Pioneers Innovative Approach to Amplifying Conference Impact

In a groundbreaking initiative, the city of Glasgow has launched the Glasgow Conference Impact Network, a collaborative effort aimed at maximising the positive long-term impacts of academic conferences hosted within its borders.

This pioneering endeavour, spearheaded by the Glasgow Convention Bureau in partnership with the Glasgow Science Festival, has united a diverse array of stakeholders, including academic institutions, charities, and conference venues.



The launch event, attended by over 30 engaged participants from across various sectors, showcased the city's commitment to fostering a dynamic and inclusive conference landscape.

Dr. Deborah McNeill, Engagement Manager at the University of Glasgow's College of Medicine, Veterinary & Life Sciences, emphasised the network's core mission:

"We are bringing together a wide variety of diverse ideas and approaches from this incredible range of organisations. We are here to ensure that community needs are at the heart of these developments."

Aileen Crawford, Head of the Glasgow Convention Bureau, underscored the significance of this approach, stating,

"Taking the subject matter of the conference outside the walls of the convention centre and into the community is hugely important to our association conference clients"

Glasgow in Numbers

370

In the 2023/2024 financial year, Glasgow hosted over **370** international and UK conferences

£144,000,000

Conferences in Glasgow are worth **£144** million in 2023/2024 period

100

Each year Glasgow Convention Bureau works with partners on more than **100 bids** for major UK and international conferences.

P&J Live Teams up with Positive Planet to Enhance Sustainability Credentials



P&J Live, North-East's largest event venue, has appointed sustainability specialists Positive Planet as Net Zero advisors.

Positive Planet will assess the venue's carbon footprint aiding in the development of a carbon reduction plan.

Staff will undergo carbon literacy training to foster understanding and action on climate change. The venue aims to bolster its sustainability efforts through this partnership, setting an example in the events sector.

P&J Live Confirmed as Host of European Society of Breast Imaging (EUSOBI) Annual Scientific Meeting

P&J Live has been confirmed as the host for the European Society of Breast Imaging's (EUSOBI) Annual Scientific Meeting in 2025 (25 – 27 September). The event, anticipated to draw 1,500 delegates from across Europe to Aberdeen, serves as a platform for knowledge exchange and scientific advancements in breast imaging.

Laura Wilson, Head of Aberdeen Convention Bureau said: *“The city has a history of innovation within breast screening, including the recent AI breast screening trials within Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, thanks to the ground-breaking work undertaken by the University of Aberdeen and NHS Grampian. We look forward to welcoming experts to enjoy our region’s hospitality while collaborating on future research.”*

Horizons DMC Reaffirms Sustainability Commitment with new Partnership

Specialist MICE DMC, Horizons DMC, has announced its ongoing commitment to sustainability and responsible tourism.

In a significant move towards ecological responsibility, Horizons has partnered with SCOTLAND: The Big Picture. This charity is dedicated to rewilding efforts that foster biodiversity and tackle climate change by restoring native ecosystems such as woodlands and wetlands across Scotland. Through annual donations, Horizons supports efforts to sequester carbon, restore wildlife populations, and enhance community wellbeing. The organisation is actively working towards achieving B Corp certification reflecting its commitment to meeting high standards of social and environmental performance.

Marriott UKI and Nordics Champions Sustainability with new Food Waste Pledge

Marriott UKI and Nordics, part of the Marriott International hotel group, has reaffirmed its dedication to responsible business practices, emphasising environmental sustainability and reducing food waste. Recognising the significance of its “Food Print,” the company, which manages the Sheraton Grand Hotel & Spa in Edinburgh, has committed to fostering a food waste-conscious environment.

As part of its new sustainability practice Marriott UKI and Nordics has established seven pillars on food waste which it has committed to help reduce its impact. This includes envisioning a sustainable path, team engagement through a Food Lover’s Committee, implementing a monitoring system, refining processes, kitchen best practices, customer inspiration, and circular solutions like redistribution or transformation of leftovers.



Ocean Sciences Meeting heads to Glasgow in 2026

Ocean Sciences Meeting 2026 (OSM26) will be held at the Scottish Event Campus (SEC) in Glasgow – the first meeting outside of the United States for the biennial conference founded in 1982.

The meeting will bring together more than 5,000 delegates in Scotland to discuss all aspects of oceanography following previous events in San Diego and New Orleans. OSM26, which will be held in February 2026, has been endorsed by the UN Decade of Ocean Sciences for Sustainable Development.

Co-sponsored by AGU, ASLO, and TOS, OSM is a premier global ocean sciences conference, attracting experts from various sectors. Following Glasgow’s successful hosting of COP26, SEC continues to be a favoured venue for sustainability-focused gatherings, underscoring the importance of collaborative efforts for a thriving, equitable future.

Dornoch Station Hotel Opens Under Marine & Lawn Brand

The iconic Dornoch Hotel, which dates back to 1902, has reopened its doors as ‘Dornoch Station’, under the Marine & Lawn brand. Paying homage to its original name, the ‘Station Hotel,’ this transformation marks a significant chapter in its history.

Nestled on four picturesque acres along the coastal Highlands, Dornoch is just a stone’s throw away from the renowned Royal Dornoch Golf Club, the hotel promises a blend of heritage and modernity. Following a comprehensive refurbishment since its acquisition in 2022, the property boasts 89 rooms, revamped public areas, and new additions including a putting green and fire pits for guests to enjoy.

The Balmoral Launches New Private Dining Space at Award-Winning Restaurant



Luxury Edinburgh hotel, The Balmoral, has launched an exclusive private dining room at its acclaimed restaurant, Number One. Accommodating up to 10 guests, the intimate space offers a sophisticated ambiance for private dinners and celebrations. Adjacent to the striking wine cellar established in 2021, the private dining room features glass doors providing glimpses of the curated selection of rare wines.

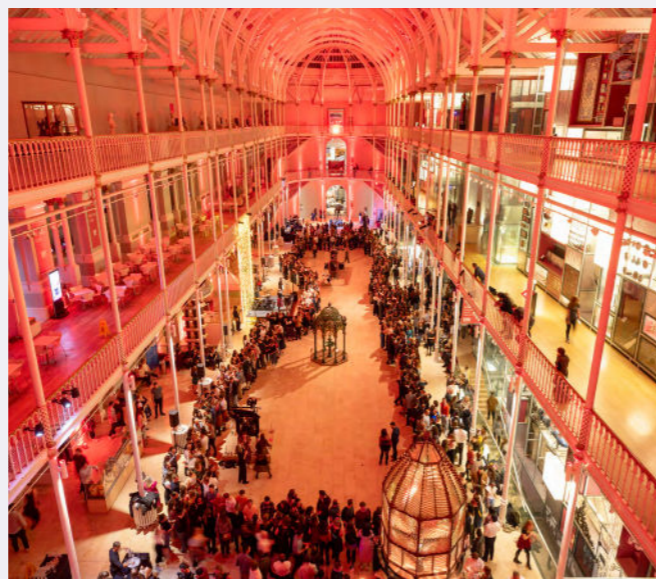
Alongside this addition, Number One has launched its Cellar Experience, where guests can indulge in Charles Heidsieck Champagne and Caviar before a sumptuous dinner, complemented by expertly selected wines. Additionally, the option for exclusive use of the restaurant, including the private dining room and wine cellar, caters to larger gatherings of up to 50 guests, elevating the dining experience at The Balmoral.

EXPLORING SCOTLAND'S CULTURE



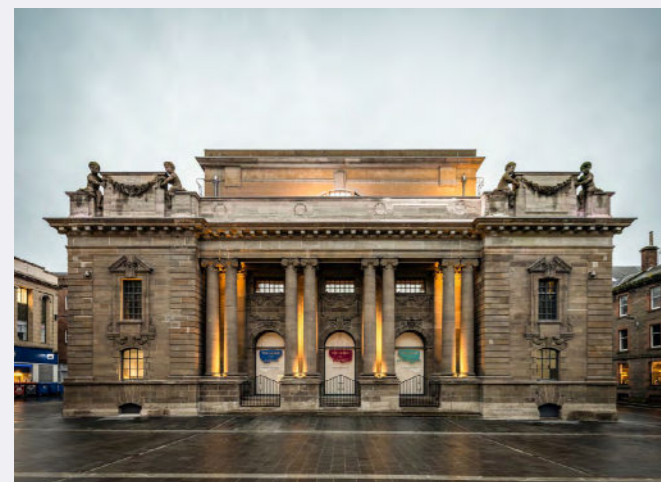
Uncovering Scotland's Cultural Treasures

Recognised in National Geographic's prestigious Best of the World list for 2024, Scotland is renowned for its idyllic landscapes, vibrant cities, magnificent castles, and luxury resorts. But the country also has a rich culture and history, which can be explored in each of its main cities. From the grand halls of world-class museums to the energy of a vibrant theatre scene, and the haunting allure of majestic castles, Scotland offers an immersive journey into the very heart of its storied past and vibrant present.



The National Museum of Scotland

Begin your cultural exploration at the [National Museum of Scotland](#) in Edinburgh, a sprawling institution that serves as a gateway to the country's captivating history. Wander through its captivating galleries, where relics from prehistoric eras to the modern day converge. Marvel at the intricate craftsmanship of Iron Age jewellery, stand in awe before the towering skeletons of dinosaurs, or learn more about Scotland's most controversial monarch, Mary Queen of Scots.



The Riverside Museum

Venture westward to Glasgow and discover the [Riverside Museum](#), an eclectic collection that celebrates the nation's industrial prowess. Climb aboard vintage locomotives, explore a recreated street from the early 20th Century, and uncover the innovations that propelled Scotland's transformation from an agrarian society to a powerhouse of innovation and manufacturing. This museum offers a fascinating glimpse into the country's rich industrial heritage.



V&A Dundee

Head to Scotland's design museum, [V&A Dundee](#). This stunning museum is a must-visit destination for art enthusiasts and design lovers alike. Situated on the waterfront, V&A Dundee is an architectural masterpiece, with its striking design inspired by the cliffs of Scotland's east coast. Inside, you'll find a treasure trove of exhibitions showcasing the best of design, from fashion to furniture, and everything in between. Explore the interactive displays, immerse yourself in the history of Scotland's design heritage, and marvel at the creativity on display.



Don't miss out on...

For art enthusiasts, the [Scottish National Gallery](#) in Edinburgh and the [Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum](#) in Glasgow showcase masterpieces spanning centuries. Lose yourself in the captivating brushstrokes of Scottish luminaries like Sir Henry Raeburn, and revel in the brilliance of international artists adorning the walls of these esteemed institutions. These cultural hubs not only preserve Scotland's artistic legacy but also serve as platforms for contemporary creativity, ensuring that the country's vibrant art scene remains ever evolving.

Scotland's Thriving Theatre Scene

From gripping dramas to side-splitting comedies, Scotland's performing arts cater to a myriad of tastes and preferences, offering an unparalleled cultural experience.

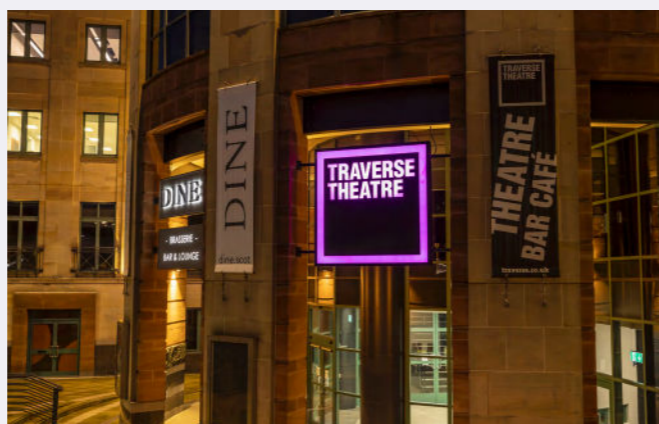
The Royal Lyceum Theatre

In Edinburgh, the [Royal Lyceum Theatre](#) stands as a bastion of classical repertoire and innovative productions. Experience Shakespearean classics or lose yourself in the spellbinding narratives of contemporary playwrights, all within the opulent confines of this admired institution. The grandeur of the venue and the calibre of the performances create an unforgettable evening for any theatre aficionado.



Theatre Royal

Head to Glasgow, where the [Theatre Royal](#) exudes sophistication and elegance, hosting a diverse array of performances ranging from West End musicals to avant-garde experiments. Whether you are seeking a night of musical enchantment or a thought-provoking theatrical journey, Glasgow's stages promise an experience that will linger in your mind long after the curtain falls.



Grassroots theatres you don't want to miss

Discover Scotland's thriving grassroots theatre scene by exploring intimate venues like the [Traverse Theatre](#) in Edinburgh and the [Tron Theatre](#) in Glasgow, where emerging talent and groundbreaking works are showcased. Here, you will see the raw power of storytelling in its purest form, as local artists push the boundaries of creativity and innovation. These hidden gems offer a unique glimpse into the country's dynamic cultural landscape.

Castles: Gateways to Scotland's Storied Past

No visit to Scotland would be complete without a trip to one of its ancient castles. From towering fortresses perched atop craggy cliffs to romantic ruins shrouded in mist, these majestic structures offer a glimpse into the nation's tumultuous history and enduring legacy.



Stirling Castle

Journey to [Stirling Castle](#), perched majestically atop a volcanic crag overlooking the eponymous town, where tales of valour and intrigue intertwine amidst its storied halls. Explore the lavish interiors adorned with intricate tapestries and ornate furnishings, and stand in awe before the panoramic views stretching across the rolling Scottish countryside.



Edinburgh Castle

Perched atop Castle Rock, [Edinburgh Castle](#) offers breathtaking views of the city that are truly unrivalled. This historic fortress holds the title of one of Europe's oldest fortified places, and its rich history as a royal residence, military stronghold, prison, and fortress is filled with countless fascinating tales. While some parts of the castle continue to be used for military purposes, it has also become a renowned tourist destination, attracting visitors from around the globe. Additionally, as an integral part of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site, Edinburgh Castle stands as an iconic symbol of the city's rich history.



Glenapp Castle

Immerse yourself in the grandeur of [Glenapp Castle](#), nestled in the picturesque southwest region of Scotland. This breathtaking Scottish Baronial castle stands as a testament to luxury and elegance, with its magnificent architecture and stunning surroundings. Indulge in the culinary delights of the castle's renowned cuisine, which has been honoured with three AA Rosettes. Surrounded by 36 acres of meticulously maintained private gardens, the castle boasts panoramic views of the Irish Sea, with Arran and Ailsa Craig serving as a picturesque backdrop.

MAKING YOUR BUDGET WORK EVEN HARDER

Sustainable events: making the budget work harder

As event organisers, we have a responsibility to create memorable experiences whilst minimising our environmental footprint and maximising the efficiency of our resources. Sustainable event planning goes hand in hand with optimising budgets, as eco-friendly practices often lead to cost savings. In this article, we'll explore strategies for making every penny count while prioritising sustainability in key areas such as catering, furniture, venue choice, digital materials, and more.

Sustainable catering

Choosing sustainable catering options promotes environmental responsibility and can also be cost-effective. Opt for locally sourced, seasonal ingredients to reduce transportation emissions and support local farmers. Additionally, compostable or reusable tableware (like ceramic crockery) reduces single-use plastics and lowers expenses associated with disposable items.

Eco-friendly furniture and decor

When selecting furniture and decor for your event, prioritise items that are durable, reusable, and made from sustainable materials. Renting furniture instead of purchasing it outright can significantly lower costs while minimising waste. Choose decor elements such as potted plants or LED lighting that can be reused or repurposed for future events, reducing the need for single-use decorations.

Venue choice and energy efficiency

The venue you choose can have a significant impact on both your budget and the environment. Look for venues that prioritise sustainability initiatives such as energy-efficient lighting, recycling programs, and renewable energy sources. Outdoor venues offer natural lighting and ventilation, reducing the need for artificial lighting and air conditioning, which can translate to cost savings on utility bills.

Digital materials and communication

In today's digital age, there is reduced need for excessive printing of materials such as brochures, programmes, or signage. Where possible, choose

digital alternatives such as event apps, email communication, and electronic signage to reduce paper waste and printing costs. Digital materials also offer greater flexibility for last-minute updates or changes, eliminating the need to reprint materials that may become obsolete.

Waste reduction and recycling

Implement waste reduction strategies throughout your event to reduce environmental impact and lower disposal costs. Provide clearly labelled recycling and compost bins to encourage guests to dispose of waste properly. Partner with local organisations or food banks to donate surplus food instead of letting it go to waste, contributing to community welfare while reducing your carbon footprint.

Transportation and accessibility

Consider the environmental and financial costs associated with transportation when planning your event. Where appropriate, choose a centrally located venue with access to public transportation to reduce emissions from attendee travel and alleviate parking expenses. Offer incentives for carpooling or provide shuttle services to encourage sustainable transportation options.

Water and energy conservation

Implement water and energy conservation measures to reduce resource usage and lower utility costs. Encourage attendees to use refillable water bottles instead of single-use plastic bottles by providing water stations throughout the venue. Opt for energy-efficient lighting, heating, and cooling systems to minimise electricity consumption without sacrificing comfort.

Partnering with sustainable suppliers

Collaborate with suppliers and vendors that share your commitment to sustainability. Consider whether suppliers offer ethically and locally sourced products, utilise environmentally-friendly business practices, or if they are a fair employer to their staff. Working with like-minded partners can allow a smoother event planning process.

