

2025 Tour O The Borders Economic Impact Report

Report for

Scottish Borders Council



Source: Marc Marshall, Ian Linton, Blair Kemp, Rich Turley, & My Bib Number

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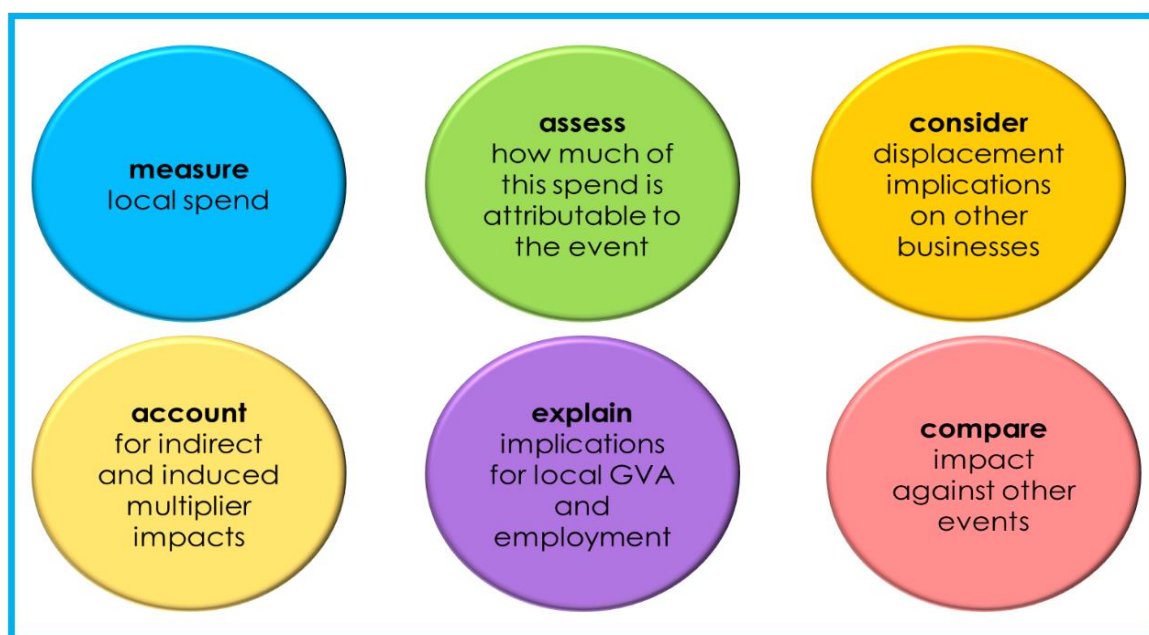
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1 Introduction

This report presents the impacts resulting from the 2025 Tour O The Borders event, held on 7 September 2025 and follows the principles set out in HM Treasury's 'Green Book' and the eventIMPACTS calculator. The objectives of the research were to:



The impact assessment is based upon findings from web-based surveys of 2,234 attendees and 158 businesses (based along the event route). 1,239 attendees responded to the survey¹ (94% were participants and 6% spectators) and 46 businesses.²

The report is structured as follows:

Section 2: The event and its attendees

Section 3: Local business views

Section 4: Economic impact

Appendix 1: Economic impact assessment methodology



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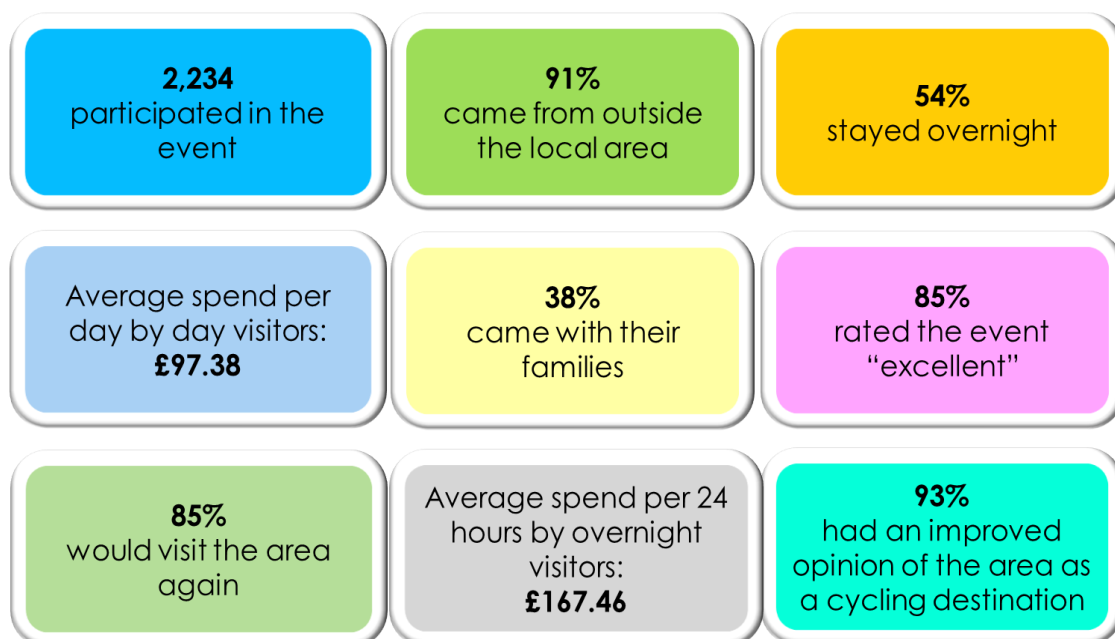
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¹ 55% response rate

² 39% response rate

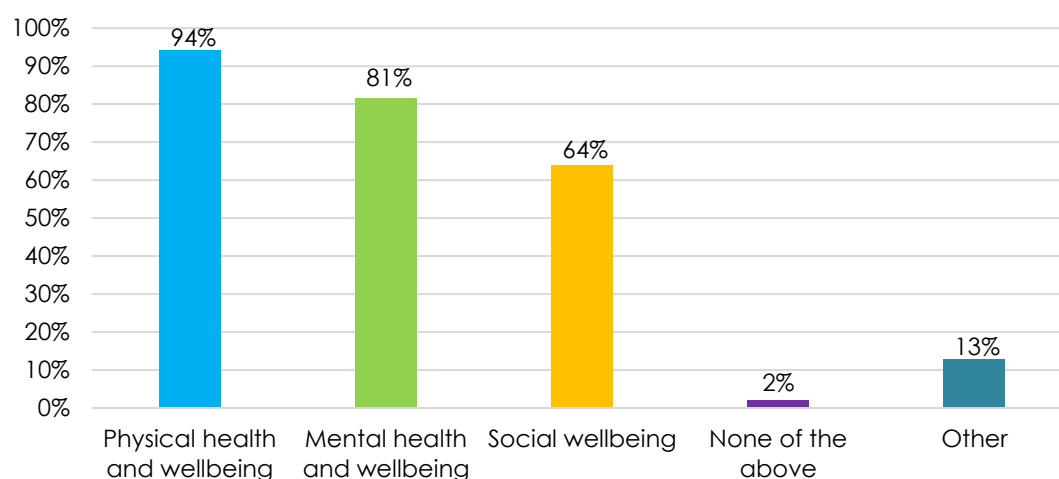
2 The Event and its Attendees

In summary:



2.1 Health and wellbeing

Attendees were asked in what way does the Tour O The Borders have a positive impact. The vast majority (94%, 1,161) noted physical health and wellbeing benefits, 81% (1,005) mentioned mental health and wellbeing benefits, and 64% (787) said social wellbeing benefits.



N=1,235

Other included:

- boost to local economy and tourism
- community connection
- promotion of cycling and active lifestyle
- scenic and regional discovery



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There are a number of health and wellbeing benefits related to exercise such as cycling. According to the World Health Organisation:

"Cycling can help reduce physical inactivity and air pollution, save lives and mitigate climate change."

Furthermore, participation in cycling is associated with a lower risk of mortality from any cause, and incidence of cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes; as well as positive mental health and wellbeing³.

2.2 Closed road events

94% (1,164) of attendees said that closed road events 'definitely' make people more likely to participate in cycling with a further 4% (51) saying maybe. 2% (21) said unlikely or definitely not.

Reasons cited as to why closed road events are important, mainly focused on 'safety and reduced risk' followed by 'enhanced enjoyment and experience'.



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"Safety as a cyclist is massively increased with closed roads and gives us all an opportunity to see the area with peace of mind that traffic won't be a factor."

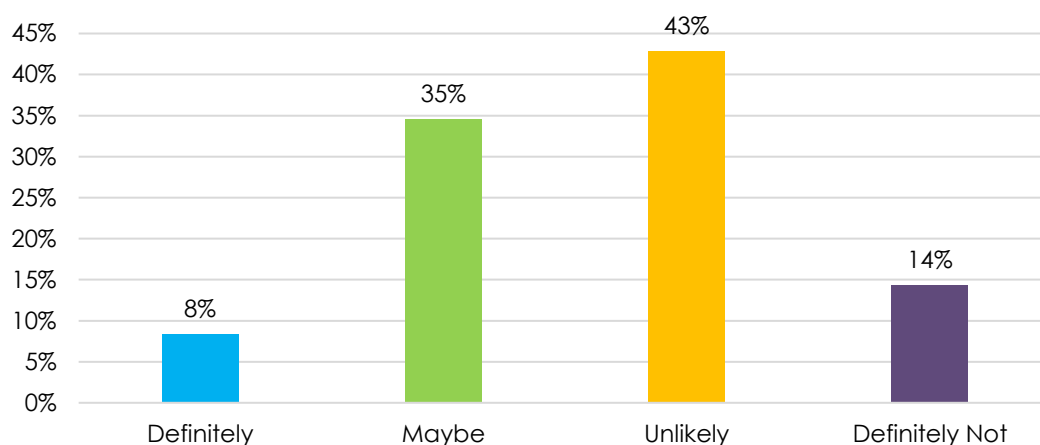
"Far more enjoyable ride that makes a big difference compared to a normal cycle on a weekend. I'm more likely to travel to take part and bring friends along as closed roads gives us a chance for a much more sociable ride."

"Unique to the area [closed road event] and a joy to participate in."

"Allows riders, especially less experienced or less confident riders, to have the experience of an excellent sportive without the anxiety of traffic."

³ <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10546027/>

When asked if they would participate in the Tour O The Borders if it was open roads, 57% (705) said unlikely or definitely not, 35% (426) said maybe, and 8% (103) said they definitely would.



N=1,234

While Tour O The Borders is classed as a closed road event – there are a couple of areas where there is shared road access. 77% (849) said that the shared road access (Moffat, Talla, Cardrona) did not have a negative impact on their day, 21% (229) said it did but it was acceptable, whilst 2% (19) said it spoiled the experience.

2.3 Repeat visits

86% (1,038) said the event encouraged them to make repeat visits to the Scottish Borders, with many returning to the region multiple times. Over half (55%, 666) said they would visit the region less if there was no Tour O The Borders.



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Final comments included:

- general praise for the event 29% (235)
- excellent event organisation and logistics 29% (235)
- positive feedback on route quality and experience 22% (179)
- appreciation of scenic landscape and natural beauty 13% (105)
- support for closed roads and traffic-free experience 12% (94)

Areas for improvement included:

- food and drink availability or setup 12% (94)
- parking and access issues causing delays 11% (91)
- road closures and local disruption 4% (34)

"Fantastic event. Well marshalled. Well sign posted. Brilliant route with something for everyone."

"The routes included some of the most spectacular, picture post card views."

"Fabulous to be on closed roads, very much enjoyed taking part."

"The food/drink queues were quite slow."

"The traffic management of getting into Peebles and the official car park needs improving."

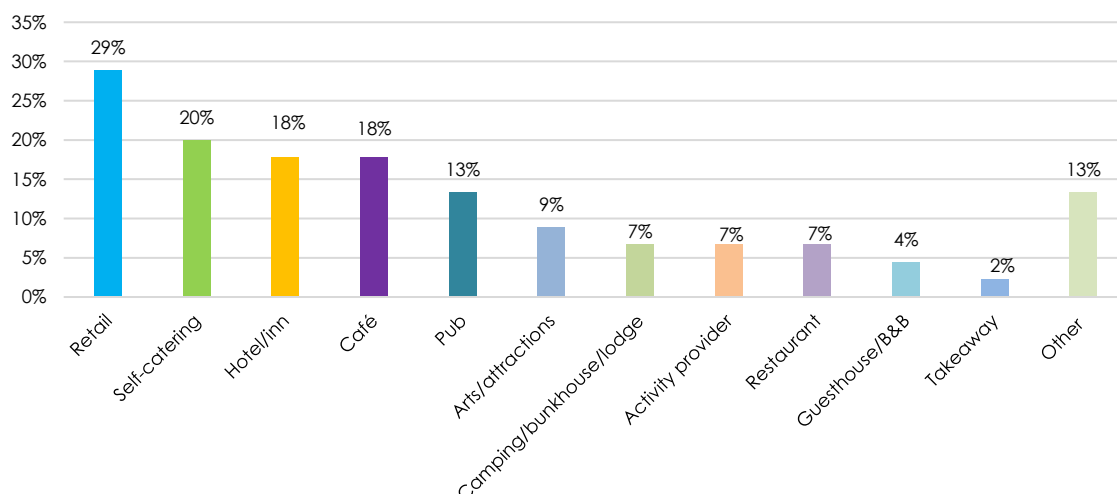
3 Local Business Views

Findings are based on 45 businesses along the route, responding to the survey.

3.1 About the businesses

Businesses covered a wide range of sectors, the most common being retail, self-catering, hotels and cafes⁴. Other included:

- farming
- motor trade
- botanical gardens
- brewery
- butcher/bakers



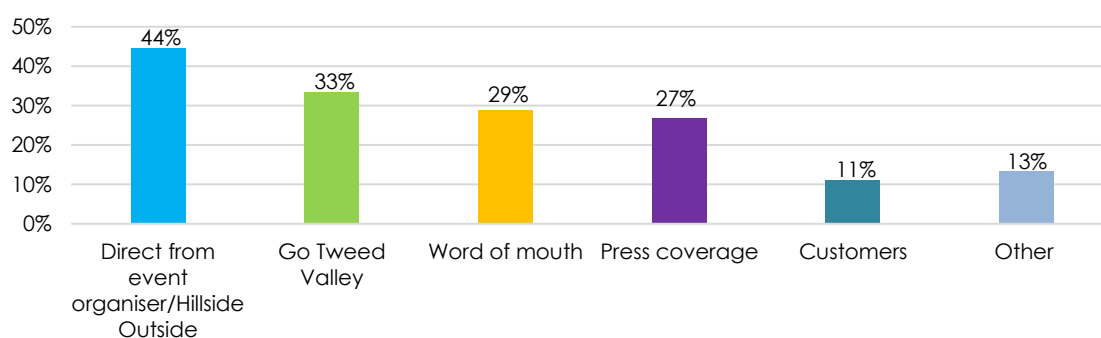
N=45

Over half (58%, 26) were based in Peebles, 20% (9) in Innerleithen and district including Traquair, 9% (4) in Ettrick and Yarrow, 2 in the upper Tweed including Stobo, Broughton and Tweedsmuir and 9% (4) elsewhere in the Borders.

Collectively the businesses employ 445 staff, 197 full-time and 248 part-time (on average 5 full-time and 7 part-time). 20% (9) were seasonal businesses opened on average for nine months of the year.

3.2 Views on Tour O The Borders

All were aware that the Tour O The Borders was taking place. Below provides a breakdown of how they heard about the event.



N=45

50% (22) felt fully engaged or partially engaged, whilst 45% (20) felt they were not engaged.

⁴ Businesses could tick more than one option

3.3 Impacts

While the majority (72%, 31) of businesses consider the event to be important or very important for **the Scottish Borders community**, 14% (6) consider it to be unimportant or very unimportant. A further 14% (6) believe it is neither important nor unimportant.

"It creates a great buzz about the town and surrounding areas, bringing much needed money into the area. Being on the Sunday, people seem to make a weekend of it."

"It brings visitors from out with the area to the Borders and hopefully they will return."

"Raising profile of borders cycling."

"As long as this event happens on closed roads it is seriously detrimental to those tourism businesses on the route."

"This event is not important enough to be closing the same road year after year, affecting businesses, costing people's wages, removing religious rights. They could easily take a second route to reduce impact."

Additionally, 50% (22) of businesses believe the event to be important or very important for **their business** while 32% (14) believe it to be unimportant or very unimportant. 18% (8) said it makes no difference either way. This indicates that for many, even if the event did not benefit their business, they recognise the importance of it for the wider Scottish Borders community.

"A large proportion of our customers on the Saturday are people taking part in the Tour O The Borders making a weekend of their stay - bringing direct business for us."

"Events like these are really important for businesses like mine, I have the same guests returning each year to do the event and stay at my property."

"This is the only cycle event that brings trade to our High Street."

"Even by association, events like this help to create a strong community engaged brand for businesses in the Scottish Borders."

"This event runs on our busiest day and costs us greatly."

"It did no extra business ...and lost regular customers due to no parking available."

"Damaging as with closed roads customers can't visit my business."

For 44% (19) of businesses, the event generated **extra custom**, of which:

- 72% (13) noted slightly higher than average weekly sales (0-30%)
- 4 noted much higher than average weekly sales (31-60%)
- 1 noted significantly higher than average weekly sales (61-90+%)

Eight businesses were able to tell us what this was in monetary terms, ranging from £300 to £6,000.

On the other hand, 16% (7) of businesses said the event generated a **reduction in custom**.

Where this was the case⁵:

- 2 recorded slightly lower than average weekly sales (0-30%)
- 3 recorded much lower than average weekly sales (31-60%)
- 1 recorded significantly lower than average weekly sales (61-90+%)

Four businesses were able to tell us what this was in monetary terms, ranging from £700 to £2,000.

When asked to what extent any reduction in custom was offset by increased business either before or after the event (rather than being lost entirely), 4 said not at all, and 3 said a little.

3.4 Wider feedback

60% (24) of businesses said that their customers provided feedback on the 2025 Tour O The Borders.

Positive feedback focused on event enjoyment, atmosphere and returning participants:

"Guests said it was a really well-run event, and they thoroughly enjoyed it."

"Many positive comments on the area, scenery and Peebles on the whole."

"They liked the atmosphere of the event and enjoyed Innerleithen High St as a place to stay and said that after many years of doing it, they may miss the next event and do their own exploring instead, using the routes I provide them."

Negative feedback focused on road closures, access issues and parking difficulties:

"Customers were concerned about parking as it was limited in the town and the road closures didn't help."

"More complaining about road closures and difficulty in parking."

"Visitors who did come reported they were put off by road closed signs everywhere and were unsure if we remained open."

⁵ One business did not indicate the level of reduction

When asked, in what ways the organisers of the Tour O The Borders could improve this event, or other large-scale events in future years, the following themes were mentioned:

- **business collaboration and marketing** - there was a desire to offer discounts with organisers to generate income and exposure, requests for advance promotion opportunities for local businesses, suggestion to share participant databases for offers and include advertising for smaller local businesses and cafes or provide marketing material for in-house and social media use
- **road closures and route concerns** - calls for open road events or alternative routes and suggestions to change direction or move the event elsewhere
- **parking and accessibility** - a need for better parking solutions in Peebles
- **communication and information gaps** - requests for timely road closure information and start times and better integration of local businesses into event planning
- **impact on local businesses** - suggestion to encourage footfall into town (e.g. shuttle buses, fewer catering vans) and requests for compensation for affected businesses

Final comments included:

"While not directly benefitting from the event we are broadly supportive of it. Brings a different, anecdotally more affluent, demographic into the area (possibly first-time visitors) who may return and spend in other ways if they are given a warm welcome."

"Overall, not good for my business but probably good for the economy as a whole in this area."

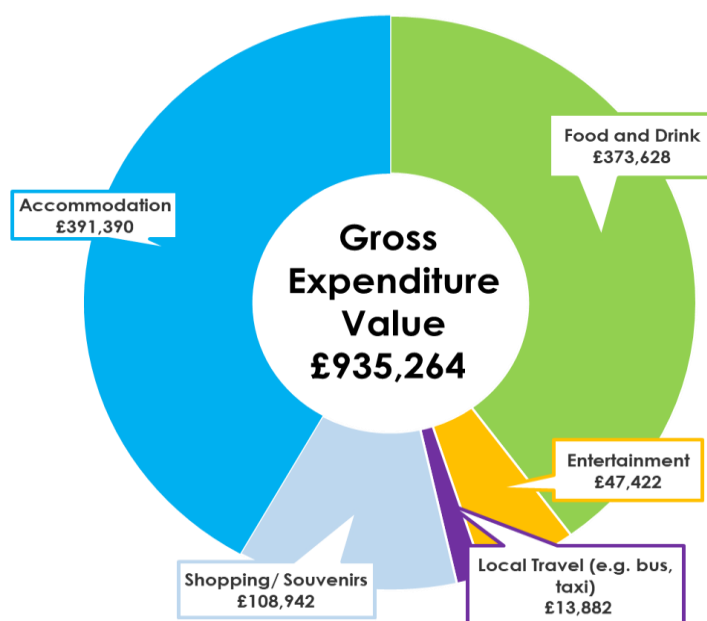
"More events = more economic benefit for peripheral businesses and the economy."

"Generally, we had a positive experience, while the event didn't impact on our business too much either way, but it was great to see the riders. We provided bike storage and takeaway breakfasts for them all as they were leaving early in the morning so would be missing breakfast - which we think was appreciated."

"I am fully engaged and provide a free website of bike routes in this area which was very popular with riders that weekend. I try and make people see how much bike riding there is to do in this area and extend their stay and/or return."

4 Economic Impact

Based on the attendee survey, the total gross expenditure at the event was **£935,264**. This can be broken down as follows:



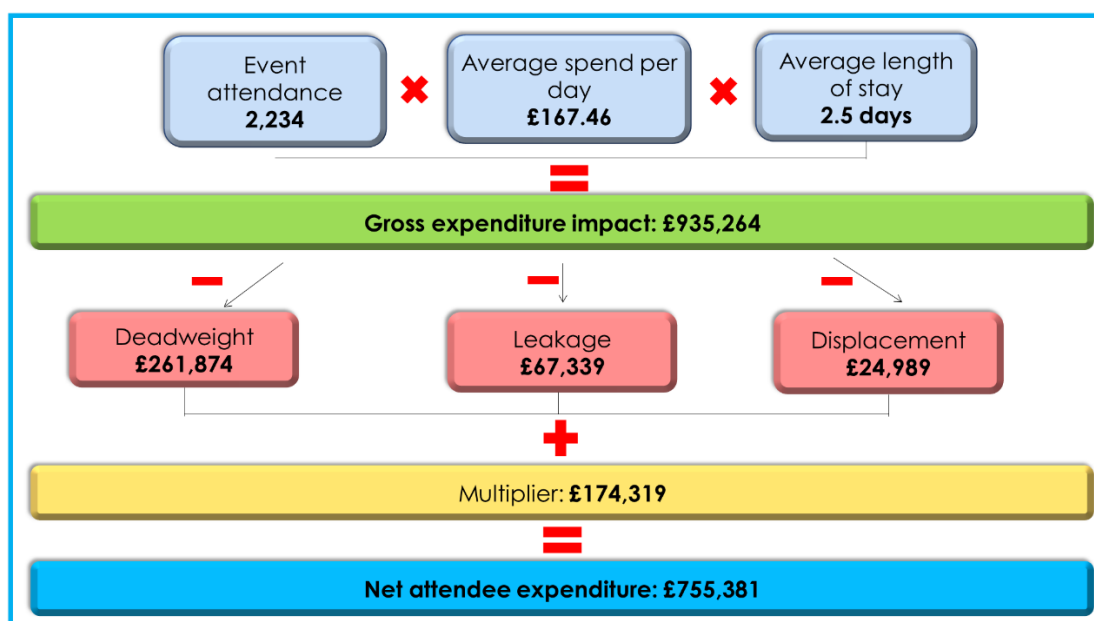
To calculate the net attendee expenditure, GVA and employment impacts the following adjustments were applied:

Deadweight	Money that would have been spent in the area anyway, even if the event hadn't taken place. e.g. spend by attendees for whom the event was not the sole reason for being in the area.
Displacement	The volume of normal activity displaced by an event, for example road closures limiting footfall to some businesses in the local area.
Leakage	Expenditure that took place outside of the local area. e.g. purchases of travel tickets or petrol at the start of the journey.
Multiplier effects	Knock-on benefits resulting from further local supply chain purchases by the businesses that receive the visitor spend (indirect multipliers), or the personal expenditure of their staff (induced multipliers).

Full details of impact methodology are provided in Appendix 1.

4.1 Summary of economic impacts

The figure below shows the net attendee expenditure of the Tour O The Borders on the local economy.

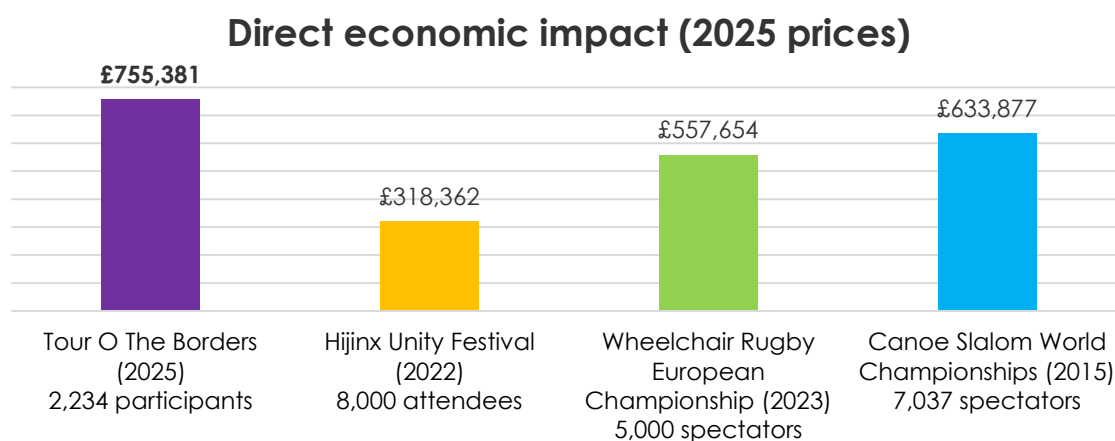


The net expenditure, net employment and net GVA impacts are summarised below. Organiser expenditure on the event was £178,620⁶. The approach assumed a 48% GVA to business turnover ratio, and a GVA per workforce job of £26,350⁷.

Scottish Borders	
Net attendee expenditure	£755,381
Organiser expenditure	£178,620
Total expenditure	£934,001
Net GVA impact	£448,321
FTE employment impact	17.0

4.2 Impact comparators

These impacts compare favourably with the net impacts of other, similarly sized events, which have taken place in the UK over the past few years:



⁶ Includes event staff and volunteers, venue costs, traffic management, production costs and marketing.

⁷ Based on guidance from eventimpacts.com

4.1 Impact measurement limitations

The current economic assessment does not account for potential long-term benefits generated by the event, such as repeat visits to the area or extended stays in other parts of the country influenced by participation.

All spending on parking and merchandise has also been excluded because these items generate revenue for the event organiser. However, the model does not account for any portion of parking expenditure that may have gone to third-party providers.

Additionally, the displacement model relies on feedback from a limited sample of businesses reporting reduced trade, which may not accurately reflect the experience of the wider businesses along the route.

As a result, the findings are likely to represent a conservative estimate of the overall economic impact of the Tour O The Borders on both the local region and the broader Scottish economy.

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Appendix 1 – Tour O The Borders Impact Assessment Methodology

The gross attendee spend figures have been calculated based on the aggregate expenditure of the survey respondents on food and drink, accommodation, entertainment, local travel and shopping/souvenirs, scaled up to the total number of participants. Expenditure on merchandise and parking were excluded from the calculations due to these items being revenue generating for the event organisers. Spend on accommodation was also reduced to account for any revenue generated by the organisers from the official event campsite.

The gross figure was converted to a net economic impact figure based on the following approach:

Deadweight - the proportion of benefits that would have occurred anyway

Deadweight is accounted for by asking the question “how important was Tour O The Borders in your decision to visit the area”. Options included:

- it was my only reason
- it was my main reason
- it was one of several reasons
- it was not a factor in my decision
- I live/work here

It was assumed that anyone that comes to the location solely because of the event should be classified as 0% deadweight; anyone that said it was their main reason should be classed as 25% deadweight, anyone that said it was one of several factors should be classed as 50% deadweight, and that all other spectators should be classed as 100% deadweight.

Leakage - the proportion of benefits that are realised by individuals or organisations located outside the intended target region

Based on experience from previous research studies, leakage was assumed at 10% at a local level.

Displacement - the potential negative effects that one organisation's activities may have on others operating within the same area

Displacement was captured through the business survey by asking “did the event generate any reduction in custom for your business?”. 16% said it did, of those, four were able to tell us what this was in monetary terms. After adjusting for temporal displacement⁸, the average loss in monetary terms was grossed up to the total number of businesses along the route. This was done based on location i.e. 17% of business in Peebles and 75% of businesses in Ettrick and Yarrow reported a reduction in custom through the survey. Businesses that were not opened on a Sunday were removed from the grossing up calculations.

It should be noted that the figure used for deadweight is based on a small sample of businesses.

The multiplier effect - the economic value generated through the procurement of goods and services from external providers and the spending of wages by individuals directly employed by the project or through its supply chain

The multiplier effect captures both the ‘indirect’ impact (expenditures made in the supply chain which are triggered by the event) and the ‘induced’ impact of the event (wage expenditure triggered by the employees of the events and those working in the supply chain).

These are based on industry specific multipliers taken from Scottish Government Input-Output tables.

⁸ The extent to which any reduction in custom during the event was offset by increased business either before or after it - rather than being lost entirely