# Event Wales:
# A Major Events Strategy For Wales 2010 – 2020

Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

www.cymru.gov.uk

2010 Ryder Cup, Celtic Manor, Newport

## The 2020 Vision for Wales

Wales recognised as a consistently outstanding destination for major events.

## Mission Statement

Developing a balanced and sustainable portfolio of major events which enhances Wales' international reputation and the wellbeing of its people and communities.

75% wedi'i ailgylchu recycled

ISBN 978 0 7504 5718 7
WAG10-10116
G/MH/3821/09-10
September
Typeset in 12pt
© Crown copyright 2010

# Ministerial Foreword

The cherished milestones in all our individual lives are marked by events. They are the moments that shape our destinies and remain etched in the memory. There is a similar dynamic involved in the evolution of communities and of nations. Events bring us together. Major events have a powerful, almost indefinable quality to capture the essence of both individual and collective expression. They connect us with our past and point to the future. They are a mirror in whose reflection we learn something about ourselves as a people. They are also a prism through which other nations and peoples in these islands and around the world see us, recognise us and engage with us.

A decade and more has now passed since the historic devolution settlement for Wales. Nation building is a process not an event. But events illustrate and illuminate that journey as it is mapped into the future. At their best they are not simply a barometer of progress. They accelerate it: delivering and demonstrating what is possible; challenging and changing perceptions; opening up new possibilities. Some may register more than a twinge of ironic pleasure in the fact that it is arguably a cricket match where Wales hosted England and the cricketing world in its greatest showpiece occasion, an Ashes Test Match, where the remarkable capacity of events to make statements that resonate so spectacularly beyond the field of play was so thunderously demonstrated. With perfect timing, Wales played an exquisite cover drive that crossed many boundaries. With a Welsh flourish a new player had announced an arrival on the international stage.

As our nation now hosts the Ryder Cup for the first time we do so with a new found sense of confidence that has been forged in our most recent history. We know the eyes of the world are upon us and that many tens of thousands will cross the Severn Bridge to visit us. We do not underestimate the enormous challenges past, present and future and what has and will be required to meet them. But Wales does not doubt its ability to deliver.

In these difficult times there is an even greater responsibility on Government to clearly articulate its strategic priorities and to work in a smart, proactive and cost-effective way with our many partners both within our borders and without to deliver the best possible economic, social and cultural legacy for Wales. To position ourselves astutely so that we can continue to stand out amongst the global crowd is what this Major Events Strategy sets out to achieve. While events by themselves do not define our ambition they can make a real impact on prosperity and well being in all its integrated dimensions. On behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government we commend it to you and endorse it wholeheartedly.

**Ieuan Wyn Jones**
Deputy First Minister & Minister for the Economy & Transport

**Alun Ffred Jones**
Minister for Heritage

# 1. Introduction

Wales Millennium Centre, Cardiff

1.1 The 1999 Rugby World Cup, six FA Cup Finals, the 2009 Ashes Test, the 2010 Ryder Cup, the Hay Festival and the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod have earned Wales a growing reputation as a world class major events destination. It is no accident that this has occurred during the historic decade in which Wales has taken control of its own Devolved affairs and where government in Wales has acquired a new capacity to react effectively to opportunities.

1.2 Major international events influence the way we see Wales and the world, and how the world sees Wales. Building a positive external reputation and brand image for Wales is an important challenge recognised by the Welsh Assembly Government. A successful strategy for building a sustainable and balanced portfolio of major events will contribute directly to achieving this outcome and deliver a series of economic, social, cultural and legacy benefits to Wales[1].

1.3 We now have a sound platform on which to build Wales' position in a fiercely competitive global market. The 2010 Ryder Cup will put Wales under a global spotlight as never before, and the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will have a similar effect for the UK as a whole. New opportunities will be created as a result. This integrated strategy, aligned to the Welsh Assembly Government's *One Wales* agenda, sets out how we will work more proactively to achieve our potential. It describes how we will lead a more co-ordinated and coherent approach, by putting in place a robust strategic framework which will harness and develop the skills, knowledge and expertise of all the individuals, groups and organisations involved in major events delivery across the nation.

1.4 The overarching aim is to create a systematic, balanced and sustainable portfolio of world class events that deliver a long term economic, social and cultural legacy for the people of Wales, as well as ensuring best value for the Welsh public pound. We have already taken a significant step forward with the establishment of a dedicated Major Events Unit (MEU) located in the Assembly Government to lead the drive for a more coherent and strategic Welsh approach.

1.5 The global recession does of course present a major challenge to achieving our vision. While we must be ambitious, we also have to be realistic about what can be achieved particularly with regard to potential bids for Mega Events as defined in the next section. In the current financial climate, where budgets are under intense scrutiny, it is important that this strategy sets out the framework that will enable us to work smarter in ensuring that our investments in major events are targeted effectively to help to increase the prosperity and long term well being of the people of Wales.

1 Economic Renewal: a new direction (July 2010), Welsh Assembly Government.

# 2. What do we mean by major events?

National Eisteddfod

2.1 It is important to be clear about the purpose and scope of this strategy. Its aim is the development and exploitation of a portfolio of events designed to achieve positive outcomes for Wales in improving the wellbeing of its people. Supported events should 'run with the grain' of our communities, making connections with the needs and aspirations of the people of Wales in the twenty first century. That will mean assimilating the best of our cultural heritage and traditions in a vibrant, contemporary outlook balanced with the need to support the innovative, the experimental and the quirky.

2.2 We recognise that there are hundreds of small events and festivals which make a valuable contribution to local communities and local economies across Wales[2]. However, they are not the focus of this strategy because they are unlikely to have wider economic and socio-cultural impact at an all-Wales level.

2 Making Fun (2009): Welsh Enterprise Institute and Welsh Assembly Government.

2.3 Similarly conferences, exhibitions and trade fairs are also valuable, but are outside the scope of this strategy. Typically, these commercial events are unlikely to make a significant contribution to the delivery the wider economic, social and cultural objectives of this strategy.

2.4 There are four categories of event which will be supported through this strategy.

- **Major Events** – these are peripatetic events defined by their scale and appeal to attract and influence large scale international audiences and extensive media coverage, and to deliver economic impact and significant visitor numbers for the host destination. They can command global TV audiences and involve major international sponsors. They can have a positive impact in influencing specific market segments and in changing attitudes and behaviours. These international events are not "owned" by Wales and would have to choose Wales in the face of international competition. Examples include an Ashes Test Match, rugby's Heineken Cup Final and the MOBO (Music of Black Origin) Awards.

- **Signature Events** – these events can also have a strong international dimension but unlike the category of major events described above they are recurring. They are also either unique to Wales or distinctively Welsh in flavour, and reflect our culture, traditions and values. They enhance the image and cultural identity of Wales and provide a high quality experience for visitors. Successful Signature Events continuously re-invigorate and replenish their audiences. Examples include established events such as the Hay Festival, the National and Urdd Eisteddfodau, the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod and the Royal Welsh Show, as well as newer events like the Green Man and Wakestock festivals.

- **Mega Events** – like major events, these are peripatetic events with a global reach. They are distinguished by the fact that they are normally preceded by large scale capital projects, often involving building new venues and

Ashes Test, SWALEC Stadium, Cardiff

supporting infrastructure. They involve a major bidding effort and demand a high level of government resource and support at all stages from bidding to delivery. Typically, this means the creation of a stand-alone organisation with a dedicated budget to manage the entire process from start to finish. Examples include the Commonwealth Games and the Ryder Cup.

- **Growth Events** – these are smaller events, often new, with a footprint and focus that is regional, local or sector led and which demonstrate the ambition and potential to evolve and grow to become Major or Signature Events for Wales. These events can also act as milestones in growing the capacity, experience and credibility of destination Wales, acting as a necessary precursor to the hosting of targeted major events. These will be considered for support. An important dimension of this 'added value investment' is in creating and nurturing home grown events, thereby supporting efforts to build a strong and sustainable events industry in Wales. Examples include the Cardiff Half Marathon.

2.5 The specific role of the MEU in supporting these events is described more fully later in section 6, but it is clear that the MEU must operate as a time – limited strategic investor, not as a recurring grant giving body or sponsor. The financial support which it provides cannot be a substitute for core funding provided by other public bodies such as the Arts Council of Wales, Sport Wales and the Welsh Language Board.

2.6 Any financial support provided by the MEU will be limited to that which is necessary to achieve the specific major event-related objectives set out in this strategy.

# 3. Why invest in major events?

Heineken Cup Final, Cardiff

3.1 Major events capture the imagination of people around the world, while research has shown that they can provide significant economic benefits and improve the international reputation and profile of the host country and venue[3]. There is also growing recognition that major events have the power to inspire and engage diverse individuals and communities and to thereby enhance social, environmental and cultural wellbeing, including an enhanced sense of place.

3.2 The Welsh Assembly Government's vision is for a prosperous, confident and outward looking Wales. Our programme for delivering that vision is set out in *One Wales*. Major events can make a significant positive contribution to achieving that vision, delivering benefits across a range of policy areas.

- **A Healthy Future** – major events can provide a high profile platform to communicate positive messages and give people real life experiences that encourage healthier lifestyles. For example, mass participation sporting events can help to raise public awareness of the importance of regular exercise.
- **A Prosperous Society** – major events can stimulate new enterprise and business growth, leading to the creation of quality, long – term jobs. They also help to showcase and promote tourism in key markets, and can support diversification of the rural economy.
- **Living Communities** – successful major events engage communities through local voluntary action, through participation and through the live spectator experience in particular as well as through various media platforms.
- **Learning for Life** – major events is a dynamic, knowledge-based creative industry, which requires a range of high quality skills, from project management and finance to marketing, media and communications. Events can enhance the environment for developing the skills to support a modern, creative economy.
- **A Fair and Just Society** – successful major events can help people and communities to achieve their full potential, including outreach programmes targeted at hard to reach and minority groups.
- **A Sustainable Environment** – major events that proactively embrace the sustainable event management agenda can help to raise awareness of sustainability, and showcase good practice such as in the use of renewable energy , integrated transport, waste recycling and the procurement of local goods and services.
- **A Rich and Diverse Culture** – major events showcase Wales' unique cultural identity and heritage, are a catalyst for cultural innovation and expression and provide valuable opportunities for our leading artists and athletes to display their talents on the world stage.

3 Millennium Stadium, Cardiff and Wales: The Economic Impact (November 2007). Econactive Ltd and Strategic Marketing

# 4. Guiding Principles

Wakestock Festival, Abersoch, Gwynedd / © Sim Bradley

4.1 This strategy is based on a set of basic principles that the portfolio of major events to be supported by the MEU will, collectively:

- deliver clear and measurable benefits to Wales in line with *One Wales* and complementary Assembly Government strategies and priorities;
- deliver a demonstrable return on public sector investment;
- enhance the recognition and reputation of Wales in the World;
- create a strong sense of place which celebrates the diversity and distinctiveness of Welsh culture and enhances the use and profile of the Welsh language inside and outside Wales;
- support the development of a strong and sustainable events industry in Wales;
- encourage a fair and equitable spread of opportunities across Wales, and an even spread of events across the calendar;
- strike a balance between attracting one-off international events; nurturing and growing existing events; and stimulating and creating new events;
- make effective and efficient use of Wales' resources, including built facilities and our outstanding natural environment;
- be soundly based on the principles of sustainable development, in line with British Standard 8901: Sustainability Management Systems for Events, including deliverability based on robust business planning underpinned by sound governance and management structures; and
- exploit opportunities for developing new strategic alliances, new partnerships and new forms of collaboration and ensure that the major events agenda is fully considered where appropriate in capital expenditure programmes.

4.2 These guiding principles will underpin the clear and transparent assessment framework for selecting events to be supported set out in the next section.

Cardiff Half Marathon

Glanusk International Horse Trials, Crickhowell, Powys

# 5. How will we decide which major events to support?

5.1 The first step in the decision making process, will be to assess each event against criteria aligned to *One Wales*. An appropriate selection of the criteria set out in the following table (overleaf) will be used at an early stage of discussions with event owners to determine the strategic case for investment. This will ensure that full consideration of the impact and legacy of the event is an integral part of the planning process from the outset.

5.2 This assessment framework will not simply be a tool against which req uests for funding are assessed. It will also be used proactively to research and identify events which Wales can develop, attract or bid for. It will enable us to assess the value of events in an objective and equitable way. It is not a checklist – events seeking MEU support will not have to 'tick all the boxes'. Given the different characteristics which define the various categories of events, and the variety of impacts which they will have in delivering outputs aligned to *One Wales*, we will adopt a balanced portfolio approach which can mean applying different sets of criteria to the different categories of events.

5.3 For example, Major Events would be expected to deliver significant benefits to the Welsh economy and to raise Wales' profile in the world. Growth Events on the other hand will be expected to deliver outputs linked to community engagement, the development of skills and improving access and participation.

5.4 While the balanced portfolio of supported events will be expected to generate a positive economic return for Wales, we will seek an appropriate mix of investments between those which generate substantial economic benefits and those which deliver wider socio – cultural benefits. A range of quantitative and qualitative measures will provide the degree of flexibility needed to effectively respond to different types of events in different locations at different times of the year.

5.5 We will publish more detailed guidelines for event owners and organisers setting out clearly and concisely how we will assess applications for funding and our decision making processes.

5.6 Events must be affordable and as demand for funding will almost inevitably exceed supply, it will not be possible to provide financial support for all events.

5.7 It is appropriate that this Major Events Strategy for Wales acknowledges the important role which our Capital City Cardiff plays in building Wales' reputation as an international location for major events. We must recognise that event owners will often prioritise Cardiff as a host destination. Appropriate investments in events which showcase Cardiff as an exceptional capital city will be a key feature going forward. However, we will also encourage an equitable spread of opportunities across Wales. The strength of commitment from local and regional partners throughout the country will be a key factor in all our investment decisions.

World Championship Sailing, Pwllheli, Gwynedd / © Paul Todd www.outsideimages.com

| One Wales Policy Area | Assessment criteria |
|---|---|
| A Healthy Future | • Supports social and physical environments that encourage health and wellbeing |
| A Prosperous Society | • Supports long-term high quality jobs<br>• Stimulates new enterprise and business growth<br>• Promotes tourism in key markets<br>• Supports diversification of the rural economy |
| Living Communities | • Supports local voluntary action and volunteering<br>• Promotes and supports social or community businesses |
| Learning for Life | • Enables people to develop the life skills to support a modern, creative economy |
| A Fair and Just Society | • Supports outreach programmes targeted at hard to reach and minority groups |
| A Sustainable Environment | • Raises awareness of sustainability issues<br>• Contributes to a reduction in ecological footprint<br>• Minimises waste through reduction, reuse and provision of onsite recycling facilities at the event venue<br>• Makes a neutral or positive impact on the environment<br>• Demonstrates progress towards achieving BS8901: Sustainability Management Systems for Events |
| A Rich & Diverse Culture | • Promotes, supports and makes use of the Welsh language<br>• Widens access to, and encourages sustainable participation in, the arts, sport or phy sical activity.<br>• Supports the development of a high quality arts sector in Wales<br>• Gives Welsh artists and athletes high profile opportunities to perform and to compete on home soil<br>• Promotes Welsh arts and artists on the UK and world stage<br>• Supports Welsh sporting success on the World stage<br>• Promotes the Wales brand in key overseas target markets<br>• Provides Welsh audiences with world class experiences |

# 6. Working together for Wales

6.1 There are many distinct advantages in being a 'smaller' nation in population terms, not least the ability to move quickly and effectively to establish 'Team Wales' partnerships either led or closely supported by Government. Agile, cohesive and decisive partnerships are essential in the delivery of major events and are attractive to event owners as they seek to locate. The demonstrable success of 'Team Wales' partnerships in the delivery of events such as the 2009 Ashes Test Match and the 2010 Ryder Cup are models upon which to build a more systematic and strategic approach to partnership working in the years ahead.

6.2 A clear sense of unity of purpose and structure is vital to the successful delivery of this strategy. There is necessarily a diverse and complex range of organisations involved in supporting and delivering events in Wales. It is important that all organisations involved in the events industry in Wales have a shared vision and a clear sense of ownership in, and a shared responsibility for, delivering a national strategy that works for people and communities across Wales.

6.3 The development of strong external (to Wales) relationships and partnerships will also be critical to the successful delivery of this strategy. Those partners need to be confident that a 'Team Wales' effort, guided by this strategy and supported by Government is a consistently outstanding proposition.

6.4 The primary role of the MEU will be to lead and co-ordinate the delivery of this strategy. It will not be directly involved in the delivery of major events, but will support and add value to those organisations which do. The main functions of the MEU are to:

- co-ordinate major events activity across Wales, from identifying opportunities through to delivery and post-event evaluation, acting as a focal point for event owners looking to hold major events in Wales;
- identify local and regional events with growth potential;
- identify major international events which Wales can bid for or attract;
- allocate funding in an open and transparent manner using criteria-based assessment and evaluation;
- harness existing expertise in Wales to develop a more professional and systematic approach to event planning, management and delivery, helping to create an environment that encourages the sharing of skills and specialist knowledge;
- support the development of specialist major event skills, knowledge and experience;
- exploit leverage opportunities that maximise the benefits to Wales
- develop effective UK wide and international relationships with major event owners, influencers and stakeholders;
- provide strategic advice and guidance to event owners and organisers;
- champion the importance of major events and Wales' hosting capacity to internal and external audiences; this will include researching and disseminating international best practice;

- ensure that public funding for events is conditional upon a reciprocal commitment by event organisers in specific areas such as the use, integration and profile of the Welsh language and in sustainable event management; and
- regularly review the strategic context for supporting and investing in major events.

6.5 In carrying out these functions, the MEU will seek to build strong and effective partnerships across geographic, organisational and sectoral boundaries. We will work closely with a range of partners and stakeholder groups in the public, private and third sectors.

6.6 Local government and planning authorities are key strategic partners. Much of the event management experience in Wales resides in local authorities, and many of the venues suitable for hosting major events are owned or managed by local authorities. Major events have the power to instil a strong sense of place and civic pride in local communities and local authorities have a leadership role in engaging positively with their communities to secure the local and regional support that is vital for a successful event. They also provide key support services such as health and safety, transport and waste management. In delivering this strategy, we will explore opportunities for a consortium led approach to working with local government wherever appropriate.

6.7 Other key partners will include:

- Arts Council of Wales
- Commercial (and other where appropriate) event owners and organisers in Wales, across the UK and internationally
- Commercial venue owners and operators
- Countryside Council for Wales
- The economic fora in Wales
- Environment Agency Wales
- Forestry Commission Wales
- National Park authorities
- Professional, voluntary and community arts organisations
- Sport Wales
- Police and emergency services
- Transport and accommodation providers
- Wales, UK and international sports federations and governing bodies
- UK Sport
- Visit Wales and Regional Tourism Partnerships
- Welsh Language Board

6.8 We have actively engaged many of these organisations and groups in the development of this strategy. It is now vital that they take account of this document in shaping their own strategic and financial approach to major events.

6.9 Where bringing an event to Wales involves a competitive bid process, the MEU will lead and support partners (for example, local authorities and sports governing bodies) in securing new events. This will involve

identifying those major international events which Wales should bid for; building the most appropriate partnerships to bid successfully; and building strong working relationships with event owners to bring these events to Wales. In the majority of cases, the MEU will support its partners rather than lead the bid itself. The role of the MEU in respect of potential bids for Mega Events (as defined in Section 2 of this strategy), will be to manage the preliminary work including the preparation of advice to Ministers on feasibility, cost/benefit analysis and a prior assessment of legacy impact.

BBC Radio One Big Weekend, Bangor, Gwynedd

# 7. How will we measure success?

Green Man Festival, Crickhowell, Powys

7.1 The MEU's investments in major events need to be carefully monitored and evaluated, not only in order to measure the impact of the events themselves, but also to assess the effectiveness of our support for events in delivering outputs linked to *One Wales*.

7.2 The diversity of the events industry in nature, content and scope calls for a framework approach to monitoring and evaluation. This will ensure that events are assessed in a consistent and relevant manner and also that the scale of research and evaluation is appropriate to the scale of individual events in the portfolio.

7.3 The framework will effectively comprise a suite of research and evaluation methods in order to assess economic, socio-cultural, environmental and media impacts in a holistic fashion.

7.4 Very large events may well require specific research and evaluation studies to be commissioned; smaller events are unlikely to require such detailed work. Nevertheless, the principles and core methodologies used to develop the framework will, as far as possible, be applied consistently across all events in the portfolio, while maintaining a focus on national priorities.

7.5 It will also be important to develop this framework as a resource tool for event owners, organisers and sponsors, providing them with practical guidelines in respect of key data required as input and, where required, on the most effective methods of gathering data.

7.6 Broadly similar frameworks have been developed in other parts of the UK. For example, the eventIMPACTS toolkit developed by UK Sport and a range of partners involved in the events industry across the UK[4]. We will work collaboratively with the relevant organisations in order to ensure maximum compatibility between approaches, and, to establish, as far as possible, a consistent approach and methodology. In this way, there are likely synergies in terms of common definitions, methods and costs. It is likely that emerging methodologies will comprise both primary data collection and modeling techniques for larger events.

7.7 The following table (overleaf) provides a summary of the high level key performance indicators that will be used in measuring the success of this strategy.

7.8 This suite of key performance indicators will be further developed and refined over time.

7.9 This strategy will be reviewed in 2015 and every five years thereafter.

4 www.eventimpacts.com

| Impact Area | Key Performance Indicators |
|---|---|
| Economic | • Number of new FTE jobs created in Wales<br>• Number of visitors from outside Wales, and outside peak season<br>• Net additional contribution to the Welsh economy<br>• Other public and private sector investment leveraged<br>• Use of local (Welsh) products and services |
| Socio-cultural | • Number and diversity of people attending<br>• Number and diversity of participants<br>• Number and diversity of volunteers from Wales recruited/ trained/deployed<br>• Provision of core activities in Welsh. Performances in Welsh. Use of bilingual promotional materials, ticketing, signage etc<br>• Outreach programmes and linked mass participation events |
| Environmental | • Carbon dioxide emissions<br>• Amount of waste produced, amount of waste recycled<br>• Environmental awareness raised<br>• Achieves accreditation under BS 8901<br>• Environmental impact assessment |
| Media | • National and international TV coverage<br>• National and international print media coverage<br>• National and international internet coverage |

Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod

# 8. Putting strategy into action

8.1 The previous sections of this strategy provide the events industry in Wales with a guide to action. This section outlines what the MEU will do to build Wales' position as a World class major events destination. Working collaboratively with partners and stakeholders across the entire spectrum of the events industry, the MEU will:

- Develop and launch an 'Event Wales' operational identity and communications plan which will incorporate:
  - a Major Events website
  - a national calendar of major events
  - a database of event owners and organisers, venues and locations
  - a database of research into the impact of major events
  - an online toolkit for self assessment and evaluation of future events
- Co-ordinate, in association with the appropriate Sector Skills Councils the education sector and training providers, the development of a skills action plan to strengthen Wales' professional event management and production capacity, from trainee to graduate level.
- Establish a Growth Fund with a ring fenced budget to create or nurture events outside Cardiff.
- Examine the potential for developing the concept of a 'Green' event ticket, building on the innovative approach of the 'Cardiff Connection' initiative.
- In partnership with the Welsh Language Board, provide a consultancy service delivering practical advice free of charge to supported events to improve outcomes for enhanced profile and usage of the Welsh language at supported major and signature events.
- Establish a biennial International Events Conference to promote and market Wales as a major events destination.
- Support events that build on and connect to the opportunity presented by the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games and to the Pre Games Training Camps established in Wales for international teams.

8.2 Given the exceptional financial challenges which we face in the coming years and the need to build Wales' event management and production capacity, the focus of our investment over the first five years of the lifetime of this strategy will be to:

- support a programme of Growth Events which creates the environment for developing specialist skills, knowledge and experience as the foundation for growing a strong and sustainable events industry in Wales;
- work strategically with the owners and organisers of our Signature Events to identify new and innovative ways of extending their reach to new audiences both inside and outside Wales; and
- attract major international events which enhance the recognition and reputation of Wales.

Heineken Cup Final, Cardiff