



# TRUSTEES' WEEK



**inform** · **inspire** · **support** · **celebrate**

Post-Conference Report  
2014 - 2017

Sharing Scotland's collective experience of working as, and with, trustees.

Our aims are to highlight the great work that trustees are currently doing, and to present opportunities for people from all walks of life to get involved and make a difference.



#TWScot17  
#TrusteesWeek

# Introduction

Since 2013, Scotland's Third Sector Governance Forum has hosted an annual Trustees' Week conference. The conferences have grown yearly, culminating this year (2017) in two separate conferences—one for 100 delegates in Inverness, one for 180 delegates in Edinburgh.



Due to the size and popularity of this year's conference, we thought it was a good opportunity to reflect back on how the conferences have evolved over the years; and analyse which aspects have worked best and what trends can inform future decisions.

The following data has been pulled from event evaluations conducted after each conference. Because the very first conference (Dundee, 2013) was evaluated using a very different format, it was left out of the summaries.



# Attendance Rates

	Dundee (2014)	Airdrie (2015)	Dunfermline (2016)	Inverness (2017)	Edinburgh (2017)
Original Goal	100	180	200	100	100
Booked	161	233	229	95	215
Waitlist	65	0	92	0	77
Non-Arrivals	19 (11%)	62 (27%)	39 (17%)	29 (30%)	58 (26%)
Final Numbers	142	171	190	66	157
Evaluation Responses	68 (48%)	50 (29%)	71 (37%)	21 (32%)	37 (24%)

- Two of the conferences (Dundee 2014 and Edinburgh 2017) were originally intended to be roughly 100 people; however, due to massive interest the size was increased during the planning stage.
- The lowest rate of non-arrivals (Dundee 2014) was probably due to the increase in size at such a late stage (prior to this we had been very actively encouraging anyone who could no longer make it to cancel)
- The second lowest rate (Dunfermline 2016) was the year we employed a policy of charging for any non-arrivals. This policy appears to have reduced non-arrivals by roughly 15%.
- The year with the highest rate of evaluations (2014) was the only year in which all resources were published *after* the conference (and “behind” the evaluation form). In years were delegates could find the resources online prior to the conference, the number of evaluations completed has dropped.

# Aspects of the day?

Following the event, delegates are asked to rate each of the following on a scale of 1-5 (1 = Very Poor, 5 = Excellent). The table below shows the average results from each year.

	Dundee (2014)	Airdrie (2015)	Dunfermline (2016)	Inverness (2017)	Edinburgh (2017)
Marketing	3.9	3.8	4.1	3.8	3.9
Booking Process	4.1	4.4	4.4	4.5	4.5
Pre-Event Information	3	4.2	4.1	4.2	3.8
Venue	3.5	4	3.6	4.2	4.6
Catering	3.6	3.7	3.5	4	4.6
Organisation on the Day	4	4.2	4	4.1	4.2

- Marketing has stayed fairly consistent over the years, both in practise and scoring. In 2016, the invitation email contained the workshop titles, which had never been done before. This was repeated in 2017, however while 2016 featured 10 table discussion, 2017 had 4 workshops.
- The 2017 booking process (both conferences) asked the delegates to indicate which of the workshops would be their preference so that we could allocate rooms accordingly.
- The Venue and Pre-Event Info in 2014 probably scored so lowly due to the severe changes in plans. This low score did encourage us to include bigger/ better blurbs regarding the workshops going forward.
- The Pre-Event Info scores in 2017 are curious, as both Inverness and edinburgh received the same information. Presumably, attendees within Edinburgh have a higher standard of expectation.
- Organisation on the Day scores higher in years where there was a central room that delegates would leave then come back to throughout the day, with breakout rooms close and easy to find.

# Professional Development

Delegates were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statements below. The following scores are the number of delegates who *agreed* or *strongly agreed*.

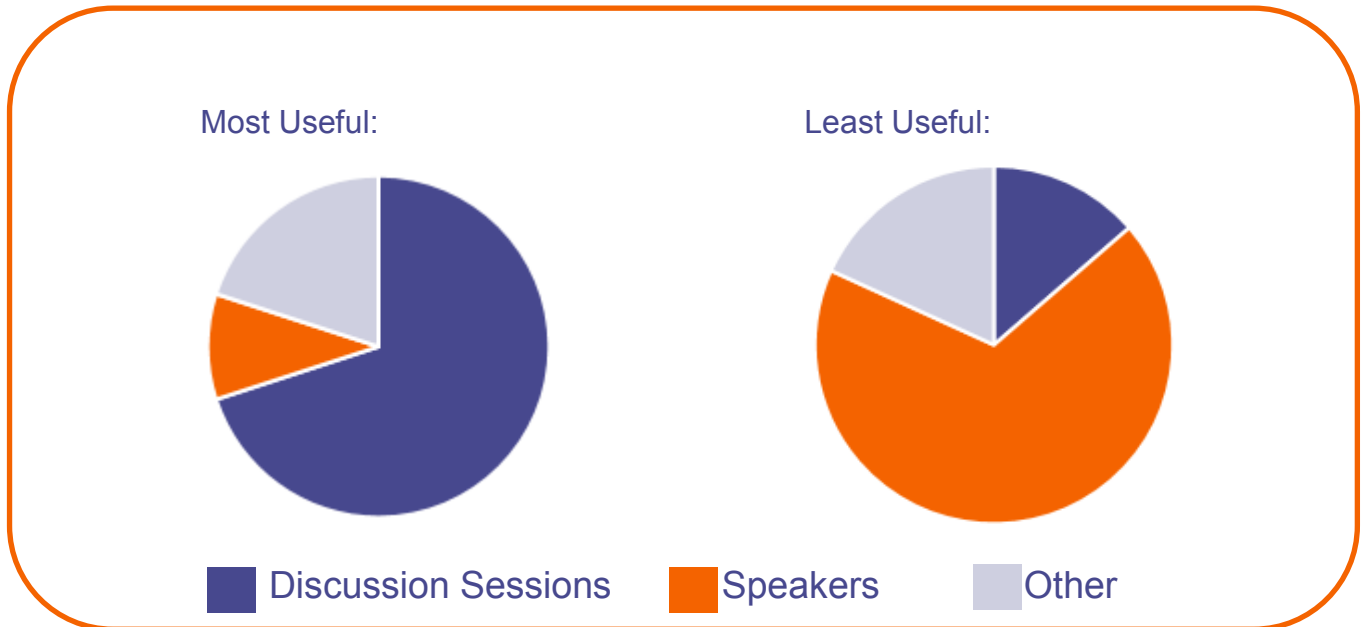
	Dundee (2014)	Airdrie (2015)	Dunfermline (2016)	Inverness (2017)	Edinburgh (2017)
Attending this event was a good use of my time	93%	96%	87%	95%	95%
It will enhance my role as a trustee	93%	85%	72%	95%	90%
I learned something useful from my peers.	93%	90%	73%	90%	93%
It will have a positive impact on my organisation	(not asked)	90%	78%	95%	90%

- Although the 2016 conference scored significantly lower than other years, with regards to Profession Development, a lot of the comments referenced concerns elsewhere in the conference (for example, one person felt it was too busy and left early, and therefore *strongly disagreed* with the statements above). As such, the lower scores seem to reflect operational concerns rather than e.g. issues with facilitator selection.
- On the whole, these scores suggest that the conferences are remarkably well-received, and provide a lot of benefit to the delegates.



# Workshop Structure

As part of the evaluation process in 2015, delegates are asked what they consider to be the most valuable and least valuable aspects of the conference. The questions were left open, but a strong pattern emerged in the responses:



Bearing in mind that the speakers scored between 3.7 and 4.3 out of 5 (i.e. most delegates considered speakers to be “good” or “excellent”) these results clearly show that the delegates favoured smaller discussion sessions over the plenary sessions.

In 2016 and 2017, more emphasis was placed on workshops and discussion sessions, and this trend has not occurred with the same strength again.



Alternative session structures have been tested in 2016 and 2017 however.

In 2016, a “speed-networking energiser” was introduced immediately after lunch encouraging delegates to get active and meet with delegates that they perhaps wouldn’t normally. Almost all comments regarding this were positive; and although there were some comments that it led to some awkward and “artificial” conversations, some pointed out that they always felt awkward during networking sessions, and this method put everyone on equal footing.

In 2017 we repeated the energiser, but also introduced an Unconference (where delegates were able to suggest a topic of interest to themselves, and then lead a table discussion regarding it) and Fireside Chats (where experts in the chosen fields were interviewed on stage, rather than simply talking to the delegation).

Comments in the evaluation showed these were all received positively; with delegates enjoying the range of topics and rating the individuals highly.

The following shows the *positive response* rate to the question “Did you find the \_\_\_\_\_ session a useful mechanism to meet other delegates / engage with subject matter?”

	Dunfermline (2016)	Inverness (2017)	Edinburgh (2017)
Workshops	80%	100%	95%
Speed-Networking	80%	85%	73%
Unconference	-	80%	64%
Fireside Chats	-	67%	73%

Workshops (including table discussions) are clearly the most positively regarded structure for sessions; despite the *quality* of the other sessions still being highly regarded.

# Summary

Delegates are asked to rate the conferences as a whole. The following shows the average score each year on a scale of 1-5 (1 = Very Poor, 5 = Excellent)

	Dundee (2014)	Airdrie (2015)	Dunfermline (2016)	Inverness (2017)	Edinburgh (2017)
Overall how would you rate the event?	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.5



*“It confirmed that our challenges are not unique and that there are positive options we had yet to consider.”*  
- Airdrie 2015

Delegates are also asked whether they would recommend the conference to a colleague. The following shows the positive response rate to this question.

	Dundee (2014)	Airdrie (2015)	Dunfermline (2016)	Inverness (2017)	Edinburgh (2017)
Would you recommend this conference to a colleague?	100%	92%	96%	100%	100%





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The forum would like to take this opportunity to thank our conference supporters again

