



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Scottish Parliament 20th anniversary programme: update

By correspondence

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Executive summary

1. This Paper updates the SPCB on the key successes and legacy from the 20th Anniversary Programme of events and activities that took place throughout 2019.

Overall Programme

2. The SPCB approved an ambitious programme including a major event on Saturday 29 June with a vision of celebrating the positive difference that the Parliament has made to the lives of the people of Scotland over the past 20 years.
3. The 20th Anniversary Programme offered a unique opportunity for the Scottish Parliament to reflect on and refresh its founding principles of accountability, openness, equal opportunities and power sharing. Specifically, our aims were to communicate with the people of Scotland to:
 - build positive awareness of the Parliament's impact and translate that awareness into engagement;
 - ensure the year-long programme of events engaged with people across Scotland;
 - position the anniversary in a way that appealed to our various target audiences, including harder to reach groups; and
 - encourage a wider conversation about the role of the Parliament.

Key Elements

Role of Parliament in Scottish Society

4. One of the key things that we wanted to achieve from the Programme was that it should reflect the evolution that has taken place with the Public Engagement Strategy. As a reminder, there has been a significant change in strategic direction for Public Engagement since 2014, with much more emphasis on the power of engagement to improve scrutiny and strengthen the ability of the Parliament to hold government to account. Rather than the main effort being around Holyrood

as a building, the central aims of the Public Engagement Strategy are to support (1) effective public participation in the work of the Parliament and (2) improved awareness among the public of the relevance and accessibility of the Parliament.

5. The Programme sought to reflect this broader purpose by including elements that went beyond celebration of an important anniversary and, instead, provided a platform to reflect on the Parliament's position in public life and its role in shaping public policy. Examples from the Programme include:
 - SPICe 20th Anniversary Series: looking back over the last 20 years of public policy and what might be coming down the line. This thematic approach worked well and is something that SPICe is planning to repeat in the future.
 - Events throughout the year to debate policy developments; examine future challenges and the role for the Parliament.
 - Deliberative engagement with Young People as part of the 29 June event.
 - Launch of Main Hall Exhibition that celebrates parliamentary achievements.
6. This type of programme arguably reflected a greater sense of self-assurance and external confidence. These sentiments were picked up in a lot of the media coverage (centred around May 2019 – the anniversary of when the Parliament first met). For example, there was an editorial in *The Times* that commented on the maturing of the Parliament over the previous decade, with reference to the increase in fiscal powers. It said "no serious political party would now dare to suggest the abolition of the Parliament. That is one of its achievements; it is a permanent fixture of Scottish public life, creating a space in which 'Scottish solutions for Scottish problems' may be pursued if not always found."
7. This sense of the Parliament being valued and trusted by the people of Scotland will be one of the workstreams in the refreshed Public Engagement Strategy.

Main events

8. The year-long programme of events and activities both here at Holyrood and across Scotland provided a platform to reinforce the key message that the Parliament is for all of Scotland no matter where you live.

Saturday 29 June

9. The centrepiece of the 20th Anniversary Programme took place on Saturday 29 June. The day itself was split into two separate elements that formally marked the 20th Anniversary of the Scottish Parliament maintaining and building on the tradition that the Parliament has established over the past 20 years. The overall day saw over 2,000 people attend the various events.
 - Ceremonial aspects included: movement of the Crown of Scotland from Edinburgh Castle to the Parliament; an address to Members and invited guests by Her Majesty The Queen followed by speeches from all five party leaders along with entertainment provided by the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland,

Karen Matheson and a poem specially commissioned by the Makar, Jackie Kay; and a lunch reception. Guests included representatives of organisations and local authorities from across Scotland along with many of the 1 July Young People.

- The Open Afternoon then saw the Parliament open its doors to the public. Aimed at a family audience, this event enhanced the Parliament's openness and accessibility with live performances, future technology and retro party games. A wide demographic attended the Open Afternoon as a result of the increased parliamentary focus and a specific goal to bring in performers that represented each region in Scotland.
10. Overall the events received positive local and global media coverage given the substantial interest in the occasion. The Open Afternoon attracted a wide range of age groups and families from across Scotland.
 11. The promotion work reached over 110,000 people on Facebook. We livestreamed The Queen's address on Twitter and this was viewed by over 6,000 people over the course of the day, by far the most viewed live broadcast on this channel.

Family Days

12. With the Edinburgh Science Festival (ESF) we piloted two Family Days on Saturday 6 and Saturday 13 April. The main purpose for these Days was to improve awareness of the relevance and accessibility of the Scottish Parliament to one of our key audiences - Scottish families. Nearly 4,400 people attended over the two Saturdays taking part in science-themed activities.
13. Both Days were very successful in engaging new Scottish audiences with almost half of those surveyed (49%) visiting the Parliament for the first time. The majority of those surveyed were Scottish residents – 75% of those surveyed in the Main Hall but 97% of those surveyed in the Garden Lobby clearly indicating that the Family Days' activities attracted Scottish residents. Although statistics for ethnicity were not collected, anecdotal feedback from SPS was that the both Days attracted a much more ethnically diverse family audience than would normally visit the Scottish Parliament. We will include statistics for ethnicity in future surveys.
14. Overall the feedback from families was very positive with many citing that it was great for the Parliament to be holding these events; the building is an excellent venue; the positive, friendly attitude of staff; and the wide mix of activities available for families.

Regional Days

15. To ensure the overall 20th Anniversary programme engaged with people across Scotland – one of the four key aims – a programme of outreach was developed for the Presiding Officer. The purpose was to provide the Presiding Officer with regionally visible engagement across the country – so that people could see the Parliament in their own communities. We also wanted to use the programme to demonstrate to communities that the Parliament was listening to what was important to communities – and ensure they were able to set the agenda for what

and how the Presiding Officer engaged. We also sought to include innovative approaches, such as Agenda Days and off-site Festival of Politics events.

16. General feedback from the people that attended the Maryhill Regional Day was very positive. The event made them want to engage more with the Scottish Parliament so after the Regional Day a number of them visited for the first time during the Festival of Politics.
17. The Regional Days provide the opportunity for discussion and community-driven action on grass-roots issues – facilitated by the Presiding Officer (affordable housing, rural transport in Skye for example) – that were welcomed locally as opportunities for local change.
18. So far, we have delivered two very different Regional Days – Maryhill on 31 May and Skye on 27 September. Our event for Banffshire and Buchan coast was postponed due to the UK election. Three more are planned before summer 2020, with another three before the end of 2020 to ensure that all eight regions have been visited before the end of Session 5.

Partnership working

19. Throughout the year we partnered with a number of external organisations on events and activities which allowed us to reach new and more diverse audiences both at Holyrood and across Scotland helping the overall programme achieve all its aims.
20. In partnership with The Parliament Project - an externally sponsored project to inspire, empower and encourage women to run for political office in the UK – the Parliament hosted Scotland’s Women Stand on Saturday 7 September. The event was very successful in raising awareness of the relevance and accessibility of the Scottish Parliament to as a diverse audience of women from across Scotland as possible. Over 300 women from diverse backgrounds across from Scotland came together in the Parliament and across the country via weblinks in four regional hubs – Aberdeen; Lerwick; Lochgilphead; and Stornoway.
21. We also piloted our first Young People’s Festival of Politics – in partnership with Young Scot and the Scottish Youth Parliament – on Saturday 30 November. The purpose of this event was to engage with a youth audience as part of the overall 20th Anniversary Programme and to deliver a youth led event with key partners as a legacy from Year of Young People 2018; around 1,000 people visited the Parliament on that day.
22. Working in partnership with organisations throughout the 20th Anniversary programme allowed the Scottish Parliament to target key audiences and achieve its aims and objectives or improving awareness of the relevance and accessibility of the Scottish Parliament to people from across Scotland. Going forward we will continue to seek relevant partnerships with organisations from across Scotland to ensure we engage with as many key audiences as possible.

Communications and Impact

23. The communications throughout the year were informed by the overall aims and included:

- The release of data, imagery and information to the media coinciding with key anniversary dates;
- Securing of a broad range of media interviews with the Presiding Officer, Clerk/Chief Executive and staff working in a range of roles within the Parliament;
- Designing a widely used 20th anniversary logo which was used across 20th anniversary products, collateral and channels throughout the year (logo helped tie the messaging together and over 2,600 20th anniversary branded products were sold in the shop); and
- Social media content reinforcing anniversary messages, with all aspects of our anniversary promoted online (regular special edition content included a weekly #throwbackthursday on Instagram, blogs, podcasts, an Instameet and themed Instagram competition).

24. The overall evaluation of the work has shown that:

- There was extensive multi-media coverage, including mainstream broadcast news and programming, through to features in local outlets and specialist press. These opportunities were spread across all Parliamentary regions, including outlets that carry parliamentary news less frequently (particularly around regional and public engagement events held within the 20th anniversary programme).
- The narrative in Anniversary content was positive, reiterating our core messages around being an open, accessible and responsive legislature, that people are encouraged to engage with.
- Our work has created public engagement with the Parliament's celebrations, including from targeted audiences.
 - Over 6,400 visitors came to our Family Days and the Open Afternoon on Saturday 29 June.
 - We also succeeded in attracting people who had never visited the Parliament before, people not engaged with politics and families. On Saturday 29 June, 56% of attendees were visiting for the first time; at Family Days, around 80% of visitors were in family groups. These were key aims of the programme which we achieved, and hope will lead to future engagement.
- There was also substantial organic coverage to mark the Anniversary from key stakeholders in civic Scotland, discussing devolution, and looking at the Parliament's role, as per our aims.
- There was high engagement with 20th Anniversary social media content. Around 500,000 people viewed the 29 June posts across Twitter, Facebook

and Instagram, and 40% of 'open day' visitors cited social media as where they found out about events.

Resource implications

25. The Programme was delivered within budget. With the exception of the major event on Saturday 29 June (which was funded separately) all other events and activities were delivered within existing office budgets.

Next Steps

26. As a legacy of the Programme, we will be taking forward several of the elements of the programme including Family Days; outreach work across Scotland through Regional Days; and partnership working which allows the Parliament to reach new and more diverse audiences from across Scotland.

27. There were several organisational benefits from the programme including much greater cross-office collaboration; increased appetite for risk, notably with external partners. We intend to build on these positives, to inform the evolution of our public engagement work as focus shifts to planning for the next parliamentary session.

Publication scheme

28. This Paper can be published.

Decision

29. The SPCB is asked to note this Paper and the successes and legacy from the 20th Anniversary Programme.

Events and Exhibitions Team