



Feedback: Evaluating Success and Moving Forward

Feedback: the shortest word in the English language containing the letters a, b, c, d, e and f.

It's also the central element in our annual report – the Annual Destination Feedback Report -which has just been finalised, and things are looking very positive indeed. As reflected in the feedback report, 2018 has been another year of success for business events in Dundee and Angus.

The report is based on responses from 226 UK and international delegates and event organisers attending conference events supported by Dundee & Angus Convention Bureau between January and September 2018. The survey included questions on all aspects of the conference event experience in the Dundee and Angus area.

In the report, the region was very positively reviewed in relation to its current delivery of events and its existing position as both a conference destination for future events as well as a city with opportunities for leisure. Up to 90% of respondents considered it desirable on both these fronts.

Commenting on Dundee as a conference destination following the Scottish Metabolomics Network Symposium 2018, Dr J. William Allwood, from The James Hutton Institute said, "The conference has been a great success and I have been overwhelmed by the volume of positive feedback that I received upon the meeting and also regarding Dundee as a whole."

A key aspect assessed was the forms of transport used for the respondents' journey into Dundee. Respondents remarked on their "very enjoyable rail journey" with "great views and landmark historic railway bridges". Access to Wi-Fi on board was also positively commented on.

Having awareness of the methods of transport used is useful for us as we work to increase the accessibility to the city for delegates. Making the journey to Dundee and Angus as seamless as possible is a priority for us; especially for overseas delegates.

The results showed the forms of transport and airports used by the respondents were varied - a positive marker of Dundee's accessibility as a city for both UK and international delegates. However, the report also highlights some weaknesses in transport infrastructure which we will continue to lobby for, along with our partners, to improve accessibility.

Respondents were also very satisfied with the accommodation options in Dundee, with all responses citing it to have been above-average and 43% describing it as 'excellent'. High scores in value for money, cleanliness, reception and customer service were noted. One respondent said of their accommodation, "Staff were friendly, facilities were great, and the overall atmosphere of the hotel makes it excellent for both business and leisure."

Facilities and services at the main conference event venue as well as the social itinerary included in the conference programme were undoubtedly on the agenda when it came to feedback. The report shows the importance of Wi-Fi access to conference and event delegates.

Venue facilities and services were allocated positive responses – mostly 'very good'. When asked for conference venue feedback, one respondent said, "It was great! It had a nice location, and the facilities were clean and modern. The provided meals and refreshments were also fantastic."

A reassuring 72% of the respondents will be collaborating with people they met at a conference, further encouraging knowledge exchange and thereby contributing to the city's intellectual capital and enabling social and economic progress.

Councillor John Alexander, leader of Dundee City Council, welcomed the survey's findings. He said: "This positive endorsement of the city and its facilities comes as no surprise to those of who live in, work in and promote the city on a daily basis. But it is important that impartial delegates and visitors make their voice heard and share their experiences with colleagues, friends and family to encourage more business and leisure visits to Dundee."

In the business events sector, partners have a joint role in understanding what event organisers want to achieve - but our work continues, beyond a conference. Feedback on delegate experience and perception of the destination is valuable for us as partners to be able to move forward in the evolving sector of business events.

For a convention bureau, post-conference feedback is a means of enhancing and developing the various aspects that come into play when coordinating an event. But equally important is to remember that working in business events is not working in isolation – it's the collaborative spirit which we share with our partners that forms the backbone of business events in Dundee, and the benefits this brings to the wider region. Therefore, the information gained from feedback is also beneficial for the many organisations we collaborate with when planning a major conference event.

As 2019 unfolds, new projects for business events in Dundee are on the horizon- there are six major conferences set to take place in the city in 2019. It will be a further opportunity for Dundee & Angus Convention Bureau to showcase the region as an inspirational platform for transformational thinking.

With the recent opening of V&A Dundee, it's an exciting time to be hosting two international design and architecture conferences. In the first half of 2019, the 13th International Conference of the European Academy of Design: Running with Scissors, in partnership with the University of Dundee, will be attracting 350 delegates to the city. The second half of 2019 will welcome the 16th Architectural Humanities Research Association Conferences, also in collaboration with the University of Dundee.

We are also looking forward to two major international events: Leisure Studies Association Conference and the European Coal Combustion Products Association Conference. These two conferences will each be welcoming both UK and international visitors from across the globe.

The British Association of Sports and Exercise Sciences (BASES) will be hosting their conference in April this year, generating approximately £250,000 for the local economy. This is the first time since 2006 that BASES has hosted an event in Scotland and are expecting an estimated 250 UK Universities students to attend this event, co-hosted by University of Dundee and Abertay University.

Major events such as those mentioned above demonstrate Dundee's vision and ambition for the ever-evolving sector of business events. However, we do believe that before looking forward, it's crucial to take a step back and allow room for reflection on the feedback we received from our delegates and organisers. It will allow us to better evaluate our success and will serve as a springboard for further developments in future conference management.

To view the full report, please [click here](#)