

Annual Report

2024/2025

1 April 2024 - 31 March 2025

**Supplier
Development
Programme**

Helping You **Bid Better**



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Introduction to the Supplier Development Programme

The Supplier Development Programme (SDP) is a partnership between Scottish Government, Local Authorities, public bodies, and private sector main contractors, who work together to make their business opportunities accessible to the wider supply chain.

In Scotland, there is an annual public sector spend of £16.6bn, and throughout the rest of the UK there is an annual public spend of £596.2bn. With big spend comes big opportunities!

As a business support initiative, SDP uses training and networking to help Scottish SMEs and supported businesses find and win public sector contracts. This training includes free webinars and in-person events, held across Scotland throughout the year.

By assisting SMEs to become 'tender ready' for public procurement, SDP improves their efficiency, sustainability and market potential, making them more likely to win public contracts. As it helps more businesses win a share of Scotland's public sector contracts, SDP is supporting Community Wealth Building.

SDP's Key Objectives

- Raise awareness of opportunities arising from public sector spend
- Provide training and support on all aspects of public sector tendering
- Improve the tender readiness of local suppliers through early intervention
- Support SDP member organisations to meet the Sustainable Procurement Duty
- Promote links and integrate with other government business support services

SDP Chair Note

Fiona Conti, Chair of the Supplier Development Programme



Fiona Conti is the Strategic Procurement Manager at Commercial and Procurement Shared Service (CPSS) and she has had the responsibility and pleasure of being SDP's Chair since being re-appointed in July 2024.

In her CPSS role supporting Highland, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils, Fiona has been leading on the North of Scotland Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Partnership. The contract award has recently been concluded, with the project entering its delivery phase.

In her role as SDP Chair, Fiona has supported multiple events, including Meet the Buyer 2024 in Glasgow and Meet the Buyer North 2024 in Aberdeen. She has also supported SDP in raising awareness of its work in Community Wealth Building, helping to strengthen local economic impact across Scotland by encouraging SMEs to sign up to SDP and make use of its training and events, which promote equitable access for Scottish SMEs to public sector opportunities.

Fiona said: "I am really looking forward to continuing my work with SDP this year and hope you will all continue to support the Programme through the coordination of training and events at a regional level, and by contributing ideas for the future of SDP.

"In these challenging financial times, SDP continues to provide best in class support for our supply chain, and we will endeavour to ensure that this remains the case. I am delighted to announce that SDP has secured additional funding from the Scottish Government for 2025, which will allow us to continue supporting SMEs and the Scottish supply chain."

Introduction from the Programme Manager

Gillian Cameron, Programme Manager



Over the last year, when talking to our SDP members one thing has become clear, public-sector tendering has many competing priorities.

It's easy to get overwhelmed - particularly if you start thinking about the Sustainable Procurement Duty and Community Wealth Building aspirations far too late in the procurement cycle.

SDP has supported our members implementing key proven strategies to help achieve positive outcomes.

We understand that best-practice procurement can be difficult to implement, so SDP focuses on early market engagement that supports community-based social, economic development and growth.

One of the ways in which we do this is reporting and tracking our members' activity with local suppliers, through robust data collection and supplier feedback, which enriches their contract reports and positively shapes their future work.

This thorough approach has been recognised by the Scottish Government Procurement and Property Directorate, who have this year increased SDP's funding to continue to back its work.

Renewed support from government means SDP can continue to help Scottish SMEs become tender ready and bid for more opportunities across the public sector.

This year has also seen the introduction of our new Customer Development Officer, Amy Peters, who will play a key part in the continued support of SDP's members, keeping them focused forward planning and on early engagement.

Proactive planning has been at the heart of SDP, this year more than ever, as the team adapted to deliver an increased number of events and training sessions, often to tight timescales and complex requirements.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the whole SDP team for their ongoing hard work and positivity.

The Supplier Development Programme is led by its Board. The following individuals served on the board during 2024/2025.

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| • Fiona Conti (chair) | Aberdeen City Council |
| • Councillor Anthony Buchanan: Vice Chair | East Renfrewshire Council |
| • Councillor Chris Cullen | South Ayrshire Council |
| • David Aitken | Inverclyde Council |
| • Councillor David Inglis | Dumfries and Galloway Council |
| • Councillor Heather Brannan-McVey | North Lanarkshire Council |
| • Jane Morrison | Glasgow City Council |
| • Councillor Mark McGeever | South Lanarkshire Council |
| • Councillor Mo Razzaq | South Lanarkshire Council |
| • Pamela Stevenson | Fife Council |
| • Paula Deegan | City of Edinburgh Council |
| • Jackie Hill | Glasgow City Council |
| • Rachael Thomas | Dundee City Council |
| • Councillor Stephen Canning | East Ayrshire Council |
| • Stuart Jamieson | Inverclyde Council |

Ex-officio

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| • Gillian Cameron | SDP Scotland |
|-------------------|--------------|

Secretary to the Board

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| • Elizabeth Bailey | SDP Scotland |
|--------------------|--------------|

During 2024/2025, the following changes were made to the Board appointments:

Re-appointments

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| • Fiona Conti (Chair) | Aberdeen City Council |
| • Councillor Anthony Buchanan (Vice Chair) | East Renfrewshire Council |

New appointments

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| • Mo Razzaq | South Lanarkshire Council |
| • Jane Morrison | Glasgow City Council |

Resignations

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| • Stuart Jamieson | Inverclyde Council |
| • Mark McGeever | South Lanarkshire Council |
| • Jackie Hill | Glasgow City Council |

Supporting our Members

The Supplier Development Programme (SDP) was established in 2007, and is a partnership of Local Authorities, Scottish Government and other public bodies that work together to bring free tendering support to Scottish-based SMEs.

Supplier Membership

SDP Supplier Membership is free and open to Scottish based SMEs and Third Sector organisations, which include charities, social enterprises, supported businesses and voluntary groups. It helps businesses that have little experience of tendering and often no bid team.

Such businesses can miss out on public sector contracts, as they lack resources to dedicate to formal procurement processes.

SDP aims to help these businesses become 'tender ready' for contracts, through training and networking events.

Core Membership

SDP Core Membership is available to Scottish local authorities, for an annual fee.

Through its Core Membership model, SDP helps councils engage potential suppliers, raising early awareness of contract opportunities, and providing Bespoke Training to encourage local businesses, and social enterprises, to participate in the tender or quotation process.

This helps the councils diversify their supply chain and meet their legal obligations under the Sustainable Procurement Duty, Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014.

Affiliate Membership

SDP Affiliate Membership is available to organisations, that connect the public and private sectors. These memberships are available for an annual fee.

Through its Affiliate Membership programme, SDP helps public bodies including anchor institutions, such as the NHS, increase awareness of their pipelines and opportunities. SDP also works with its Affiliate Members to spread the news about their procurement policy updates and helps them meet their Community Wealth Building aspirations. Just as it supports its Corporate Members, SDP supports its Affiliate Members with training, events, marketing and reporting.

Corporate Membership

SDP's Corporate Membership is open to main contractors who wish to open their supply chain and demonstrate how they are seeking to work with local suppliers and social enterprises. Membership is on annual fee basis.

Through its Corporate Membership model, SDP helps main contractors meet and hire local supply chain partners, helping them reach their sustainability and Community Wealth Building goals. SDP does this through Meet the Buyer events, Meet the Contractor events, Talking Tenders training, Aligned Tender training, marketing and reporting support.

Core Membership



Affiliate Members



Corporate Members



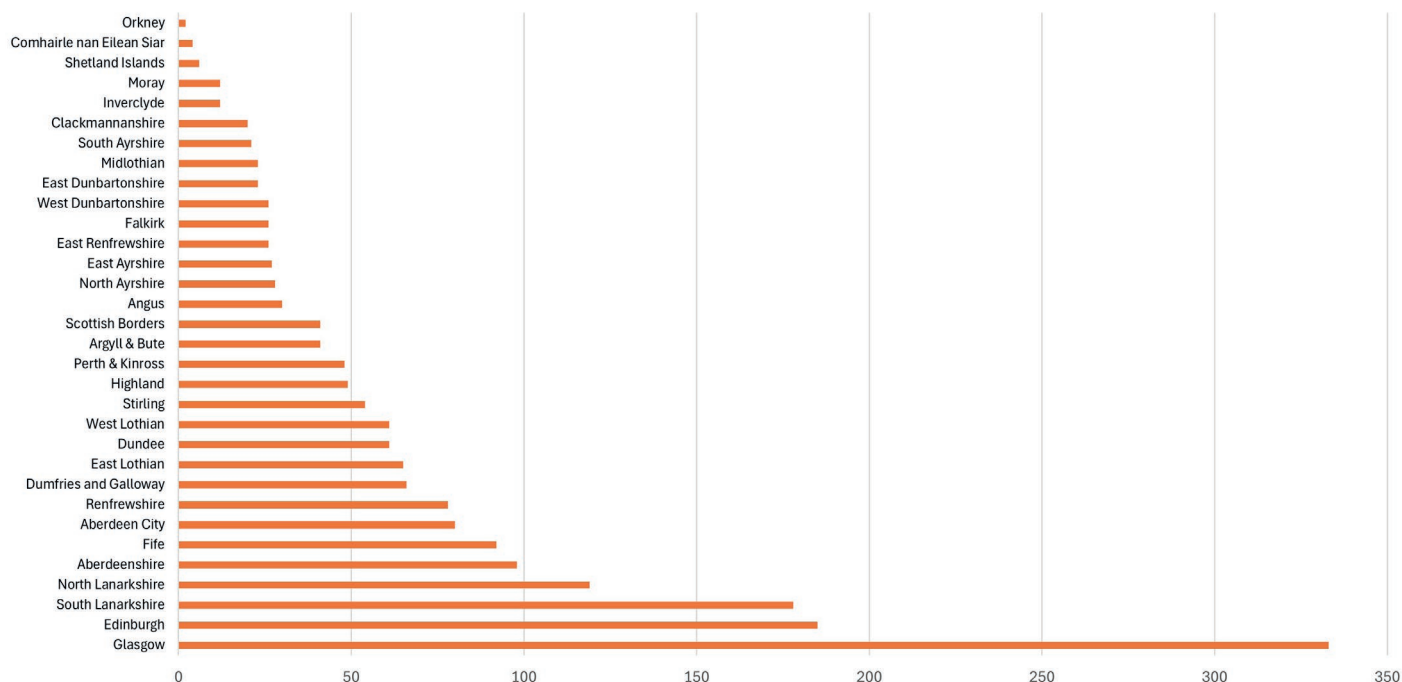
Strategic Objectives: Scottish SME Unique Business Registrations

SDP's work aligns with the National Performance Framework and contributes towards Scottish Procurement's drive to use collective spending power to deliver sustainable economic growth.

Website registrations of Scottish SME unique businesses 1 April 2024 - 31 March 2025	Total to date last year	Cumulative total
1,935	23,552	25,487

SDP had **the target of increasing the Scottish SME Unique Businesses registered with it by 6%**. From 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025, 1,935 Scottish SME unique businesses registered with SDP Scotland, bringing the overall **cumulative total** to 25,487. This is a 8.2% increase in the cumulative total from last year, **meaning SDP surpassed its target by 2.2%.**

Number of Unique SME Registrations



Strategic Objectives: Year-On-Year Increase in Supplier Registrations

From 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025, 1,935 Scottish SME unique businesses registered with SDP Scotland. Looking back at the same period last year 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024, 1,969 Scottish SME unique businesses registered with SDP Scotland. This shows that SDP had a slight decrease in year-on-year rate of growth in Scottish SME registrations of -34 or -1.72%.

While SDP's rate of registration growth was down for Scottish SME unique businesses (from 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025) the number of overall people (from all sizes of businesses) registering with the Programme was 2,804, which was the same figure as the last financial year, showing that there is steady rate of growth in Programme membership.

Local Authorities with the most Registrations

Following a similar trend to last year, registrations from SME unique businesses in Scotland's Central Belt made up the largest percentage of SDP's total new SME members. Suppliers from Glasgow City (17.2%) and Edinburgh (9.6%) contributed to this trend.

This was closely followed by unique Scottish SMEs based in South Lanarkshire (9.2%) North Lanarkshire (6.1%) Aberdeenshire (5%) Fife (4.8%) Aberdeen City (4.1%) and Renfrewshire (4%).

The new Scottish SME registrations in these areas correlate with SDP events that were held in these regions, over this financial year, including: Glasgow City Council webinars, a Supplier Engagement Event in Edinburgh, South Lanarkshire Council webinars, Meet the Buyer North in Aberdeen, Meet the Buyer Fife, and Renfrewshire Council webinars.

SDP's Chair, Fiona Conti, continues to take a proactive approach to help boost SDP registrations in Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and The Highland Councils; as Fiona is Strategic Procurement Manager (Interim) at Commercial and Procurement Shared Service, which works across all three of these councils.

Biggest Year-On-Year Increase in Registrations by Area

The following local authority areas saw the biggest increase in new SME supplier registrations (from last financial year to this financial year) West Dunbartonshire (271%) Clackmannanshire (122%) Argyll and Bute (86%) East Lothian (80%) and South Lanarkshire (60%).

Rise in new SME registrations across West Dunbartonshire correlates with West Dunbartonshire Meet the Real Buyer, held on 27 March 2025; likewise the Clackmannanshire Council Meet the Buyer held in October 2024 increased its local registrations. Argyll and Bute, East Lothian and South Lanarkshire Councils all held Talking Tenders and Aligned Tender training webinars over this period too, which increased the SDP SME registrations in those areas.

Strategic Objectives: Supplier Registrations

Local Authority	Total registrations 2024/2025	Total cumulative registrations 2023/2024	Total cumulative companies registered to 31 March 2025	Annual cumulative percentage increase
Aberdeen City	80	729	809	11%
Aberdeenshire	98	593	691	17%
Angus	30	420	450	7%
Argyll & Bute	41	323	364	13%
Clackmannanshire	20	236	256	8%
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	4	69	73	6%
Dumfries and Galloway	66	602	668	11%
Dundee City	61	698	759	9%
East Ayrshire	27	556	583	5%
East Dunbartonshire	23	340	363	7%
East Lothian	65	335	400	19%
East Renfrewshire	26	346	372	8%
Edinburgh City	185	2483	2668	7%
Falkirk	26	546	572	5%
Fife	92	1200	1292	8%
Glasgow City	333	4077	4410	8%
Highland	49	708	757	7%
Inverclyde	12	237	249	5%
Midlothian	23	454	477	5%
Moray	12	201	213	6%
North Ayrshire	28	507	535	6%
North Lanarkshire	119	1690	1809	7%
Orkney	2	67	69	3%
Perth & Kinross	48	629	677	8%
Renfrewshire	78	924	1002	8%
Scottish Borders	41	511	552	8%
Shetland Islands	6	72	78	8%
South Ayrshire	21	541	562	4%
South Lanarkshire	178	1848	2026	10%
Stirling	54	519	573	10%
West Dunbartonshire	26	260	286	10%
West Lothian	61	831	892	7%
Total	1935	23552	23487	8%

SDP Tender Training for Scotland and SDP eLearning Courses

SDP offers 11 core training courses to Scottish micro, small and medium sized businesses, third sector and supported businesses.

SDP Training

- 1.1 Working with the Public Sector – All You Need to know
- 1.2 Using Public Contracts Scotland (PCS) – How to Find and Bid for Opportunities
- 1.3 Getting your Business Tender Ready – The Checklist
- 1.4 Planning your Bid – Timing and Resources

- 2.1 Passing the Selection Stage – The Single Procurement Document (SPD)
- 2.2 How to Write Outstanding Tenders – The Invitation to Tender (ITT) Stage
- 2.3 Understanding and Bidding – Frameworks and Dynamic Purchasing Systems (DPS)
- 2.4 Improving your Bid Score – Increase Your Tender Win Rate
- 2.5 Responding to Tender Policy Requirements – Power of Procurement

- 3.1 Understanding your Role in Contract Management – Critical Success Factors
- 3.2 Expanding to Sell into the Wider UK Market

Practical Workshop Webinars

- Quick Quotes Made Easy

Other Bespoke Webinars

- Talking Tenders
- Aligned Training

Added Value: Buyer Training

- Understanding the Questions in the Single Procurement Document (SPD) - Buyer Training for SDP Membership Organisations

SDP eLearning Courses

- 1.1 Working with the Public Sector - All You Need to Know
- 1.2 Using Public Contracts Scotland (PCS) – How to Find and Bid for Opportunities
- 1.3 Getting your Business Tender Ready - The Checklist

- 2.1 Passing the Selection Stage – The Single Procurement Document (SPD)
- 2.2 How to Write Outstanding Tenders – The Invitation to Tender (ITT) Stage
- 2.3 Understanding and Bidding – Frameworks and Dynamic Purchasing Systems (DPS)
- 2.4 Improving your Bid Score – Increase Your Tender Win Rate
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- 3.2 Expanding to Sell into the Wider UK Market

Training Attendance and Feedback

From 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025, 6,756 people, including representatives from 4,131 Unique Scottish SME businesses attended 116 events with SDP. This was a 9% increase on the 106 events delivered last year.

This increase in training led to increased engagement, with 4,131 unique Scottish-based SME businesses attending SDP events, up 41% from 2,927 last year. Of the 116 events there were 47 Core Training events, 56 Bespoke Training events, 9 Meet the Buyer events and 4 Meet the Contractor events. Following all of these events, SDP sent surveys to gain attendee feedback on what worked well and what could be improved.

Due to the large numbers of attendees at the Meet the Buyer events, these are analysed in a latter section of the Annual Report, in infographics, showing numbers and feedback from each event. From its (non- Meet the Buyer) events, SDP received 1,035 survey responses, 497 from Core Training, 494 from Bespoke Training and 44 from Meet the Contractor events.

Core Training

SDP hosts Core Training throughout the year to registered SMEs, supported businesses, and charities that are based in Scotland. Companies are encouraged to self-select the training appropriate to them, from Level 1, Level 2, or Level 3.

In this financial year, SDP provided 47 Core Training webinars, which saw 2,367 bookings, and 1,099 attendees, including 1,001 Unique Scottish SME businesses.

Of the 497 people that responded to post event Core Training survey, 96% rated the training 'excellent' or 'good'.

Bespoke Training

SDP has worked with local authorities and other public bodies to align Bespoke Training to actual tenders, improving the tendering capability of SMEs on live opportunities.

In this financial year, SDP organised a total of 56 Bespoke Training sessions, which saw 2,737 bookings, and 1,544 total attendees, including 1,018 Unique Scottish SME businesses.

These sessions included Talking Tenders events (which walked SMEs through requirements of specific contracts) Aligned Tender Training (post-Contract Notice publication events that follow up from Talking Tenders) Supplier Engagement events (led by main contractors working on public sector projects) and Partner Events (where SDP member organisations led the training).

Of the 494 people that responded to post event Bespoke Training survey, 93% rated the training 'excellent' or 'good'.

Meet the Buyer Events

From 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 SDP hosted and supported 9 in person Meet the Buyer events. Collectively these saw 7,661 bookings, and 3,930 attendees including those from 1,990 Unique Scottish SME businesses. Meet the Buyers are networking events, where multiple buyers can engage with suppliers to discuss new projects, contracts, framework opportunities and supply chain developments. Further analysis on Meet the Buyers can be found in the following infographics, showing numbers and feedback from each event.

Meet the Contractor Events

In this financial year, SDP organised a total of 4 Meet the Contractor Events, which saw 292 bookings, and 183 attendees, including 122 Unique Scottish SME businesses. Of the 44 people that responded to post event Meet the Contractor survey, 98% rated the events 'excellent' or 'good'.

External Events

As well as delivering its own training and events, in the last financial year SDP attended and supported 4 external events, including P4H Scotland, Scotland Manufacturing & Supply Chain Conference, Procurex Scotland and Space-Comm.

SDP promoted these events on its website calendar, with bookings and data collection handled directly by the organisers.

SDP Supplier Training Numbers

SDP builds the capability of Scottish SMEs and Third Sector Organisations, to ensure they are 'tender ready' to win new contracts. SDP can evidence that it has improved SME and third sector suppliers' capability to bid, through its training attendance and feedback reporting, as well as in case studies.

1 April 2024 - 31 March 2025	Total Training Sessions	Bookings	Scottish SME Attendees	Unique Scottish SME Businesses
ALL SDP TRAINING				
SDP core training	47	2,367	1,099	1,001
SDP bespoke training	56	2,737	1,544	1,018
SDP Meet the Buyer Events	9	7,661	3,930	1,990
Meet the Contractor Events	4	292	183	122
Totals	116	13,057	6,756	4,131

1 April 2024 - 31 March 2025	Modules	Accessed by	Unique ScottishSME Businesses
SDP ELEARNING TRAINING			
SDP eLearning training	11	328	305

Social Enterprises and SDP Training

Analysing SDP Core Training attendance for FY 2024/25, 55 attendees from 53 organisations classed as a Scottish Social Enterprise/ Charity or Supported Business attended.

Examining SDP Bespoke Training attendance for FY 2024/25, 68 attendees from 64 businesses classed as a Scottish Social Enterprise/ Charity or Supported Business joined them.

Analysing SDP Meet the Buyer attendance for FY 2024/25, 37 attendees from 33 organisations classed as a Scottish Social Enterprise/ Charity or Supported Business attended.

Examining SDP Meet the Contractor attendance for FY 2024/25, two attendees from two organisations classed as a Scottish Social Enterprise/ Charity or Supported Business attended.

Some of the highest engagement from organisations classed as a Scottish Social Enterprise/ Charity or Supported Business was in SDP's Bespoke sessions, including NHSGGC's Writing Compelling bids for the NHS National Community Benefit Gateway (NCBG) Portal, Glasgow City Council session, its Homeless Outreach Services Contract, and Glasgow City Council (HSCP) session on its the Market Facilitation Plan 2024 to 2026.

Breakdown of Unique Scottish SMEs at all SDP Supplier Training by Local Authority

Local Authority	
Aberdeen City	133
Aberdeenshire	139
Angus	55
Argyll & Bute	59
Clackmannanshire	36
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	3
Dumfries and Galloway	105
Dundee City	115
East Ayrshire	55
East Dunbartonshire	49
East Lothian	103
East Renfrewshire	44
Edinburgh City	439
Falkirk	87
Fife	216
Glasgow City	809
Highland	95
Inverclyde	21
Midlothian	38
Moray	28
North Ayrshire	52
North Lanarkshire	298
Orkney	1
Perth & Kinross	91
Renfrewshire	148
Scottish Borders	62
Shetland Islands	10
South Ayrshire	51
South Lanarkshire	466
Stirling	93
West Dunbartonshire	50
West Lothian	121
Unknown Region	59
Total	4131

Training Event Feedback

April 2024
3.1 Understanding Your Role in Contract Management

"We picked up some great snippets to include in our tender returns, and although we are well versed in submissions we can always improve and learn more."

May 2024
Fife Council - Scheme of Tenders/Quick Quotes Made Easy

"Thank you for putting this event on; it addresses an ongoing challenge we have on how to participate (in public sector tendering) as a small business."

June 2024
Aberdeenshire Council - Hard FM Minor Works Framework

"Really enjoyed it, and it was very helpful for a small business trying to navigate PCS and frameworks/tendering."

August 2024
2.1 Passing the Selection Stage - The Single Procurement Document (SPD)

"It was good to get an overview of what could go where and what things you needed to re-check with each submission."

July 2024
2.5 Responding to Tender Policy Requirements - Power of Procurement

"I enjoyed all of the course - it was excellent to have someone who has worked on both sides of the tendering process and could give clear examples of how we can improve our bids."

September 2024
2.2 How to Write Outstanding Tenders - The Invitation to Tender (ITT) Stage

"The preparation section was useful and also the dos and don'ts of what to say in your answers."

November 2024
1.4 Planning Your Bid - Time and Resources

"Very useful to have the insight from an experienced bidder and buyer and to have templates/guide for planning out the work."

October 2024
Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership (GCHSCP) Homeless Outreach Services Contract

"I have been to a couple of SDP events that have really helped build confidence and understanding in relation to tender completion/ bidding."

December 2024
Joint Employability Framework for Stirling and Clackmannanshire Local Authority Areas

"The breakdown of the tendering process, and the different terms and information on the different procurement organisations was useful."

January 2025
2.5 Responding to Tender Policy Requirements - Power of Procurement

"There was some very useful advice about what to include in tender responses in terms of evidence including Fair Work schemes and ways of demonstrating our commitments to Net Zero. I would highly recommend this training to others."

February 2025
1.2 Using Public Contracts Scotland (PCS) - How to Find and Bid for Opportunities

"The trainer hosted the session very well and presented tips and guidance clearly. I really enjoyed following the session and feel more confident navigating the PCS platform."

March 2025
2.2 How to Write Outstanding Tenders - The Invitation to Tender (ITT) Stage

"Seeing how a sample response had been compiled was helpful. I appreciated the Q&A."

Case Studies: Supporting Scotland's Suppliers

Outside the Box grows with SDP Help



Outside the Box provides training, evaluations and development support to community groups to help them start using new services and activities or adapt to changing circumstances. It also helps public service providers engage with their service users. Since participating in SDP tender training and events, Outside the Box has won £117,000 of public sector work.

Early Days

Outside the Box was founded in 2004. In 2020, when its team sought to bid on more public sector contracts, it used the support of SDP, which its team had seen advertised on Public Contracts Scotland.

SDP Training

In April 2020, Outside the Box joined the SDP Core Training webinar **Planning Your Bid**, before going on to complete the **Improving Your Bid Score** module in May that year, and then revisiting the module with other colleagues the following month.

Contract Wins

Soon the team put its learnings into practice, by submitting more public sector bids, and in 2022 Outside the Box won work on the £25k East Lothian Council Dementia Strategy Consultation contract.

Continued Training

Keen to build upon this momentum, the team took further SDP training, by joining the **How to Write Outstanding Tenders** webinar in October 2023. Soon after attending this training the team won a contract with East Renfrewshire to set up an Equalities Forum.

As well as winning the £13k Equalities Forum contract in 2023, Outside the Box was also awarded work on the East Lothian Adult Learning contract, worth £25k, that year. The success didn't stop there, the following year Outside the Box won work on the Wild Strathfillan Nature Restoration Initiative £8k contract and the NatureScot National Park Consultation £30k project.

SDP Events

The Outside the Box team spread the word of its success at SDP networking events. In March 2025 the team joined delegates at West Dunbartonshire Meet the Real Buyer and the next month they attended Glasgow Meet the Real Buyer. These events connected the team to council buyers and procurement officials, allowing them to get updates on their upcoming opportunities.

Ruth Noble, Community Development Adviser, Outside the Box said: "SDP training and events helped us discover how to find relevant opportunities, how to break down a bid, and how to approach costings and policies."

24/7 Elite Healthcare Wins Place on NLC Flexible Framework for Self-Directed Support



24/7 Elite Healthcare Ltd is a Scottish home care provider that registered with the Care Inspectorate in June 2024. In Autumn 2024 the business renewed its SDP tender training, and by February 2025 it had won a place on the £800m, Self-Directed Support Flexible Framework in North Lanarkshire.

Early Days

When planning her business in 2020, registered nurse Jesca Masiyazi knew that she wanted to continue to work in health care, and to operate within the public sector, but she was unsure which route to take to market. She discovered SDP through her Business Gateway adviser and started doing its tender training. While participating in training, Jesca discovered that local authorities advertise their healthcare opportunities through Public Contracts Scotland (PCS) and often use Framework Agreements to procure.

SDP Training

Armed with this knowledge, Jesca participated in the SDP webinar **Understanding and Bidding - Frameworks and Dynamic Purchasing Systems (DPS)**, to learn how to apply to a Framework Agreement. She also joined SDP webinars that helped improve her bid writing. With her sights set on winning local authority contracts, Jesca established 24/7 Elite Healthcare, and got it registered with the Care Inspectorate in June 2024.

Continued Training

Once her business was formed, Jesca went back to the SDP website and followed through the training from the Level 1 course to the end Level 3, and at times repeated sessions to refresh her knowledge.

SDP Events

After gaining confidence in training, Jesca signed up for SDP networking events, to introduce her business to local authority buying teams. Between October and November 2024, Jesca attended SDP Meet the Buyer South as well as Fife and Lanarkshire Meet the Buyer events.

Framework Win

After months of training and networking, Jesca felt ready to bid when the North Lanarkshire Council Self-Directed Support Flexible Framework tender was advertised. She submitted the bid in December 2024, and in February 2025 she was notified that she had won a place on the £800m Framework Agreement. By joining this Framework, 24/7 Elite Healthcare entered into a shortlist of suppliers who can be selected to provide care and home care services for North Lanarkshire Council.

Jesca said: "I would encourage every business, new and experienced, to work with SDP and use their training and events. The Programme is marvellous! The training is very inclusive, and trainers are patient enough to answer any question. Everyone feels respected and valued!"

2024-2025 Meet the Buyer Events

15 April 2024

Dumfries and Galloway
Meet the Buyer - Dumfries

- 273 registered
- 173 attended

23 April 2024

Meet the Buyer
Newton Stewart

- Dumfries and Galloway
- 80 registered
- 40 attended

5 June 2024

Meet the Buyer National

- 3169 registered
- 1585 attended

11 September 2024

Meet the Buyer North

- 1040 registered
- 590 attended

19 September 2024

RJ McLeod
Meet the Contractor Crystal Rig
10am

- 27 registered
- 10 attended

29 October 2024

Meet the Buyer South

- 506 registered
- 247 attended

2pm

- 20 registered
- 101 attended

7 November 2024

Fife Council Meet the Buyer

- 581 registered
- 313 attended

14 November 2024

City of Edinburgh Council
Supplier Engagement Event

- 310 registered
- 143 attended

20 November 2024

Lanarkshire
Meet the Real Buyer

- 819 registered
- 394 attended

4 March 2025

Meet the Buyer Tayside

- 607 registered
- 355 attended

27 March 2025

West Dunbartonshire
Meet the Real Buyer

- 462 registered
- 233 attended

Meet the Buyer Events

Supplier Development Programme

Meet the Buyer 2024

3,169

People registered

1,585

Attended on the day

689

Unique Scottish SME businesses attended



80+ Exhibitors

Including headline partners: Scottish Government, Scotland Excel and sponsors NHS NSS, APUC, Glasgow Caledonian University, hub South West Scotland, PODS Health and Bumblebee EV

199

of those who attended Meet the Buyer National 2024 gave feedback.

97%

felt more confident about bidding for public sector contracts after attending the event.

85%

were encouraged to consider bidding for more contracts following the event.



Suppliers said:

"It taught me so much about the pathway to bid for business. Everyone I spoke to at the stalls were very friendly, and the workshops were informative. I will be acting upon what I learned, in fact, we have changed our whole business strategy around this."

84%

of attendees were planning to actively pursue opportunities with organisations they met.

78%

of attendees rated the event 'Excellent' or 'Good'.

Exhibitors said:

"The event was packed and I know our stalls were busy all day. Great work from SDP."

www.sdpscotland.co.uk/events-mtb/

Supplier Development Programme

Meet the Buyer North 2024

1,040

Suppliers registered

590

Attended on the day

364

attendees were from 271 unique Scottish SMEs



35 Exhibitors

Including headline partners: Scottish Government, Scotland Excel, and the Commercial and Procurement Shared Services, as well as sponsors NHS National Services Scotland and CITB.

129

of those who attended Meet the Buyer North 2024 gave feedback.

95%

of respondents rated Meet the Buyer North 2024 as 'Good' or 'Excellent'

95%

felt this event helped to make useful connections that could benefit their business in the future



Suppliers said:

"Fantastic set up and lots of very knowledgeable people to help make the experience very enjoyable and insightful. We've come away from Meet the Buyer North in a stronger position than beforehand for sure."

100%

of exhibitors that responded rated Meet the Buyer North 2024 as 'Good' or 'Excellent'

100%

of exhibitors that responded felt this event provided an opportunity to engage with new suppliers

Exhibitors said:

"From start to finish, it was a great set up. The footfall was fantastic and we got a lot from the attendees we met. All in brilliant event!"

<https://www.sdpscotland.co.uk/events-mtbn-2024/>

Supplier Development Programme

Meet the Buyer South 2024

506

People registered

247

Attended on the day

127

Unique Scottish SME businesses attended

20

Exhibitors in attendance on the day

Including Supplier Development Programme, Scottish Borders Council, East Lothian Council, Scottish Government, Balfour Beatty, Scotland Excel, Scottish Procurement Alliance, South of Scotland Enterprise, and many more...

93%

of supplier survey respondents rated the event as 'Good' or 'Excellent'

91%

of respondents felt the event helped them make useful connections that could be beneficial in the future

91%

of respondents are actively planning to pursue opportunities with 1 or more exhibitors



Suppliers said:

"I really enjoyed the event. It was great to meet and network with so many new businesses. There was a great buzz on the day, and everyone was so nice and helpful. Thank you."

Exhibitors said:
"Bustling, enthusiastic crowd of suppliers, many of which were new and quite innovative – well worth the trip to Galashiels!"

100%

of exhibitors responding to the survey rated the event as 'Good' or 'Excellent'

100%

of exhibitors responding to the survey would participate in future Meet the Buyer events

Regional Meet the Buyer Events

Supplier Development Programme

MTB Dumfries Roadshow 2024

286

Total Registered Suppliers

173

Attendees on the day

83

Attendees from unique Scottish SME businesses



"It was useful to meet the people behind the projects in which we are chasing business."

100%

of visitors rated the event 'Excellent' or 'Good'

86%

of businesses said they were more likely to bid for contracts after attending the event

78%

suppliers said they felt more capable of bidding for contracts after attending the event

18

Exhibition Stands on the day
Including Scotland Excel, Scottish Procurement Alliance, NHS D&G, Ashleigh Construction, Wheatley Group, and Vattenfall.

100%

of exhibitors rated the event 'Excellent' or 'Good'

83%

of exhibitors said they would like to exhibit at similar events in the future

Exhibitors said:

"There was good attendance, and quite a few suppliers new to us and some interesting chats around potential future opportunities."

www.sdpScotland.co.uk/events-mtb/

Supplier Development Programme

MTB Newton Stewart Roadshow 2024

85

Total Registered Suppliers

40

Attendees on the day

22

Attendees from unique Scottish SME businesses



"It was great to put faces to names, to pick up ideas, and to have the opportunity to make contacts we would not normally come across."

100%

of visitors rated the event 'Excellent' or 'Good'

100%

suppliers felt more capable of bidding for contracts after attending

90%

of businesses were more likely to bid for contracts after attending

10

Exhibitors on the day
Including, NHS D&G, hub South West, Wheatley Group, Clark Contracts, Morgan Sindall, FSB, SOSE and Business Gateway.

90%

of those asked rated the exhibitors and speakers as 'Excellent' or 'Good'

Visitors said:

"We were given details for people within the procurement team who we can contact for advice, which will be very helpful going forward."

www.sdpScotland.co.uk/events-mtb/

Supplier Development Programme

Fife Council Meet the Buyer 2024

581

People registered

313

Attended on the day

181

Unique Scottish SME businesses attended

35

Exhibitors in attendance on the day

Including Supplier Development Programme, Fife Council, NHS Fife, BAM Construction, Balfour Beatty, Federation of Small Businesses, PFI Scotland, Scotland Excel, Scottish Enterprise and more...

98%

of respondents rated the event as 'Good' or 'Excellent'

97%

of respondents rated the exhibitors and speakers as 'excellent' or 'good'.

86%

of respondents said they are more likely to bid for contracts after attending this event.



Suppliers said:

"I found the venue to be an excellent choice, and there was a good spread of buyers who play a pivotal role within the industry in and around Fife."

Regional Meet the Buyer Events

Supplier Development Programme

Lanarkshire Meet the 'Real' Buyer 2024

823

People pre-registered for the event

394

Attended on the day

215

Unique Scottish SME businesses attended

26

Exhibitors in attendance on the day

Including a range of North and South Lanarkshire Council services, Supplier Development Programme, Business Gateway, NHS Lanarkshire, BAM Construction, Hochtief, Laing O'Rourke, and more...

91%

of respondents rated the event as 'Good' or 'Excellent'

94%

of respondents rated the exhibitors as 'excellent' or 'good'.

88%

of respondents rated engagement with exhibitors as 'Good' or 'Excellent'.



Suppliers said:

"I wasn't sure what to expect, but I found everyone very helpful and very eager to support small businesses. I found SDP extremely helpful, and they were good at explaining the jargon."

Supplier Development Programme

West Dunbartonshire Meet the 'Real' Buyer

462

People pre-registered for the event

233

Attended on the day

140

Unique Scottish SME businesses attended



9 Exhibitors were there on the day including West Dunbartonshire Council Procurement Team, NHS Golden Jubilee, NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde, Scotland Excel, and Working4U.

75%

of respondents rated the exhibitors as 'excellent' or 'good'

67%

of respondents said that they were more likely to bid for contracts after attending this event

58%

of suppliers felt more capable of bidding for contracts after attending



Suppliers said:

"Meeting the people on each stand made it a worthwhile commercial decision to spend time at the event."

Supplier Development Programme

Meet the Buyer Tayside 2025

618

Total Registered Suppliers

355

Attendees on the day

271

Unique Scottish SME businesses



"Meeting all the buyers and being able to introduce ourselves and gain a better understanding of some of the frameworks was particularly useful."

86%

of visitors rated the event 'Excellent' or 'Good'

76%

of businesses were more likely to bid for contracts after attending

67%

suppliers felt more capable of bidding for contracts after attending

35

Exhibitors on the day

Including, NHS Tayside, Dundee & Angus College, Balfour Beatty Construction, Tayside Contracts, Hillcrest, Tilbury Douglas and Robertson Tayside.

93%

of those asked rated the exhibitors as 'Excellent' or 'Good'

Visitors said:

"The presentations on tendering gave me a better understanding of the process involved. Found all the exhibitors to be very helpful."

www.sdpscotland.co.uk

Social Media Analysis

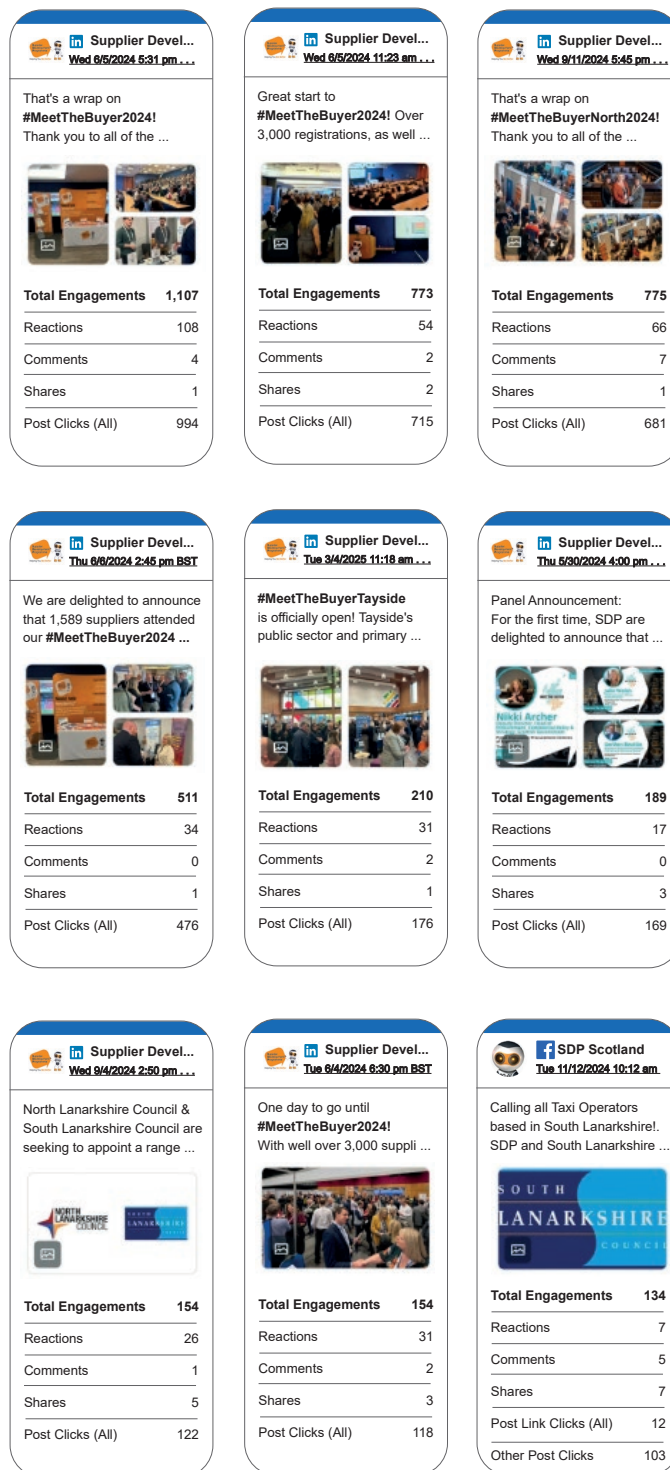
SDP uses social media to share information on upcoming training opportunities, events, market information, media releases, news, contract opportunities and other items of note relating to procurement, Public Contracts Scotland, and SDP member organisations.

During 2024/2025, SDP encouraged suppliers and partners to utilise hashtags, including:

#HelpingYouBidBetter
 #PowerOfSDP
 #SupplierOpp
 #10DR
 #MeetTheBuyer2024
 #MeetTheBuyerNorth2024
 #MeetTheBuyerSouth2024

Additionally, to maximise efforts in the public sector to be open and transparent in communications around public sector procurement, SDP utilises a joined-up approach to support the Scottish Government Procurement Communications Strategy with the use of the following hashtags:

#PowerOfProcurement
 #GoodForBusiness



Platform	2023/2024	2024/2025	% change in followers
Facebook	885	918	Increased by 4%
LinkedIn	3067	3771	Increased by 23%
Twitter (X)	3462	3355	Decreased by 3% *
YouTube	207	250	Increased by 21%

* Following the rebrand of Twitter to X and changes in the platform's management, SDP has seen a decrease in its followers, this could be due to the platform's decreased resonance among SDP stakeholders.

SDP plays a vital role in helping Scottish SMEs understand and engage with Scottish Government policies, including the principles of Community Wealth Building (CWB).

A key pillar of CWB is Progressive Procurement. Throughout the year, SDP delivered a series of events and webinars designed to raise awareness, strengthen local supply chains, and connect businesses with new opportunities. These sessions highlighted the importance of local employment and keeping wealth within communities. Attendees primarily included Scottish SMEs, employee-owned businesses, social enterprises, co-operatives, and community-led organisations.

As the public sector looked to encourage consortium bids, SDP worked with Co-Operative Development Scotland (CDS) to provide training on The Consortium Model of Bidding for Bigger Contracts, helping suppliers consider bidding collectively for larger tenders.

In addition, SDP hosted a variety of webinars and events focusing on Net Zero, green and renewable energies, supporting suppliers to understand how to align their operations and bids with Scotland's climate emergency targets.

By working in partnership with the Scottish Government and our member organisations, SDP provides a practical mechanism for delivering these key policies, helping to build stronger, fairer, and more sustainable local economies. Below are the webinars and events that specifically focused on these topics:

- 23 April 2024: 2.5 Responding to Tender Policy Requirements (including Community Benefits and Net Zero targets).
- 24 May 2024: Talking Tenders with Nature Scot (Peatland Restoration).
- 5 June 2024: Meet the Buyer National, with a Supported Business Zone, as well as other exhibitors including the Energy Technology Partnership (ETP), Historic Environment Scotland, Living Wage Scotland, Social Security Scotland and Zero Waste Scotland.
- 3 July 2024: Talking Tenders with Nature Scot (Peatland Restoration).
- 4 July 2024: Talking Tenders with Nature Scot (Peatland Restoration).
- 9 July 2024: 2.5 Responding to Tender Policy Requirements.
- 28 August 2024: Co-operative Development Scotland (CDS) - the Consortium Model of Bidding for Bigger Contracts.
- 11 September 2024: Meet the Buyer North 2024, which included Historic Environment Scotland, Energy Saving Trust, and Living Wage Scotland as exhibitors.
- 2 October 2024: 2.5 Responding to Tender Policy Requirements.
- 8 October 2024: Forestry and Land Scotland - Seed Collection & Associated Services Bidder Information and Aligned Tender Training Session.
- 22 October 2024: GCHSCP Homeless Outreach Services Contract Webinar.
- 29 October 2024: Writing compelling bids for the NHS National Community Benefit Gateway (NCBG) portal for the Greater Glasgow Area.
- 29 October 2024: Meet the Buyer South 2024, which included Just Enterprise and Social Enterprise Scotland as exhibitors.
- 31 October 2024: Clackmannanshire Council Meet the Contractor, which included Clackmannanshire Council's keynote on Community Wealth Building.

Supporting Scottish Government Policy and Community Wealth Building

- 7 November 2024: Fife Meet the Buyer 2024, which included Centre for Engineering, Education and Development, Employability Fife, ESES Communities, Fife Council Economic Development, Fife Council Affordable Housing Programme, and Skills Development Scotland as exhibitors.
- 14 November 2024: City of Edinburgh Council: Supplier Engagement Event, which included a keynote on CEC Community Wealth Building, Community Benefits and Innovation Teams.
- 16 January 2025: Talking Tenders - Clean Heat Procurement.
- 21 January 2025: The Highland Council - Energy Efficiency Framework.
- 23 January 2025: Talking Tenders - Clean Heat Procurement.
- 23 January 2025: 2.5 Responding to Tender Policy Requirements.
- 27 February 2025: South Lanarkshire Council, Community Benefit supplier meeting.
- 4 March 2025: Meet the Buyer Tayside, which included Dundee Fair Trade Forum, Social Enterprise Scotland and Social Security Scotland as exhibitors.
- 27 March 2025: West Dunbartonshire Meet the Real Buyer, which included Working4U (employability business support) as an exhibitor.

Contact us



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