commonwealth games GLASGOW 2026

commonwealth sport

GLASGOW 2026 COMMONWEALTH GAMES

IMPACT EVALUATION



October 2026



THE BEGINNING OF A NEW ERA

Glasgow 2026 will forever hold a special place in the story of the Commonwealth Sport Movement. At a moment of uncertainty, Glasgow and Scotland stepped forward with courage, generosity, ambition and a passionate belief in what these Games mean to athletes and communities across 74 nations and territories.

On behalf of Commonwealth Sport, my heartfelt thanks go to Glasgow and Scotland, Commonwealth Games Scotland, the Organising Company, our Commonwealth Games Associations, our commercial and government partners, the volunteers and everyone who helped deliver such a memorable Games. In a record-breaking timeframe, we worked with agility, flexibility and creativity to provide a global stage for the Commonwealth's finest athletes to shine.

Glasgow 2026 marked the beginning of a new era for our Movement, delivering a wonderful celebration of sport, culture and friendship, with integrated Para sport at its heart and a welcome that once again reflected the very best of Glasgow. As we look towards the Centenary Commonwealth Games in Amdavad in 2030, we do so with renewed confidence in the future of the Games and the opportunities presented by a more flexible approach to hosting.

This evaluation captures both the impact of Glasgow 2026 and the valuable lessons for future hosts. It demonstrates how a more collaborative, flexible and sustainable approach can reduce the cost, complexity and environmental impact of staging the Games while maintaining world-class sport and an outstanding athlete experience. Crucially, it provides a blueprint for more nations and territories to shape future Games around their own strengths, communities and ambitions.

Glasgow has shown what is possible when we come together with a shared ambition. Its impact will be felt far beyond these Games.

Thank you.

Katie Sadleir CNZM
Chief Executive, Commonwealth Sport



AN EVENT REMEMBERED FOR GENERATIONS

We set out for Glasgow 2026 to feel altogether brilliant for the athletes competing and for people watching, taking part and experiencing the Games across the city, nation and all over the Commonwealth. This was a Games that delivered exceptional sport alongside community programmes full of Glasgow's warmth, creativity and character.

Doing that in an accelerated timeframe demanded a partnership with vision, clear priorities, bold decisions and a willingness to think differently. We designed a Games around Glasgow's existing venues and expertise, brought specialist teams together and made the compact format an opportunity to innovate and prioritise sustainability. Our ambition was to show how a new approach could deliver quality and generate social impact for our host city and nation.

This evaluation gives us powerful evidence of what that ambition delivered. It also demonstrates why the experience beyond the field of play matters, more so when financial resources are limited. Free participatory activities, the festival, the Game On Live Site, our schools, youth and community programmes all created more ways for people to take part, connect with one another, and make Glasgow 2026 their own.

Inclusion and access to opportunities create the magic and joy that leave lasting memories from major events.

I am immensely proud of the Commonwealth athletes and teams who competed at these Games, and of our incredible workforce, volunteer Legends, partners and communities, whose collective energy and pride turned a shared purpose to save the Commonwealth Games into an event that will be remembered for generations.

Glasgow 2026's contribution to future events is to share what worked brilliantly, the evidence we gathered and the lessons we learned.

Our thanks go to the evaluation team for this report, the findings offer practical experience for others to adapt and evolve, shape and build upon.

Glasgow 2026 was built on belief, bravery and courage. This report records what we achieved together and what that experience can make possible next.

Phil Batty OBE
Chief Executive, Glasgow 2026

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INTRODUCTION



THE GAMES DESIGNED TO BE DIFFERENT

Glasgow 2026 accelerated a new model for the Commonwealth Games, built around affordability, flexibility and ambition.



At the Commonwealth Sport General Assembly in Singapore (November 2023), the membership of the Commonwealth voted to invest in a new model of the Games to secure its future.

Funding was made available by Commonwealth Sport to any nation or territory that could put forward a credible delivery plan to reimagine the Games and stage it in time for the 2026 edition. Subsequently, Commonwealth Games Scotland (Team Scotland) and Commonwealth Sport began discussions about whether Scotland could once again deliver the Games. Talks with the Scottish Government, UK Government and Glasgow City Council followed, and Glasgow was confirmed as host in October 2024.

The ambition to deliver a different model for the Commonwealth Games was set out in Commonwealth Sport's Strategy 2023-2034. Commonwealth Sport had been reviewing how the Games could cost less to stage and become accessible to a wider range of host nations. Glasgow didn't start that conversation, but it accelerated it dramatically. Glasgow 2026 was delivered for £159.6 million, around 85% less than the average cost of the three previous Games (Glasgow 2014, Gold Coast 2018 and Birmingham 2022), in 2026 prices.

Building on the legacy of Glasgow 2014, Ian Reid CBE and Jon Doig OBE of Commonwealth Games Scotland, alongside Commonwealth Sport, developed a vision centred on existing infrastructure, a compact eight-mile corridor and an accessible public transport network connecting venues for athletes, residents and visitors.

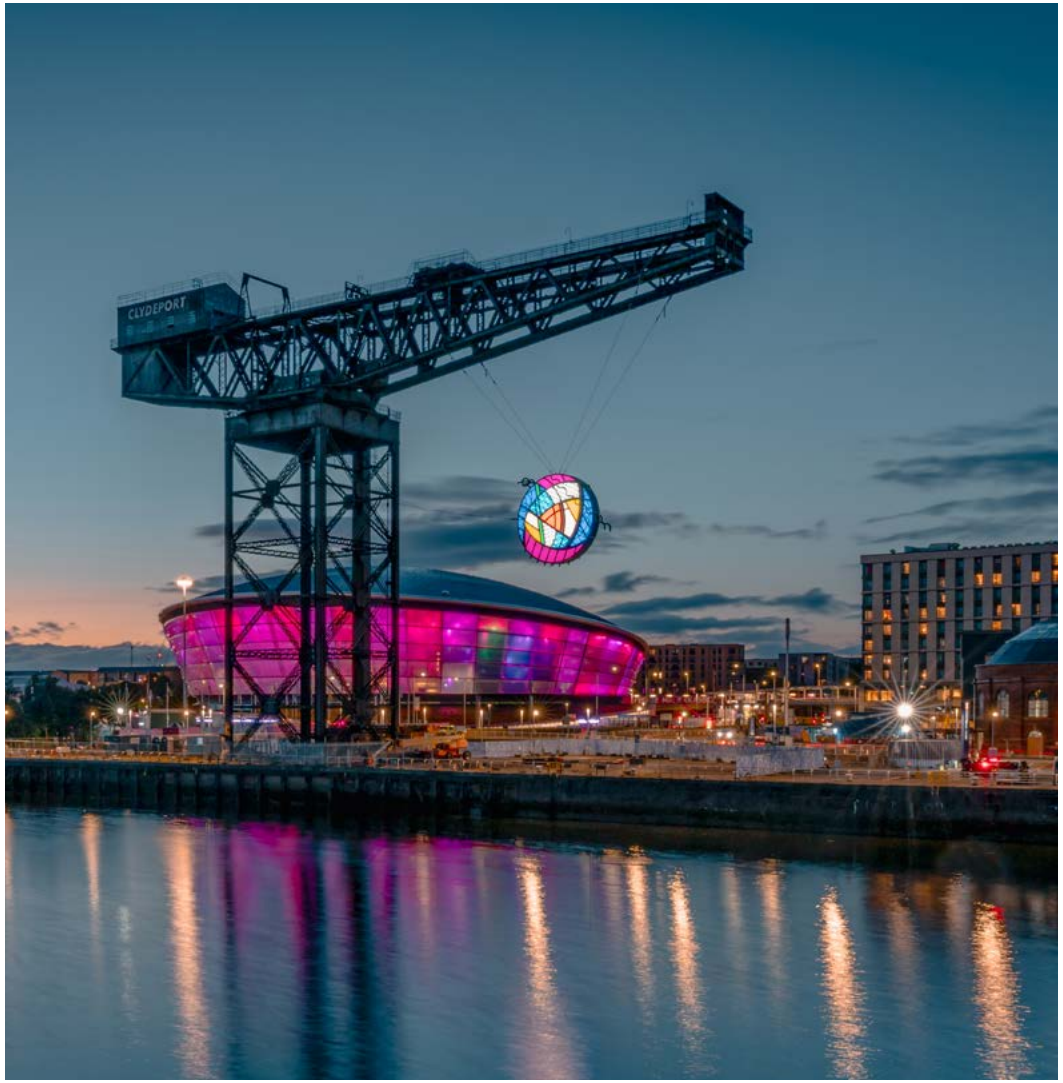
The approach also drew on Glasgow and Scotland's track record of hosting major events, supported by established events strategies, an experienced workforce and local supply chains. To embed legacy from the outset, Commonwealth Sport and Commonwealth Games Scotland invested in dedicated legacy and community engagement roles before the Organising Company was established. This ensured legacy planning remained central to Glasgow 2026 and could inform future editions of the Games, including the Malta 2027 Commonwealth Youth Games and Amdavad 2030 Commonwealth Games.

From confirmation to the Opening Ceremony on 23 July 2026, there was a short timeline to turn those ideas into a world-class Commonwealth Games. The Organising Company Board led by Chair, George Black CBE, was formalised in December 2024 and an Executive Leadership Team started work in January 2025. This left just 18 months to operationalise and deliver a new format edition on time, in budget and to safe and secure standards.

The constraints were considerable, but they also created an opportunity. A shorter timeframe and a significantly reduced budget gave the team, in the words of Glasgow 2026 Chief Executive Phil Batty OBE, "permission to be bold and brave".

There wasn't the time, money or need to reproduce the traditional model. Instead, Glasgow could ask a more fundamental question: What could the Commonwealth Games look like to remain relevant for the next 100 years?

MAKING MORE OF WHAT WAS ALREADY THERE



> ***These Games were built on the legacy of 2014. They couldn't have been delivered without it.***
>
> **George Black, CBE** Chairman Glasgow 2026

The answer began with Glasgow itself. The city knows major events and already had much of what the Games needed. It had hosted a successful edition of the Games just 12 years earlier, in 2014. Instead of building new competition venues, Glasgow 2026 made use of existing infrastructure, including the Scottish Event Campus, Glasgow International Arena / Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome, Tollcross International Swimming Centre and Scotstoun Stadium.

Every venue sat within an eight-mile radius. Hotels replaced the traditional athletes' village and the result was a compact Games designed around the city rather than a city reshaped around the Games.

The same thinking shaped the Organising Company. Rather than building a large organisation with every capability in-house, Glasgow 2026 adopted a lean, partnership-led model. The Organising Company recruited an experienced core delivery team supplemented by major event specialists embedded directly, bringing expertise where and when it was needed.

The relationship with government also evolved. With core funding coming from Commonwealth Sport, the Scottish Government and UK Government were able to act as partners and enablers rather than primary funders. This marked a significant departure from the traditional model, including Birmingham 2022, where approximately 85% of the funding was underwritten by central and local government.



FROM CONSTRAINT TO OPPORTUNITY

> ***The 2026 Games was a bridge to the Commonwealth Games of tomorrow – an exciting first step in our journey to reset and redefine the Games as a truly collaborative, flexible and sustainable model for the future that minimises costs, reduces the environmental footprint, and enhances social impact – in doing so increasing the scope of countries capable of hosting."***
>
> **Katie Sadleir CNZM**
> Chief Executive, Commonwealth Sport

Major international sporting events face increasing scrutiny over their cost, environmental impact and the demands they place on host cities and nations. Glasgow 2026 offered an opportunity to show how the Commonwealth Games could be delivered differently and pioneer a new event format to set an example for industry-wide change.

The Games made use of existing venues within a compact footprint, replaced the traditional athletes' village with hotel accommodation and operated with a leaner Organising Company. It also adopted a different commercial mindset, embedded sustainability management through ISO 20121 and used a Story of Change to connect decisions with intended outcomes. The Story of Change brought together four impact drivers – Inclusive, Welcoming, Greener and Financially Responsible – aligned with Commonwealth Sport's wealths model. A framework was developed to map the financial and in-kind contributions of partners against the activities, outputs and outcomes needed to deliver the Games' wider ambitions.

The new model provided a full 10-sport programme, including the largest Swimming and Athletics programme in the history of the Games. These were practical responses to the challenges of delivering an international event in the timeframe. But together, they offered something more: a proof of concept for how the Commonwealth Games could be hosted in the future.

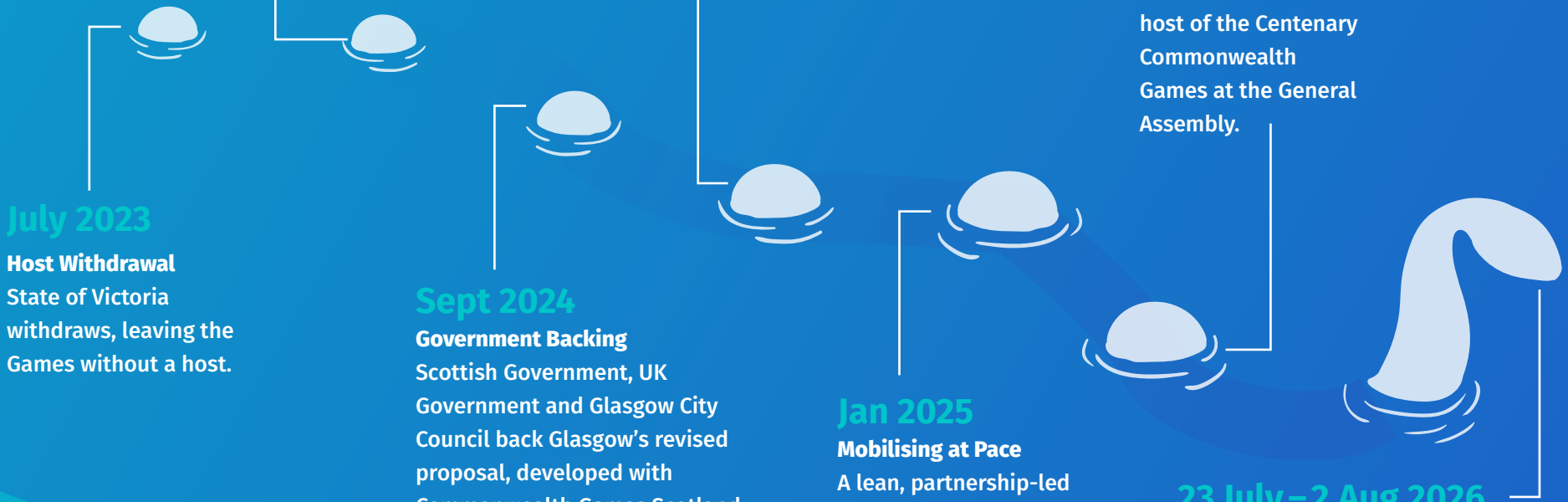
The new model still delivered the moments that make the Games special. Josh Kerr brought Scotstoun Stadium to its feet with gold in the Commonwealth Mile, while Scottish Para cyclist Neil Fachie returned from retirement to claim two golds at the Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome and Arena. Emma Finucane won four Track Cycling golds, South Africa's Chad le Clos became the most decorated Commonwealth Games athlete of all time, and 76-year-old Australian Louise Hoskins became the oldest gold medallist in Games history.

Mauritius celebrated a Commonwealth Games first as Para athlete Noemi Alphonse won two silvers in the T54 1500m and 400m. Jamaica's Sunshine Girls defeated defending champions Australia 46-45 in a dramatic netball semi-final, while Trinidad and Tobago's Jereem Richards secured silver in the men's 400m in 44.82 seconds.

Beyond the competition, Sir Chris Hoy received an emotional reception at the velodrome bearing his name, while a mass ceilidh brought people together at the Closing Ceremony. Glasgow demonstrated that a different approach to hosting the Games didn't have to come at the expense of its atmosphere, sporting excellence or memorable moments.

Scotland stepped forward because the Commonwealth Games needed a host. In doing so, it helped demonstrate how the Games could work differently. The decisions behind that transformation, and how they can inform future hosts, are at the heart of the Glasgow 2026 story and at a pivotal moment in the history of the Movement.

THE RACE TO DELIVER GLASGOW 2026



July 2023

Host Withdrawal

State of Victoria withdraws, leaving the Games without a host.

2023 – 2024

Rethinking the Games

Commonwealth Sport develops a leaner, more flexible model.

Sept 2024

Government Backing

Scottish Government, UK Government and Glasgow City Council back Glasgow's revised proposal, developed with Commonwealth Games Scotland and Commonwealth Sport.

Oct 2024

Glasgow Confirmed

Glasgow is confirmed as host.

Jan 2025

Mobilising at Pace

A lean, partnership-led Organising Company is formed and scaled to deliver the Games.

Nov 2025

Amdavad 2030

India is confirmed as host of the Centenary Commonwealth Games at the General Assembly.

23 July – 2 Aug 2026

Games Time

11 days, 10 sports, 2,749 athletes and 74 nations and territories.

VENUES, LIVE SITES AND TRAVEL

Glasgow 2026 delivered 10 sports across four existing venue clusters within an eight-mile corridor: Scotstoun Stadium, Tollcross International Swimming Centre, Glasgow International Arena/Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome and the Scottish Event Campus. By using established facilities, the Games avoided new venue construction and reduced operational complexity.

Beyond the competition venues, the free Game On Live Site at Kelvingrove Park offered live screenings, sporting activities and entertainment, while Live@SWG3 and the wider Glasgow 2026 Festival extended the Games experience across the city.

The compact venue model also shaped travel planning, with spectators encouraged to use public transport, walk or cycle wherever possible. Existing transport networks were supported by targeted services, including accessible shuttle arrangements at selected venues.



STORY OF CHANGE: THE REIMAGINED GAMES

Four impact drivers and five Common Wealths guided delivery and ambitions for lasting impact.

Glasgow 2026 was designed to do more than deliver 11 days of world-class sport. The Story of Change plan set out how a different model of hosting could create meaningful benefits for people, places and the planet. It set out to build on the UK's reputation for staging major events that realise social, cultural and economic benefits for our communities.

With funding from Spirit of 2012 and Commonwealth Sport, CCSE co-hosted workshops with more than 170 athletes, residents, young people and community representatives to develop the Story of Change framework, establishing four impact drivers to guide decision-making, measure progress and inform future Games.

THE FOUR IMPACT DRIVERS

#1 The inclusive Games, where everyone belongs

Putting accessibility, safety and inclusion at the heart of the experience. From the largest integrated Para sport programme in Games history to removing barriers for spectators, volunteers and communities, the aim was to make the Games accessible to more people.



#2 Delivering a greener Games, treading lighter on the planet

Reducing environmental impact by making use of existing venues, cutting carbon emissions, minimising waste and embedding sustainability into Games operations. The ambition was to demonstrate a lower-carbon, more circular model for major events.

#3 Creating a welcoming Games, in a welcoming city

Creating opportunities to participate, volunteer, learn and celebrate through sport and culture. By engaging communities across Glasgow and beyond, the Games aimed to build skills, strengthen connections and create a lasting sense of pride and belonging.

#4 Designing a place-based, financially responsible event format

Delivering a Games that uses financial resources efficiently and responsibly by building from the city's existing venues, infrastructure, expertise and partnership. The aim was to support the visitor economy, strengthen the local events workforce and demonstrate a more accessible hosting model for future Games.

THE STORY OF CHANGE LOGIC MODEL

Cross Cutting Impact Drivers	Inputs	Activities	Immediate Outcomes	Common Wealths – Intended Goals	Long-term Impacts – Lasting Benefits
Delivering a greener Games, treading lighter on the planet. The inclusive Games where everyone belongs. Creating a welcoming Games in a welcoming city. Designing a place-based, financially responsible event format.	**Partnership:** Glasgow 2026 Organising Company; Commonwealth Sport; Glasgow City Council; the Scottish Government; UK Government; Glasgow Life; Scottish Event Campus; Commonwealth Games Scotland; alongside our delivery suppliers; local communities; Commonwealth Games Associations; national and local agencies, our governing bodies, international federations and our athletes. **Local talent and industry expertise:** World-class workforce and supply chain, developed across multiple major events and across sectors. **£162m delivery budget:** Investment from Commonwealth Sport, strategic partners and commercial revenue; with no detriment to the public purse.	World-class integrated sporting competition. Thousands of volunteers. A delivery company, supply chain and expert workforce. National and international promotion and campaigns. Community, schools and engagement programmes. Glasgow 2026 Festival. King's Baton Relay. 'ALL IN' programme. Sustainability action. Social Values initiatives. Advocacy, leadership and international relations.	Elite sporting outcomes on the field of play achieved through integrated, inclusive sport delivery. Civic engagement and cohesion across Glasgow and Scotland. Hundreds of thousands of visitors to the city (and wider Scotland), spending in the local economy. A low-carbon Games delivered through smart design, new transport models and responsible supply chain management. Global profile for Glasgow, Scotland, the UK and Commonwealth Sport. Focused community involvement that centres lived experience. Opportunities to learn, participate, volunteer and be inspired, having a positive impact on people and communities. A financially responsible model rooted in place and partnership.	**Sport Wealth** The future of the largest integrated multi-sport event is secured. Sport is more accessible for more people. **Social Wealth** A greener, more inclusive Games model is demonstrated. Enhanced skills, pride, wellbeing and connection among volunteers, workers and communities. **Cultural Wealth** There is a stronger sense of belonging and celebration across Glasgow and the Commonwealth. **Economic Wealth** Glasgow and Scotland's visitor economy is energised. Jobs, skills, inward investment and local supply chain growth accelerated. **Diplomatic Wealth** There is stronger international collaboration across the Commonwealth.	The Commonwealth Games reimagined for a new era of sport. A more connected, proud and confident host city and nation. The smarter, more sustainable blueprint for future events. Stronger talent pool of a skilled, diverse major events workforce for Scotland. Increased community, sporting and cultural assets with strengthened participation pathways. Global recognition of Glasgow, Scotland and the UK as pioneers in major event delivery.



THE FIVE COMMON WEALTHS

The Story of Change was also informed by Commonwealth Sport's Common Wealth model, which identifies five ways the Games can contribute to lasting prosperity:

SPORT WEALTH
Stronger sport systems, athlete development and high performance.

SOCIAL WEALTH
Greater wellbeing, equity, safety and inclusion.

CULTURAL WEALTH
Celebrating identity, creativity and Commonwealth diversity.

ECONOMIC WEALTH
Supporting jobs, investment, tourism and sustainable growth.

DIPLOMATIC WEALTH
Building connections, partnerships and relationships across the Commonwealth.

ABOUT THIS EVALUATION

Assessing the social, environmental and economic impact of Glasgow 2026 against its stated ambitions.

The Games Impact Evaluation was commissioned by Commonwealth Sport and the Organising Company to evidence and document the learning from this edition of the event.

In April 2026, The Bulb and the Centre for Culture, Sport and Events (CCSE) at the University of the West of Scotland were appointed to deliver an independent social, environmental and economic evaluation of Glasgow 2026. Its purpose was to assess the impact of the Games against the ambitions set out in the Story of Change.

The evaluation examines the outputs and outcomes achieved to date, creating an evidence base for Glasgow 2026 and future hosts exploring what a cost-efficient model can deliver. Although not a process evaluation, the significant shift from the traditional delivery model made it important to understand what changed, what worked and what lessons could inform future events.

This report builds on 'The Story So Far', the interim evaluation published on the final day of the Games. It focuses on outputs and indicative outcomes from before, during and immediately after Glasgow 2026, with most data collection completed by 4 September 2026. Longer-term and legacy impacts that fall beyond this phase of the evaluation would require longitudinal evaluation to be funded and commissioned. It is recommended that in future editions this forms part of further study.

The report is organised around the four impact drivers set out in the Story of Change: An Inclusive Games, A Greener Games, A Welcoming Games and a Place-Based, Financially Responsible Event. Chapters 2 to 5 explore each in turn.

Chapter 6 draws together the cross-cutting themes and considers the strengths and challenges of the new model, while Chapter 7 looks at what Glasgow, prospective hosts and the wider events industry can learn from the experience.

METHODOLOGY

The evaluation was built around an Integrated Evaluation Framework, connecting the research questions, indicators and data sources directly to Glasgow 2026's Story of Change and the Commonwealth Sport Common Wealth model.





A multidisciplinary team brought together social, economic and environmental expertise, applying methods from each discipline within a shared impact measurement plan.

The evaluation combined primary research – including case studies, surveys, stakeholder interviews, focus groups and observations – with operational data from the Organising Company, Commonwealth Sport and its partners.

Evidence was gathered across three phases:

- **Pre-Games:** administrative and early output data, surveys, stakeholder interviews and early case studies.
- **Games-time:** operational and monitoring data, alongside observational site visits and interviews.
- **Post-Games:** completed administrative datasets, survey data, reflective interviews and focus groups with volunteers, athletes, ticketholders, Live Site attendees, case study participants and community stakeholders.

Case studies explored selected programmes and initiatives in greater depth, combining monitoring data, stakeholder perspectives and participant experiences. They complemented the wider evaluation by providing context on how activities were delivered, the outcomes experienced and their potential longer-term impact and legacy.

DATA VALIDATION AND ASSURANCE

Where the evaluation used operational data supplied by the Organising Company, Commonwealth Sport and their partners, the team worked from the underlying datasets rather than summary dashboards wherever possible. Figures were checked for consistency and cross-referenced against other sources, with data quality assessed for accuracy, completeness, consistency, timeliness and transparency.

This report makes data limitations clear wherever possible. All data was handled in line with UK GDPR and a data-minimisation approach, with ethical approval provided by the University of the West of Scotland.

Several surveys contributed to the evaluation. Most achieved strong sample sizes, with margins of error and confidence intervals detailed in the accompanying notes. However, like all surveys, they were subject to self-selection: those who chose to respond may not fully represent the wider population.

This is particularly important when considering public perceptions of the Games. The evaluation does not include a representative survey of Glasgow or Scottish residents as a whole due to timing.

The resident-facing evidence reflects people who bought tickets, volunteered or attended a Live Site rather than those who did not engage with the Games.

Case studies and stakeholder interviews were deliberately selected to explore how impacts were experienced in particular settings, rather than provide a statistically representative picture.

Where Glasgow 2026 is compared with previous Games or other benchmarks, the report makes the basis for comparison clear. Differences in scale, methodology and indicator definitions mean many comparisons provide useful context rather than direct measures of relative performance.

While this evaluation captures only the early outcomes of Glasgow 2026, it provides a strong foundation for understanding what the Games achieved and what can be learned. Some impacts will take longer to emerge, but the evidence gathered offers valuable insights into what a different model of hosting can deliver.

Above all, Glasgow 2026 provides an opportunity to build on that experience, helping future hosts deliver a Commonwealth Games that is more flexible, accessible and sustainable.

GLASGOW 2026 AT A GLANCE

A WORLD-CLASS INTEGRATED SPORTING COMPETITION

2,749
athletes from
74
nations and territories

10
sports over
11
days of competition

1,168
medals available across
215
medal events



152
Games Records and
6 WORLD RECORDS

47 medal events in the ***LARGEST-EVER*** Para sport programme

FIRST-EVER
Commonwealth Para sport medal for Uganda



FIRST COMMONWEALTH GAMES

Gabon



Togo



FIRST-EVER COMMONWEALTH GAMES MEDALS

- Rwanda
- Gabon
- Tuvalu

4
competition venues across an
8-MILE FOOTPRINT

LARGEST DELEGATION
AUSTRALIA
257 ATHLETES



GLASGOW 2026 AT A GLANCE

FIRSTS, FEATS AND MILESTONES

3X3 BASKETBALL

expanded from **8 to 12 teams** per gender, and 3x3 Wheelchair Basketball from **6 to 8.**

TRACK CYCLING AND PARA TRACK CYCLING

C1-C5 events debuted, creating the largest-ever programme.

BOWLS AND PARA BOWLS

27 Nations competed in a shorter, more dynamic Bowls and Para Bowls format.

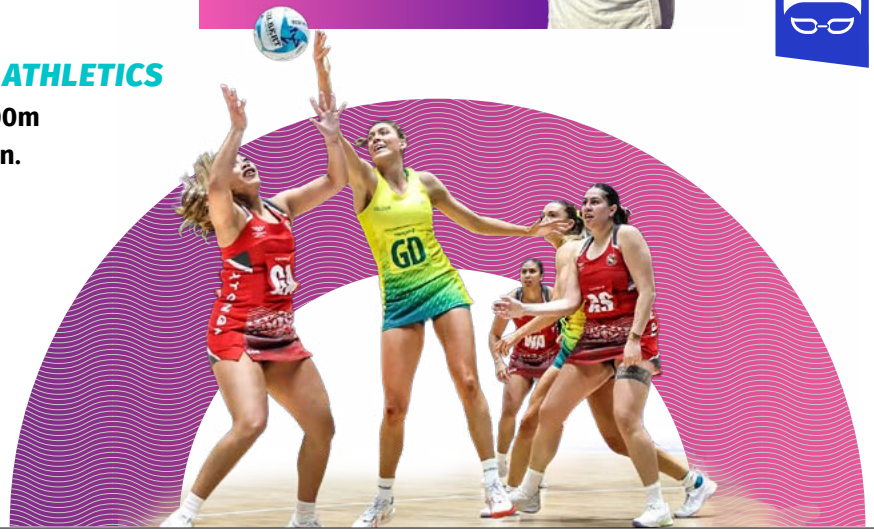
JUDO

Gabon claimed its first Commonwealth Games medal in Women's +78kg on its Games debut.



ATHLETICS AND PARA ATHLETICS

introduced the **Mixed 4x400m Relay** and **T20 classification.**



BOXING

featured an equal number of men's and women's events for the first time.

FIRST THREE-SPORT PARA ATHLETE

Hope Gordon became the first three-sport Para athlete, competing in Para Powerlifting at Glasgow 2026 after Para Canoe and Para Skiing in previous events.



GYMNASTICS



Reuben Ward claimed Scotland's first Artistic Gymnastics All-Around gold, while Ellie Black became the first gymnast to win two Commonwealth All-Around titles.

SWIMMING AND PARA SWIMMING

featured a record medal programme, including debuts for the Women's 1500m and Men's 800m.

NETBALL

attracted the largest ticketed audience of all sports.

DRIVING INTEREST AT HOME AND INTERNATIONALLY

510m
watched live sport coverage globally

590m
social views and 18.6m interactions

51,500
downloads of the Fan App

90,000+
pieces of media coverage

14m
views of the website and app

39
commercial partners

GLASGOW 2026 AT A GLANCE

DELIVERED BY AN EXPERT WORKFORCE AND SUPPLY CHAIN

562
Organising Company staff and

2,387
embedded delivery and venue partners: total team size

71%
of Organising Company staff were Scottish residents

34%
of Organising Company staff were new to major events

1 in 5
had worked on a previous Commonwealth Games

Games-related economic activity supported an estimated

2,400
FTE YEARS
of employment in Scotland, including
2,100 IN GLASGOW CITY REGION

£117.3m
Gross Value Added to the Scottish economy

£223m
Gross Output across Scotland

c.90%
of contracted expenditure delivered from within the Glasgow City Region

£92.5m
of Gross Value Added to the Glasgow City Region economy



WITH SUPPORT FROM THOUSANDS OF VOLUNTEERS

24,917
applications

156,110
hours volunteering

4,000+
volunteers

(More than one third were not active volunteers pre-Games)

16-96
age range with 16-17-year-olds eligible for the first time.

GLASGOW 2026 AT A GLANCE

MORE WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

1million+
experienced the Games live across Scotland.

448,473
spectator tickets issued.

21,183
subsidised tickets provided to community organisations and local groups.



126
athlete visits across 29 local authorities, reaching 27,827 pupils.

247,000
people attended the Live Sites and Merchant City Festival.

82
students secured Games-time roles through Campus to Commonwealth.

110
projects funded through NLCF Awards for All, with 902,408 distributed by 24th July.

200,000+
people reached through 161 projects supported by £1.2m in Festival funding.

755
organisations signed up to go 'All In'.

2,536
downloads of education resources.

A NEW LOOK KING'S BATON RELAY



ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH

74
individually created Batons.

1,022,054
pieces of plastic collected.

95,467
volunteer hours over 111 events across the Commonwealth.

CULMINATING IN SCOTLAND

82
events across 23 days in Scotland.

86,264
people attended events visited by the Baton.

52
Batonbearers

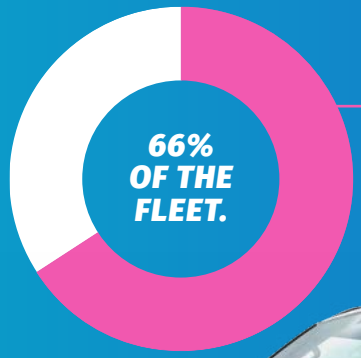


GLASGOW 2026 AT A GLANCE

HOSTING MORE SUSTAINABLY

ISO 20121 *(SUSTAINABLE EVENT MANAGEMENT)*
certification achieved

19,021 tCO_2e
avoided



85
electric and
11
hybrid vehicles



Competition venues powered by
100%
renewable energy



96%
of temporary overlay hired



74%
resale, donation or recycled of leftover assets

100%
diversion of waste from landfill

26,585 km
travelled on e-bikes

66%
of athlete bus miles travelled in EV buses



ADVOCACY, LEADERSHIP AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

115
events hosted at Team Scotland House with more than 20,000 visits to the venue

Sports Ministers from
50
Commonwealth Countries and seven Overseas Territories convened to discuss global sports policy

81
attendees at three-day Future Host Observer Programme

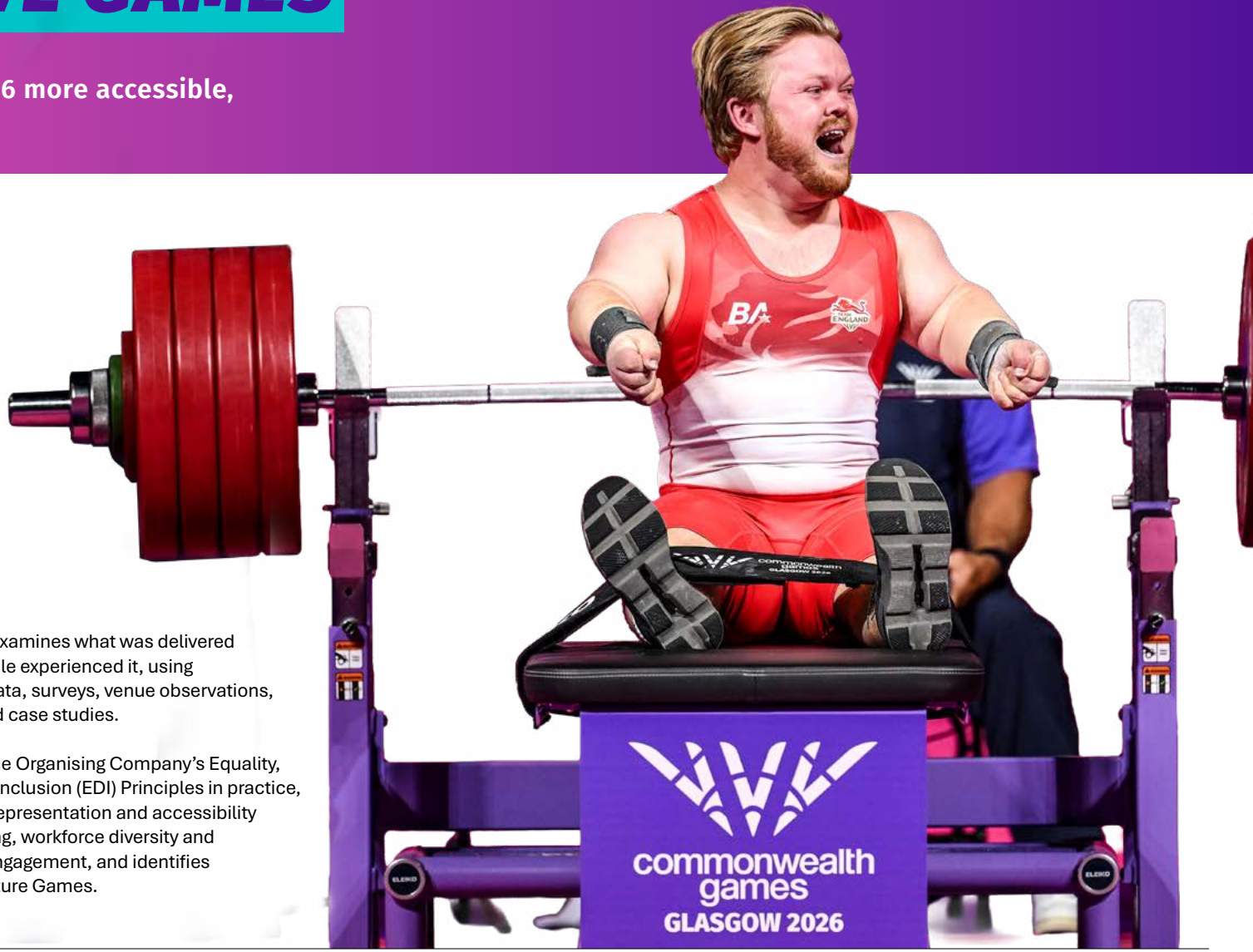
5,238
attendees across 86 events and 96 sport sessions as part of the Hosted Events Programme



THE INCLUSIVE GAMES WHERE EVERYONE BELONGS

DELIVERING AN INCLUSIVE GAMES

Breaking down barriers to make Glasgow 2026 more accessible, representative and inclusive for all.



Glasgow 2026 set out to make the Games more accessible and inclusive, on and off the field of play. It staged the largest integrated Para sport programme in Commonwealth Games history, planned venues with accessibility in mind and introduced additional support for disabled volunteers and those with additional support needs. For the first time, 16- and 17-year-olds could also apply to volunteer in the main programme in addition to sport specialist youth volunteering opportunities.

The ambition was to enhance the experience for spectators, staff, volunteers and communities, while laying the foundations for more inclusive sporting events and sport participation in Glasgow and Scotland. Three goals guided this work, to:

- Deliver an integrated competition, including the largest Para sport medal programme in Games history, and an inclusive experience for athletes, teams and officials from 74 nations and territories.
- Remove barriers to create an accessible and safe experience throughout Games planning and delivery.
- Build a representative workforce and bring lived experience into decisions through staff, volunteers, partners and community participants.

This chapter examines what was delivered and how people experienced it, using programme data, surveys, venue observations, interviews and case studies.

It considers the Organising Company's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Principles in practice, from athlete representation and accessibility to safeguarding, workforce diversity and community engagement, and identifies lessons for future Games.

EMBEDDING INCLUSION IN THE GAMES

Glasgow 2026 established an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and Engagement Committee of the Organising Company Board to embed inclusion in Games planning and decision-making. The Committee oversaw a set of Principles developed alongside the Story of Change, aimed at ensuring people could participate regardless of background, nation or ability.

These Principles included 'Access Matters', which connected the integrated Para sport programme with the wider approach to accessibility across the Games.

The Principles on Cultural Inclusion, Safeguarding and Wellbeing also informed the Glasgow 2026 Human Rights Statement. Developed with the Centre for Culture, Sport and Events (CCSE), it set out commitments to protect, respect and promote the rights of everyone involved.

The Organising Company also partnered with It's a Penalty to raise awareness of human trafficking risks associated with major sporting events, building on work with UNICEF at Glasgow 2014.

For further information, please see **National EDI Forum For Scottish Sport case study**.

GLASGOW 2026 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PRINCIPLES

Access Matters
Glasgow 2026's integrated sports programme demonstrated our commitment to inclusion. The Organising Company worked to remove digital, physical, sensory and logistical barriers across venues and the wider Games experience.



Belong Together
The Organising Company sought to create an environment where everyone connected to Glasgow 2026 felt they belonged. Through inclusion, respect and shared purpose, athletes, volunteers, staff and spectators were valued, supported and part of the Games experience.

Driven by Dignity
Everyone had the right to feel safe and respected. Clear policies and codes of conduct, supported by transparent reporting, helped us improve the environment for all.

Cultural Inclusion
The Games celebrated the diversity of the Commonwealth, reflecting the voices, traditions and languages of different communities through the Ceremonies, events and materials.

Gender Equity
Glasgow 2026 built on the Games' leadership in gender parity, providing equal events, opportunities and visibility for all participants.

Safeguarding and Wellbeing
The Organising Company worked to provide a safe physical and digital environment for everyone, particularly children, disabled adults and people requiring additional support.

Inclusive Leadership
Leadership and governance sought to reflect the diversity of the Commonwealth Games and its communities, valuing different perspectives and encouraging meaningful representation at every level.

Diverse Teams
The Organising Company aimed to build a workforce and volunteer team that reflected the diversity of Commonwealth communities, through fair recruitment, inclusive training and opportunities for people from all backgrounds to contribute and thrive.

Communities First
The Games were designed with communities in mind. It engaged local, national and international voices, businesses, sports organisations and community groups to encourage widespread participation and involvement.

Legacy of Inclusion
The ambition extended beyond the Games, from improving accessible facilities to increasing participation in sport and physical activity among underrepresented groups. Lasting change remained the goal.

Ongoing Education
The Games recognised inclusion as an ongoing process. Through training, awareness campaigns and open conversations, it worked to foster a culture of learning, development and greater equity.

ATHLETE PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION



Across 11 days, 2,749 athletes from 74 nations and territories competed in 10 sports and six Para sports, with 215 medal events and 1,168 medals available.

Glasgow 2026 brought several Commonwealth firsts. Gabon and Togo made their Games debuts, with Marthe Gnacadja Avaro winning Gabon's first medal in women's +78kg Judo. Florence Niyonkuru and Tarona Taafaki secured the first medals for Rwanda and Tuvalu, while Uganda's Husnah Kukundakwe won silver in the women's SB8 100m Breaststroke, becoming the nation's first Commonwealth Para sport medallist.

The Games staged the largest integrated Para sport medal programme in its history, with 450 athletes competing across six sports and 47 medal events, with 141 medals available. England's Mark Swan claimed the first medal of Glasgow 2026 in men's lightweight Para Powerlifting, followed by Esther Nworgu who was the first female Para athlete to secure a medal at the Games. Para athletes won 19% of medals overall, including 14 of Scotland's 39 medals (36%).

Support for athletes from nations with fewer sporting resources was another priority. Commonwealth Sport's GAPS (Gather, Adjust, Prepare and Sustain), delivered with the University of the West of Scotland, brought 38 Para athletes to a pre-Games camp in Ayr. Travel grants, performance support, psychology, physiotherapy, media training and acclimatisation helped athletes prepare for the Games. GAPS also provides development and classification support throughout the Commonwealth Sport cycle.

Among GAPS athletes who had attended a camp in the previous six months, nine won medals at Glasgow 2026, including seven who attended the Ayr camp. Another seven achieved personal bests and 22 recorded season's bests. Overall, 62 GAPS athletes from 21 nations competed across four sports at the Games. For further information, please see **Commonwealth Sport GAPS Program case study.**

Team Scotland's Achieve programme provided another pathway, supporting developing athletes who had not qualified for the Games. Covering 18 sports, including some outside the Games programme, it combined mentoring with opportunities to learn alongside Team Scotland athletes. For further information, please see **Team Scotland Achieve Programme 2026 case study.**

TEAM SCOTLAND'S ACHIEVE PROGRAMME

in numbers at Glasgow 2026

37 participants

26 women

11 men

23 athletes

1st time female-only coaching cohort

9/10 average participant rating

14 coaches

13 mentors

18 sports represented

232 athletes and coaches supported since 2010

> ***"I love being surrounded by so many different cultures. Everyone is so welcoming and I've learned so much from other coaches while also helping my fellow GAPS athletes. The GAPS programme makes sure no one is left behind."***
>
> **GAPS Participant**



PERCEPTIONS OF INCLUSION AND EXPERIENCE

Athletes rated their Glasgow 2026 experience positively. Of 193 respondents, 72% described it as 'Excellent' or 'Very Good', rising to 93% when including 'Good'.

Ratings were consistent across Para and non-Para sport athletes, with 93% of both groups rating their experience 'Good' or better. Seven respondents did not identify a sport and were excluded from this comparison.

Meeting other athletes was a highlight. Of 200 respondents, 55% selected it as one of the best aspects of the Games, while 46% valued the team environment. For 58%, meeting athletes from different nations and cultures made the Games meaningful, while 44% valued belonging to the wider Commonwealth athlete community.

There were some differences between groups. Para athletes were less likely to select meeting other athletes as a highlight (38% compared with 60% of non-Para athletes), but more likely to value the team environment (66% compared with 44%).

The hotel-based accommodation model presented challenges. Of 180 respondents, 42% felt it limited opportunities to meet other athletes, while 12% were unsure how to connect with them. Across the wider survey, 36% (72 of 200) wanted more opportunities to meet fellow competitors.

Further work and planning is required in future Games to create more shared spaces and activities that provide better opportunities for athletes to connect. Glasgow 2026 delivered an element of this, but this could be enhanced going forward.

Maintaining those connections beyond the Games presents another challenge. Athletes whose sports were not included in future programmes risk losing competition and engagement opportunities, while changes to eligible classifications can affect development pathways for Para athletes. One proposal was to establish a 'Commonwealth Sport Family', maintaining connections regardless of future Games programmes and involving athletes in activities such as school visits.

Inclusion was also reflected in the ceremonies, where interviewees highlighted the importance of representation and storytelling alongside physical accessibility, particularly in terms of whose voices were heard and whose stories were told.

At Para sport venues, screens and commentary helped spectators understand classifications, while selected sessions involving visually impaired athletes offered audio description. However, this was not available across every sport. Clearer explanations of classifications and competition formats, alongside wider audio description, could improve the spectator experience at future Games.

Athletes also contributed to Games planning through an Organising Company Athlete Advisory Group representing most sports. Despite initial concerns that the short delivery timeframe might limit its influence, members reported constructive dialogue and the freedom to challenge decisions.

The group's debrief concluded that its 'strongest message was that Glasgow 2026 successfully placed athletes at the heart of Games planning and delivery'. It also identified accessibility, technology and post-Games wellbeing as priorities for improvement.

ACCESSIBILITY, SAFEGUARDING AND INCLUSIVE DESIGN

Making Glasgow 2026 accessible extended beyond competition venues to spectator journeys, accommodation, transport, athlete services and safeguarding. Each required practical decisions, often within the constraints of existing infrastructure and a short delivery timeframe.

Around 400 staff received training in inclusive Games delivery, based on the social model of disability. This covered physical, sensory and communication barriers, inclusive language, neurodiversity and reasonable adjustments. Adapted training was also provided to volunteers and more than 40 people working in Glasgow's tourism and hotel sector.

The Accessibility Policy and Accessibility Management Plan guided decisions across functional areas, supported by working groups and venue planning.

The evidence shows how these commitments worked in practice, including where existing infrastructure or late decisions created barriers.

VENUE ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility means more than providing wheelchair spaces. Across all four competition venues, planning considered step-free routes, seating and toilets alongside hearing assistance, accessible viewing areas and volunteer support. Provision included 13 accessible entrances, 18 accessible viewing platforms, 58 accessible toilets and Changing Places facilities at every venue.

Immediately before the Games, the Accessibility team conducted the first lived-experience audits of every Commonwealth Games competition venue. Members of the Scottish Disability Sport Youth Panel and other disability-led groups tested spectator and workforce routes, seating, toilets and sensory provision. Their feedback directly informed improvements to routes, entry lanes, thresholds, contrast markings and wayfinding, demonstrating the value of involving disabled people directly in venue planning.

This was supported by physical investment across the Games estate, including resurfacing works at Scotstoun Stadium, an accessible shower at Tollcross International Swimming Centre and additional trackway, ramps and surface treatments. These are explored further in the **Preparing World Class Venues case study**.



Games-time experience also highlighted where provision did not fully meet demand. Accessible parking provision was oversubscribed relative to demand at Scotstoun Stadium, Glasgow International Arena/ Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome, and Tollcross International Swimming Centre. At the Scottish Event Campus, Games overlay displaced the existing free accessible car park, requiring Blue Badge holders to use an adjacent paid multistorey car park.

More broadly, the audits and Games-time experience identified opportunities to improve wayfinding and signage, awareness of available hearing assistance and access to information about Para sport classifications.

Opening Ceremony

BBC Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging Lead and disability advocate Robbie Crow, who attended the Opening Ceremony, highlighted the accessibility of the event. Writing on LinkedIn, he noted: "Accessibility is often only noticed when it's missing. Last night, it quietly did exactly what it was supposed to do." He pointed in particular to the availability of live audio description and British Sign Language interpretation, as well as the preparedness of volunteers to provide support.

"I never once felt awkward asking for support or like I was creating extra work for anyone," he wrote.

> ***"It's accessibility in every meaning of the word. We've really tried to not only create a story that is accessible from a narrative or an editorial perspective, but then also in our casting and our representation and giving opportunity to those groups."***
>
> **Tom Davies,**
> Ceremonies Executive Producer, Glasgow 2026

SPECTATOR EXPERIENCE

All four competition venues provided accessible and companion seating, supported by accessible entrances, viewing areas and volunteers, although availability varied, particularly for late requests.

A range of measures sought to make the wider spectator experience more inclusive. British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation was provided at both Ceremonies, press conferences and workforce and volunteer briefings, while live audio description was available at the Ceremonies and selected Para Bowls, Swimming, Athletics and Cycling sessions. Future hosts should consider extending live audio description across a wider range of sports and sessions, particularly high-attendance sports such as Netball. Hearing assistance included 160 devices and 16 induction loops across venues, while spectator welfare spaces, sensory bags and a dedicated sensory bus at the SEC provided additional support.

Accessible travel was supported through public transport, designated walking and wheeling routes, accessible parking and additional Games-specific provision. This included wheelchairs, mobility scooters and wheelchair-accessible vehicles provided through Official Accessibility Partner Allied Mobility, alongside a dedicated accessible shuttle between Scotstounhill station and Scotstoun Stadium that transported more than 100 passengers per day. However, step-free public transport was not available across every route to Games venues, while distances between some designated drop-off points and venues presented challenges for spectators with mobility requirements.



"It felt that everyone was genuinely interested in listening to our experiences and understanding how accessibility could be improved. I felt that my views were valued."

Dana Brand, Accessibility Auditor and Scottish Disability Sport Youth Panel Representative

Spectator feedback reflected this mixed experience. Among 335 respondents with accessibility requirements in their travel party who provided an accessibility rating, the average rating was 7 out of 10, with 64% scoring their experience eight or above and 18% scoring it four or below. This compared with an average of 8 among respondents without accessibility requirements in their party. Lower ratings highlighted seating and ticket allocations that did not always meet stated needs, sometimes requiring spectators to use stairs. Parking and drop-off arrangements, walking distances, transport, signage and information were also identified as areas for improvement.

While many spectators with accessibility requirements reported positive experiences, accessibility was not consistent across the full journey. Future hosts can build on Glasgow 2026's provision by considering accessibility across the end-to-end spectator journey, particularly ticketing, seating, transport, wayfinding and the availability and communication of accessible services.

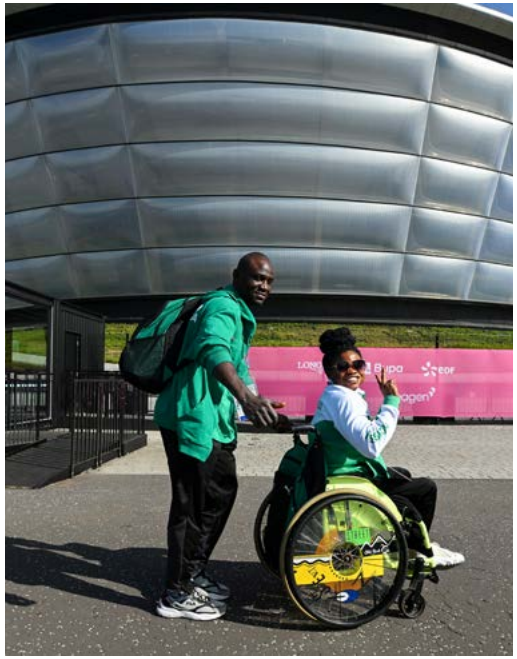
ATHLETE EXPERIENCE

For Para athletes, the hotel-based model required accessible provision to be delivered consistently across multiple properties rather than a single village. Online and in-person hotel audits initially identified around 92 accessible rooms, while also highlighting barriers including heavy doors, bathroom features and routes.

Detailed athlete requirements arrived relatively late, after which 65 rooms were adapted with grab rails, shower seats and other equipment. Early access to information and a clear understanding of athletes' needs can help inform accommodation requirements, enabling future hosts to identify and plan necessary adaptations at an earlier stage. The audits also helped improve major Glasgow hotels' understanding of accessibility requirements, providing a potential benefit beyond the Games.

Accessible transport and seating provision were also put in place to support Para athletes and other accredited groups. Athlete transport included half-hourly shuttle services and accessible buses, supplemented by bookable accessible transport where required. Designated accessible athlete seating was provided in Athletics and Para Athletics, Swimming and Para Swimming, 3x3 Basketball and Wheelchair Basketball, Bowls and Para Bowls, Para Powerlifting and Gymnastics. Accessible seating for Games Family members, including companion seating, was provided across all competition venues, demonstrating that accessibility considerations also extended to this stakeholder group. For further information, please see **The Athlete Journey at Glasgow 2026 case study**.

Feedback from Para athletes was generally positive. Among those who provided a rating, 82% rated accommodation support 'Good' or better, while 79% gave those ratings to both transport and overall athlete support. However, six of 29 Para respondents (21%) identified accessibility and inclusion as an area for improvement, alongside training access (48%), transport and logistics (45%), accommodation (24%) and athlete services (24%).



SAFEGUARDING AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Glasgow 2026 established safeguarding arrangements across the Games estate, supported by a Safeguarding Policy and defined roles and responsibilities. A safeguarding management structure involving Glasgow 2026 and Commonwealth Sport brought together trained personnel and specialist safeguarding roles.

During the Games, a dedicated desk, digital case-management system and shared Safeguarding Dashboard supported reporting, monitoring and escalation, including through QR codes. Three hundred workforce members completed in-house safeguarding training, with 10 receiving accredited training. Together, these measures established clear routes for identifying, reporting and responding to safeguarding concerns during the Games.

Glasgow 2026 also published a Human Rights Statement, developed with the Centre for Culture, Sport and Events (CCSE) and aligned with Commonwealth Sport's Human Rights Policy Statement. It committed to protecting, respecting and promoting the rights of everyone affected by the Games.

Both safeguarding and human rights arrangements were developed later than would typically be expected within a Games planning cycle, reflecting Glasgow 2026's compressed planning timeline. While safeguarding was translated into an operational system of trained personnel, reporting procedures and case management, human rights commitments were less fully embedded in Games-time delivery, with the evaluation finding limited evidence of an equivalent implementation framework.



For future hosts, a human rights due diligence action plan, with clear responsibilities, resources and monitoring, would provide a stronger basis for translating commitments into implementation.

DIVERSE REPRESENTATION ACROSS THE WORKFORCE AND VOLUNTEERS

The 'Diverse Teams' principle committed Glasgow 2026 to fair recruitment, inclusive training and a workforce reflecting the communities it served. Workforce and volunteer data show where this ambition was achieved and where gaps in representation remained.

WORKFORCE

Glasgow 2026 treated recruitment as part of its wider social purpose. The Organising Company set ambitious EDI targets and established a dedicated committee within its governance structure.



Among team members providing demographic data, around 60% identified as female and 95% as White. Women held 10 of 13 Executive Leadership Team roles (77%) and 59% of Senior Management Team positions.

Nine per cent reported a disability, while 88% did not and 3% preferred not to say. Scottish residents made up 71% of the workforce, including 58% from Glasgow City Region. A further 22% came from elsewhere in the UK and 7% from overseas.

Five of six workforce indicators exceeded baseline targets, with LGBTQ+ representation also exceeding its stretch target. Ethnic minority representation was the exception, at 4% against a 10% baseline.

Embedded Delivery Suppliers were specialist organisations integrated into Glasgow 2026's planning and operations, taking responsibility for functions traditionally managed by a larger Organising Company. Drawing on established expertise, resources and infrastructure, this approach supported a leaner delivery model, reduced fixed costs and avoided duplication while maintaining the capacity to deliver a major international sporting event. They also made up a significant part of the workforce, although inconsistent demographic data prevented a complete Games-wide picture. Trivandi employed

TABLE 2.1: WORKFORCE INDICATORS

Workforce KPI	Baseline target	Stretch target	Final recorded position	Result
Glasgow City Region	50%	75%	58%	Exceeds baseline target
Scotland	70%	80%	71%	Exceeds baseline target
Ethnic minority	10%	15%	4%	Below baseline target
LGBTQ+	5%	7%	12%	Exceeds stretch target
Long-term health condition	5%	10%	9%	Exceeds baseline target
16-24 years old	10%	15%	12%	Exceeds baseline target

248 people, of whom 130 provided demographic information. Among respondents, 64% identified as female, 86% as White, 8% reported a disability and 9% identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual or another sexual orientation. For further information, please see **Glasgow 2026 Workforce Legacy case study**.

> ***"We have an unwavering commitment to ambitious EDI targets and strategy, and we prioritised having an EDI subcommittee as part of our governance structure."***
>
> **Jade Gallagher,** Chief Operating Officer, Glasgow 2026

VOLUNTEERS

Glasgow 2026 sought to make volunteering more accessible to people who might not otherwise have considered a role at a major sporting event. The Organising Company set recruitment targets covering geography, ethnicity, LGBTQ+ identity, disability, long-term health conditions, age and deprivation, monitoring progress throughout recruitment.

For the first time, 16- and 17-year-olds could volunteer in the main programme, with the minimum age reduced from 18 at Birmingham 2022 .

This resulted in 24,917 people applying for approximately 4,000 volunteer roles between September and November 2025. Recruitment was supported by Volunteer Scotland and Glasgow Life, alongside promotion through Games channels and an extensive community engagement and outreach programme.

Most applicants heard about opportunities through Glasgow 2026 emails (47%) or social media (24%), followed by word of mouth (8%), sports clubs (7%), universities or colleges (4%) and governing bodies (3%).

Selection and training took place largely online, reducing travel and time commitments. Training covered the reimagined Games, sustainability, accessibility, health and safety and EDI, with venue training and practical rehearsals held in person where needed, including for medal Ceremonies.

While this approach reduced travel, it also limited opportunities for volunteers to meet before the Games. Walking tours, delivered by Invisible Cities, explored Glasgow's sporting history and a wellbeing programme with SAMH helped build connections between volunteers and provided opportunities to meet in person. However, some volunteers had limited opportunities to participate due to delays in role offers, reflecting changing workforce requirements and ongoing recruitment within the Games' compressed delivery timeline.

Of the 4,090 people offered volunteer roles, the programme met or exceeded five of seven measurable representation targets. Glasgow City Region representation fell short, while the data also indicated a shortfall among volunteers from Scotland's most deprived areas, subject to the limitations noted.

Among volunteers offered roles, 82% were from Scotland, 17% were aged 16-24 and 10% identified as LGBTQ+, all exceeding their stretch targets. Ethnic minority representation (12%) and disability or long-term health conditions (11%) met baseline targets. Glasgow City Region representation reached 55%, below the 60% baseline.

The volunteer programme also benefited from Allwyn UK's involvement, with funding from its £1m Social Value Fund contributing to the wider development and experience of volunteers, alongside Allwyn UK's active participation in the programme. Trespass returned to the Commonwealth Games following its partnership



TABLE 2.2: VOLUNTEER TARGET INDICATORS

Volunteer KPI	Baseline target	Stretch target	Final position	Result
Glasgow City Region	60%	75%	55%	Below baseline
Scotland	70%	80%	82%	Exceeds stretch
Ethnic minority background	10%	15%	12%	Exceeds baseline
LGBTQ+	5%	7%	10%	Exceeds stretch
Long-term health condition or disability	10%	15%	11%	Exceeds baseline
16–24 years old	10%	15%	17%	Exceeds stretch
Live in Scotland's 20% most deprived data zones	20%	40%	19%	Below baseline

in 2014, serving as the Official Uniform Provider for Glasgow 2026 and supplying uniforms worn by thousands of volunteers and officials.

The programme attracted people new to volunteering. More than a third (36%) had not volunteered in the previous two years, while 251 were aged 16 or 17 and eligible for the first time. Women accounted for 61% of volunteers, with those aged 55-64 representing the largest age group (27%). At Glasgow 2014, 17% of Clyde-sider applicants had not volunteered formally in the previous 12 months, although differences in the reporting periods and populations limit direct comparison.

The data also recorded 19% of volunteers from Scotland's most deprived areas, against a 20% baseline.



TABLE 2.3: VOLUNTEERS OFFERED POSITIONS, BY AGE GROUP.

Categories as defined in the Organising Company's volunteer database.

Age group	% of those starting
16–17	6.3%
18–24	11.6%
25–34	14.3%
35–44	12.1%
45–54	14.3%
55–64	26.8%
65–74	12.9%
75+	1.7%

For further information, please see **Glasgow 2026 Legends Volunteer Programme case study.**

TABLE 2.4: VOLUNTEERS OFFERED POSITIONS BY ETHNIC GROUP.

Categories as defined in the Organising Company's volunteer database.

Ethnic group	Percentage
White: British, English, Northern Irish, Scottish, Welsh	75%
White: Any other White background	12%
White: Irish	<1%
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	<1%
Asian	6%
Black	4%
Mixed or multiple	2%
Other ethnic group	<1%
Prefer not to say	1%

A DIVERSITY OF MOTIVATIONS

Volunteers were motivated by different factors. Sport was the biggest draw (57%), followed by giving back (more than half) and the opportunity for a unique experience (45%). Others wanted to gain work experience (26%), make new friends (18%), develop skills (17%), represent their region (16%) or build confidence (12%).

Glasgow 2014 also left a lasting impression, featuring in a quarter of the 1,208 application stories. Some applicants wanted to relive the experience, while others felt ready to volunteer for the first time. Many described family connections, renewed confidence following illness or personal change, or a desire to give back to a city that had welcomed them.

Meeting people and sharing the Games experience were among the highlights of volunteering. Almost a third (31%) valued meeting others and working as a team, while 19% enjoyed being close to athletes and competition and 13% appreciated interactions with spectators. Communication was the most common concern, raised by around one in 10 volunteers, followed by training and transport.

Six percent (around 65 people) of post-Games survey respondents required adjustments, including shorter shifts, longer breaks, seating or changes to their roles. For some, this support made participation possible. One volunteer described it as "the difference between taking part and not taking part", while another praised team leaders as "extremely helpful, supportive and accommodating".



Most people requiring adjustments reported positive experiences, although this was not consistent across all respondents. Some volunteers lacked the information needed to choose suitable roles, while a small number reported that adjustments did not meet their needs. Although most who raised concerns described supportive team leaders, difficulties remained.

The feedback highlights the importance of providing clear role information and ensuring adjustments remain appropriate when responsibilities change.

Volunteering beyond the Games

Glasgow 2026 also encouraged continued volunteering. The proportion of volunteers intending or considering volunteering again rose from 75% before the Games to 87% afterwards, with positive Games-time experiences helping to strengthen that interest.

Many had already identified new opportunities, although some wanted more support to take the next step. These findings reflect intentions rather than confirmed future participation.

> ***"I came back to Scotland as a refugee and found a new home here. If my unique experience can be used to help with the Games, I'm keen to make my contribution."***
>
> **Volunteer,** Glasgow 2026

BOARD AND COMMITTEES

Men held seven of 12 Glasgow 2026 Board seats and five of six Co-opted Committee positions. Both the EDI and Engagement Committee and the Remuneration and Nominations Committee had equal representation of men and women.

Ten of the 12 Board members identified as White. The EDI and Engagement Committee included seven White, two Asian British, one Black British and one Mixed/Multiple member.

Two Board members, one Co-opted Committee member and one EDI and Engagement Committee member reported a disability, compared with none on the Remuneration and Nominations Committee.

The National EDI Forum in Scottish Sport brought additional perspectives from Scottish sport inclusion organisations, advising on community engagement, campaigns and participation.

Demographic data were unavailable for seven other governance bodies: the Audit and Risk Committee, Games Operations Committee, Budget Oversight Committee, Athlete Advisory Group, CGA Reference Group, Remuneration and Nominations Committee and Dissolution and Governance Committee.

STRENGTHENING GLASGOW AND SCOTLAND'S SPORT ECOSYSTEM

Glasgow 2026 also created opportunities to make sport more inclusive beyond the Games, bringing clubs, charities and public bodies together around programmes designed to support longer-term participation.

The Team Scotland Youth Trust's Achieve programme was one example. It reported a 93% positive participant experience and introduced its first women-only coaching cohort, providing 14 coaches with mentoring and development to build confidence, networks and pathways into elite coaching. Achieve Director Emma Brunning identified a stronger, more connected and diverse Scottish sport system as the wider ambition, with women's coaching remaining a priority.

Partnerships offered another route. Established in December 2025, Together We're All In brought together Scottish Athletics, Scottish Disability Sport, Scottish Action for Mental Health, the Daily Mile Foundation and junior parkrun. Activities included primary school events at Scotstoun Stadium, with partners developing longer-term plans for participation, inclusion and wellbeing within existing funding.

The Scottish Government's £20m Summer of Sport programme, administered by sportscotland, provided free and low-cost activities for children and young people across Scotland. Building on the momentum of Glasgow 2026 and Scotland's participation in the 2026 FIFA World Cup, it aimed to increase participation in local sport and encourage continued engagement beyond the summer.

The Glasgow 2026 Legacy Network provided a structure to connect these ambitions. Established in April 2025 with the University of the West of Scotland and funding from Commonwealth Sport and Spirit of 2012, it brought together organisations from sport, culture, health, education and communities.

Ten co-creation workshops helped shape the Story of Change, while six learning and networking events supported legacy planning. The Network also explored funding opportunities, including aligning National Lottery Community Fund Awards for All with Glasgow 2026. Commonwealth Sport and the Organising Company subsequently secured this alignment, with Network members receiving support to apply (see Chapter 4).

Together, these initiatives established partnerships and opportunities for continued participation. Turning them into lasting outcomes will depend on sustained investment, collaboration and local capacity.



SUMMARY

Glasgow 2026 demonstrated how inclusion could be embedded across Games delivery. The largest integrated Para sport programme in Games history, lived-experience accessibility audits and new volunteering opportunities showed what could be achieved through deliberate planning. However, challenges remained in spectator journeys, accessible ticketing and workforce representation.

While the longer-term impact of programmes and partnerships remains to be seen, Glasgow 2026 offers important lessons for future hosts: involve people with lived experience from the outset, consider accessibility across the entire Games experience and build partnerships that can continue beyond the event.



3



DELIVERING A GREENER GAMES, TREADING LIGHTER ON THE PLANET

A PLAN TO MINIMISE THE GAMES' FOOTPRINT

Reducing the Games' environmental impact through existing infrastructure, lower emissions and resource efficiency.

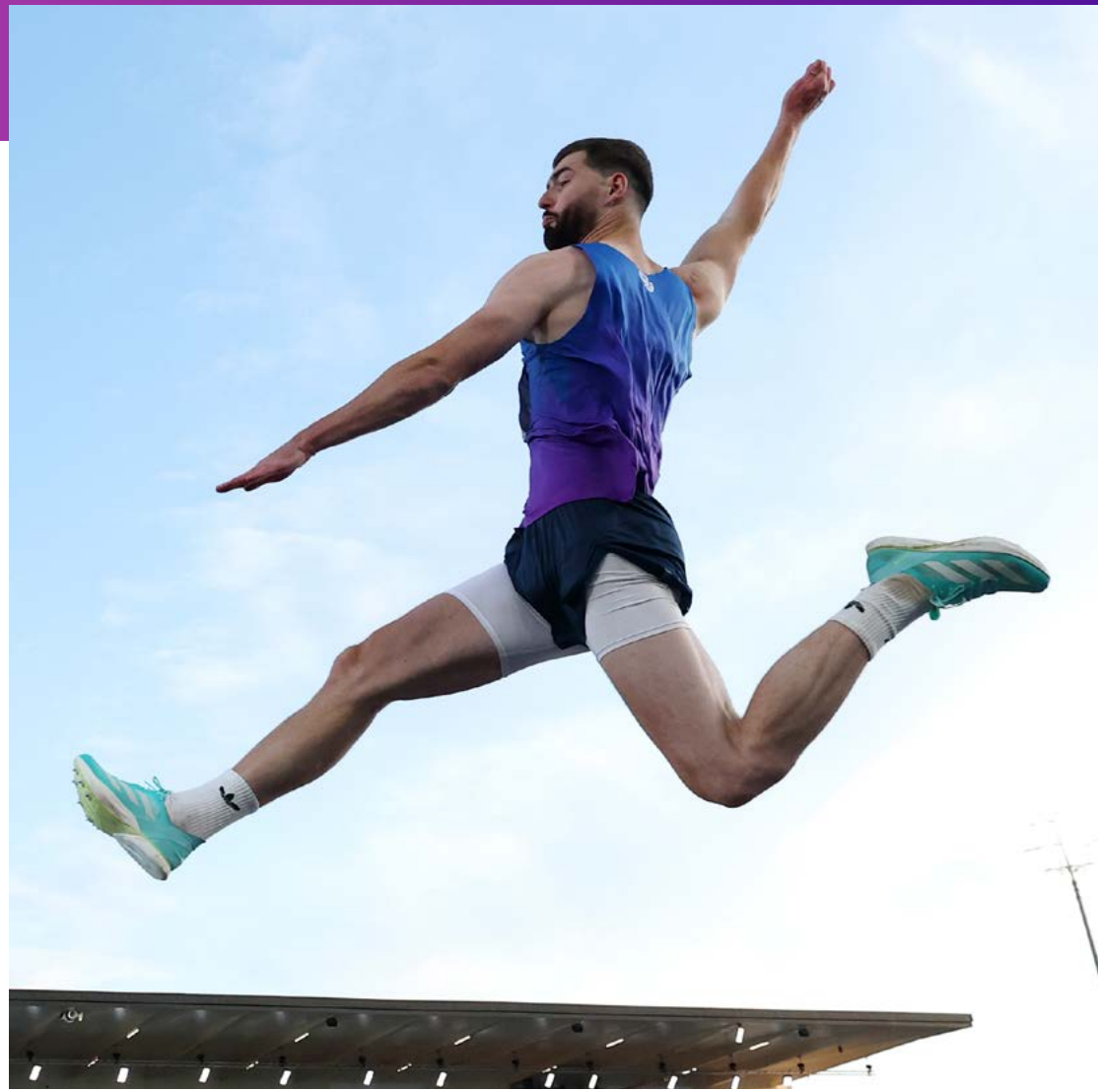
Glasgow 2026 set out to deliver a major multi-sport event with a smaller environmental footprint. The approach began with what the city already had: competition venues developed for Glasgow 2014, an established events workforce and infrastructure that could support another Commonwealth Games without further construction.

The Games built on that foundation through three environmental goals:

- Host a low-carbon Games by reducing greenhouse gas emissions through design, procurement and operations.
- Deliver a circular Games by prioritising reuse, reducing demand for new materials and extending the life of Games assets.
- Divert waste from landfill through prevention, reduction, reuse and recycling.

The goals were supported by ISO 20121, the international standard for sustainable event management, which embeds sustainability into planning and decision-making. Birmingham 2022 was the first Commonwealth Games to achieve independent certification, and Commonwealth Sport subsequently maintained annual certification for its organisation. Glasgow 2026 was audited under Commonwealth Sport's certification and achieved zero non-conformities, demonstrating strong alignment with the standard's requirements and a commitment to sustainable event delivery.

This chapter examines the decisions behind that approach, the environmental results and the areas where targets were not met. It draws on carbon and waste monitoring, procurement data, venue observations, interviews and case studies to consider what future hosts can learn.



MEASURING THE GAMES' ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Understanding the Games' environmental impact required a consistent approach to measurement. Glasgow 2026 developed its carbon management plan in line with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol and the International Olympic Committee's Carbon Footprint Methodology. Official AI Technology Partner Ideagen supported calculations for travel, transport, waste and energy through its platform.

Birmingham 2022 reported a residual carbon footprint of approximately 201,800 tonnes of CO_2e, after reduction measures including the use of existing venues, cleaner fuels and lower-impact operations. Its Organising Company also established a 2,022-acre Commonwealth Legacy Forest, intended to offset emissions over 35 years. Glasgow 2026 used the same measurement methodology to support comparison, although the Games differed in size and format.

A Carbon Footprint Boundary Decision Tree defined which activities to include. It classified activities according to the Games' funding, control and influence:

- **Owned:** Activities funded by the Organising Company.
- **Shared:** Activities not funded by the Organising Company but subject to its control or influence.
- **Associated:** Activities outside its funding or control that resulted directly from the Games, including spectator travel and Games-time city activations.
- **Out of scope:** Activities neither funded nor influenced by the Organising Company and not a direct consequence of the Games.

Each activity was assessed for the Games' influence, data quality, scale of impact and stakeholder interest. Most fell into the shared or associated categories. Performance was also tracked against 10 environmental targets established through the Story of Change.

The Glasgow 2026 baseline carbon emissions were 58,270 tCO2e, based on the forecast model where most of the calculations used a spend-based approach. The final carbon footprint was 40,907 tCO_2e. The two biggest areas of emissions in this footprint were spectator travel accounting for 45% followed by Games-provided transport for the Games Family and technical officials at 22%.

Glasgow 2026's footprint was substantially below Birmingham 2022's 201,821 tCO2e, and also recorded lower emissions relative to tickets sold, athletes and medal events. These intensity measures suggest that the difference was not solely a result of staging a smaller Games, although comparisons between the Games must take account of the different scale and delivery models.



HOSTING A LOW CARBON GAMES

The most significant decision was made before the Games began: Glasgow 2026 would use existing competition venues and hotels rather than build new facilities. That avoided the embodied carbon associated with new construction and focused investment on the infrastructure the city already had.

Venues developed or refurbished for Glasgow 2014 – including the Glasgow International Arena/Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome, Tollcross International Swimming Centre and Scotstoun Stadium – had continued to serve communities and host events.

Targeted upgrades brought them up to international sporting competition standard, generating 1,466 tCO_2e. While the emissions associated with their original construction were incurred in 2014, their continued use demonstrates how the value of existing infrastructure can be extended across multiple events and years of community activity.

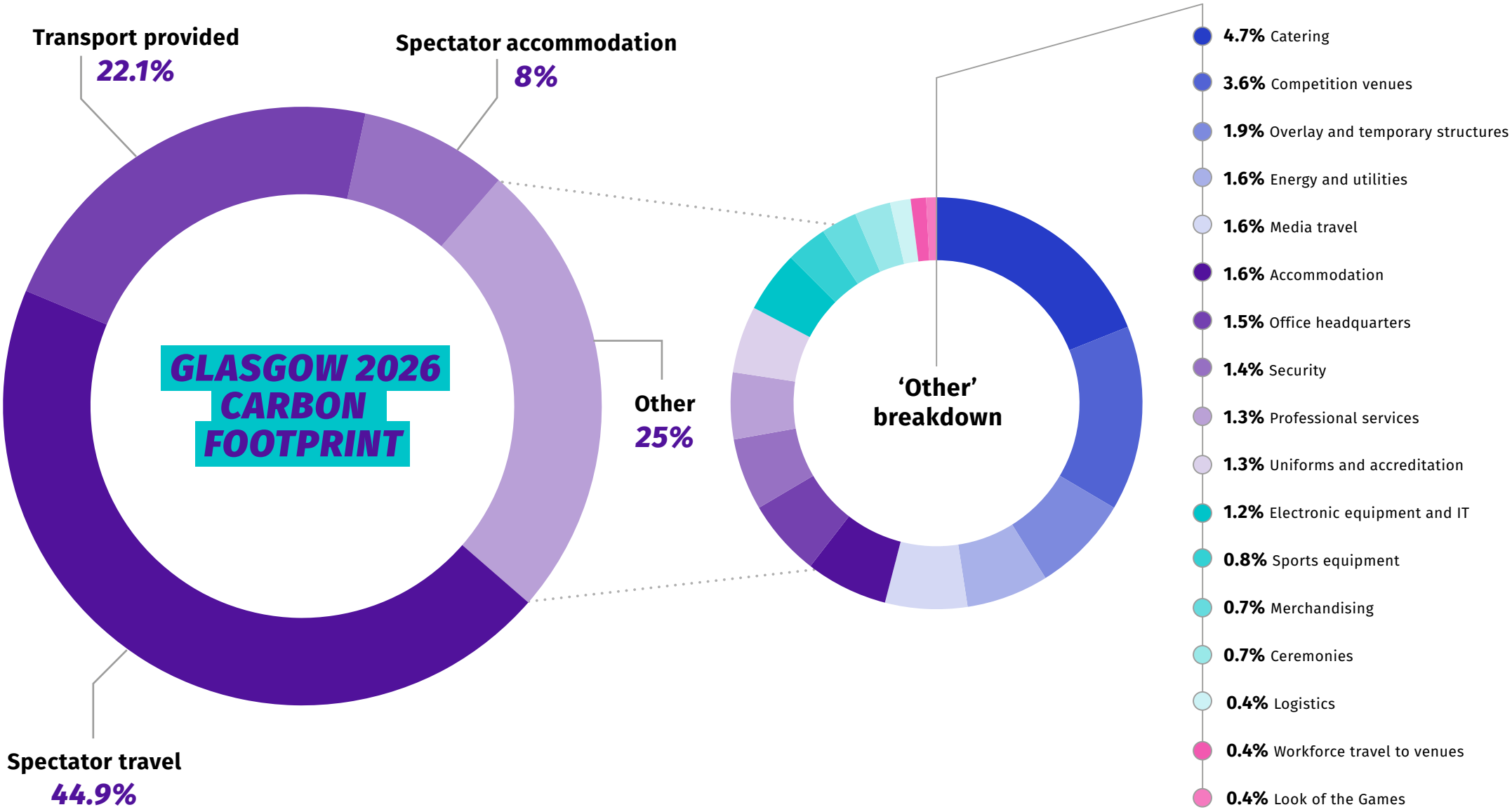
The King's Baton Relay was also redesigned. Instead of a single Baton travelling between Commonwealth Games Associations (CGAs), all 74 received their own Baton. Handover arrangements made use of existing gatherings, including Open Days and Chef de Mission meetings, reducing dedicated freight and travel. The change was estimated to avoid 427 tCO_2e compared with the Birmingham 2022 relay, largely through reduced travel.



TABLE 3.1: LOW-CARBON TARGETS AND OUTCOMES

Delivering a Low-Carbon Games – Targets	Outcome	Result
At least **60%** of Games fleet vehicles are electric or hybrid.	**66%**	Exceeds target
80% of attendees use public transport or active travel	**67%**	Below target
100% of energy is derived from the mains grid and/or green energy sources.	**100%**	Meets target
80% of food and drink procured for the Games is locally-sourced to reduce emissions from transport and production.	**53%** based on main ingredient	Below target
25% of Games menus are plant-based	**23%**	Below target

TABLE 3.2: GLASGOW 2026 CARBON FOOTPRINT BREAKDOWN



ESTIMATED EMISSIONS AVOIDED

An assessment of operational and procurement choices made from concept through to delivery suggests that an estimated 19,021 tCO_2e of emissions were avoided compared with specified alternatives or pre-Games expectations. These estimated avoided emissions are separate from the Games' reported carbon footprint and should not be subtracted from it.

TABLE 3.3: ESTIMATED EMISSIONS AVOIDED

Measure	Explanation	Avoided tCO_2e
Use of existing venues	Venue upgrades rather than building new (in comparison to Birmingham 2022)	**15,142**
Spectator travel	Higher train and lower plane use compared to pre-Games expectations	**1,348**
Hire model for all assets (excluding overlay)	**61%** of assets hired instead of purchased	**1,293**
Hire of overlay infrastructure increase rather than purchased	Increase in percentage of overlay hire from **90%** (target) to **96%** (actual)	**449**
Switching Glasgow Life venues to renewable energy and decision to only use HVO fuels for temporary power	Compared to fossil fuel equivalents	**438**
Hotels on renewable energy	**41%** of hotel nights on renewable energy instead of standard tariff	**248**
Lower meat and fish consumption	Lower number of actual meat and fish meals purchased/consumed **(54%)** compared to expectations **(80%)**	**45**
Prioritising Electric Games fleet (buses, cars, vans)	Compared to diesel equivalents	**38**
One-third of branding made from 50% recycled plastic	Compared to virgin plastic	**10**
Total use of water refill stations	Avoided use of **156,700** single-use plastic bottles equivalent	**10**
Total		**19,021**

ENERGY

Powering the Games differently

Glasgow 2026 adopted a grid-first approach, using existing electricity infrastructure and cleaner power rather than relying on temporary generators. Switching competition venues to renewable electricity and replacing diesel with hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) for temporary power was estimated to avoid 438 tCO_2e – roughly the annual emissions of 212 average UK cars.

For the first time at a Commonwealth Games, every competition venue was powered by renewable electricity. The SEC already had a renewable supply. Official Energy and Utilities Principal Partner EDF enabled Scotstoun Stadium, Tollcross International Swimming Centre and the Glasgow International Arena/Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome to switch tariffs.

EDF supplied approximately 5.38 GWh of traceable renewable electricity from Scottish sources, equivalent to the annual electricity use of around 2,000 average UK homes. Supported by Glasgow City Council, the agreement was designed to continue beyond the Games. During the event, the switch avoided an estimated 117 tCO_2e, equivalent to 631 return flights between London and Glasgow.



The assessment estimates that continued supply to the three venues could avoid a further 705 tCO_2e – equivalent to approximately 4.3 million kilometers in an average petrol car, or about 109 journeys around the globe.

Renewable energy was less common in non-competition venues, including hotels and training grounds. Nevertheless, 41% of Games-booked hotel nights were in accommodation using renewable electricity, with an estimated saving of 248 tCO_2e. The assessment found those tariffs to be around 75% less carbon-intensive than standard tariffs, underlining the influence of venue selection on an event's footprint.

Where temporary generators were needed, Glasgow 2026 used 100% HVO instead of diesel, with a reported 75% reduction in associated emissions.

Leadership retained the commitment despite an expected price premium. Disruption to global fuel markets ultimately meant HVO cost less than budgeted, turning an environmental decision into a financial saving.

The wider lesson is the value of reducing temporary power demand first, then using lower-carbon alternatives where generators remain necessary.

TRANSPORT AND TRAVEL

Moving the Games differently

Transport remained Glasgow 2026's largest source of emissions. It accounted for 69% of the total footprint, compared with 64% at Birmingham 2022. In Glasgow, spectator travel contributed 45%, Games-provided transport 22% and media travel 2%. Flights by athletes, technical officials and the Games Family generated 90% of emissions within Games-provided transport.

Four competition venues within an eight-mile corridor helped limit travel distances. The Games also worked with transport partners to reduce vehicle emissions and make public transport and active travel more attractive.

Official Car Partner BYD supplied electric and hybrid vehicles for Games operations and the Scottish leg of the King's Baton Relay. They represented 66% of the operational fleet, compared with 42% at Birmingham 2022. First Bus delivered 66% of athlete bus mileage with electric vehicles, balancing the Games demand with vehicle availability. All catering cargo vans were electric.

The fleet also travelled much less. It covered 79,375 miles, against 1,269,505 at Birmingham 2022 – approximately 94% fewer. Fleet emissions were 38 tCO_2e, compared with 326 tCO_2e in Birmingham, an 88% reduction. The smaller geographic footprint of Glasgow 2026 contributed to both differences, but the results also show the benefit of combining fewer journeys with cleaner vehicles. Charging from renewable electricity offers a further opportunity to reduce emissions per kilometre.

A Transport Working Group coordinated providers and addressed barriers. Spectator guides, the Games app and workforce communications promoted public transport and active travel. The Commonwealth Mile encouraged walking along the River Clyde between venues.

Voi offered athletes, volunteers and workforce members 300 free minutes of e-bike use and gave the public a 10% discount, covering 7,418 rides during Games-time. The Organising Company provided free workforce rail travel, via ScotRail, supporting 21,000 journeys.

Among surveyed spectators, 67% used public transport (51%) or active travel (16%), which came in below the 80% target. Only 31% said they had considered sustainability when planning their journey. This suggests practical, affordable options can encourage lower-carbon travel even when environmental concerns are not the main motivation.

> ***"For the first time in Commonwealth Games history, all competition venues were powered by renewable electricity."***
>
> **Martin Reynolds,** Deputy Chief Executive, Commonwealth Sport

Connectivity mattered. Tollcross International Swimming Centre recorded the lowest sustainable travel share, with higher car and taxi use, and lower train use than at other venues by around 9%. More than 60% of spectators travelled from within 100 km of Glasgow, while rail was the most common way to reach the city.

Spectator travel emissions were reported at approximately 41 kgCO_2e per ticket, compared to 63 kgCO_2e at Birmingham 2022, a 35% reduction. Against Glasgow 2026's own forecast, travel patterns avoided an estimated 1,348 tCO_2e, reflecting fewer unique spectators and a higher share travelling by train rather than air.



FOOD

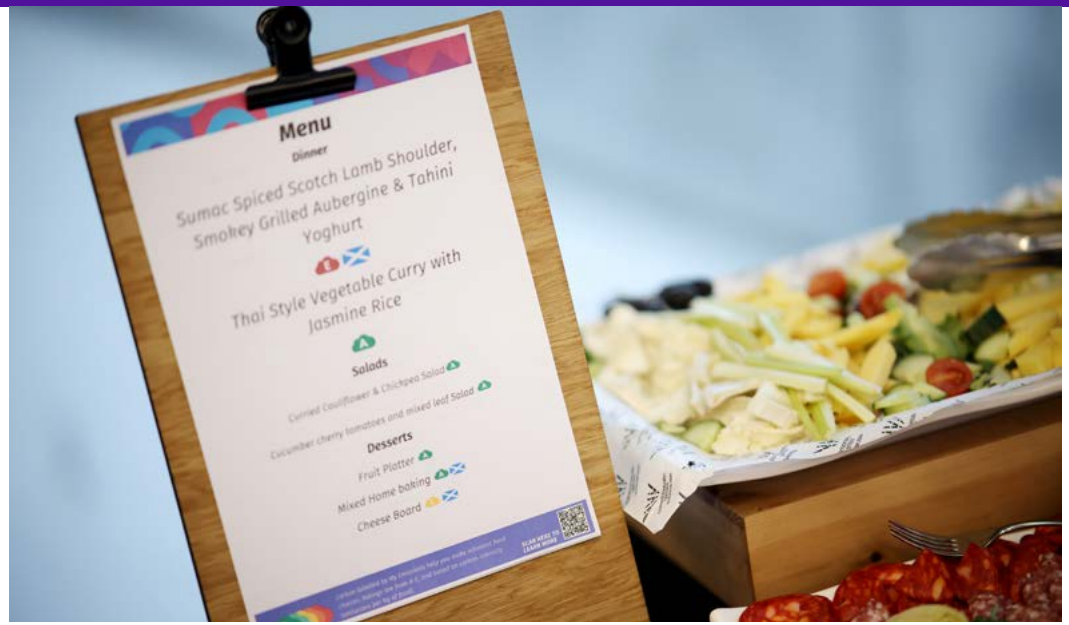
Serving the Games differently

Glasgow 2026 used its Food and Drink Framework to embed sustainability into catering procurement, menu development and delivery. Building on Glasgow 2014 and the 2018 European Championships, the approach aligned with Scotland's Good Food Nation ambition and the Glasgow City Food Plan.

For the first time at a Commonwealth Games , all competition-venue menus displayed carbon labels and local sourcing information. Working with MyEmissions, Glasgow 2026 introduced carbon labelling across 100% of menus, while Scottish flags identified dishes whose main ingredients were sourced from Scotland.

This provided greater transparency about the environmental impact and provenance of food. However, the availability of information did not necessarily translate into consumer engagement, highlighting the need to consider how sustainability information is presented and used.

Glasgow 2026 expanded its range of meat-free and plant-based dishes, reflecting growing interest in healthier, more varied and lower-impact diets. Meat-free options accounted for 59% of non-spectator menus, up from 40% at Birmingham 2022, and represented 46% of meals served. Fully plant-based dishes made up 23% of Games menus, just below the 25% target. Alongside an emphasis on fruit, vegetables, fibre and inclusive menu choices, this demonstrated how major sporting events can encourage healthier eating patterns while reducing environmental impacts.



Local sourcing proved more challenging. Based on the provenance of their primary ingredient, 53% of fresh food menu items were classified as Scottish, below the 80% ambition. Seasonal availability and constraints on regional production affected the range of ingredients that could be sourced. However, Scottish-based businesses accounted for more than 80% of suppliers to Levy, one of the main SEC caterers. The average carbon footprint was approximately 1.3 kg CO_2e per meal, compared with a stated UK average of 1.6 kg CO_2e.



The results demonstrate the importance of distinguishing between sourcing locally produced ingredients and procuring from local businesses. Future Games should establish clear definitions and measurable targets that reflect both ambitions, informed by the capacity and seasonality of regional supply chains. See **Serving Scotland case study** for further information.

CARBON OFFSETTING AND CLIMATE LEGACY

Glasgow 2026 did not claim to be carbon neutral or net zero. It prioritised emissions reductions, then decided on carbon credits and local environmental investment after the final footprint had been calculated.

The Games purchased credits from a verified wind power project in Gujarat, India, the region due to host the 2030 Commonwealth Games. The project generates renewable electricity for India's grid and displaces more carbon-intensive generation.

In Scotland, the 200 m^2 garden created for the Opening Ceremony was replanted in Port Glasgow. The Organising Company also committed to installing 248 m^2 of floating ecosystems across five Glasgow parks, intended to improve biodiversity, water quality and environmental education.

These projects connected the Games' environmental programme with international climate action and local nature recovery. Their longer-term benefits will depend on delivery and continued stewardship, building on the environmental efforts undertaken as part of the King's Baton Relay in the lead up to the Games.

For further information, please see **Powered By Partnership case study**.



DELIVERING A CIRCULAR GAMES

Major events can require large amounts of temporary infrastructure, signage, equipment and materials that are used only once. Glasgow 2026 sought to reduce that demand by hiring wherever possible, choosing recycled materials and planning what would happen to assets after the Games. The approach supports Glasgow's ambition to become a Circular City by 2030.

The Organising Company set expectations through a Supplier Code of Practice, Materials and Packaging Policy and Recycling Management Policy. A central asset register tracked equipment from procurement through to reuse, resale, donation or disposal. Suppliers were essential to making those commitments work in practice.

TABLE 3.4: CIRCULAR GAMES TARGETS AND OUTCOMES

Delivering a Circular Games – Targets	Outcome	Result
At least **90%** of the Games temporary overlay is hired and returned for reuse.	**96%**	Exceeds target
Resell, donate or recycle at least **80%** of leftover Games owned assets and materials.	**74%**	Below target
100% of suppliers to comply with the Supplier Code of Practice	**73%**	Below target





RESPONSIBLE PROCUREMENT AND MATERIALS

Uptake of the Supplier Code reached 73%, short of the 100% target. This excluded suppliers engaged only through purchase orders for goods and services below a certain threshold. Applying the Code consistently to tenders and purchase orders would give future hosts wider coverage and clearer accountability.

Partnerships also helped the Games use materials that might otherwise have been too expensive. Official Equipment Provider Eleiko supplied approximately 30 tonnes of Weightlifting and Para Powerlifting equipment made with 97% recycled steel and fossil-free energy. The steel's footprint was reported to be around 80% below the global average, while the equipment was designed for decades of use, with resale or legacy use planned.

A contribution from Official Circularity Partner Zero Waste Scotland helped Glasgow 2026 produce 36% of Games branding using recycled plastic (rPET), avoiding virgin plastic equivalent to 301,675 bottles. Medal manufacturer Toye used recycled precious metals and manufacturing offcuts, with ribbons made from 100% recycled polyester.

PLANNING FOR LIFE AFTER THE GAMES

Hiring rather than buying reduced the demand for new materials. Glasgow 2026 hired 96% of temporary overlay and 61% of other Games assets. For sports equipment, the figure reached 76%, similar to Paris 2024's reported 75%, despite Glasgow's smaller scale. Sourcing specialist competition equipment through hire markets remained a challenge.

Where purchases were needed, the Games looked for onward uses. The Organising Company donated equipment supplied by the Official Boxing Equipment Provider Sting to Boxing Scotland, including a boxing ring, warm-up stations and training equipment.

Overall, 74% of assets were recycled, donated or resold, just below the 80% target. A further 26% were sent for waste-to-energy processing rather than landfill. Much of the material without a second use was bespoke steel and wood from the Ceremonies.

The Asset Dissolution Working Group worked to identify recipients and onward uses before the Games ended. Paris 2024 reported a 90% asset reuse rate, supported by requiring second-life plans in all procurement contracts. Glasgow's experience highlights the importance of engaging suppliers earlier, exploring wider hire markets and incorporating asset recovery and disposal costs into procurement decisions, particularly for bespoke materials. For further information, see **Circularity at Glasgow 2026 case study**.



ACHIEVING A ZERO WASTE GAMES

Glasgow 2026 diverted 100% of Games waste from landfill, exceeding its 95% target. The result depended on preventing waste where possible, separating materials on site and using Glasgow's existing collection and processing infrastructure.

The Recycling Management Policy set out responsibilities and waste streams, using the language of 'recycling' to encourage teams to keep materials in use. Working with Glasgow City Council and contractors, venues arranged separate collections for mixed recyclables, food, glass, timber, electrical equipment and general waste. Food waste was composted and residual waste went to the Glasgow Recycling and Renewable Energy Centre for energy recovery rather than landfill.

Landfill diversion is not the same as eliminating waste or its environmental impacts. Glasgow's ability to achieve it depended on local infrastructure that future hosts will need to assess early in their own planning.



TABLE 3.5: ZERO WASTE GAMES TARGETS AND OUTCOMES

Delivering a Zero Waste Games – Targets	Results
Divert **95%** of Games-related waste (by weight) from landfill through reuse, recycling or composting.	**100%** exceeds target
Minimise the use of single-use plastic items across all venues, catering and operations, replacing them with reusable or compostable alternatives.	• **36%** of branding made from recycled polyester • **100%** recycled plastic in Coca-Cola 500ml bottles • **32** water refill stations, saving an estimated 156,700 single-use plastic bottles • **94%** compostable and reusable serveware and drinkware combined

LESS WASTE. BETTER RECOVERY

The Games reported 146 tonnes of waste, equating to 0.33kg per ticket, against 0.3kg at Paris 2024 and 1.1 kg at Birmingham 2022. The reported per-ticket measure was approximately 69% lower than Birmingham's, although differences in event scale and waste accounting need to be considered.



Some 41% of waste was collected for recycling, but 32% was ultimately recycled after contamination and processing losses. Residual waste went to energy recovery, enabling the 100% landfill diversion result.

The Games also accelerated upgrades that will remain in use. Glasgow Life venues received 70 sets of three waste-segregation bins. At the SEC, funds were invested in a four-way sorting system already planned by the venue, with the Games bringing forward delivery.

Official Soft Drinks Partner Coca-Cola supplied 500 ml bottles made from 100% recycled plastic. Interactive ballot bins at the SEC and Scotstoun Stadium encouraged recycling, although only 4% of surveyed spectators reported using them. Visibility and ease of use therefore remain important for future events.



REDUCING SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

Glasgow 2026 installed 29 drinking-water refill taps at competition venues and three more at the Game On Live Site in Kelvingrove Park. Official Supporter Scottish Water provided 10 taps, including Gold, Silver and Bronze designs at the Live Site, and promoted water conservation alongside refilling.

An estimated 156,700 single-use plastic bottles were avoided. Among surveyed spectators, 60% used the stations and free drinking-water provision scored 7.7 out of 10.

The Games also introduced reusable cups across three competition venues. Reusable cups accounted for 12% of drinkware, while 99% of serveware and 81% of drinkware were compostable.

The trial revealed practical constraints. Safety requirements affected deployment, some drinks were still poured from single-use bottles and 16% of reusable cups at the Glasgow International Arena and Tollcross International Swimming Centre were lost or damaged. Future schemes will need to plan collection, washing and return as carefully as procurement.

COLLECTING ONE MILLION PIECES OF PLASTIC ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH

The King's Baton Relay also carried an environmental campaign beyond Glasgow. Led by the Royal Commonwealth Society and Commonwealth Sport, the Commonwealth Clean Oceans Plastic Campaign worked with local partners to include clean-ups in all 74 Relay stages.

The campaign connected community activity with education and advocacy, from schools in Cameroon to discussions about plastics regulation at London Climate Action Week. Its network of partners was expected to continue beyond the Games. For further information, please see **Commonwealth Clean Oceans Plastic Campaign case study**.



ENCOURAGING BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

Infrastructure and procurement were only part of the environmental programme. Glasgow 2026 also sought to influence how staff, volunteers, spectators and suppliers made decisions before and during the Games.

Voluntary online sustainability training was offered to workforce at the Organising Company, Commonwealth Sport and Trivandi, with a 49% completion rate. Among volunteers, 68% said they better understood sustainability in event delivery and 66% were likely to apply what they had learned in future. More than half (57%) reported taking at least one action, including travelling by public transport or active travel, recycling or reducing energy use.

Among ticket holders, 72% reported good awareness of the Games' sustainability activity, with an average rating of 7.3 out of 10. Zero Waste Scotland's spectator campaign reached an estimated 1.1 million people through social media, the spectator app and venue screens.



SCOTTISH WATER HOSTS 30,000 CONVERSATIONS ABOUT WATER CONSUMPTION

Scottish Water used its Gold, Silver and Bronze Top Up Taps and an engagement stand at the Game On Live Site to promote water conservation. Across the 10-day activation, staff reported approximately 30,000 conversations, averaging four minutes each.

Taking inspiration from the four-minute mile, the campaign asked people to try a four-minute shower. Around 2,500 visitors pledged to do so at least once during the Games. Whether the pledges led to lasting behaviour change was not measured.

SUMMARY



Glasgow 2026 showed how an international sporting event could reduce its environmental footprint by building delivery around existing infrastructure. Venues developed for 2014, a compact Games footprint and the use of established city services meant the Organising Company could concentrate investment on targeted improvements rather than new construction.

The results included a reported carbon footprint of 40,907 tCO_2e, renewable electricity at every competition venue, 96% of temporary overlay hired and zero waste sent to landfill. Carbon labelling on every competition venue menu and the introduction of reusable cups provided further Commonwealth Games firsts. Partnerships with transport, energy, catering and circularity specialists helped turn those decisions into practice.

Not every target was met. Public transport use and active travel reached 67% against an 80% ambition, supplier uptake of the circularity Code was 73% and the share of purchased assets donated or resold was below target. Some results also depended on infrastructure and investment already available in Glasgow, while longer-term changes in behaviour and environmental benefits will need further evidence.

The main lesson for future hosts is not simply to copy Glasgow's initiatives. It is to understand what a city already has, leverage sustainability partners, and embed environmental requirements early in procurement and planning. Glasgow offers evidence of how those decisions can reduce the resources required to stage the Games, and where the model can still improve.



CREATING A WELCOMING GAMES, IN A WELCOMING CITY

INSPIRING ENGAGEMENT WITH THE GAMES

Connecting communities, creating opportunities and celebrating Glasgow and Scotland through the Games.



Glasgow 2026 sought to use the Games as a platform to connect communities, create opportunities and celebrate the city and Scotland locally and internationally. Community, cultural and sporting activations, education and employability initiatives, opportunities for public participation and engagement across the Commonwealth with international partners and diplomats reflected this ambition. There were three broad goals in this Impact Driver, to:

- Engage the public in projects and programmes to activate the city and enhance equal access to sport, physical activity, culture and community action.
- Grow skills through a local workforce which strengthens employability in the industry and future-proofs Glasgow and Scotland's world-class events expertise and talent.
- Provide people of all ages with opportunities to learn and be inspired through participation in schools, community, education and volunteering initiatives.

This chapter assesses the extent to which these activities inspired engagement with the Games, contributed to civic pride, wellbeing and social connection, developed skills and opportunities, strengthened Glasgow and Scotland's reputation and international relationships, and celebrated the cultural diversity of the host city.

THE ‘FRIENDLY GAMES’

Known as the Friendly City, Glasgow welcomed athletes, officials and visitors from 74 Commonwealth nations and territories. Building on its experience of hosting major sporting and cultural events, the city used Glasgow 2026 to celebrate both world-class sport and its cultural life. A programme of performances, festivals, sports participation and community activity extended the Games beyond the competition venues.

‘Clydebuilt’ was a guiding ethos of Glasgow 2026, celebrating the city’s creativity, talent and identity through the making of the Games.

Glasgow-based artists, designers and agencies helped shape the Games’ creative campaign, medals, countdown clock, athlete murals and ceremonies. Scottish designer Siobhan Mackenzie created the Games tartan, while local children and young people helped design mascot Finnie, celebrating icons of the city.

Other contributions included ceremony capes made from recycled materials by community groups, a Baton crafted in Glasgow from fallen ash trees and the Rose art installation honouring Charles Rennie Mackintosh.



> ***“We want to see all of Scotland represented here. We want to see all of our cultural diversity. We want to see all age groups.”***
>
> **Louisa Mahon,**
> Chief Marketing Officer, Glasgow 2026

OPENING AND CLOSING CEREMONIES

The Opening Ceremony at The Hydro set a confident tone for Glasgow 2026, which for the first time at a Commonwealth Games, was staged indoors. Backed by a 50-metre curved screen, the Celtic-knot shaped walkway and stage contained a living garden, celebrating Scotland’s natural landscape. A dedicated Show of Athletes gave each nation and territory its moment in the spotlight, with each of the 74 individual Batons making a return to the city to be planted in the Garden, symbolising unity.

Through performance, music and dance, and powerful storytelling, the show celebrated Glasgow’s contribution to the world and a city shaped by courage, generosity, reinvention and community. Emerging talent performed alongside established artists, with a replica of Glasgow Central Station’s famous clock taking centre stage. The King and Queen arrived by TARDIS, the audience welcomed Scottish pipes and drums and a giant Nessie, and hundreds of volunteer cast members performed under a giant teacake.

The Closing Ceremony, staged indoors at The Hydro following the netball final, brought athletes, volunteer Legends and audiences together for a wrap party celebrating friendship across nations and the people who made the Games possible. The David Dixon Award recognised outstanding athletic achievement, while spoken word, a mass ceilidh, rave and performances from Scottish and international talent created a party atmosphere. The handover to Amdavad fused Scottish and Indian music and looked towards the Centenary Games in 2030. And the River Clyde and the Finnieston Crane’s Glasgow Rose were illuminated by fireworks as Simple Minds Don’t You Forget About Me provided the final words to a Games that was all the people taking part and the character of the host city.



GLASGOW 2026 FESTIVAL

Running for 10 weeks from 23 May to 9 August, the Glasgow 2026 Festival featured cultural, sporting and community activity across the city before, during and after the Games. Glasgow Life developed and delivered the programme with the Organising Company through three strands: the Festival Fund, an enhanced summer programme and new artistic commissions.

The Festival Fund supported locally led projects in all 23 Glasgow council wards, extending the reach of the Games into communities beyond the competition venues. The wider programme included an expanded Merchant City Festival, Glasgow Mela and creative commissions by Vince Virr, Jasleen Kaur, Emer Tumilty and NEWSUBSTANCE, and Jasmine Togo-Brisby as part of Glasgow International Festival of Contemporary Art.

Projects such as the Summer of Fun and Connect, Develop, Champion, led by Scottish ClubSport, created opportunities for sports participation across the city by increasing access to sport venues and facilitating sport in venues not normally used for sport.

For further information, please see **Glasgow 2026 Festival Fund case study**.

755 ORGANISATIONS GO ALL IN

All In gave communities, schools, sports clubs, charities and businesses an open way to connect their own activities with Glasgow 2026. The Scotland-wide programme built on community branding at previous major events, making it easier for organisations to use a Games-linked identity and promote local activity.

Participating organisations received digital branding, merchandise, promotion through Games channels and opportunities to connect with others. Activities were also featured on The List, a UK-wide events website.



In total, 755 organisations signed up, including 255 businesses, with representation in every Glasgow ward and all 32 Scottish local authorities. Among 60 organisations responding to the evaluation survey, 43% said their activity would not have happened without All In, while 40% said it would have taken place on a smaller or different scale. Three-quarters identified association with Glasgow 2026 as a benefit.

National Lottery Awards for All Scotland was aligned with the programme, with £2.2 million made available by The National Lottery Community Fund Scotland, sportscotland and Creative Scotland for Games-inspired sport, arts and community activity. Some funded organisations also participated in All In. For further information, please see **National Lottery Awards For All Scotland case study**.

Respondents also reported benefits including media and publicity (42%), increased attendance (40%) and greater credibility with funders or partners (38%). Because some had received Awards for All or Festival Fund support, these outcomes cannot be attributed to All In alone. For further information, please see **All In Glasgow 2026 case study**.

GAME ON LIVE SITE OFFERS ANOTHER WAY TO ENGAGE

The Game On Live Site was supported by funding from Commonwealth Sport and an additional £1 million awarded by sportscotland from the Scottish Government's £20 million Summer of Sport investment programme.

Alongside live competition screenings and entertainment, local sports clubs and groups hosted more than 300 participation sessions and performances. Over 25,000 people took part in 'come and try' activities across sport, physical activity, arts and culture.

The wider initiative sought to build participation and physical activity around a year in which Scotland hosted the Commonwealth Games and its men's football team competed at the FIFA World Cup.

Of 402 survey respondents, 97% rated their experience good or very good; 99% agreed or strongly agreed that the site felt welcoming and 95% that it felt inclusive of different backgrounds and abilities. The audience included Glasgow residents (45%), people from elsewhere in Scotland (42%), the rest of the UK (6%) and overseas (7%).

In addition to the 'come and try' activities at the Live Site, the Caledonia Gladiators provided another example of how clubs used the Games to encourage continued participation. The club used the 3x3 basketball events to promote participation and volunteering opportunities. Around 190 people registered an interest in becoming involved, including 20 interested in volunteering. The Gladiators also registered as an All In project and planned a post-Games 3x3 basketball festival to build on this interest. For further information, please see **Game On Live Site Kelvingrove Park case study**.



DEVELOPING SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY OPPORTUNITIES

Glasgow 2026 offered people opportunities to develop skills, build professional networks and gain practical experience through Games delivery, volunteering and targeted employability programmes. These ranged from entry-level placements to training for experienced event professionals.

Campus to Commonwealth connected further and higher education institutions with placements, paid Games-time roles, volunteering and applied learning.

The Trivandi Academy's Major Events Foundation Training enrolled 523 people from Embedded Delivery Suppliers, the OC and Commonwealth Sport. More than 30 modules covered operations, leadership, health and wellbeing, cultural competency, sustainability and inclusion. Among respondents, 96% said the course created a shared understanding of major events, while 89% rated it four or five out of five. Successful participants received a Highfield-accredited certificate.

A further 22 people took part in the Academy's Experiential Learning Programme, combining training with Games-time roles in accreditation, protocol, spectator services and venue management. All 10 evaluation respondents said they had improved their understanding of major event delivery and gained knowledge unavailable through their usual roles. Nine expanded their professional networks, eight developed new skills and seven reported a change in how they viewed their future careers.

The Striders initiative offered five paid coordinator-level placements to people from Glasgow who had experienced barriers to employment. Funded by the Scottish Government through Glasgow City Council on behalf of Glasgow Futures Local Employability Partnership. The programme was delivered by GCVS with partners Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, Enable Scotland, CEMVO Scotland, and Move On and provided residents within the Glasgow city boundary, with the opportunity to work on a paid placement at the Real Living Wage.

In addition, the Organising Company's paid work placement programme offered Glasgow residents opportunities to gain experience while earning the Real Living Wage. Funded by the Scottish Government through Glasgow City Council, on behalf of Glasgow Futures Local Employability Partnership, it was delivered by GCVS alongside Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, Enable Scotland, CEMVO Scotland and Move On.



ADDRESSING THE SHORTAGE OF BROADCAST PROFESSIONALS

Led by Scottish broadcaster QTV and jointly funded by Actua, Screen Scotland and QTV, the Host Broadcaster Training Initiative used Glasgow 2026 to develop Scotland's outside broadcast workforce.

Running from December 2025 to September 2026, it combined a 10-month Technical Accelerator for six employed trainees with workshops for 18 new entrants. Structured learning, paid work experience and Games-time deployment helped experienced professionals work towards senior technical roles and gave newcomers a route into the industry.

The Organising Company's partners also supported skills development and career opportunities. Progress Productions created 75 paid placements through its Progress Pioneers programme, helping people enter the events industry.



DEVELOPING EMERGING LEADERS ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH

The eqUIP (University Internship Programme) Skills Academy, delivered by Commonwealth Sport and the Organising Company, supported 15 emerging leaders from 15 Commonwealth nations and territories. Aged 23-30, all had previous Commonwealth Games Association internship experience.

Through Trivandi Academy, participants received online and in-person leadership and professional development training, mentoring, networking and peer learning. They also completed volunteer placements during the Games, applying their learning in a live event setting. For further information, please see **eqUIP Skills Academy case study**.

> ***"The eqUIP programme was very impactful. It gives me capacity building. It strengthened my leadership skills, my communication skills, logistics, skills. So many skills that I've gained."***
>
> **eqUIP participant**

ENGAGING SCHOOLS, STUDENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE



Education programmes helped children and young people connect with Glasgow 2026, from classroom resources and athlete visits to coaching, volunteering and paid Games-time roles.

Youth Coaching Pathways sought to turn school-based leadership and volunteering into longer-term involvement in community sport. Its Beyond the Games conference brought together 105 young people from 20 Scottish local authority areas and 32 sports to explore confidence, awareness of opportunities and connections with local clubs.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS PROGRAMME REACHES ACROSS SCOTLAND AND BEYOND

The National Schools Programme offered curriculum-linked resources, athlete visits, Finnie-themed activities, movement breaks and a Schools' Baton Relay. It reached all 32 Scottish local authorities. Online resources were downloaded 2,536 times, with an estimated reach of 16,381 classes. Of these registrations, 972 international sign-ups came from 10 countries and territories. Athletes made 129 visits to 129 schools.

The Schools' Baton Relay reached Glasgow's learning communities, including early years settings, through activities about Commonwealth nations, the Baton journey and sustainability. For further information, please see For further information, please see **The Scotland Route of the King's Baton Relay case study.** Elsewhere, 30 Glasgow pupils attended the Commonwealth Day Service at Westminster Abbey, and around 1,500 pupils from 20 primary and additional support needs schools took part in Daily Mile Foundation events at Scotstoun Stadium.

Children and young people also shaped and co-designed the Games. Consultation with pupils informed the creation of mascot Finnie, the schools programme, the Festival, All In, the Opening Ceremony and youth volunteering. 'You Said, We Did' sessions in March 2026 showed pupils how their feedback had influenced plans.

> ***"Glasgow Rising Stars provided the opportunity for young people to play a part in some of the Games' most memorable and emotional moments. As we celebrated the inspiring achievements of the athletes competing, we wanted to recognise and inspire the next generation who will help shape the future of the city and the Commonwealth."***
>
> **Darren Hall,**
> Director of Games and Assurance, Commonwealth Sport

The programme engaged schools serving communities experiencing higher levels of disadvantage. Among 854 participating schools matched to census data, 28% of pupils lived in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) deciles 1-2, compared with 22% nationally. Schools where at least half of pupils lived in these areas made up 23% of participants, against 17% nationally. School feedback indicated greater awareness of the Games, engagement with sport and interest in attending.

The British Council and Youth Sport Trust also produced a classroom pack for seven- to eleven-year-olds. After the Games, six Glasgow teachers and a local authority representative travelled to Gujarat for an exchange on sport in education, inclusive learning, wellbeing, digital classroom tools and global citizenship.

For the first time ever, young people participated in Medal Ceremonies as gift bearers as part of a "Glasgow Rising Stars" initiative, placing young beneficiaries from Glasgow's official charity partners at the heart of some of the Games most significant and memorable moments. For further information, please see **Glasgow 2026 Schools Programme case study.**

A ROUTE FOR STUDENTS INTO GLASGOW 2026

Campus to Commonwealth (C2C) helped students and colleges and universities contribute to the Games through campus events, sports sessions, research, lectures and workshops. Twenty-five teams or departments from 16 institutions registered activity through All In.

At least 82 students secured paid Games-time roles in event delivery, media, broadcast, accommodation and ceremonies. Thirteen students from five institutions completed Organising Company placements, while 3,065 progressed to the selection stage of the Games volunteer application process.

There were early examples of progression into employment. Of six University of Stirling students who completed Organising Company placements, two secured full-time roles – one with the Organising Company and one with Commonwealth Sport – while two moved into a Games-time role with Trivandi.

C2C also provided specialist learning opportunities. Through Glasgow Caledonian University's Psychology for the Common (wealth) Good project, 24 trainee sport and exercise psychologists supported athletes and teams from five Commonwealth Games Associations, gaining experience while extending psychological support to teams without equivalent in-house provision.

Other collaborations included Glasgow Caledonian University's Vision Clinic, the University of Strathclyde's Prosthetics and Orthotics Lab, Glasgow School of Art's role in commissioning the medal designer and City of Glasgow College students supporting public engagement activities and providing beauty and holistic services to athletes.

Comprehensive progression data was not available, so the longer-term employment impact cannot yet be quantified.

CIVIC PRIDE, SOCIAL COHESION AND WELLBEING

Survey findings offer an early picture of how people who took part in Glasgow 2026 experienced the Games, including their sense of civic pride, social connection and wellbeing.

Volunteer contribution

Volunteering also offers potential for longer-term impact. Most respondents (87%) intended or would consider volunteering again, while more than a third had not volunteered in the two years before Glasgow 2026.

Regular volunteering is associated with improved wellbeing, particularly among older people, those experiencing disadvantage and those with lower wellbeing. Supporting Games volunteers into ongoing roles could therefore benefit both individuals and their communities.

To encourage this, Volunteer Glasgow coordinated third sector interfaces across the region to share local opportunities based on volunteers' postcodes, before, during and after the Games. Drop-in and come-and-try sessions provided further opportunities to get involved. Whether this interest translates into regular volunteering will require longer-term follow-up beyond this evaluation.



COMMUNITY CONNECTION AND WELLBEING

All In organisations reported positive social outcomes from their projects. Of 59 respondents, 57 (97%) said their activity brought people together 'a lot', with the other two saying 'a little'.

Among respondents to each question, 72% (42 of 58) said their projects increased community pride 'a lot' and 73% (43 of 59) said they improved wellbeing 'a lot'. Including smaller reported contributions, 97% reported an increase in pride and 97% an improvement in wellbeing. All respondents to the relevant question reported greater awareness of the Commonwealth Games, including 75% (44 of 59) who said it increased 'a lot'.

Some organisations also received Awards for All or Festival Fund support, so the findings reflect overlapping programmes rather than All In alone.

FINNIE BRINGS THE GAMES TO LIFE

Co-created with 76 young people from 24 Glasgow schools, mascot Finnie became a symbol of the city and a platform for community engagement. Across around 700 appearances, Finnie reached children from more than 500 Scottish schools, including 158 school visits, and made 300 appearances at Games venues and live sites. Finnie also contributed commercially, with around 25,000 merchandise items sold, including 16,300 recycled-polyester plush toys, generating £381,036 in net revenue.

ENCOURAGING CONTINUED PARTICIPATION

The Glasgow 2026 Legacy Network was also designed to support continued participation beyond the Games through the work of its member organisations. One example is Together We Move, delivered by Legacy Network member Movement for Health, which used the Games as a platform to encourage more inclusive approaches to movement. For further information, please see **Glasgow 2026 Legacy Network case study.**

Together We Move used the Games to celebrate everyday movement, particularly among people living with long-term health conditions or who did not consider themselves physically active. The campaign included advertising, podcasts and a Day of Movement on 18 June, supported by activity across Scotland.

By Games time, it had reached around 100,000 people through social media, advertising and media coverage, while approximately 80 organisations had engaged through campaign materials or activities. Designed to continue beyond Glasgow 2026, Together We Move aims to grow its network and promote inclusive ways to enjoy movement. For further information, please see **Together We Move case study** and **Together We're All In case study**

A separate example is the Game On Live Site, where 52% of respondents said their visit made them more likely to attend similar live events, while 49% said they were more likely to take part in cultural or community events. These are intentions rather than evidence of subsequent participation, but suggest potential for continued engagement.



CIVIC PRIDE AND A WELCOMING HOST CITY

Among respondents from the Glasgow City Region, pride in Glasgow averaged a score of 8.8 out of 10. Across the full spectator survey sample, the Games' role in bringing people and communities together received an average score of 8.3 out of 10, while Glasgow's welcome received an average score of 9.0.

Police Scotland also sought to create a welcoming atmosphere while meeting security requirements. With venues located in different communities, its approach emphasised early local engagement and community-led policing, with the ability to respond proportionately when needed.

> ***"Community engagement was absolutely key because actually if the communities support the Games being in their area, then it helps, it helps massively.... We start at the lowest level, community policing led effectively, that allows officers then to be friendly, accommodate and engage in and then respond and scale up rather than presenting a robust presence."***
>
> **Assistant Chief Constable Mark Sutherland,** Police Scotland

The Games also created opportunities for cultural connections beyond Scotland. In Ceilidh Meets Garba, Glasgow- and India-based filmmaker Rakasree Basu brought Scottish ceilidh dancing together with Garba, a traditional dance from Gujarat. The project celebrated shared traditions of music, dance and gathering, strengthening connections between Glasgow and Amdavad ahead of the 2030 Games.

RUN THE RACE GLASGOW

Run the Race Glasgow, an All In project led by the Salvation Army with Action of Churches Together in Scotland (ACTS), brought churches together through sport and community activity. It mobilised volunteers to support athletes and visitors, created opportunities for Christian organisations to collaborate and encouraged longer-term community outreach through physical activity.

The initiative showed how local organisations used the Games to advance activities rooted in their existing networks and communities.

CELEBRATING GLASGOW'S CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Glasgow 2026 provided a platform for local artists, community organisations and established festivals to celebrate the city's identity and its connections across the Commonwealth.

The Glasgow 2026 Festival Fund supported 161 organisations across all 23 Glasgow wards, with over £1.18m distributed across arts, sport, communities and creative industries. Delivered by Glasgow Life and the Organising Company, and funding from Commonwealth Sport, the Scottish Government, Glasgow City Council and sportscotland, the Festival Fund provided grants from £600 to £10,000.

Funding was reported across four areas:

- **Arts:** £332,819 (43 projects)
- **Sport:** £478,802 (70 projects)
- **Communities:** £282,435 (40 projects)
- **Creative industries:** £92,134 (9 projects)

The programme connected new commissions with Glasgow's established cultural calendar. Glasgow Mela attracted 21,000 visitors and involved 81 artists. The Merchant City Festival recorded more than 113,000 attendances across 235 events over 10 days, involving 422 artists. Glasgow International Festival of Visual Art involved 120 artists in 74 exhibitions and events across 35 venues over 18 days.

Additional funding from Commonwealth Sport, the Organising Company, Creative Scotland and VisitScotland enhanced these established festivals.

Four new artistic commissions formed part of the Festival: Jasleen Kaur's Superstructure, Jasmine Togo-Brisby's Liquid Land, Emer Tumilty and NEWSUBSTANCE's The Glasgow Rose, and Vince Virr's Invitation to Gather.

Superstructure placed eight sculptures along the River Clyde, exploring its connections with trade, history and empire. The Glasgow Rose, designed by Tumilty with NEWSUBSTANCE, transformed the Finnieston Crane into a large-scale artwork.

At SWG3, LIVE@SWG3 presented 10 days of live music, club culture, digital arts and immersive experiences. The venue also hosted Sanctuary@SWG3, an indoor and outdoor social space for accredited athletes and the paid Games workforce.



> ***"Inspired by the iconic rose motifs of Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, The Glasgow Rose reimagines one of Glasgow's best-known symbols through a bold contemporary lens. Bringing together the rose and the crane – two enduring emblems of the city – the artwork celebrates Glasgow's rich artistic legacy while reflecting the energy, diversity and imagination that continue to shape it today."***
>
> **Chris Ansell,** Director of Live Programmes and Engagement, Glasgow 2026





A WELCOMING GAMES EXPERIENCE

Volunteers were a particularly valued part of the Games. Ticket holders rated staff and volunteer helpfulness 9.3 out of 10, equal to the entertainment value of the sport and just behind sporting performance (9.35).

The contribution of volunteers also reflected the sense of connection the Games created among people with different backgrounds and experiences.

Volunteer onboarding survey respondent

I lived in Ukraine for eight years coaching Ukrainian team members squash until the war started in 2022, then I returned to the UK with my family and kids. Scotland has given my family so much support. I would love to give back to this beautiful city."

I'm inspired by how this event unites people from diverse backgrounds. Supporting others and helping create memorable experiences motivates me, as I believe small acts of kindness can bring joy and smiles to many."

"I was inspired by how major sporting events unite people across cultures. Having benefited from sports in my own journey, I want to give back by supporting Glasgow 2026."

SUMMARY

Glasgow 2026 gave people ways to take part beyond watching sport. Through festivals, community projects, schools, volunteering, skills programmes and public events, the Games created multiple opportunities to participate, contribute and connect across every Glasgow ward, all 32 Scottish local authorities and the nations and territories of the Commonwealth. Much of this reach came through taking a strategic approach to partnerships.

Glasgow 2026 also welcomed its residents, communities and their networks to participate in making the Games a success beyond the field of play, reaching beyond what the Organising Company could achieve alone. Programmes including All In and the Glasgow 2026 Festival intentionally enabled local organisations to build and extend on existing networks, resources and ideas, generating positive experiences, strengthened civic pride and greater social connection in the process. Glasgow 2026 also welcomed new people into employment as its workforce and education programmes created opportunities for practical experience and professional development which will sustain well after the Games.

Glasgow 2026 demonstrated the value of making public engagement an integral part of Games delivery. Simple routes to involvement, combined with the activation of local partnerships and community ownership, offer lessons for future hosts seeking to extend the benefits of a major event beyond sporting competition.



5



A PLACE-BASED EVENT, DELIVERED IN A FINANCIALLY RESPONSIBLE FORMAT

A NEW DELIVERY MODEL FOR HOSTING THE GAMES

A streamlined, commercially funded Games built around existing infrastructure, with economic benefits for Glasgow and Scotland.

Glasgow 2026 was delivered through a different operating model from previous Commonwealth Games. The Organising Company was operationalised in January 2025, leaving 18 months to undertake the delivery preparations in advance of the Opening Ceremony.

That timeline shaped procurement, the choice of sports and associated venues, as well as the composition of the workforce.

The Games was designed around Glasgow's existing infrastructure, major event expertise and available resources, with a streamlined budget and a new funding structure. These characteristics have a direct bearing on the economic impact assessed in this section and are important context for interpreting the results.

This Impact Driver had three overarching goals:

- Showcase Glasgow, Scotland and the UK as a global leader in hosting world-class major events.
- Deliver economic impact and returns for Glasgow and Scotland from a delivery budget with a new funding structure, which was largely commercially funded, with minimal local public funding.
- Model a new format for the Games that responds to the strengths, assets and infrastructure of the host city.

The chapter evaluates the short-term economic impact of Glasgow 2026. This short-term impact is defined as the activity generated by the planning and delivery of the Games and by spending associated with Games visitors.

Longer-term economic effects, including those arising from improved facilities, post-Games legacy outcomes, and Glasgow's continued capacity to host major events, fall outside its scope and have not been quantified.



THE ECONOMICS OF THE DELIVERY MODEL

Glasgow 2026 generated £223.0 million of Gross Output (GO) across Scotland. Of this, £126.5 million was direct impact: net additional expenditure in Scotland by the Organising Company, its delivery partners and Games visitors. The remainder arose through indirect impacts, as suppliers purchased goods and services from their own supply chains, and induced impacts, as wages supported by this level of activity were spent in the wider economy.

Of the £223.0 million GO, £117.3 million was Gross Value Added (GVA), the economic value added after netting off the cost of bought-in goods and services, and this activity supported an estimated 2,400 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) years of employment.

Within Scotland, the Glasgow City Region accounted for most of this activity, with £176.0 million of GO, £92.5 million of GVA and an estimated 2,100 FTE years of employment.

Five features of the delivery model shaped the economic outcome:

1. A new funding structure
2. Existing venues, built on 2014's investment
3. Hotels used as athlete accommodation
4. A lean Organising Company with embedded delivery suppliers
5. A streamlined sport programme shaped to the venue



1. A NEW FUNDING STRUCTURE

Of the £162.2m raised for the Games, Commonwealth Sport contributed £118.4m – around 73% of the total budget – alongside commercial revenue (£39.8m) and Commonwealth Games Australia (£2.3m), together making up around 99%. The remaining 1% came from public sources: £1.0m from sportscotland towards the Game On Live Site to enable community participation, and £0.7m of security funding from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office ("FCDO") in response to an increase in the national threat level. By contrast, Glasgow 2014 was approximately 78% publicly funded.

2. EXISTING VENUES, BUILT ON 2014'S INVESTMENT

Glasgow 2026 built on the legacy of Glasgow 2014. The 2014 Games budget contributed £99 million in 2026 prices (£70 million at the time) towards venues and the Athletes' Village, alongside wider investment by Glasgow City Council, the Scottish Government and venue owners in facilities including the Emirates Arena, Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome, the Hydro and Athletes' Village development. This investment provided the foundation for Glasgow 2026, with competition concentrated across four existing international-standard venues within an eight-mile corridor. A further £5.7 million was invested across three sites ahead of the Games, accelerating refurbishment and leaving upgraded facilities as a lasting benefit for the city. See **Preparing World-Class Venues case study** for more detail. This resulted in a substantially different investment profile from Glasgow 2014.

3. HOTELS AS ATHLETE ACCOMMODATION

Glasgow's existing hotel stock provided accommodation for athletes and team officials at a cost of £12.5m, making use of established city infrastructure rather than requiring a purpose-built athletes' village and subsequent conversion.

4. A LEAN OC WITH EMBEDDED DELIVERY SUPPLIERS

Glasgow 2026 kept a lean Organising Company and delivered the Games through a core group of embedded suppliers, each holding major contracts across venue and operational delivery. Venue-use agreements with established operators such as Glasgow Life and the Scottish Event Campus brought proven venues, teams and expertise, reducing the need to build new capability from scratch. For further information, please see **The Partner Family study.**

5. A STREAMLINED SPORTS PROGRAMME

The programme comprised 10 sports and six integrated Para sports, compared with 17 sports staged in 2014, with the programme designed around available venues and the delivery timeframe.

> ***"We are taking the opportunity to reimagine the Games to secure its future, to demonstrate an affordable and sustainable model."***

Martin Fitchie,
Chief Information Officer, Glasgow 2026



WHY THIS MATTERS

Glasgow 2014 laid the foundations for Glasgow 2026. The venues, infrastructure and expertise developed for the earlier Games allowed Glasgow to host again, this time with a significantly smaller budget and a different funding model.

Approximately 85% of Glasgow 2026's revenue (£137.8m) came from outside Scotland, including Commonwealth Sport and Commonwealth Games Australia (£120.7m) and international commercial revenue (£17.1m). By contrast, Glasgow 2014 cost £768m in 2026 prices (£543m at the time), of which £600m (£425m) came from the Scottish Government and Glasgow City Council.

The budgets are not directly comparable. Glasgow 2014 involved substantial capital investment in new and upgraded venues, alongside an athletes' village that brought regeneration and new housing to the city's East End. That investment created lasting assets and established Glasgow as a world-class host for major events.

Glasgow 2026 was able to build on that legacy, using existing infrastructure and expertise to deliver the Games at a fraction of the cost. In this sense, the 2026 Games were themselves part of the legacy of public investment in 2014.

With permanent infrastructure already in place, Glasgow 2026's expenditure was concentrated in services such as accommodation, food and beverage, arts and recreation and professional services, supporting economic activity during the Games delivery period.



HOW THE ECONOMIC IMPACT WAS MEASURED

The assessment identifies spending that occurred because of Glasgow 2026, excludes activity that would have happened anyway or was displaced from elsewhere, and estimates how the remaining expenditure contributed to the wider economy. Results are reported for both the Glasgow City Region and Scotland.

Two types of spending are assessed:

- Games delivery expenditure: Organising Company's capital and operating costs of staging the Games, including related activity such as live public programmes.
- Visitor and attendee expenditure: Spending by spectators and the Games Family on accommodation, food, travel, retail and other day-to-day expenses.

Only spending additional to the economy is counted. Ticket purchases are excluded from visitor spending because they fund Organising Company expenditure already counted in delivery costs, and accommodation, catering and transport provided by the Organising Company to athletes and officials sit within delivery expenditure rather than their personal spending. Activity funded or delivered by partner organisations outside the Organising Company's accounts is excluded.



Funding and visitor spending are assessed against the same question: *would this money have entered the economy without the Games?* Funding from outside Scotland, principally Commonwealth Sport, international broadcast rights and sponsorship, is treated as additional. Domestic public funding and residents' spending are excluded.

The resulting net additional expenditure is assessed using an input-output model, which captures the direct, indirect and induced effects as money flows through supply chains and household spending. Only value retained within the Glasgow City Region or Scotland is counted.

Economic impact is reported through three measures: output (the total financial value of goods and services produced), gross value added (GVA, the economic value added contribution to GDP) and employment (full-time equivalent, or FTE, years supported).

The full methodology, including the treatment of additionality, expenditure categories, data sources and input-output framework, is provided in the Appendix.

FUNDING THE GAMES

Commonwealth Sport contributed £118.4 million towards Glasgow 2026's overall £162.2 million budget, covering core Games costs, including venue readiness, city activation and enhanced services for visiting Commonwealth Games Associations.

Ticketing was the largest source of commercial revenue, generating £15.1 million net of fees, against total commercial revenue of £39.8 million. Other sources included broadcasting, sponsorship and partnerships, merchandise and hospitality. Commercial income, including broadcast rights and sponsorship, formed an important part of the funding model alongside the contribution from Commonwealth Sport. These programmes are usually developed over several years, and sponsors generally look for certainty over broadcast arrangements before committing. The window to secure broadcast and sponsorship partners was much shorter than usual, which limited the opportunity to grow income from these sources.

No public funding was required for sporting competition, but the Organising Company received £1 million from sportscotland for Game On Live Site activities and £0.7 million from the FCDO for additional security following a rise in the national threat level. Separately, sportscotland, Glasgow City Council and the Scottish Government contributed £250,000 each to Glasgow Life for community Festival Fund grants. This £750,000 is excluded from the Organising Company's revenue figures and economic assessment.

TABLE 6.1: REVENUE BY SOURCE

Source	£m	% of total	Type
Commonwealth Sport	118.4	73%	Non-public
Commercial revenue	39.8	25%	Non-public
Commonwealth Games Australia	2.3	1%	Non-public
FCDO and sportscotland	1.7	1%	Public
Total revenue	162.2	100%	

WHAT THE GAMES COST

Glasgow 2026 was delivered within the £162.2 million Games Delivery Budget approved by the OC Board and funded from the sources shown in Table 6.1. Based on the latest financial outturn available at the time of reporting, expenditure was £159.6 million (Table 6.2), £2.6 million under budget. This reflects strong budgetary control under the streamlined delivery model, despite a compressed planning timeline.

TABLE 6.2: EXPENDITURE BY AREA

Expenditure area	£m	% of total
Games-related opex	148.3m	93%
Games-related capex	5.9m	4%
Discretionary opex	5.4m	3%
Total expenditure	159.6m	100%



WHERE THE MONEY WAS INVESTED

Of the 104 core suppliers contracted by the Organising Company, 39% of contract value was held by suppliers in the Glasgow City Region, 45% elsewhere in the UK, 15% internationally and 1% elsewhere in Scotland.

Of these, 22 suppliers located outside Glasgow established a base in the city for the Games and delivered from within it. On this delivery basis, 90% of contracted expenditure was delivered from within the Glasgow City Region. This does not mean that the full value remained locally, as suppliers may source staff, equipment and overheads from elsewhere, but it illustrates the concentration of Games-time activity within the region.

The partnership model

Glasgow 2026 adopted a delivery model developed specifically for the Games. Rather than building a large in-house organisation, a lean Organising Company worked with embedded delivery suppliers responsible for major areas of Games delivery, including venue operations, ceremonies, sport presentation, broadcast, technology, accommodation, transport, branding and wayfinding. This partnership-led approach allowed the Games to be delivered efficiently and at pace.



TABLE 6.3: EMBEDDED DELIVERY SUPPLIERS'

Organisation	Role
Trivandi	Event Delivery & Venue Management
Progress Productions	Sport Presentation & Medal Ceremonies
People & Co.	Ceremonies Production
Actua	Host Broadcast
CSE	Accommodation, Arrival & Departures
Riedel Communications	Venue Connectivity
Wiz-Team	Games Management Systems
The Team	Look, Wayfinding & Signage
First Travel Solutions	Bus Systems & Transport Planning
SEC	Competition Venue & Venue Services
Glasgow Life	Competition Venue & Venue Services

Unlike Glasgow 2014, when the Organising Company took over venues and operated them with its own staff, Glasgow 2026 relied on existing venue teams, supported by Embedded Delivery Suppliers. Their knowledge of the venues helped minimise operational challenges. During planning, the Organising Company also funded dedicated project teams at Glasgow Life and the SEC, allowing venue staff to maintain their day-to-day responsibilities.

A similar approach was adopted with Police Scotland with the Organising Company funding a strategic planning unit to be co-located with operational teams to devise and develop a proportionate security posture for the event.
A total Organising Company team size of 562 was supported by a further 2,288 from Embedded Delivery Suppliers and 99 from Venue Partners, a core team of around 2,950 drawn from both employed staff and contractors. Beyond this core team, a further 6,616 contractors were engaged through other suppliers, taking the total paid and contracted workforce to around 9,600, alongside more than 4,000 volunteers.

Value in kind and partner contributions

Within commercial income of £39.8 million, the Organising Company received £11.2 million in value-in-kind contributions from its commercial partners, covering all or part of the cost of goods and services that would otherwise have required funding. This is included in both income and delivery expenditure. A further £1.1 million in benefits in kind enhanced Games delivery but did not replace budgeted expenditure. This amount is therefore excluded from the delivery expenditure assessed.

VISITORS AND PARTICIPANTS

Spectators

A total of 448,473 tickets were issued across 138 sessions, demonstrating the scale of engagement with the Games. With many spectators attending multiple sessions, an estimated 185,215 individual spectators attended the Games, after accounting for non-attendance and excluding accredited groups, who are counted separately in this analysis.

The economic impact of spectators resident in the Glasgow City Region is excluded from the assessment on the basis that their spending would have occurred in the area regardless of the Games and is therefore not considered additional to the local economy.

An estimated 63% of spectators came from outside GCR. Wider travel data supports the scale of visitor movement. ScotRail recorded more than 2.1 million passenger journeys in the week from 26 July to 1 August, its busiest week since returning to public ownership, and 8.4 million journeys in July as a whole, almost 900,000 more than in July 2025.



TABLE 6.4: SPECTATORS BY ORIGIN

Origin	Unique visitors	Average stay (rounded)	Gross expenditure (£m)[3]
Glasgow City Region	68,854	1 day	7.1
Overnight – rest of Scotland	14,788	4 nights	5.3
Overnight – rest of UK	49,486	5 nights	30.9
International	5,670	10 nights	7.7
Day-trip (non-GCR)	46,418	1 day	2.9
Total	185,215		53.8

Figures are rounded and may not sum exactly to totals.

Games Family

Alongside spectators, Glasgow 2026 welcomed 7,683 members of the international Games Family, including athletes, team officials, technical officials, media, broadcasters, delegates, sponsors and guests from Commonwealth Games Associations, International Federations, broadcast partners, Commonwealth Sport and other organisations. Three in five travelled from outside the UK.

Volunteers

More than 4,000 volunteers registered to support the Games, with 1,769 travelling from outside the Glasgow City Region and staying an average of nine nights in Scotland.

Their spending on accommodation, food and drink, local travel and shopping generated an estimated £1.2 million in additional expenditure for the regional economy. While the value of their volunteering time was not included in gross value added (GVA), their visitor spending contributed to the economic assessment. A further £0.5 million in volunteer programme costs was included in Games delivery expenditure.



TABLE 6.5: GAMES FAMILY AND VOLUNTEERS INCLUDED IN THE ASSESSMENT

Group	People	Average stay (nights rounded)	Gross personal expenditure (£m)[4]
Athletes and team officials	4,063	10	0.3
Technical officials	680	9	0.7
Media and broadcast, UK	1,007	14	1.8
Media and broadcast, international	565	14	1.0
Delegates, VIPs and sponsors	1,368	9	0.3
Volunteers (non-local)	1,769	9	1.2
Total	9,452		5.4

Figures are rounded and may not sum exactly to totals.



A PROGRAMME SHAPED TO THE CITY

Glasgow 2026 staged 10 sports, including six with fully integrated Para programmes – across four venues within an eight-mile corridor, compared with 17 sports in 2014. Although the number of sports reduced by around 41%, medal events fell by only 18% (261 to 215), reflecting a shift in the shape of the sporting competition rather than purely a reduction in scale. Medal events increased in swimming, athletics and Para sport events to their highest ever.

The Games were delivered for £159.6 million. This equates to approximately £16.0 million per sport, against £45.2 million in 2014, and a cost of approximately £39,000 per athlete and team official, compared with £110,000 in 2014.

These figures illustrate the different scale and design of the two editions rather than providing a like-for-like measure of efficiency. Glasgow 2026's programme was shaped around the venues, infrastructure and delivery capacity already available across the city.

TABLE 6.6: SPORTS, VENUES AND UTILISATION

Sport	Venue	Competition days	Sessions	Tickets issued
Athletics and Para athletics	Scotstoun Stadium	6	12	86,385
Swimming and Para swimming	Tollcross International Swimming Centre	6	12	39,382
Artistic gymnastics	Glasgow International Arena	5	8	36,137
Track cycling and Para track cycling	Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome	4	8	25,789
3x3 basketball and 3x3 wheelchair basketball	Scottish Event Campus	6	13	31,333
Bowls and Para bowls	Scottish Event Campus	11	20	21,712
Boxing	Scottish Event Campus	8	17	23,677
Judo	Scottish Event Campus	3	6	13,585
Netball	Scottish Event Campus	9	21	122,972
Weightlifting and Para powerlifting	Scottish Event Campus	6	17	25,856
Ceremonies and rehearsals	Scottish Event Campus	3	4	21,645
Total		**11**	**138**	**448,473**

Competition days total reflects the 11-day Games period; sports ran concurrently.

Managing regular venue activity alongside the Games

Using existing venues meant balancing Games-time requirements with their established community and sporting functions. During the event period, some regular activity was temporarily paused: Glasgow Club membership access was adjusted, organisations occupying venue space relocated and a small number of sporting fixtures were moved.

The Organising Company covered the associated costs through venue hire arrangements, including lost revenue, staffing and tenant relocation. Activity moved elsewhere within the Glasgow City Region was considered a transfer rather than an economic loss, although a small number of fixtures relocated outside the region.

These effects form part of the wider picture of staging a major event within active community facilities. No additional deduction has been made for displaced venue activity, as the associated costs are already included in Games delivery expenditure.

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF GLASGOW 2026

Glasgow 2026 generated £223.0 million of total GO across Scotland, of which £117.3 million was gross value added (GVA), supporting an estimated 2,400 FTE years of employment. Within this, the Glasgow City Region accounted for £176.0 million of GO, £92.5 million of GVA and an estimated 2,100 FTE years of employment.

What drove the impact

Games delivery expenditure accounted for £85.3 million of the £125.5 million (68%) in net additional direct expenditure in the Glasgow City Region, with spending by spectators, the Games Family and volunteers contributing the remaining £40.1 million (32%). A similar pattern was seen across Scotland, reflecting the importance of the expenditure required to stage the Games alongside visitor spending.

The largest direct impacts were concentrated in accommodation, professional and technical services, arts, entertainment and sport, construction of temporary overlay, food and beverage services and retail.

The use of existing permanent infrastructure also shaped the type of economic activity generated. Glasgow 2014 included a substantial capital programme that contributed to economic impact. For Glasgow 2026, activity was concentrated more heavily in event delivery and the expenditure of those attending and participating in the Games.

TABLE 6.7: ECONOMIC IMPACT BY GEOGRAPHY

	Gross Output – Scotland (£m)	Gross Output – GCR (£m)	GVA – Scotland (£m)	GVA – GCR (£m)
Direct	126.5	125.5	67.3	66.4
Indirect	37.3	23.8	17.1	11.0
Induced	59.2	26.7	32.9	15.2
Total	223.0	176.0	117.3	92.5

Figures are rounded and may not sum exactly to totals

TABLE 6.8: NET ADDITIONAL IMPACT BY SOURCE

	Net additional expenditure direct – Scotland (£m)	Net additional expenditure direct – GCR (£m)
Games delivery expenditure	87.8	85.3
Spectator expenditure	33.3	35.1
Games Family expenditure	4.2	4.0
Volunteer expenditure	1.2	1.0
Total	126.5	125.4

Figures are rounded and may not sum exactly to totals

Delivery expenditure was the largest component in both the Glasgow City Region and Scotland, although the distribution of spending differed.

Spectator, Games Family and volunteer expenditure was slightly lower for Scotland (£38.7 million) than for the Glasgow City Region (£40.1 million). This reflects spending by visitors from elsewhere in Scotland, which was additional to the regional economy but not to Scotland as a whole.

Delivery expenditure showed the opposite pattern, reaching £87.8 million across Scotland compared with £85.3 million in the Glasgow City Region, as suppliers and workers beyond the city region also benefited.

Once the direct, indirect and induced effects were accounted for, gross output (GO) reached £176.0 million in the Glasgow City Region and £223.0 million across Scotland, demonstrating a positive net economic impact at both levels.

The economic value of an externally funded Games

Of Glasgow 2026's £162.2 million of funding, 99% came from Commonwealth Sport, commercial partners and other non-public sources: approximately £96 for every £1 of public funding.

This marked a significant departure from previous Games, where public funding covered most operating costs, and represented the lowest public funding share of any modern Commonwealth Games.

With a total delivery spend of £159.6 million, Glasgow 2026 was also the leanest modern Commonwealth Games. Making use of existing venues and adopting a lean, partnership-led delivery model helped keep costs down. With so little public funding involved, conventional measures of return on public investment offer limited value for comparison. Instead, the economic contribution of Glasgow 2026 is better understood through the investment attracted into Scotland and the activity generated.

The figures capture economic activity associated with Games planning, delivery and visitor spending up to and including the Games themselves. They do not account for longer-term benefits, such as future tourism, new events, trade and investment, or gains in skills and participation. Social, cultural, sporting and environmental outcomes are assessed separately.



> ***"Not many countries can afford to spend heavily on new venues. Designing the Games around the resources a host already has is a more sustainable model for the future."***
>
> **Faye Shaw,**
> Chief Finance and Corporate Services Officer

The evaluation also excludes unquantified in-kind contributions from partners and investment brought forward by others in response to the Games. The findings therefore provide an early, conservative picture of Glasgow 2026's economic contribution, rather than its full long-term impact.

Comparison with prior games

Table 6.9 presents a high-level comparison of Glasgow 2026 with the three preceding Commonwealth Games. These comparisons are indicative only. Each edition differs in its delivery model, and the underlying impact assessments differ in scope, geography and methodology, so the figures are not directly like for like. On delivery spend, Glasgow 2026 was delivered at a materially lower cost, and with a substantially smaller public funding share, than recent editions, reflecting the unique delivery model.

Games-related operating and capital costs have been restated to 2026 prices using the HM Treasury GDP deflator. These figures exclude spending on wider legacy programmes and investment brought forward for the Games.



TABLE 6.9: COMPARISON OF COSTS WITH PRIOR GAMES

	Glasgow 2014	Gold Coast 2018	Birmingham 2022	Glasgow 2026
Cost of delivering the Games (rounded, 2026 prices)	£768m	£1,392m	£944m	£160m
Public funding share	78%	88%	85%	1%
Sports	17 plus 5 integrated Para sports	18 plus 7 integrated Para sports	19 plus 8 integrated Para sports	10 plus 6 integrated Para sports
Medal events	261	275	283	215
Athletes and team officials	c.7,000	c.6,500	c.6,600	4,063
Nations and territories	71	71	72	74

Sources: Audit Scotland (2015), PwC (2019) and DCMS (2024) for prior Games costs, Glasgow 2026 OC, and Commonwealth Sport for programme data. See Appendix for further detail.

REINFORCING GLASGOW AND SCOTLAND'S GLOBAL MAJOR EVENTS REPUTATION

Glasgow 2026 provided an opportunity to build on Glasgow and Scotland's established reputation for hosting international sporting events while testing a new Commonwealth Games delivery model.

Drawing on expertise developed through Glasgow 2014 and subsequent events, the Games offered a further opportunity to demonstrate Scotland's capacity to deliver a major international event under a different operational and financial model.

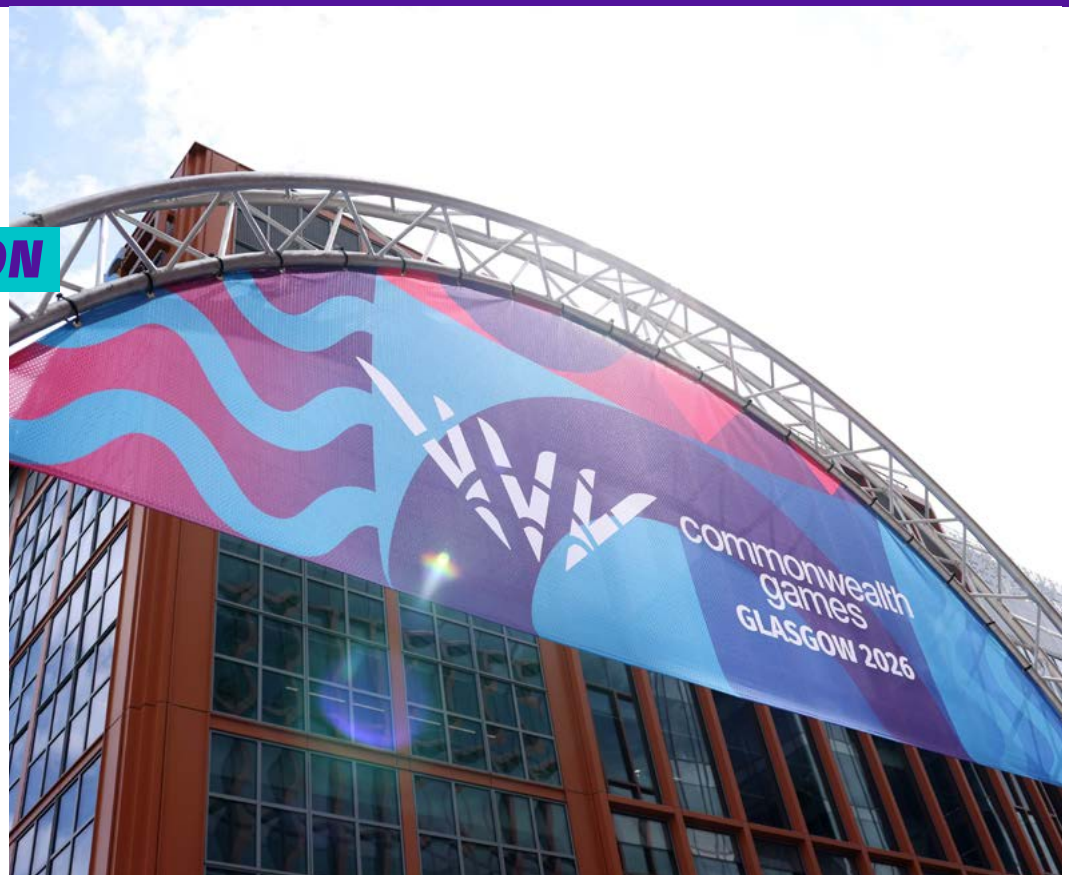
Athlete feedback provides insight into the Games-time experience. Of the 193 athletes who rated their overall experience, 72% rated it 'Excellent' or 'Very Good', rising to 93% when 'Good' ratings were included. Operational feedback was similarly favourable, with 94% rating venue operations 'Good' or better, 93% accreditation and 88% the arrival experience. Overall athlete support was rated Good or better by 88% of respondents.

Media coverage also provided an opportunity to raise the international profile of Glasgow and Scotland. Between 22 October 2024 and 31 August 2026, monitoring identified 90,868 media items, 95% of which were classified as positive or trending positive. Almost two-thirds (63%) came from sources with excellent, strong or good domain authority. Online coverage accounted for 93% of items, followed by print (3%), radio (3%) and television (1%).

Broadcast coverage also took Glasgow to audiences around the world. Rights holding broadcasters delivered 26,614 hours of coverage, reaching a global linear TV audience of 510 million and putting Glasgow and Scotland in front of viewers across the Commonwealth as hosts of a major international event.

Glasgow 2026 also drew on a wider ecosystem of expertise, knowledge and relationships built through successive major events in Glasgow and Scotland. The delivery timetable increased the value of experienced personnel, established partnerships and existing institutional knowledge, while the involvement and progression of people who had worked on earlier events provides evidence of capability retained within the sector.

These findings illustrate how Glasgow 2026 drew on Scotland's existing major event capabilities while providing an opportunity to develop further experience and demonstrate a different approach to event delivery.



> ***"We knew we had a range of expertise within Scotland... developed in conjunction with the 2014 Games, and a number of the major events since then. So we were confident that... the human capital was actually there."***
>
> **Jon Doig OBE,** CEO, Commonwealth Games Scotland





STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH

Glasgow 2026 provided a platform for developing diplomatic, cultural and sporting relationships across Commonwealth nations and territories. Beyond competition, the Games brought together sporting organisations, governments and other stakeholders, creating opportunities for collaboration, exchange and relationship-building.

Team Scotland House, an initiative conceived and delivered by Commonwealth Games Scotland, was a focal point for this engagement, serving both as a space for Team Scotland athletes and their families and as a venue for wider activities. Supported in part by the Scottish Government, the space also provided a platform through which Scotland's wider international interests could be represented during the Games.

A programme delivered with partner organisations showcased Scotland's tourism, education, trade and cultural offer, including activity involving public bodies such as VisitScotland, ActiveScotland and sportscotland, alongside activities such as whisky tastings to promote Scottish exports.

The programme sought to balance local, national and international objectives while providing a platform to represent Scotland and develop relationships with Commonwealth stakeholders. For further information, please see **Influencing International Sport Relations case study**.

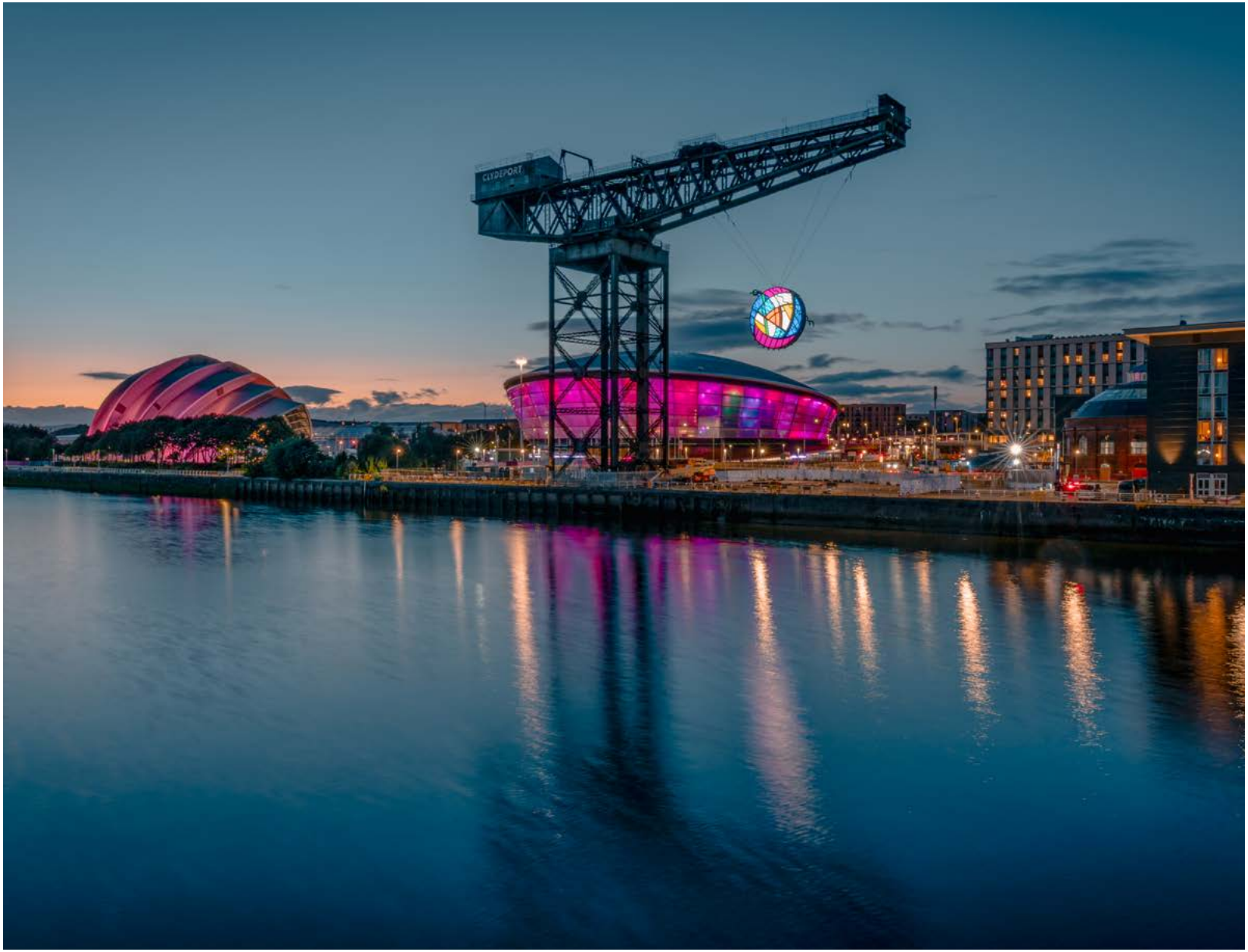
Another important environment for strengthening relationships across the Commonwealth was the 12th Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting, held in Glasgow ahead of the Opening Ceremony. The meeting adopted a Ministerial Statement setting out a shared commitment to greater cooperation through sport, including its role in promoting inclusion, sustainable development and stronger connections across Commonwealth nations and territories. Hosted by the Scottish Government, the meeting also led to the Scottish Government and Commonwealth Secretariat signing the Brighton Plus Helsinki 2014 Declaration, reinforcing commitments to advance opportunities for women and girls in sport, including across participation, leadership and decision-making.

Interest in future editions of the Commonwealth Games and Commonwealth Youth Games offers another indicator of engagement with the wider Commonwealth Sport Movement. Commonwealth Sport received multiple informal expressions of interest in hosting the 2034 Games, while delegates at the Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting in Glasgow demonstrated strong support for the 2034 Games to be hosted by an African nation. Malta is hosting the Commonwealth Youth Games in 2027 and Amdavad is confirmed as host of the 2030 Commonwealth Games.

> ***"Utilising a co-location model brought this economic and international engagement into the heart of the buzz and excitement of the Games, drawing in a wide range of delegations and stakeholders and providing excellent opportunities to work together as one 'Team Scotland' to promote Scotland's interests."***
>
> **David Torz,** Head of Commonwealth Games Unit, Scottish Government

SUMMARY

Glasgow 2026 contributed an estimated £117.3m of GVA to the Scottish economy (from £223m of Gross Output), including £92.5m to the Glasgow City Region. Delivered at a fraction of the cost of previous Games, Glasgow 2026 demonstrated that a leaner budget, existing infrastructure and a programme tailored to the host city can deliver meaningful economic benefits. The Games offered a place-based model for hosting major sporting events, showing that a smaller, more targeted investment can still generate economic impact for Glasgow and Scotland. The key lesson for future hosts is not simply that the Games can be delivered for less, but that their scale, investment and delivery can be shaped around the specific needs, priorities and assets of the host city.



6

IMPACT SUMMARY



OVERALL ACHIEVEMENTS

Glasgow 2026 set out to show that a Commonwealth Games built around its host city could deliver world-class sport, wider benefits for communities and a smaller environmental footprint.

Its co-created Story of Change connected these ambitions with a new, more flexible model for Commonwealth Sport.

The Games were organised in a reduced timeframe, drawing on Glasgow's existing venues, events expertise and partnerships, and more than 40 years of major events strategy in Glasgow and Scotland. The Organising Company comprised 562 paid roles, supported by contractors and embedded delivery suppliers, compared with a workforce of more than 2,000 and a multi-year planning cycle at Birmingham 2022.

Glasgow 2026 was delivered within a £162.2 million budget, 99% funded from non-public sources.

Across 11 days, 2,749 athletes from 74 nations and territories competed in 10 sports. Six included integrated Para events, making Glasgow 2026 the largest Para sport medal programme in Commonwealth Games history.

The Games also created opportunities to participate beyond competition. A total of 448,473 tickets were issued, alongside 161 Festival-funded projects, 755 organisations joining All In and a National Schools Programme reaching an estimated 16,000-plus classes across all 32 Scottish local authorities.

Environmental measures included renewable electricity at every competition venue for the first time in Games history and 100% diversion of Games-related waste from landfill. These achievements drew on existing infrastructure as well as decisions about energy, transport, procurement and waste.

The previous chapters examine those results in detail. This chapter draws together what Glasgow's approach made possible, where it involved compromises and which foundations could support longer-term impact. Some outcomes are already evident; others will take time to establish.



INSIDE THE GLASGOW MODEL

A place-based and partnership-built Games

Glasgow 2026 was designed around what the city already had. Existing competition venues shaped the sports programme, hotels replaced an athletes' village and local transport and city services supported delivery. Venue teams, local suppliers and embedded delivery suppliers brought expertise into the Games rather than requiring the Organising Company to build every capability itself.

Venues such as the SEC took responsibility for areas including security, production and technical delivery, strengthening the experience of teams already based in the city. That approach extended to public participation. The Glasgow 2026 Festival, All In, community involvement in the Opening Ceremony, National Lottery partnerships and commissions by local artists gave organisations ways to contribute.

Working alongside Team Scotland, Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Life, the SEC and hundreds of sporting, cultural and community partners, the Games reached well beyond competition venues. Several interviewees described an event that felt distinctly of Glasgow, rather than simply staged there.

Existing infrastructure also reduced the time, capital investment and additional construction needed.



But Glasgow's circumstances were particular. Investment in venues for the 2014 Games helped make the 2026 model possible. Other prospective hosts without comparable infrastructure may need a longer-term case for capital investment as they develop their own major events capability.

Quality across the Games experience

Glasgow's ambition was to deliver an "altogether brilliant Games". Feedback from those involved was largely positive:

- 93% of athletes rated their experience good, very good or excellent
- 91% of ticket holders agreed Glasgow would be a great location for future major sporting events
- 97% of visitors surveyed at the Game On Live Site rated their experience good or very good
- 87% of volunteers intended or would consider volunteering again

There were trade-offs. Some service levels for Commonwealth Games Associations (CGAs) were reduced to meet the time and budget available. Hotel accommodation worked well for many teams, but some athletes found it harder to meet competitors from other nations.

Selecting sports to fit existing venues could open hosting to more places, including Games spread across multiple cities. It also raises questions about how International Federations can remain involved when their sports are not guaranteed a place at every edition.

> ***"These Games will be remembered as the innovation Games because I think they've forced traditional sports like bowls to think about how you create a different model. When you're a smaller sport like ours with limited funding, you really want the funding to be going into activities that truly leave a legacy, not leave a problematic piece of infrastructure that no one's got any money to keep going."***
>
> **Brett O'Riley,** President of World Bowls



A whole-ecosystem approach to delivery

The Games was designed so that organisations shared responsibility for delivery and social outcomes. Embedded Delivery Suppliers, Glasgow Life, the SEC, the Legacy Network and All In each played a part. This opened opportunities for local organisations to contribute their own expertise, networks and programmes, rather than leaving delivery and impact entirely with the Organising Company.

The approach produced new ways of working, although collaboration was more consistent in some areas than others. Shared ownership also meant less direct control. Future hosts will need clear responsibilities, decision-making processes and coordination across partners if they adopt a similar model.

Leadership and delivery culture

Interviews with the Organising Company, Commonwealth Sport and delivery suppliers described an agile, positive team with a strong commitment to social impact. Accessible leadership and relationships across organisations helped people respond creatively under considerable time pressure.

The experience demonstrates both what a small, committed team can achieve and the pressure created by an unusually compressed delivery period.

Efficiency drives economic value

Glasgow 2026 generated £92.5 million in GVA for Glasgow City Region and £117.3 million for Scotland, supporting an estimated 2,100 and 2,400 full-time-equivalent years of employment respectively. Most of the impact came from Games operations and visitor spending rather than construction.

With much of its comparatively small budget spent in the host region, the Games supported suppliers based in Glasgow or establishing a local presence. Without a major capital programme, however, its total economic impact was smaller than that of some previous editions and more dependent on visitors.

The funding model was also distinctive. Non-public sources met 99% of the £162.2 million budget, placing a relatively small demand on public funding.

Substantial support from Commonwealth Sport when Glasgow stepped forward was specific to this edition: it demonstrates one possible funding arrangement, not necessarily a model every future host can reproduce.

Broadcast reach and access

More rights-holding broadcasters than ever before signed up to cover the Games: 22 rights holders, with coverage on 55 broadcasters in 166 territories. Broadcast coverage reached a global linear TV audience of 510 million, with a gender-balanced audience (52% women, 48% men). Netball drew the largest share of the global audience (25%), followed by Athletics (19%) and Swimming (18%). In the UK, TNT Sports provided more than 600 hours of live coverage through a dedicated channel and HBO Max, more than at any previous Games, with free-to-air highlights on Channel 5.



The Games' own social channels recorded 323 million views during the Games (590 million across the year). With audiences increasingly following sport through streaming, on-demand services and social media, future hosts and event owners will need to plan early how broadcast and digital coverage can reach the audiences they want.

Balancing the impact drivers

Glasgow 2026 demonstrated how the four impact drivers could reinforce one another, while also requiring trade-offs. The financially responsible, place-based model supported environmental ambitions, with 96% of temporary overlay hired rather than purchased.

However, hotel-based athlete accommodation offered financial and environmental efficiencies but limited opportunities to meet fellow competitors for 42% of surveyed athletes.

Similarly, while 67% of surveyed spectators used public or active transport, existing infrastructure created barriers for some disabled spectators, highlighting the need to balance sustainability with accessibility.

The partnership-led approach supported wider social outcomes, drawing on local organisations and networks to extend community engagement across all 32 Scottish local authorities. For future hosts, considering these relationships early can help maximise shared benefits while managing competing ambitions.





LEGACY TAKING SHAPE

Glasgow 2026 also helped secure the future of the Games programme at a time of real uncertainty. Following the award to Glasgow, seven countries expressed interest in hosting, and the Games is now followed by the Commonwealth Youth Games in Malta in 2027 and the Centenary Commonwealth Games in Amdavad in 2030. Glasgow 2026 also gave potential future hosts a chance to see the model for themselves. A dedicated observer programme brought countries interested in hosting to the Games, helping to build the pipeline for future editions.

Several foundations are already in place:

- **Knowledge transfer:** The Future Host Observer Programme, Commonwealth Sport's wider knowledge transfer programme and this evaluation share lessons with prospective hosts and other major events.
- **Venues and city capability:** Teams at venues including the SEC gained experience that can support future events. Physical upgrades will also continue to improve accessibility and support more sustainable practices.
- **Skills and the events workforce:** An accredited academy, paid placements, broadcast traineeships and student roles offered experience to early-career entrants and people facing barriers to employment, adding to Scotland's events workforce.
- **Volunteering:** More than a third of Games volunteers had not been active volunteers before the event. At the time of reporting, 87% intended or would consider volunteering again, and 22% had engaged with the Organising Company's signposting offer to explore new opportunities.
- **Programmes beyond the Games:** Youth Coaching Pathways, Together We Move and Together We're All In were designed to continue, while many All In organisations intended to maintain some of their activity.
- **Community networks:** The Glasgow 2026 Legacy Network will operate until December 2026, with continuation dependent on further funding. The National EDI Forum for Scottish Sport has become a standing group.



These are foundations rather than confirmed long-term outcomes. Their impact will depend on the capacity, funding and commitment of the organisations taking them forward.

For Commonwealth Sport, Glasgow 2026 also helped strengthen the future Games programme at a time of uncertainty. It is followed by the Commonwealth Youth Games in Malta in 2027 and the Centenary Commonwealth Games in Amdavad in 2030, alongside discussions with potential hosts who observed Glasgow first-hand.

The Story of Change described Glasgow 2026 as "a bridge to a new era of Commonwealth Sport". Its central contribution is a practical example of how the Games can be hosted differently: with high standards of competition and an integrated Para sport programme, a greater reliance on existing infrastructure, a more flexible approach to cost and delivery, and opportunities for public participation.

The longer-term test will be how future hosts adapt those lessons to their own cities, resources and ambitions.

7

LESSONS FOR THE FUTURE



START WITH THE PLACE AND THE EVENT



1. BUILD ON THE ASSETS OF THE PLACE

Glasgow 2026 offers a starting point for a more flexible Games, not a blueprint to copy. Its delivery model drew on the city's existing venues, infrastructure, major events expertise, talent, networks and civic goodwill. Future hosts should begin with the character and strengths of their own place, and shape the Games around them.

2. DESIGN THE GAMES AS A DELIVERY ECOSYSTEM

The Games depended on more than the event owner and Organising Company. Venues, delivery partners, suppliers, community organisations, governments and international federations all had a part to play. Future hosts should define responsibilities early, establish what expertise can be drawn on locally, brought in internationally or developed through the Games, and distinguish between work to be co-designed and work delivered to a defined brief.

3. FOCUS ON BRILLIANCE

There is no lasting legacy without a high-quality event. At its heart is sport: giving athletes the conditions to excel and presenting competition in a way that engages audiences. Ceremonies, culture and live sites can extend that experience beyond competition venues into a shared celebration across the host city. Hosts should plan and resource both from the outset.

DESIGN IN IMPACT

4. BE INTENTIONAL ABOUT IMPACT

Impact needs to be designed, not assumed. A focused Story of Change, aligned with the priorities of the host and its partners, should have visible leadership support and be embedded in delivery plans. From the outset, hosts should agree how progress will be measured and who will collect the evidence.

5. INCLUSION IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

Inclusion cannot sit with one team or in stand-alone programmes. It needs to shape governance and delivery, with every functional area given clear responsibilities and the resources to act from the outset.

6. DESIGN SETS THE SCALE OF THE SUSTAINABILITY OPPORTUNITY

The biggest environmental gains come from early decisions about the Games' format: using existing venues, keeping the event compact and making use of public transport and cleaner energy. Operational improvements matter, but cannot compensate for those choices. Hosts will face different constraints and trade-offs, including economic ones, so these decisions should be taken early and reflected in contracts.



REACH PEOPLE AND SUSTAIN THE IMPACT

7. PUT PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF THE GAMES

Athletes, spectators, viewers, residents and communities across the host city and the Commonwealth all have a stake in the Games. Hosts and event owners should agree who they want to reach, locally, nationally and internationally, and set shared goals for broadcast, ticketing, festivals, culture, education and engagement. A mix of free and paid opportunities can help broaden participation.

8. INVEST IN HUMAN CAPITAL AND A SUSTAINED EVENTS PIPELINE

Major events depend on skills built over time. A sustained pipeline of events keeps local and national venues, talent and networks active. Hosts and partners should connect training and progression between events, helping people transfer their skills while opening routes into the industry for new entrants, including volunteers.



9. LEGACY IS A COLLECTIVE ACT

No single organisation can deliver a lasting legacy. Bringing sport, civil society, public bodies and other partners together early helps build shared ownership, accountability and local advocates able to sustain activity after the Games. Partners should also agree proportionate ways to measure results together.



LOOKING AHEAD

10. BE CONFIDENT IN DIFFERENCE, UNITED BY SHARED VALUES

Commonwealth nations and territories differ in their size, resources and circumstances. Future hosts will approach inclusion, sustainability and impact in different ways, and should have the freedom to do so within the shared values of the Games. That diversity can lead to new formats, new approaches to impact and a stronger foundation for the Games' next 100 years.

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