

Report To: Education & Communities Committee

Date: 1 November 2016

**Report By: Corporate Director Education,
Communities & Organisational
Development**

Report No: EDUCOM/74/16/GB

Contact Officer: George Barbour

Contact No: 01475 712385

Subject: Gourock Highland Games

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to recommend a permanent move for the Gourock Highland Games to Battery Park following the success of the event staged there in 2016.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Gourock Highland games celebrated their 60th anniversary this year and as part of the celebration, Inverclyde Council made two changes to the event: moved location to Battery Park and made the event free to visitors.
- 2.2 The event was delivered successfully in 2016 in Battery Park, the larger location highlighted areas for potential growth in future years and all feedback for the new venue is positive.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 3.1 welcomes the successful delivery of the 2016 Gourock Highland Games;
- 3.2 expresses the Council's thanks to Chieftain Isabel Lind, OBE;
- 3.3 agrees that Battery Park become the permanent home of the Games;
- 3.4 agrees that the event continues to be free entry; and
- 3.5 remits the report to the Policy and Resources Committee.

George Barbour
Corporate Communications Manager

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 This year the Gourock Highland Games celebrated their 60th year.
- 4.2 The Games, which take place on the second Sunday in May, are the first games and pipe band event of the Scottish season
- 4.3 While the early date helps to raise the profile of the games and encourage more pipe bands to attend, it makes the event particularly susceptible to weather disruption.
- 4.4 The location of Gourock Park, while the traditional home of the games, curtails future development of the Games and weather difficulties have, in recent years, caused issues with the park. The games have also had very little link with local town centres particularly in Gourock.
- 4.5 The Council agreed for the 60th anniversary games a move to nearby Battery Park, a larger location with space for expansion and to make the event free entry.
- 4.6 The event was delivered successfully in May 2016 with one of its highest attendances in recent years. Chieftain for the Gourock Highland Games' 60th anniversary was former head teacher and tireless campaigner for the Scots language, Isabel Lind, OBE.
- 4.7 The Gourock Highland Games include among their attractions pipe band competitions and march past; traditional highland games; the West of Scotland Highland Dance Championships; and a mini Highland Games event involving local school children.
- 4.8 The date of the 2016 event fell on the weekend of the 75th anniversary of the Greenock blitz. Lone piper Keith Bowes played a moving lament to mark the occasion which allowed visitors to remember those who lost their lives to German bombers.
- 4.9 The larger location at Battery Park highlighted opportunities for potential expansion with, for example, the mini Highland Games being extended to all Inverclyde schools.

5.0 VISITOR SURVEY 2016

- 5.1 A survey carried out after the 2016 event (see appendix 1) indicated that for 19% of attendees, this was their first time visit to the Gourock Highland Games.
- 5.2 87% of respondents rated the overall quality of their experience at the Gourock Highland Games as either very good or good.
- 5.3 When asked for the key reason for attending the Gourock Highland Games, the top four responses were: free entry (77%); the weather (71%); the new location at Battery Park (70%); and the pipe band competition (70%).
- 5.4 80% of attendees at the Gourock Highland Games in 2016 came from Inverclyde; 17% came from elsewhere in Scotland; 2% from overseas; and 1% from elsewhere in the UK.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial Implications - One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Year	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments

Financial Implications - Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (if applicable)	Other Comments
00469-000-80001	Event Management (corporate communciations)	2016/17	£3905.50	N/A	Loss of income for Gourock Highland Games

6.2 Human Resources

N/A

6.3 Legal

N/A

6.4 Equalities

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

YES (see attached appendix)

NO -

6.5 Repopulation

Encouraging more people from outside of Inverclyde into the area is a key priority for the repopulation group. A successful Gourock Highland Games can help to encourage more visitors to the area and marketing will aim to promote it as the first games of Scottish Highland Games season to position the event on the Scottish events calendar.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 A visitor survey was carried out after the event in 2016 and a summary is included at appendix 1 of this report.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

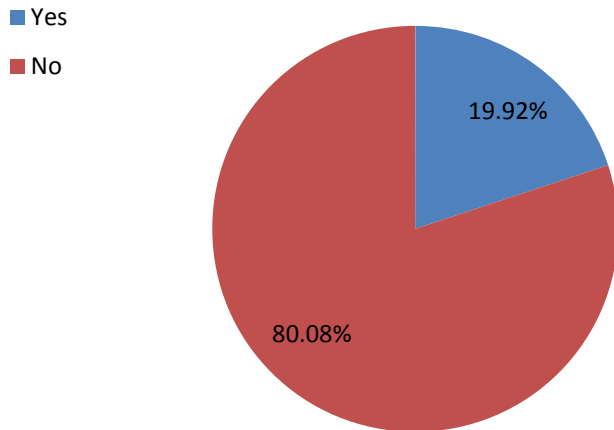
8.1 Item 14 - Gourock Highland Games - Policy and Resources Committee, 22 March 2016.

Appendix 1:

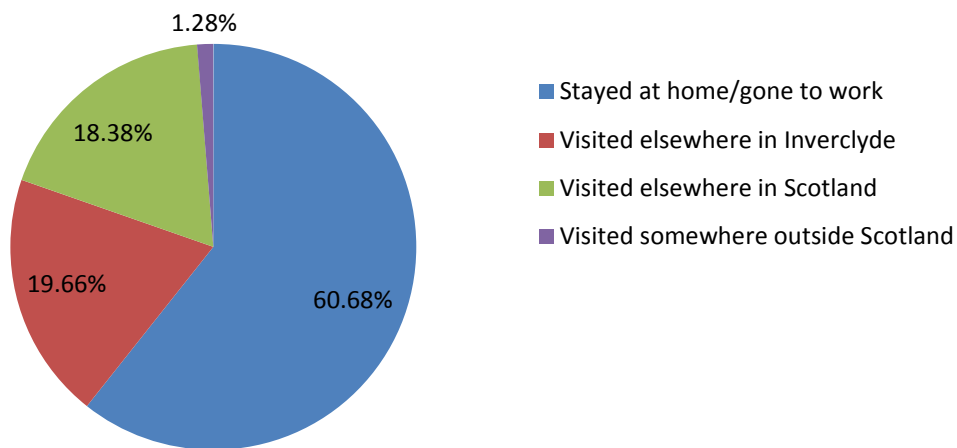
Visitor survey – Gourock Highland Games 2016

Number of responses: 255

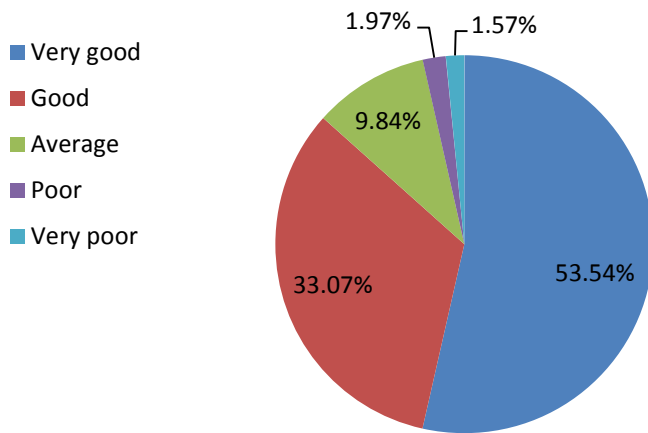
Was this your first time visiting Gourock Highland Games?



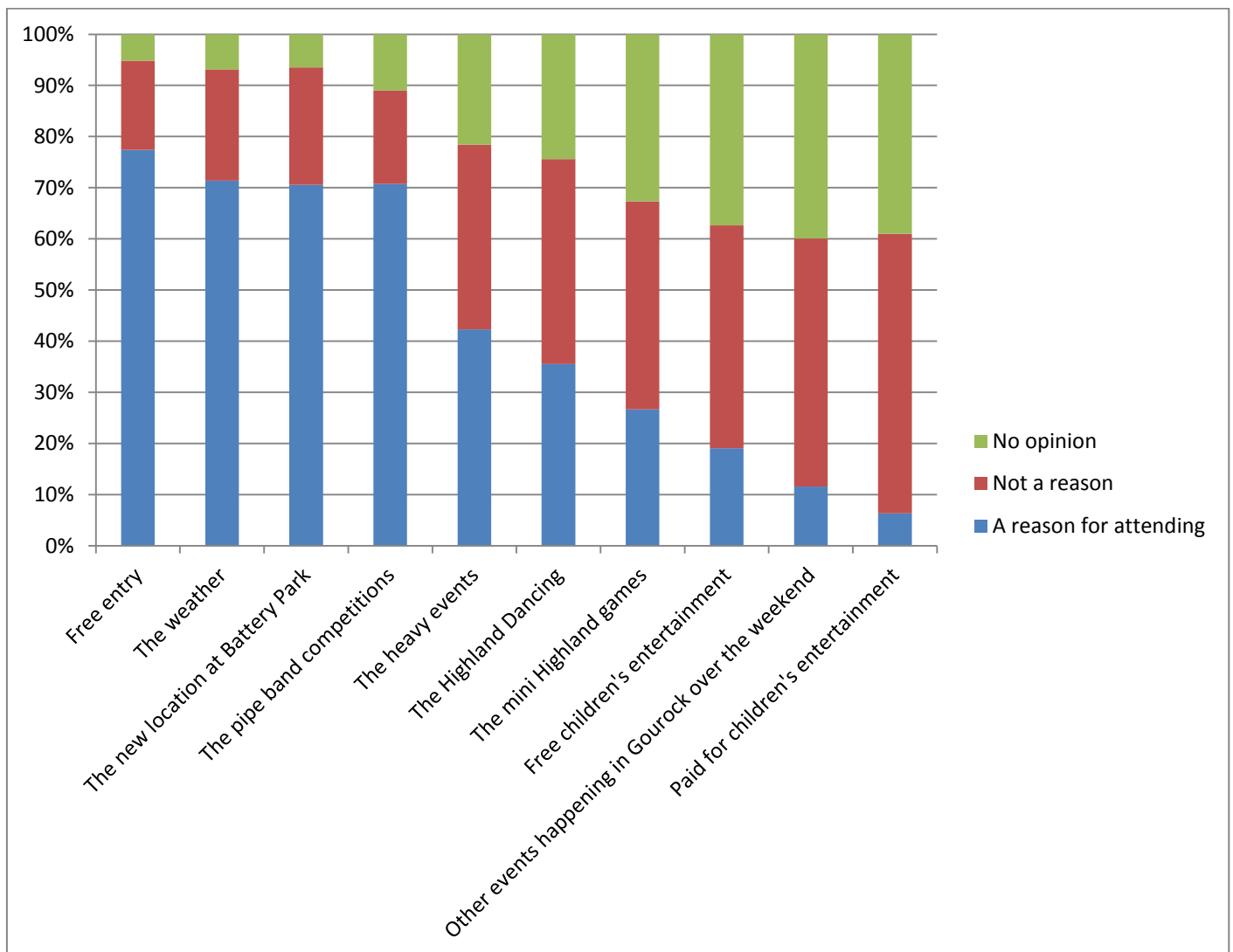
If you had not visited the Gourock Highland Games what would you have most likely done instead



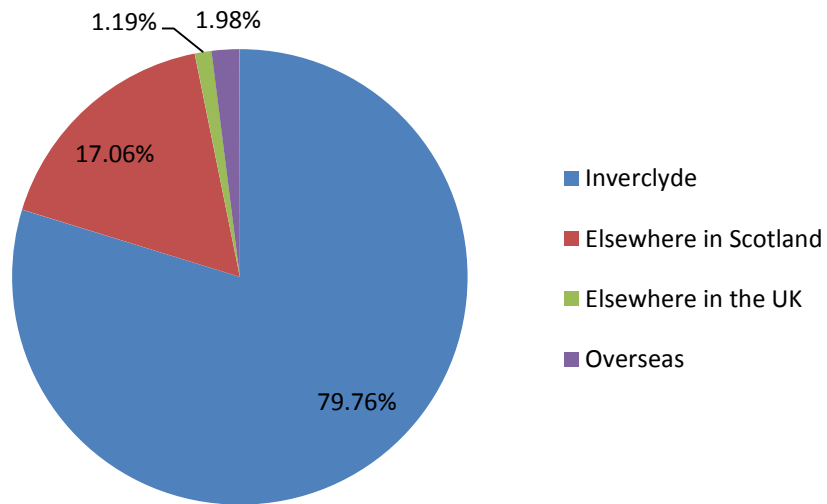
How would you rate the overall quality of your experience at Gourock Highland Games?



How much were these events a reason in deciding to attend the Gourock Highland Games at Battery Park?



Where do you normally live?



Appendix 2:

Photo gallery from the Gourrock Highland Games 2016

