



PRESS RELEASE

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Underbelly delivers the annual report from its inaugural Edinburgh's Hogmanay event

- **165,994 people from 80 countries attended Edinburgh's Hogmanay 18**
- **Edinburgh's Hogmanay 18 economic impact is calculated at £39.2m, up 40.5% from £27.9m when last measured in 2010**
- **2,871 young people took part in engagement projects**
- **Edinburgh's Hogmanay was the main or only reason for visiting Scotland for 71% of attendees from outside of Scotland**

Today Underbelly reveals the impact of its inaugural Edinburgh's Hogmanay in an annual report covering the programme, audience statistics, the results of its engagement projects, event developments, staffing and employment, community benefit, economic impact, sustainability, funding, and social and media engagement.

Charlie Wood and Ed Bartlam, directors of Underbelly and Edinburgh's Hogmanay said, *"In conceiving our inaugural programme for Edinburgh's Hogmanay we wanted to honour and build on the first 24 years of this amazing winter festival to ensure that the event continues to re-invent itself; to capture the world's imagination; and to entrench Edinburgh's position as the home of Hogmanay."*

Underbelly produces Edinburgh's Hogmanay on behalf of City of Edinburgh Council. **Developments in Underbelly's first year** included the creation of #ScotWord to mark the start of the Year of Young People 2018: #BRAW; the amazing animation and atmosphere of the Street Party up and down Princes Street, Niteworks's special composition for the midnight fireworks, Rag'n'Bone Man's singing of *Auld Lang Syne*, the addition of Bairn's Afore and Val McDermid's unique collaboration on *Message from the Skies*.

Research conducted by BOP Consulting, who regularly undertake surveys of Edinburgh's festivals, **surveyed 5,236 attendees** and found that Edinburgh's Hogmanay was the **main or only reason for visiting Scotland for 71%** of attendees from elsewhere in the world, 74% of whom were attending Hogmanay for the first time.

BOP's survey also found that:

- 85% of visitors rated events good or very good (54% rated very good).
- Visitors spent an average of 3.4 nights in Edinburgh and 4.3 nights in Scotland, spreading the benefit outside of the capital.
- 31% of attendees came from Edinburgh, the Lothians and the rest of Scotland, a further 44% from elsewhere in the UK, and 25% from nations around the world.
- While the majority of visitors were aged between 16 and 34 (54.8%), 30.3% were over 45, demonstrating the event's broad appeal.

As part of its work, BOP Consulting also undertook an economic impact study of Edinburgh's Hogmanay. This assessment follows the broader impact assessment that BOP Consulting undertook for Edinburgh's festivals in 2010 and 2015 and their analysis of Edinburgh's Hogmanay is based on the same methodology.

The calculated economic impact of Edinburgh's Hogmanay on Edinburgh in 2017/18 was £39.2m in terms of additional output, increasing by 40% from £27.9m when last measured in 2010; and the impact on Scotland in these terms was £39.8m, increasing by 22.8% from £32.4m, when last measured in 2010.

In terms of employment, the calculated economic impact equates to 826 full time jobs in Edinburgh (compared to 589 when measured in 2010) and 920 FTE in Scotland (FTE in Scotland was not measured in 2010).

As producer of Edinburgh's Hogmanay, Underbelly directly employed or engaged 375 temporary or permanent members of staff; 605 artists and support staff; and its contractors accredited a further 636 staff to the event. In addition 1,177 security personnel were employed for the event. **In total, there were 2,813 paid people directly employed or engaged on Edinburgh's Hogmanay 18** All staff at Edinburgh's Hogmanay were paid the National Living Wage, regardless of age; and there were no zero hour contracts.

The **Hogmanay Ambassador scheme** saw a total of 55 people volunteer, 31 took part in the Torchlight Procession and 24 at the Street Party. The programme proved a great success with excellent feedback from volunteers about their experience, 92% stating that they would volunteer at Edinburgh's Hogmanay again.

Charlie and Ed added, *"We wanted to move people from spectating to being more directly involved in the events so that they had access to a more fulfilling, diverse and rich experience be they ScotWord champions or the local choirs at the Street Party."*

At the start of Scotland's Year of Young People, Edinburgh's Hogmanay 18 led with two engagement projects to encourage young people to participate: **#Scotword and the Message from the Skies** writing competition.

#ScotWord was about fostering debate in a country with a proud history of discourse. 26 #ScotWord Champions, aged between 16 and 26, led a total of 106 workshops with 2,633 young people participating in diverse locations across the country to answer the question "What makes you proud to live in Scotland?". In all 633 submissions were made for #ScotWord and our Champions shortlisted seven words: ALIVE, BONNIE, BRAW, CULTURE, DIVERSE, HAME and WELCOME, An online public vote selected #BRAW as the word that would be revealed as the finale of the Torchlight Procession.

Complementing the *Message from the Skies* project, and another celebration of the Year of Young People, Edinburgh's Hogmanay ran a short story competition, open to young people aged 18 and under living in the EH, FK and KY postcodes, inviting stories inspired by Edinburgh. Over 200 young people entered, and the jury selected three winners whose stories were projected on to buildings between 2 and 25 January, ahead of Val McDermid's *New Year's Resurrection*: 11 year-old Lucy Hutcheon, 12 year-old Maisie Dalton and 16 year-old Jemma Glover.

Through the generosity of those at Edinburgh's Hogmanay, a total of £15,136 was donated to charities through ticket and additional donations at Torchlight Procession and the Loony Dook, going to One City Trust to fight inequality and exclusion in Edinburgh, and the RNLI South Queensferry respectively. A donation was also made to St Cuthbert's Church in recognition of their support of *Message from the Skies*, to help their work with Bethany Trust and the homeless over the winter months.

A 20% discount on Street Party tickets was made available to 5,000 residents with an EH postcode; and events including the Torchlight Procession, #Scotword and Message from the Skies were free to attend. Including the cost of these free events, the overall value of the community benefit was £546,210.

Edinburgh's Hogmanay is principally funded by City of Edinburgh Council with additional funding from EventScotland's International Fund, Scotland's Winter Festival Fund and the Year of Young People 2018 Event Fund and Creative Scotland through the Scottish Government's Edinburgh Festivals EXPO fund. **34% of the Edinburgh's Hogmanay 18 income came from public sector funding and 66% was from commercial sources of revenue including ticketing and sponsorship income.**

Charlie Wood and Ed Bartlam continued, *"We're delighted by the increased economic impact of the event on Edinburgh and Scotland; to be an event that both encourages people to visit and creates employment in the city; to have people from 80 countries buy tickets for the event but also see a strong local audience that engages and participates. And we're very proud of the volunteering opportunities that we created with the Hogmanay Ambassador scheme and pleased to see an event that directly employs so many people."*

"We are very grateful to all our sponsors and partners including the Edinburgh Festivals Tourism Innovation Fund, Edinburgh Airport, Carlsberg and Edinburgh

Gin; and to Edinburgh Trams and Lothian Buses who once again provided free transport home at the end of the 31 December celebration. Also a massive thank you to all the people on the ground who made the events happen on the days and nights, especially City of Edinburgh Council, Police Scotland, Scottish Ambulance Service and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.”

“Tickets for Edinburgh’s Hogmanay 19 are already on sale, with 10,000 Street Party tickets available at a discounted rate for Edinburgh residents. We will announce the full programme in September this year and hope to show that we are building on what we achieved in our first year to make Edinburgh’s Hogmanay an even bigger and better world-leading event.”

Councillor Donald Wilson, Culture and Communities Convener for the City of Edinburgh Council, said, *“There is no better place in the world to celebrate Hogmanay than in Edinburgh. Over the last 25 years Edinburgh’s Hogmanay has gone from strength to strength, welcoming millions of visitors to the city to enjoy everything it has to offer.*

“With 2017 being the 70th anniversary of Edinburgh as a festival city, it was appropriate that 2018 kicked off with the biggest party ever staged with a line-up that was second to none. Underbelly certainly didn’t fail to impress in their first year producing the event, and this report highlights just how much of a success the festival was with a whopping estimated economic impact of £39.8m for Scotland.”

Minister for Winter Festivals and Burns Night Alasdair Allan, said, *“This is an amazing result for Edinburgh’s Hogmanay and I congratulate Underbelly and those involved in the delivery of the event for their incredible work.*

“Hogmanay is a cornerstone event in the Winter Festivals and a brand leader in New Year celebrations around the world, showcasing all the many facets of Scotland’s vibrant culture and promoting Scotland as a fantastic visitor destination, rich in culture and creativity. This report shows the real impact this cultural event has on our economy and its role in engaging younger generations, especially as we celebrate 2018 Year of Young People.”

Paul Bush OBE, VisitScotland’s Director of Events, said, *“Edinburgh’s Hogmanay is an incredible occasion known the world-over, and one that plays a valuable role in reinforcing Scotland as the perfect stage for events. The enormous celebration that engulfs Edinburgh, and indeed across the whole of Scotland is legendary the world over.”*

“EventScotland was proud to support Underbelly’s 17/18 world-class event which kick-started Scotland’s Year of Young People 2018 in style and created new opportunities for young people to shine locally, nationally and globally as part of the #Scotword project. Whether it’s taking in the midnight moment, dancing under the stars at the ceilidh or illuminating the streets as part of the Torchlight Procession, there are very few places that come close to matching the experience which Edinburgh’s Hogmanay offers to thousands of visitors and locals alike each year.”

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Underbelly was awarded the contract by City of Edinburgh Council to produce Edinburgh's Hogmanay last year and 2018 saw the first event under its direction.

Underbelly is a UK based live entertainment company, its festivals and events division produces a number of events annually, including Underbelly at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, Underbelly Festival on London's Southbank, Underbelly Festival Hong Kong, Edinburgh's Christmas and Edinburgh's Hogmanay on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council, Christmas in Leicester Square, Pride in London and, West End Live in Trafalgar Square on behalf of the Society of London Theatre and Westminster City Council.

2017 marked their fifth year producing Edinburgh's Christmas for the City of Edinburgh Council, and their first year producing Edinburgh's Hogmanay.

Through its Underbelly Productions arm it produces and promotes live theatre in London's West End, throughout the UK and on tour internationally. Focusing on revivals of plays and musicals as well as commissions, their credits to date include, a revival of Clarke Peters' Five Guys Named Moe in association with Cameron Mackintosh and directed by Clarke Peters' himself, performed in a specially constructed theatre at Marble Arch.

In 2017, Underbelly sold 1.3 million tickets to its festival events and shows.

www.underbelly.co.uk