



Introduction

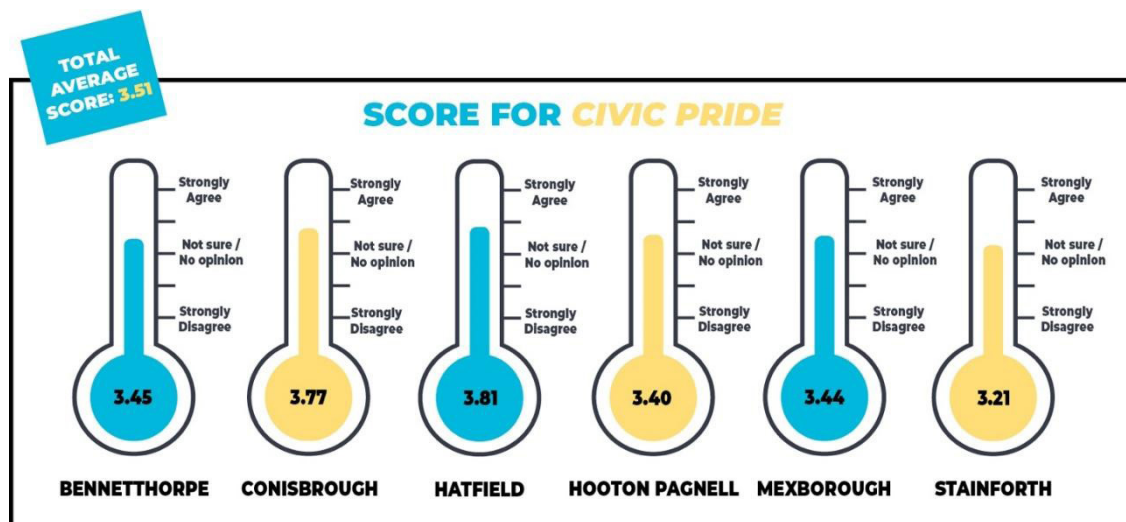
Big events affect communities in many ways, both positively and negatively. Developing a monitoring and evaluation plan starts during the Collaboration Kick-Off, with identifying the social impact objectives – the ‘why’ that underpins the event. Once the ‘why’ is agreed, a systematic and quantifiable approach is needed to measure progress towards the objectives. A helpful way to do this is to use **indicator measures** which should be appropriate, manageable, and focused on community benefits. Social Impact Monitoring Tools that combine **indicator measures** and **event stories** provide a structured and rigorous approach to understanding and communicating social impacts at community and individual scale.

Steps to Social Impact Monitoring Tool Success

1. Align social impact monitoring tools to the objectives of the big event and community needs

Monitoring and evaluation plans should be aligned to the objectives of the big event and community needs. Social impact monitoring tools should also complement other measures such as economic and/or environmental impact monitoring and evaluation. Developing a combined plan increases consistency, makes better use of resources and, most importantly, captures a more complete picture.

However, whilst it is possible to apply monetary values to some social impacts, reducing the value of big events to communities to a monetary figure overlooks the range of social benefits that can result. **Indicator measures** offer an alternative way of measuring impacts in a systematic and quantifiable way. **Indicator measures** should focus on community benefits and quantify progress towards social impact objectives and complement event stories. Indicators can be as simple as recording the number of attendees or hours volunteered, or more complex, such as using multiple scale questions to measure local pride (see example resident survey on page 5). The following example using data from six Doncaster communities during the 2018 Tour de Yorkshire Cycle race, shows how social impact scores can be transformed into a visual barometer to enable civic/local pride to be compared and quantified. Most importantly, approaches such as the barometers are easy to understand.





Every event tells a story

Although quantifying social impact using indicator measures is useful for tracing impact scale, it is important to remember that indicators draw the outline but not the whole picture. By combining **indicator measures** and **event stories**, community and individual experiences can be better understood. **Event stories** involve simply asking respondents to put into their own words how a big event has affected them. **Event stories** can be captured creatively in many ways such as: interviews; social media videos and posts; visitor books; poems; and visual or performance art pieces.

2. Develop appropriate tools for short, medium, and long-term monitoring

When developing tools for capturing **indicator measures** and **event stories** it is helpful to think about the **“What”, “How”, “Where”, “When”, and “Who”**.

What

Social impact monitoring tools do not have to be complicated. The type, duration, and complexity of the evaluation is typically determined by the social impact objectives, scale of the event, and the number of aspects being measured. For smaller community events, having a post-event chat with an organiser to evaluate how it went or to gather feedback on a Microgrant may be all that is needed. However, if the objective, for example, is to understand how a big event affected the wellbeing of a whole community, more detailed information is likely to be required, requiring greater research knowledge, resourcing, and time. It is also important to consider the medium- and long-term monitoring and evaluation requirements so that the sustainability of social impacts arising from a big event can be tracked. This requires advance planning and resource allocation, but is necessary for the detailed understanding of community social impact(s).

How

Once the social impact objectives are determined, attention can be turned to how the monitoring and evaluation will be conducted. An established method for evaluating events and activities is to distribute a survey to attendees/participants on or after the event. This type of survey is quick and easy to administer, either as a hardcopy or electronically, and provides useful data regarding aspects such as what attendees liked and disliked and how events can be improved for the future. When combined with the recording of event stories, these data can build a detailed picture of an event.

However, more complex evaluations such as measuring community wellbeing are likely to require more data, resources, and research expertise. This may involve conducting surveys with residents before and after the event to understand how the event made them feel and examine whether they felt their personal wellbeing had changed as a result. It is also important to consider how the data will be analysed and presented. For example, graphs and tables are great for clearly presenting headline data, but specialist analysis is likely to be required if it is important to explore relationships within the data such as whether different community groups experienced the event differently and whether these differences are statistically significant. Seeking out specialist help from a university or consultancy may be needed in these instances.

Where

It is also important to think about where the study will take place. For example, is the event inside, outside, or both? If the evaluation will take place outside, it pays to think about whether the survey can be conducted in different weather conditions. Big events are also often noisy and crowded, making data collection challenging, so it is important to think about the feasibility of collecting data in those environments. Consideration of researcher and participant safety is also important alongside whether any special permissions, consent or equipment are needed. If the event is taking place at different locations, it will also be necessary to consider the resources needed to conduct the study in multiple places.



When

Consideration of the timescale and scheduling of big events is also important when planning monitoring and evaluation activities. For example, is it important to collect data before, during, and after the event, or will a single point in the event cycle suffice? Daily schedules of big events can also affect data collection timing. For example, in order to understand attendance patterns, it may be necessary to monitor at different times during the day to capture peaks and troughs. Also, if the event takes place at night, it may not be possible to conduct data collection safely in hours of darkness. In this case, alternative methods would need to be found.

Who

Evaluation and monitoring typically relies upon human resourcing, so it is important to think about who will collect and analyse the data. For traditional post event surveys and the capturing of event stories, sufficient resources may exist within the event team. For larger events and more complex studies, specialist research knowledge may be required and should be budgeted for within the event proposal. The role of local people should also be carefully considered within monitoring and evaluation plans. Local people alongside visitors are typically the focus of event research activities, but local people can also be involved in the monitoring and evaluation process which can be beneficial for the success of these activities.

Involving local people and co-creating monitoring and evaluation plans with communities has several benefits, first, involving local people builds community engagement helping support sustainable partnerships for future events. Second, local people know their communities better than external researchers and are able to access groups or individuals that otherwise cannot be reached. In Doncaster, local people have played a pivotal role in monitoring and evaluation plans, working as 'community explorers' to collect data within their communities. This community-based approach has brought much success, but requires training, support, recognition, and reward, such as payment for their work, to maximise the benefits. It should also be recognised that communities may not be harmonious and therefore, understanding existing tensions or divisions, and how these may affect engagement is important. Identifying who will be involved as research subjects also informs the scale of the data collection and how it will be conducted.

3. Evaluate and improve monitoring for future events

An important aspect of evaluation is reviewing what was found out and learning how to improve monitoring and evaluation processes in the future. Key to this is reviewing the consistency of the approach. Consistent approaches better enable information to be compared before, during and after each event. Consistency also makes it easier to repeat the process for future events in the same communities and elsewhere, so impacts can be compared over time. When considering medium and long-term monitoring and evaluation requirements, maintaining community relationships, and working in partnership with event stakeholders is essential to sustain monitoring and evaluation activities. It is also important to clearly communicate new event and activity opportunities as they arise so that communities can get involved with the next big thing, helping maintain the social afterglow of a big event.



Gameplan Example Resident Survey

Introduction

Good morning/afternoon. My name is [insert name] and I am a local resident/worker in this community. I am carrying out research on behalf of [Insert organisation(s)] on the community impacts of the [name of the big event]. This will help us understand what improvements can be made to increase the local benefits of future events. Would it be okay to ask you a few questions about your views on the impact of the event? – it should only take about 15-20 minutes. Your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence and the results will contain no information that may identify you.

If you have any queries about this research, please contact: [insert name and details of person responsible for the survey].

Section 1: About You

Where do you live? **(Please tick)**

[Insert list of locations]

What is your age?

16 - 24

25 - 44

45 - 54

55 - 64

65 - 84

85 +

What is your gender?

Female

Male

Prefer not to say

What best describes what you usually do during the week? (Please tick one box only)

Employed full-time

Employed part-time

In full-time
education

Self-
employed

Looking after home / family

Retired

Unemployed

1. Cast your mind back, which activities have you been involved in for the [Insert name of big event]? (e.g. spectator; watched on TV; organiser of an event etc.)





Section 2: Personal wellbeing

In this section we ask questions about how the [insert name of big event] has had an impact on your personal wellbeing/mental health.

2. Have a think about how having the [insert name of big event] in your area makes you feel and then answer the questions below:

Wellbeing	I strongly agree	I agree	I am not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree	No opinion
The [name of event] helped me to feel optimistic about the future.	5	4	3	2	1	
The [name of event] made me feel more relaxed.	5	4	3	2	1	
Because of the [name of vent] I've been feeling more interested in other people.	5	4	3	2	1	
The [name of event] helped me feel good about myself.	5	4	3	2	1	
The [name of event] helped me feel close to other people.	5	4	3	2	1	
The [name of event] helped me feel more confident.	5	4	3	2	1	
The [name of event] made me more interested in new things.	5	4	3	2	1	

3. Could you explain your answers a little? Tell us why it had (or didn't have) an effect on you and what it is about the [insert name of big event] that made/makes you feel that way?





Section 3: Sense of civic/local pride

In this section we ask questions about how the [insert name of big event] has affected how proud you feel about living in your local area.

4. Reflect on the [insert name of big event] coming to town and how this makes you think about where you live.

Because we have the [insert name of event] I feel that [insert name of location(s)] is ...	I strongly agree	I agree	I am not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree	No opinion
... a good place to live	5	4	3	2	1	
... thriving	5	4	3	2	1	
...less ordinary	5	4	3	2	1	
...improving	5	4	3	2	1	
...prosperous	5	4	3	2	1	
...exciting	5	4	3	2	1	
...welcoming	5	4	3	2	1	
...less depressing	5	4	3	2	1	
...strong on sense of community	5	4	3	2	1	
...attractive	5	4	3	2	1	
...supportive	5	4	3	2	1	
...friendly	5	4	3	2	1	

5. Please can you briefly describe how and why having the [insert name of big event] in [insert name of location] has changed your feelings towards your local area?



Section 4: Sense of community

In this section we ask you questions about how the [insert name of big event] has affected the sense of community where you live.

6. Have a think about how the [insert name of big event] affects how you feel about your community and then answer the questions below:

Community and relationships	I strongly agree	I agree	I am not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree	No opinion
The [name of event] helped me feel trust in others	5	4	3	2	1	
I now know more people because of the [name of event]	5	4	3	2	1	
Because of the [name of the event] I'm more likely to take part in/support community events	5	4	3	2	1	
I feel our community is stronger because of the [name of event]	5	4	3	2	1	
The [name of event] made me feel part of a community	5	4	3	2	1	
The [name of event] made me want to give something back to the community	5	4	3	2	1	
The [name of event] made me feel safer in my community	5	4	3	2	1	
The [name of event] helped me to appreciate people from different backgrounds	5	4	3	2	1	





7. Could you give some examples of...

(a) how the [insert name of big event] has made **you** feel part of the community

(b) where the new people **you** met are from (e.g. neighbours, community groups, volunteers etc)

8. Was there anything that stopped you getting more involved in the [insert name of big event]?

9. What would have made it easier for you to get more involved?

10. If the [insert name of big event] or an event like it comes back to your community, what's the simplest thing that could be done to increase local benefit?

MANY THANKS FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE THIS SURVEY

