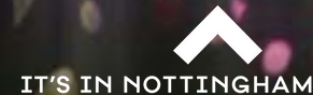


NOTTINGHAM LIGHT NIGHT

2023 Evaluation



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



**Nottingham
City Council**

Background

The 2023 event, held on Friday 3 and Saturday 4 February, was the 15th annual Light Night in Nottingham. The city was transformed after dark through illuminations, spectacle, music and outdoor arts, with an extensive programme of participatory activities.

The event aims to:

- Enhance the evening economy in Nottingham city centre
- Bring partners together to create a destination event
- Showcase artistic and creative offerings from local communities
- Increase happiness and wellbeing through culture in what can be a dark and depressing time of year
- Programme high quality art, attracting local and regional visitors
- Promote a sense of pride in the city and encourage residents to see the city in a different light
- Open buildings and spaces during the evening which may usually be inaccessible at this time

Figures throughout this document are estimated using data compiled from visitor and partner questionnaires, financial reporting, footfall counts and digital metrics.



Highlights

There were over 30 light installations, performances and participation activities across the city centre.

Evanescent - Sneinton Market Square



Re-Move - St Mary's Church



Neon Dogs - Hounds Gate

Art Matters - Robin Hood Statue



Sub:Version - Tom Dale Company & Inspire Youth Arts, Nottingham Contemporary



City Arts Lantern Parade - Lister Gate



The Nectary - Carrington Street



Fear The Light - Sussex Street



Kaira Kafo - Trinity Square Music Stage



Ode to - Lister Gate



Enchanted Forest - Sneinton Market Avenues





Headlines



103,000

Total footfall



288+

Artists and creatives
involved



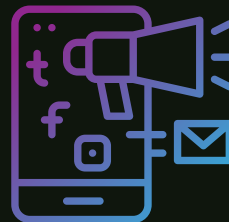
29%

New audience (not visited
Light Night previously)



32

Cultural partners
involved



1.2M+

Digital marketing
reach



36

Events across the city

Partner Summary

Light Night 2023 built on partnerships established in previous years. These included:

- **Inspire Youth Arts** followed on from their work at Light Night 2022 with an installation at St Mary's Church - Re-Move - continuing their collaboration with visual artist Rebecca Smith and composer/sound designer CJ Mirra.
- **Tom Dale Company** returned to Nottingham Contemporary with Urban Explorers, their flagship annual dance project integrating professionals with youth dancers from across Nottinghamshire (working in partnership with Inspire Youth Arts).
- **City Arts** again showcased their impressive illuminated puppets in the popular lantern parade, along with a window exhibition of previous artwork.
- **Fun Chorus** and **Nottingham Ukulele Orchestra** were back to perform at Trinity Square's music stage.
- **The Canal & River Trust** illuminated Castle Wharf for another year.



Cultural Impact

- 288+ artists and creatives involved
- 122+ paid artist days
- 4 large-scale installations showcased
- 4 commissions
- 1 co-commission



Feedback from artists and creatives:

- "The overall curation, some really striking central pieces in Old Market Square and Sneinton Market, set the tone for the whole event."
- "There was a real range of activity and installations. Good to see so many families and young people out in the city enjoying the event. It felt very busy at times but calm and well organised. Can I give a shout out to the tech team who were incredibly helpful, skilled and did their best to make our event so good. We felt well looked after. Equally I found working with Richard Buxton and Shambu Ramesh incredibly helpful, responsive and made the whole process of our first time involved in Light Night a pleasure, thank you."
- "App and general promotion of events was improved. Curation and programming felt higher quality with some impressive commissioned and bought-in works. Audiences in good spirits."
- "There is not as much community involvement as there was in the past, in recent years it seems to be more focused on business than community."

Partner Workshops

As part of their commissions, City Arts and Graham Elstone held workshops with schools, groups and the public.

City Arts

St Ann's 92nd Scouts: 17 children and 5 adults at two workshops each

Greenway Youth Club: 16 children at two workshops each

Meander disability led theatre group: 15 adult participants and two group leaders

Public workshop 1: 19 adults and children

Public workshop 2: 15 adults and children

Public workshop 3: 11 adults and children

Public workshop 4: 12 adults and children

Graham Elstone

Rosehill Special School: 10 pupils

Southglade Primary: 30 pupils



Evanescent - Sneinton Market Square

Partner Feedback

What did you feel was successful about Light Night?

- "A good selection of work spread through the city, paid commissions for artists to make new and impactful artworks that were well received by the audience."
- "A great family friendly feel about the whole city."
- "It was great to see that people remembered our venue and came back. The app seemed to work well for those who have a smart phone. There was a friendly atmosphere around the city and of course the weather was kind to us this year which helped. Light Night is a great event for the city to host and it was lovely to see the town buzzing again following covid. We met people who had travelled in from further afield just for Light Night including from Hull. Light Night enabled people to have an enjoyable evening out even if they couldn't afford to spend any money."



Nottingham Cathedral [Follow](#)

It was our first time on the Light Night trail and we LOVED it! Here's to next year! ❤️

[Like](#) [Reply](#) [Hide](#) 2 w



Business Feedback

A post-event business survey was conducted by Nottingham BID.

63% found the event of benefit to their business

87% found the event of benefit to the city

72% would be happy to recommend the event to another business
(Based on scores out of 10)

Feedback:

- "Great event for the city, really put Nottingham on the map, social media presence was everywhere."
- "Glad Nottingham does it, doesn't benefit the business... but will for the night time economy and independents."
- "We could really see a difference on the Saturday, great buzz in the city."
- "It would be great to have more community city centre activities."
- "More could be done with Victoria Centre."
- "Really nice atmosphere, felt like Christmas was back."
- "Great to see so much footfall in the city - absolutely brilliant."



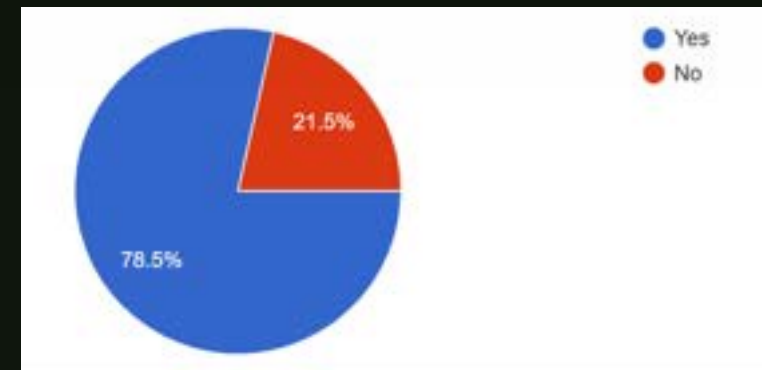
Marketing (from visitor survey)

Online survey issued via an app push notification, social media and newsletter - based on 335 responses (352 last year).

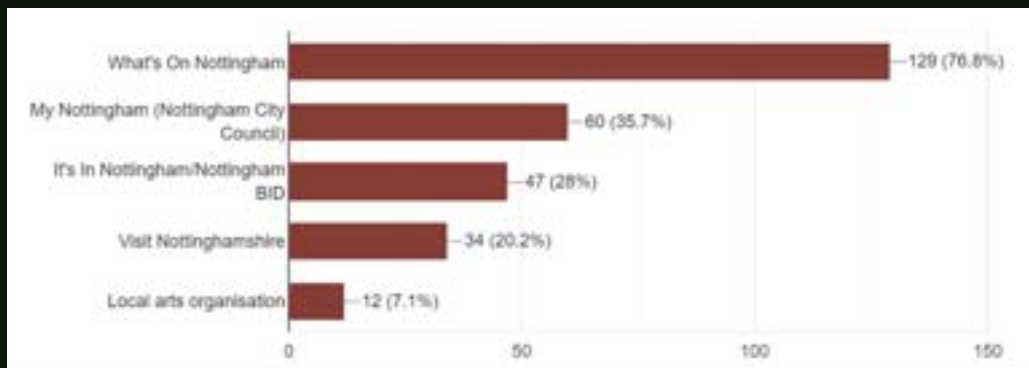
Where did you find out about this year's Light Night?

- What's On Nottingham Weekly email (111) **33%**
- Facebook (99) **29%**
- Other social media (34) **10%**
- What's On Nottingham website (23) **7%**
- Word of mouth (22) **7%**
- Poster or banner (19) **6%**
- Attended previously (16) **5%**
- News or radio (11) **3%**

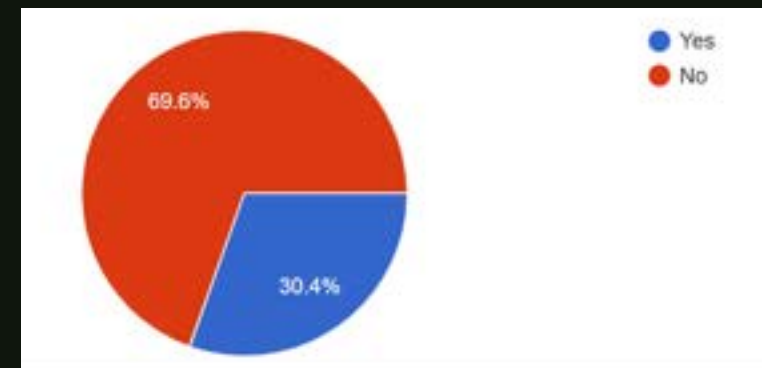
Did you use the Light Night mobile app?



Which page/organisation are you following on social media?



Did you pick up a printed guide?



Digital Marketing Reach

What's On Nottingham website visits

Event page visits up to 4 February: 27,891

Event day visits:

Friday: 3,227 Saturday: 7,441

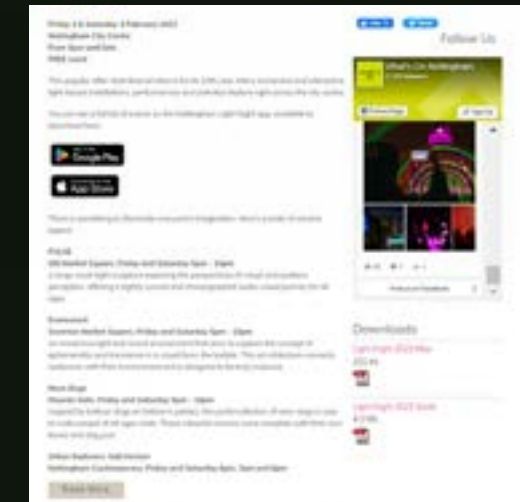
of which 7,347 accessed by mobile

Visits to What's On homepage: 62,609

Organic social media

Activity from 20 January - 5 February across

What's On Nottingham and My Nottingham channels



Facebook (19 posts, 1 event)

Impressions: 211,985

Reach: 228,121

Engagement: 19,414

(NB 5 shared posts - insights not available)

Instagram (6 posts, 2 reels, 59 stories)

Impressions: 59,775

Reach: 52,955

Engagement: 4,550

Reel views: 10,241

Story views: 44,253

(average 750 per story)

Twitter (31 tweets/retweets)

Impressions: 35,625

Engagement: 1,108

E-newsletters

Featured in three What's On Weekly newsletters, as well as a solus covering: app downloads, travel, food and drink and event highlights.

- 47,850 subscribers per edition
- 106,923 total opens
- Average open rate 37% (up from 34% last year)



Light Night was also featured in two bulletins sent from the Leader of Nottingham City Council.

- 49,510 subscribers per edition
- 58,673 total opens
- Average open rate 38% (up from 32% last year)

Digital - Paid Ad

A carousel advert was created for promotion across Facebook and Instagram.

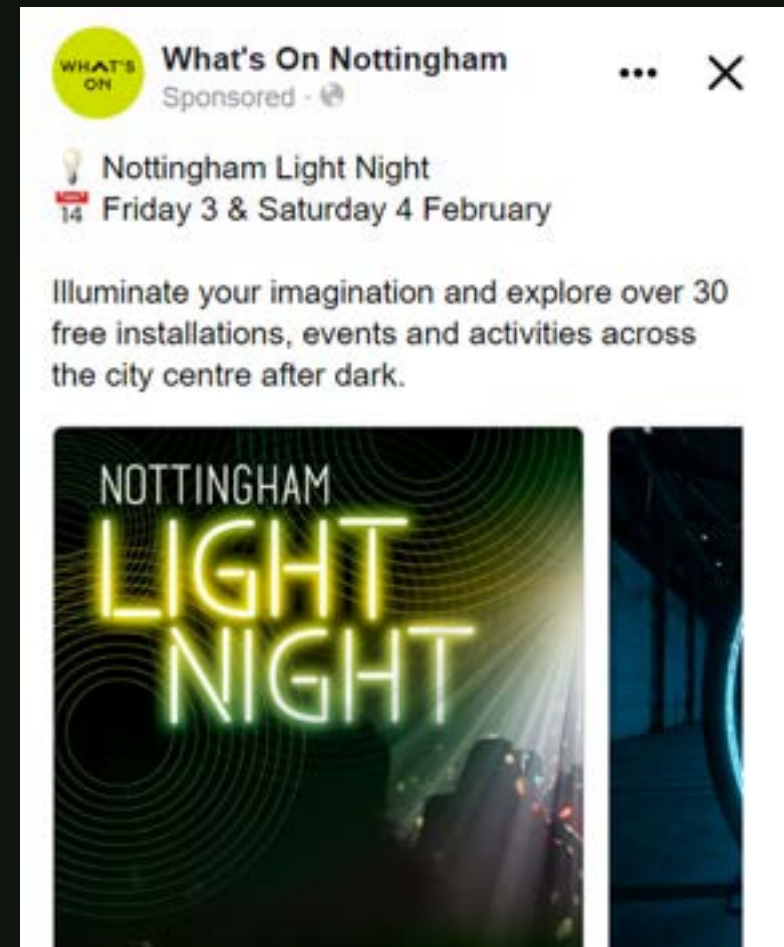
£162.75 was spent overall due to a limit set on the daily budget by Meta, over 3 days from 1 February - 4 February. The advert needs to go live earlier in future.

Targeting outside of Nottingham City Centre within a 10-15 mile radius.

Reach: 31,835

Link clicks: 1,498

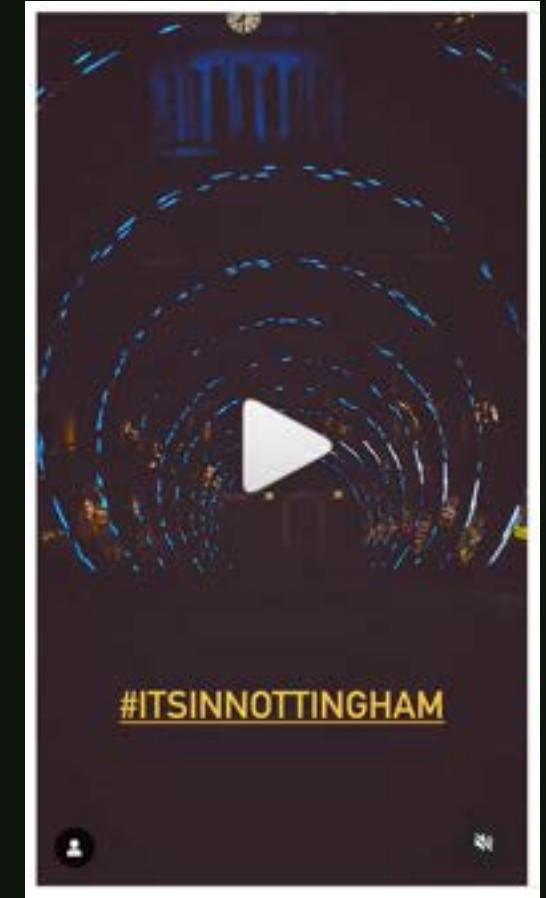
Cost per click: £0.11



Video

Nottingham BID created two videos of the installations using drone footage.

They had 24.5K views on Instagram.



It's In Nottingham letters - Robin Hood Statue



Nottingham BID

Nottingham BID digital marketing metrics:

Social media

Total organic impressions (Instagram & Facebook): 356,711

Total engagements: 34,069

Website

Total page views for Light Night webpage: 8,546

(January: 4,368 February: 4,178)

Unique visitors to Light Night webpage: 5,935

Total page views for It's In Nottingham website:

January 23,999 February: 17,602

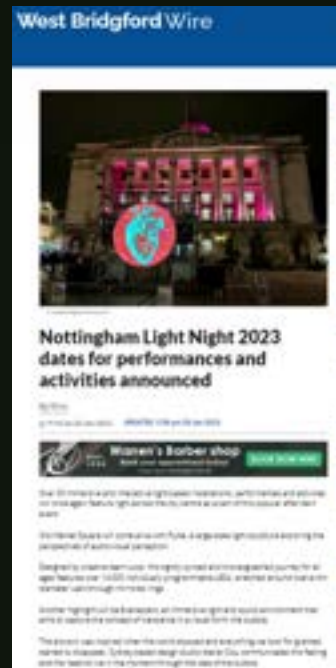
(compared to January: 11,972 February: 11,766 in 2022)

Unique visitors to It's In Nottingham website: 23,223



Media Coverage

Press release issued to local and national press comprising 150 media, arts and events organisations.



BBC East Midlands, West Bridgford Wire, Nottingham Post, Notts TV, BBC Radio Nottingham and ITV Central pre-event coverage.

Signage and Advertising

Five totem display units (1.3 x 2.4m) were placed around the city in the main zones - Old Market Square, Trinity Square, Robin Hood Statue, Sussex Street and Sneinton Market Square. Each displayed a map of the area with event locations, QR codes to the website and app downloads, and leaflet holders for the printed guides.

Digital screens were displayed at Loxley House and the Tourism Centre on Smithy Row. A half page advert was placed in Left Lion magazine.



Printed Guide

The printed guide was A3 folded to A5, with a print run of 4,000 available from the Tourism Centre and totem dispensers - map and listings were also available on the website.
62% of visitors rated the guide as Very Good or Good.



Following feedback from last year's guide, a white background was used to make it easier to read in the dark. All events were listed, with a selection of highlights given longer blurbs.



City Dressing

Council House banner and Old Market Square feature masts were in place from 20 January - 6 February.



5 railing banners were displayed on trunk routes to each gateway of the city.



Mobile App

63% of visitors rated the app as Very Good or Good. App usage was approximately double that of 2022.

IoS

Each user spent an average of 4.2 minutes on the app. In total there were 8K sessions on Friday and 13K sessions on Saturday.

Date	New Users	Returning* Users	Total Users
Friday 3 February	1,100	616	1,716
Saturday 4 February	998	945	1,943



IoS
3,659 users



Android
2,886 users



Total
6,545 users

Android

Each user spent an average of 5.6 minutes on the app. In total there were 7.6K sessions on Friday and 11K sessions on Saturday.

Date	New Users	Returning* Users	Total Users
Friday 3 February	849	478	1,327
Saturday 4 February	825	734	1,559

*Users who have downloaded the app previously, probably from last year.

Mobile Apps

The total number of interactions on the app was 103,167 for iOS and 79,030 for Android.

iOS Top Ten

Neon Dogs	2.6K
The Nectary	2.4K
Fear The Light	2.3K
Pulse	1.8K
Re-Move (St Mary's)	1.8K
Evanescent	1.7K
Ode to...	1.6K
The Blazing World	1.6K
OTOKA	1.5K
Light Night Market	1.1K

Android Top Ten

Neon Dogs	2K
The Nectary	1.8K
Fear The Light	1.8K
Pulse	1.3K
Re-Move (St Mary's)	1.3K
Evanescent	1.3K
OTOKA	1.2K
The Blazing World	1.1K
Light Night Market	819
Another World	800



Mobile App Feedback

App Pros

- "App was helpful. Map essential as we don't live in Nottingham."
- "App was good as you could select places as favourites to see."
- "I really like the app and find it very useful to look over a few days before the event to plan our route."
- "App was really useful in planning the evening."
- "Very easy to navigate."
- "The app was very informative."
- "The app is really good, it was the only way I could find the displays."
- "Directions were clear from the app."
- "The app was very good overall but a little slow."
- "Using the app helped us to navigate round Nottingham."

App Cons

- "In the app I could see the events but the map wasn't working."
- "Couldn't get the map in the app to work on my Android phone."
- "The app stopped working part way through the night and the map wouldn't load the locations of the exhibits."
- "It would have been helpful if it didn't go back to the main list each time and change days when looking at the displays."
- "App stopped working on the Friday but was fine on the Saturday. It would be amazing to be able to choose the locations you wish to visit and be given a route to follow."
- "The app is a great idea but was a bit clunky to use."
- "Too small to read on mobile phone."

Printed Guide Feedback

Printed Guide Pros

- "Loved the printed guide with the easy colour zones."
- "Nice colours and map was very clear."
- "A very useful guide to events."
- "Clear and easy to use, the map was very useful."
- "Very informative, clear map."
- "The map was easy to use to direct you to the right place."
- "Simple guide with key highlights."
- "I didn't miss anything using the map."
- "Printed guide had lots of info and I used it to draw my route depending on what I wanted to see."

Printed Guide Cons

- "Might be worth giving more info and ages it would be suited for?"
- "Not enough maps available."
- "There were no printed guides left."
- "Wish I'd got a copy of the printed guide, I never saw one."
- "The map was a nice print out, but wasn't 100% accurate on the locations of the activities so did wander to the wrong spot at times."
- "Some streets weren't labelled on it which made it confusing."
- "Far too busy and too small to read."

Postcode Maps

Red indicates most visitors, followed by dark blue, light green, yellow, purple, light blue, orange, brown, dark green and pink.



Friday: shows regional visitors dispersed over a wider area. 22% of visitors were from the pink areas. We can assume that regional visitors may have stayed in the city after work.



Saturday: 26% of visitors were from the pink areas, showing a higher number of regional visitors but from a smaller overall footprint.

Transport

A special offer was promoted for the Broad Marsh Car Park. The government's £2 single bus fare cap was also advertised, alongside grouprider tickets on NCT buses and NET Tram. Transport usage increased across the board during Light Night.

Nottingham City Transport

Approximately 10K more people travelled during Light Night than the weekends before and after. Figures are between 4pm-11pm:

Fri 27 & Sat 28 Jan: 82,990 + 9%
Fri 3 & Sat 4 Feb: 90,539 + 13%
Fri 10 & Sat 11 Feb: 80,222

Broad Marsh Car Park

The car park saw increased usage during Light Night weekend, compared to the weekends before and after:

Fri 27 & Sat 28 Jan: 1,909 + 16%
Fri 3 & Sat 4 Feb: 2,216 + 33%
Fri 10 & Sat 11 Feb: 1,661

NET Tram

There was a slight increase of people using the tram during Light Night compared to the weekends before and after:

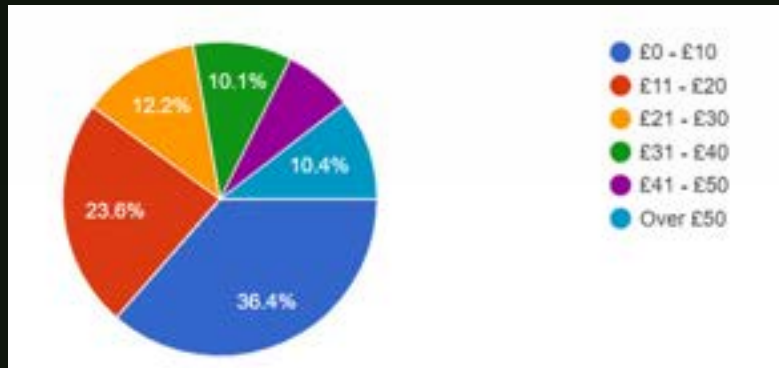
Fri 27 & Sat 28 Jan: 97,017 + 1%
Fri 3 & Sat 4 Feb: 97,764 + 3%
Fri 10 & Sat 11 Feb: 94,511

Trent Barton

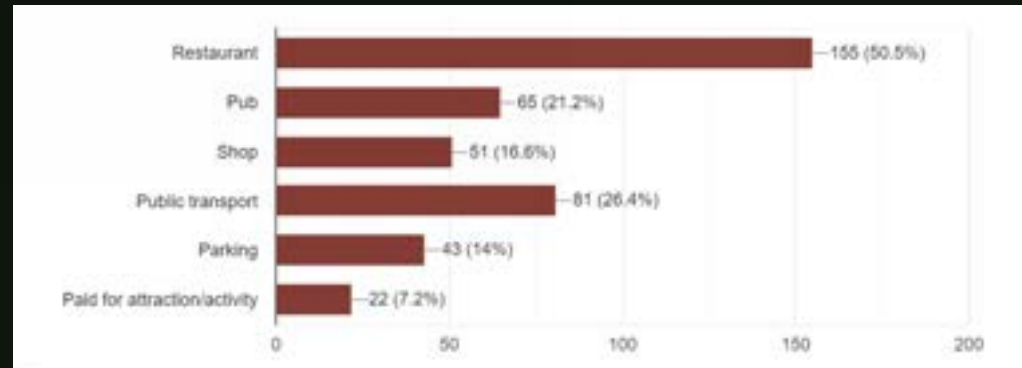
Compared to the corresponding days on the weekends before and after Light Night, Trent Barton usage was **10% higher** on Friday and **12% higher** on Saturday. This was calculated on services between 4pm-11pm.

Economic Impact

How much did you spend during your visit to Light Night?



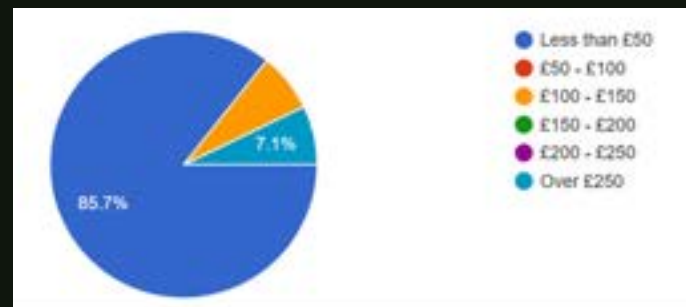
Where did you spend most of this money?



What else did you spend money on?

- Travel (24)
- Food and drink (58)
- Other - souvenirs, retail, gig, cinema, amusements (27)
- Donations (3)

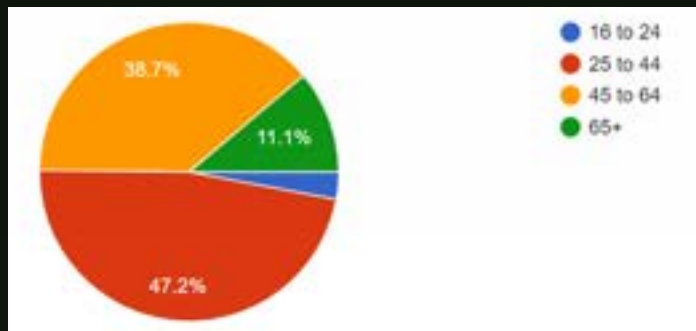
3% of visitors stayed overnight and spent money on overnight accommodation:



Audience Profile

This was an optional section on the visitor survey, resulting in limited representation from the diverse range of groups who visited Light Night.

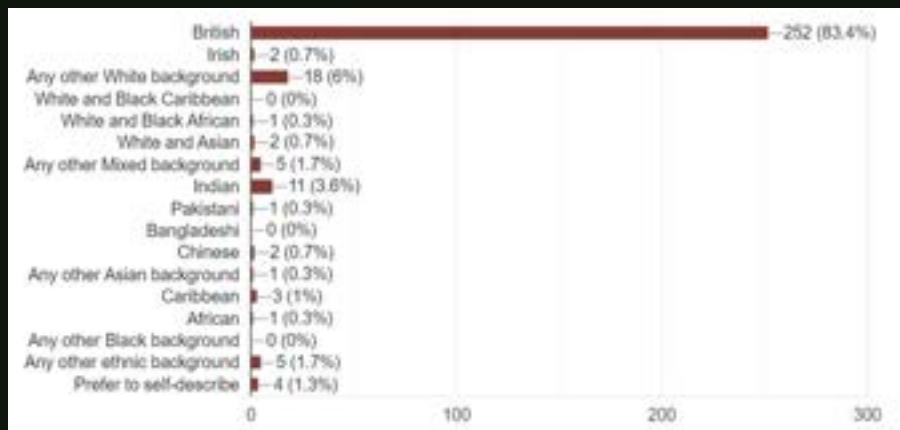
What is your age?



Do you have any longstanding illness, disability or infirmity?

54 (18%)

To which of these groups do you consider you belong?



Nottingham College School of Art & Design

Visitor Expectation

Prior to your visit, what did you expect from Light Night?

- "Festival atmosphere, plenty of lights, lit up attractions, street food."
- "A family friendly and safe visit to see light art in the centre of Nottingham after dark."
- "Brightness and fun in the February gloom."
- "Something similar to the Christmas at Wollaton lights."
- "Beautiful installations, photo opportunities and a nice long walk."
- "To see Nottingham from a different perspective."
- "More central events rather than being spread out so wide across the city."
- "Free art in multiple locations, interactive experiences, and installations from artists as well as local people."
- "Interesting installations, visiting sites I don't always go to."
- "To be entertained and to enjoy cultural events."

Expectation from previous Light Night visitors was high. Those who had not been to the event before were more pleased with the overall event. When asked if the event met their expectations:

- Those who had visited before - 73% rated the event as Very Good or Good (up from 43% last year)
- Those who had not visited before - 79% rated the event as Very Good or Good (up from 49% last year)

Reflections - Canal & River Trust



Visitor Feedback

What was your favourite part of Light Night?

- "The churches and the cathedral. They were unexpectedly fabulous."
- "My inner child needs to explain the part that made me laugh the hardest - the poops from the Neon Dogs!"
- "Seeing parts of Nottingham that I usually don't."
- "Pulse at Old Market Square."
- "The vibrancy and age range of people it brought into the city."
- "Exploring the light art with family and seeing new areas."
- "St Mary's Church was fantastic."
- "The Lantern Parade - the flamingos were brilliant."
- "Overall, people getting out and about on a winter evening."
- "I am an international student and seeing this made me so overjoyed. It gave me a sense of belonging."
- "Seeing Nottingham City Centre alive with lots of people and families. A friendly and safe atmosphere at night time - felt almost continental (apart from the cold)."

Social media comments:

- "I absolutely loved this. I cannot remember the last time that I saw the City of Nottingham so alive. The organisers need to be so proud of this event. I could not see a restaurant or pub that was not buzzing with people. Most of all, I just loved the atmosphere."
- "It was brilliant this year, truly some stunning installations."
- "Would Light Night be able to run on the Sunday also next time? Amazing, would have loved another day to see some more."
- "Went on Saturday - so many people having a great time, like Christmas. Thanks to everyone involved. All the staff in high viz helping and keeping it running smoothly. Amazing parade. A lovely welcome to lighter nights saying spring is coming."
- "Thanks for putting on this event, it was great to see so many people having an enjoyable night out at no cost!"
- "Best one in years."

Visitor Feedback

What could be improved in the future?

- "Get more local community groups and schools involved."
- "Potentially a route to follow, to capture the highlights of the installations."
- "Some things stopped at 8pm when we would have loved them to finish at 9pm, so we could fit more in."
- "It is very spread out so we only had the chance to see a few of the installations as the kids (7 and 8) were tired."
- "Better signposting, arrows pointing towards the installations."
- "Light projections and illuminations on buildings."
- "More food stalls, there was less this year than previous years and not much variety."
- "I don't know how you could improve this but the queue for the church was huge."



The Nectary - Carrington Street

Costs

Income: £96,993
Expenditure: £110,995

Estimated Nottingham Events VIK: £20,000



NOTTINGHAM LIGHT NIGHT

2023 Evaluation



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City Council**