

Visitor Surveys & Event Evaluation

April 2024



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Executive Summary

The second Baylight event in Morecambe provided a significant draw and motivation for people to visit the town, and generated income at a crucial time of year for local businesses.

As in 2023, the event attracted a mainly local audience, with average dwell times just over two hours. Baylight '24 was very well received, with high satisfaction rates in all areas.

95% of those interviewed said they would attend another Baylight event, and 94% would recommend the event to others. 100% of the businesses consulted said they wanted to see future Baylight events.

The current economic climate and cost of living crisis had an impact on event spend, but with higher numbers overall, and higher spend from those visitors staying overnight, the total economic impact of Baylight '24 is estimated at just over £900,000, 11% up on 2023, with a return on investment of over three pounds for every pound invested. The event will also have had a wider impact in terms of people's perceptions of Morecambe, local pride in the area, and future visit intentions.

Visitor Numbers

- ▶ Estimates of visitor numbers were 28,180 in total across the three days of the event.

Audience Survey

- ▶ 97% of people said that Baylight '24 was a factor in their choice to visit Morecambe. 13% were having a meal or a drink.
- ▶ When asked which of these was the MAIN reason for visiting, 86% said that it was for Baylight specifically.
- ▶ 71% of the respondents were aged between 20 and 59 years old. 8% were younger (15-19 years old) and 21% older (60+ years old). Compared to the 2023 event there were more older respondents (21% over 60 years old, up from 8%).
- ▶ Baylight '24 appealed to a wide range of markets, including couples, extended family groups, and groups of friends. Half of people at the event were with their partners, and 41% with other family members. 24% were with friends.
- ▶ Almost half of the groups attending the event included children under the age of 16 (47%).
- ▶ Average party size was 2.95 people, smaller than 4 people at the 2023 event.
- ▶ The 2024 event had a more local profile than the 2023 event. 80% of people at Baylight were local to the Morecambe area, up from 62% in 2023. 12% were from elsewhere in Lancashire (down from 26% in 2023), and 6% from neighbouring Cumbria.
- ▶ People were asked how they had heard about Baylight '24. Over half (57%) attended in 2023 – the event was successful in attracting repeat visitors.
- ▶ 35% heard about Baylight through word of mouth, from family, friends, or colleagues (down from 54% in 2023), and 25% saw an event poster or banner (up from 10% the previous year).

- ▶ Just 5% were not aware of the event in advance, and just discovered it on passing, a drop from 14% in 2023 - suggesting that marketing this year was more effective and awareness of the event was higher.
- ▶ Half of those interviewed came to Morecambe by car or other private vehicle and 34% were within walking distance.
- ▶ On average, dwell times were 2 hours and 8 minutes (very similar to 2023).
- ▶ Satisfaction with Baylight '24 was very high, and also improved on the 2023 event, with 65% rating it as 'very good' (an increase on 51% last year). Another 31% gave a 'good' rating.
- ▶ When asked to rate individual aspects of the event, ratings were also very positive, with only a handful of negative ratings. Combining ratings of 'very good' and 'good' together resulted in positive scores of:
 - 98/99% for event quality and event organisation
 - 96% for the lit-up buildings and sculptures
 - 94% for the installations and venue suitability
 - 93% for the parade
 - 83% for publicity and promotion
- ▶ People were asked if there was anything that could have improved the event. Lots of people said no, there was nothing that they would change. Suggestions for improvements included:
 - more lights/installations in general and in particular more that were interactive
 - better parking – more car parks open, make it free to park
 - live music
 - cheaper fairground rides
 - cover/shelter from poor weather
 - more for younger children
 - to have the event on earlier for children
 - extend to the west end
 - have a bigger parade and maybe the parade on for two nights
 - extend to include the Sunday night as well
- ▶ 95% of the people interviewed said they would like to come to another, similar event in Morecambe in future and 94% would also recommend the event to others
- ▶ 75% of people bought food or drink while in Morecambe, down from 85% in 2023.
- ▶ Most people had bought their items from a stall on the prom area (56%, but down from 73% in 2023). 37% had been to a pub (an increase on 29% in 2023) and 18% to a café (up from 13%).
- ▶ Average spend in Morecambe was £48.15 per group and £16.33 per person. These figures were below those in 2023 (probably due to the ongoing economic climate).
- ▶ Most people were on a day trip from home. 11 groups were staying overnight in Lancashire.

Economic Impact Assessment

- ▶ The total economic impact of Baylight '24 is estimated at £905,075, 11% up on 2023.
- ▶ Return on investment is calculated at £3.63, so for every pound invested in the event, over £3 was generated for the local economy (an 8% increase on 2023).

Business Survey

- ▶ 79% of the businesses that did not open during Baylight '24 said they had seen information on how it went, and 29% (4) said they would be likely to take part next year.
- ▶ The eight businesses that did open during Baylight '24 were asked for feedback on footfall, turnover, extra activities and ratings of the event.
 - Five businesses did extra promotion on social media, and four businesses stayed open for longer in the evening. Three businesses either took on extra staff or did extra advertising.
 - Two businesses increased their capacity and two provided special offers.
- ▶ 38% of businesses (3) had a large increase in footfall during Baylight '24 compared to other winter days, and 25% had a small increase (2 businesses).
- ▶ 63% (5 businesses) saw an increase in turnover to some extent.
- ▶ Businesses were asked what they thought of Baylight '24 overall. 75% rated the event as 'excellent' and 25% as 'good'.
- ▶ All businesses, whether they opened or remained closed during Baylight '24, were asked if they would like to see Baylight happen in future years, and 100% said that they would.

1. Introduction

Morecambe Sparkle Community Interest Company (CIC) was awarded a grant from the Lancashire Economic Recovery and Growth fund (LERG) of £424,000 for Phase 2 of a scheme initially called the Morecambe Illuminations project. Matched funding from Morecambe Town Council and Morecambe BID provided £481,500 for a two year Light Art Festival project.

The grant was for the CIC:

“To develop and implement a 2 year, 2-3 month Light Art based winter seasonal events in Morecambe between Morecambe Town Hall to the Midland Hotel that will increase revenue/footfall for town centre and resort businesses and support private sector investment, thereby improving the visitor and night time economy, supporting wider social value benefits. The project, to be delivered by Morecambe Sparkle Community Interest Company, will build upon the town’s 2021 investment extending the floodlighting and other infrastructure, creating a transformational visitor attraction”.

The project was planned to take place over three days in February half term in the years 2023 and 2024, with a festival brand name of Baylight.

1.1 Objectives

The event organisers commissioned an experienced, local independent research company, Red Research, to evaluate the event in both years.

The research and event evaluation objectives were:

- ▶ to provide insight into the audiences attending the event: the types of people, where they came from, who they came with, how much they spent and where, how they found out about the event, their ratings of it, and their propensity to attend future such events
- ▶ to identify areas of success, and room for improvement to build on and improve future events
- ▶ to assess the economic contribution of the event to the local economy and calculate return on investment (ROI) including an assessment of direct and additional levels of expenditure
- ▶ to satisfy the requirements of funders and supporters
- ▶ to justify event expenditure and resourcing
- ▶ help develop future strategies for when grant funding comes to an end

1.2 Methodology

An audience survey was carried out over the three days of the event, on Thursday 15th, Friday 16th, and Saturday 17th February 2024 when Lancashire and Cumbria schools were on half term break. Face to face interviews were carried out by trained interviewers during the event to collect information fresh from a representative sample of the audiences involved (via tablets/phones for immediate upload and analysis).

The audience survey included:

- ▶ audience profile (age, party composition, origin, visitor type)
- ▶ motivations for visit
- ▶ marketing effectiveness
- ▶ satisfaction rates both overall and with individual elements of the event
- ▶ propensity to recommend and re-visit

- ▶ dwell times
- ▶ expenditure at event
- ▶ extra activities (and spend) undertaken during visit outside of the event
- ▶ themes for future events

A target of 300 completed surveys was set, to ensure the provision of robust information on which to base future decisions. 305 surveys were completed, with an even spread across the three days of the event.

At the same time, an identical online version of the questionnaire was created, and shared on Morecambe Sparkle's and Baylight's social media accounts in the week after the event, and by email to their mailing list. The online survey was intended to increase the sample size and provide ample opportunities for people to provide feedback. 244 surveys were completed this way.

The two methodologies were analysed separately to monitor differences. This report is based on the results from the face-to-face survey unless otherwise specified.

The calculation of visitor numbers over the three nights of the festival involved the correlation of different sources including LCC carparking usage, and footfall data provided by Place Informatics from GPS data from mobile phones. An estimated 28,180 visitors attended Baylight over the three days of the event in 2024, a 34% increase on 21,031 visitors in 2023.

All surveys are subject to some degree of statistical error. The size of this error varies with the sample size, population size and strength of response. The table below shows a range of sample sizes, and the margins within which you can be 95% certain that the figures will be true if the sample is a random one. For example, if you have a sample size of 500, and 80% of them answered 'yes' to a particular question, you could be confident that any repeat of the survey would generate between 76.5%-83.5% 'yes' answers.

Statistical Reliability					
Sample size	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
500	±2.6	±3.5	±4.0	±4.2	±4.4
400	±2.9	±3.9	±4.5	±4.8	±4.9
250	±3.7	±5.0	±5.7	±6.1	±6.2
100	±5.9	±7.8	±9.0	±9.6	±9.8
50	±8.3	±11.1	±12.7	±13.6	±13.9

A sample of 305 from an overall population of 28,180 statistically produces answers at a 95% confidence level that will be accurate to +/-5.58% or better. It is generally accepted that an error level of around +/-5% is satisfactory for reliable and robust results, within accepted market research industry standards, and this sample falls within that range.

In addition, an online business survey was created to gather feedback on:

- ▶ opening hours
- ▶ footfall levels
- ▶ turnover levels
- ▶ extra activities undertaken by businesses
- ▶ comparisons with Baylight '23
- ▶ satisfaction rates
- ▶ appetite for future events

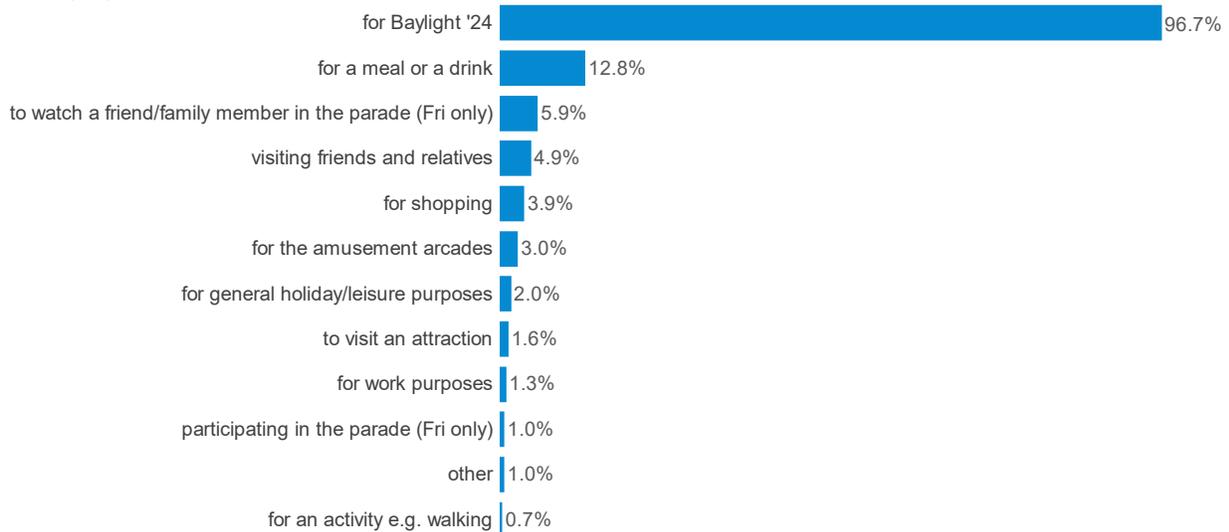
The business survey was shared by Morecambe BID to their database of Levy Payers and by Morecambe Sparkle on their Baylight Twitter and Facebook accounts. 22 responses were received.

2. Audience Research

2.1 Audience Profile

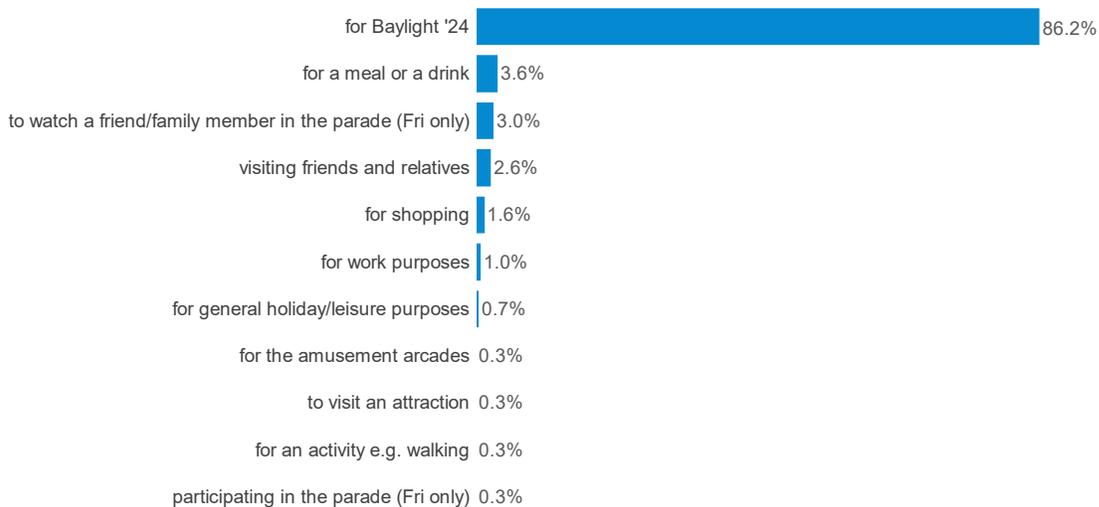
Trip Motivation

People were asked first about all/any reasons they were in Morecambe on the evening they were interviewed – and then asked to say which of those was the MAIN reason for visiting the town.



97% of people said that Baylight '24 was a factor in their choice to visit Morecambe. 13% were having a meal or a drink.

When asked which of these was the MAIN reason for visiting, 86% said that it was for Baylight specifically, and just 4% for a meal or a drink.



Baylight '24 provided a significant motivator for people to visit Morecambe, with 86% stating their trip was as a direct result of the event.

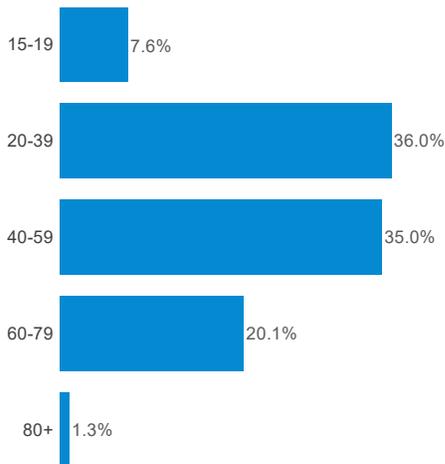
Gender

31% of those interviewed were male and 69% female. Many people interviewed were with partners, friends, or other family members, and their opinions were reflective of the group as a whole. *The online survey had a higher response from females (74%) than males (24%).*

Age Group

71% of the respondents were aged between 20 and 59 years old. 8% were younger (15-19 years old) and 21% older (60+ years old). Compared to the 2023 event there were more older respondents (21% over 60 years old, up from 8%).

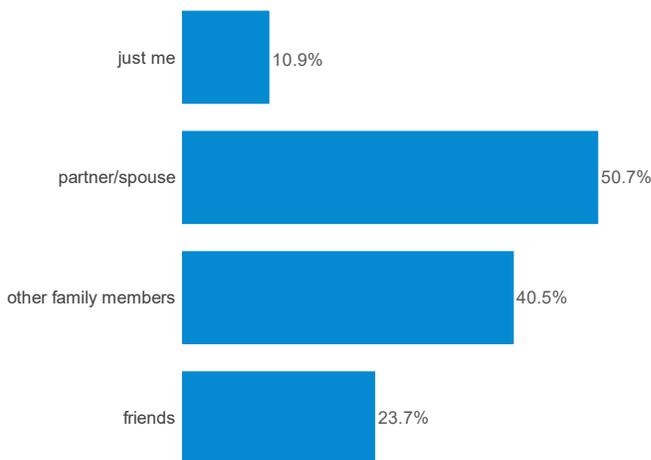
The online survey had a higher response from older people – only 19% were aged between 20-39, and 29% were over the age of 60.



Party Profile

Baylight '24 appealed to a wide range of markets, including couples, extended family groups, and groups of friends.

Half of people at the event were with their partners, and 41% with other family members. 24% were with friends.



(NB This was a multiple choice question and so responses will add up to more than 100%).

Party Size

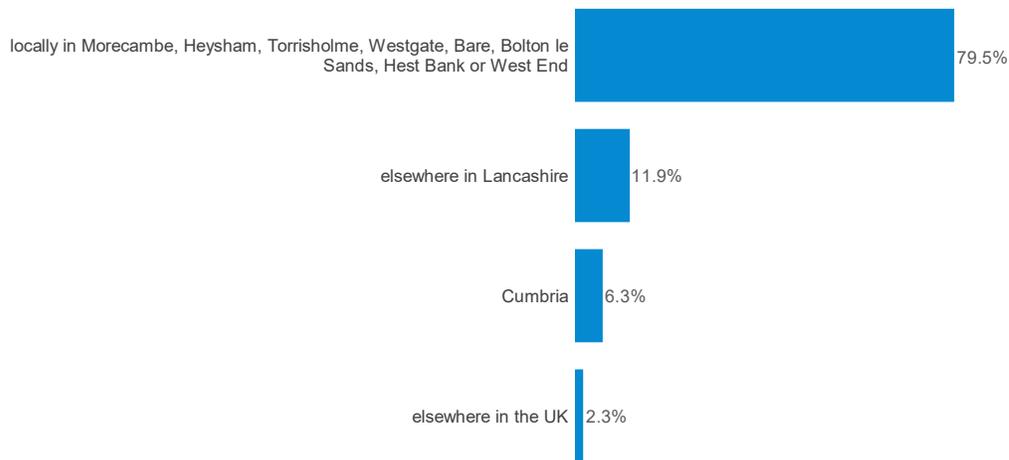
Almost half of the groups attending the event included children under the age of 16 (47%). *(43% in the online survey).*

In total the 305 groups interviewed contained 899 people. Average party size was 2.95 people, smaller than 4 people at the 2023 event *(3.65 people in the online survey).*

Origin

The 2024 event had a more local profile than the 2023 event. 80% of people at Baylight were local to the Morecambe area, up from 62% in 2023 *(66% in the online survey).*

12% were from elsewhere in Lancashire (down from 26% in 2023), and 6% from neighbouring Cumbria. *(In the online survey 18% were from elsewhere in Lancashire).*



2% were from elsewhere in the UK (7 groups). Two of these were from Yorkshire with one each from the North West, North East, West Midlands, East Midlands and London. Two groups were on their first visit to Morecambe.



MOST OF THE PEOPLE AT BAYLIGHT '24 WERE LOCAL TO THE AREA, WITH 91% FROM MORECAMBE OR LANCASHIRE

2.2 Audience Evaluation and Expenditure

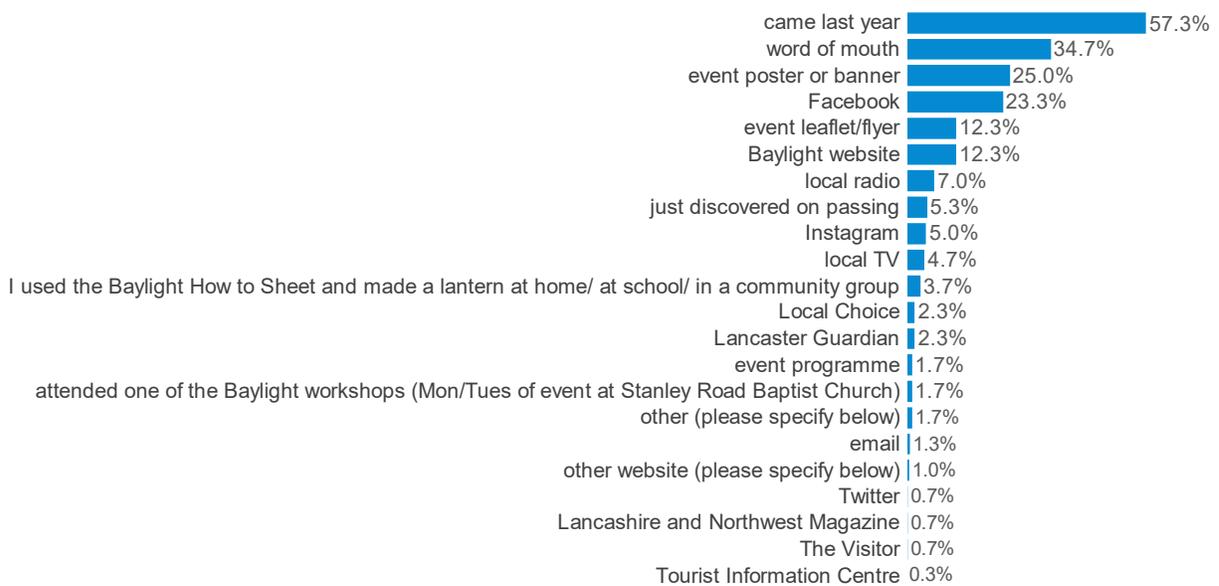
Awareness of the Event

People were asked how they had heard about Baylight '24. Over half (57%) attended in 2023 – the event was successful in attracting repeat visitors.

35% heard about Baylight through word of mouth, from family, friends, or colleagues (down from 54% in 2023), and 25% saw an event poster or banner (up from 10% the previous year). 23% saw something on Facebook, down from 33% last year. *(62% in the online survey)*.

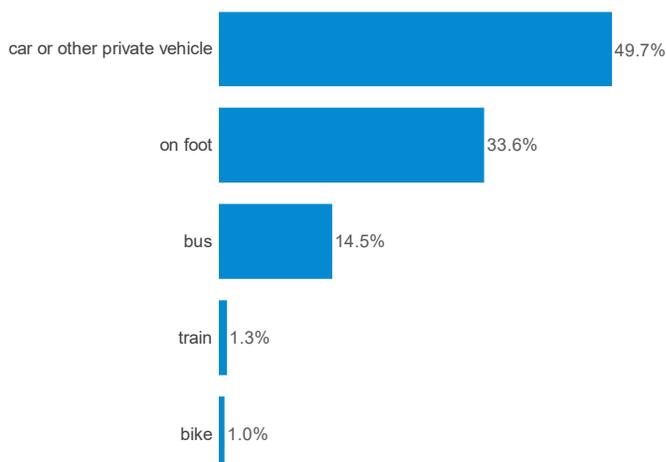
12% had visited the Baylight website or seen a leaflet/flyer about the event.

Just 5% were not aware of the event in advance, and just discovered it on passing, a drop from 14% in 2023 - suggesting that marketing this year was more effective and awareness of the event was higher.



Travel

Half of those interviewed came to Morecambe by car or other private vehicle *(64% in the online survey)*, and 34% were within walking distance. Compared to 2023 there were more people on foot (34% up from 29%) and more travelling by bus (15% up from 4%) but fewer came by car (50% down from 56%) or by train (1% down from 11% in 2023).



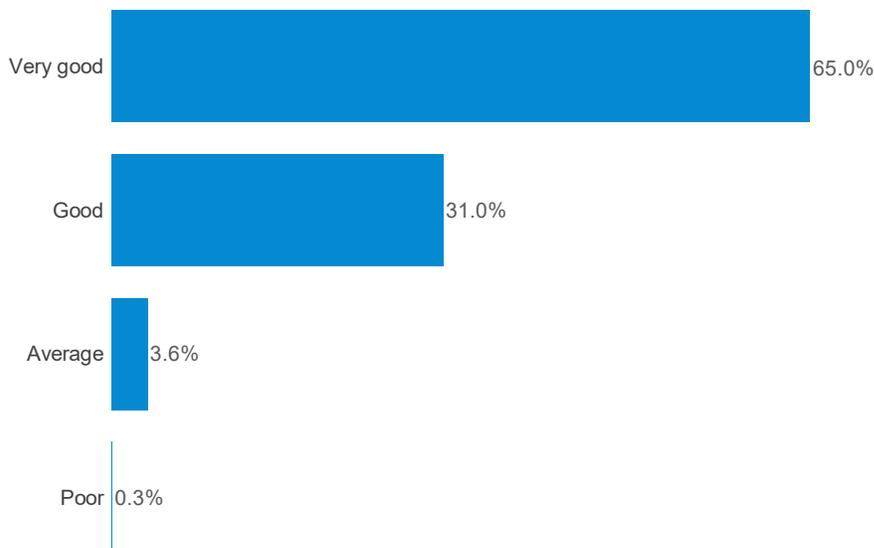
Dwell Times

People spent between 30 minutes and 6 hours in Morecambe during their visit. The most common response was two hours, and on average, dwell times were 2 hours and 8 minutes - very similar to 2023. *(2 hours and 32 minutes in the online survey).*

Overall Satisfaction

Satisfaction with Baylight '24 was very high, and also improved on the 2023 event, with 65% rating it as 'very good' (an increase on 51% last year). Another 31% gave a 'good' rating. 4% of people described it as 'average' and just one person thought it was 'poor'.

(In the online survey, more people gave an 'average' rating (10%) and 6% gave negative ratings).

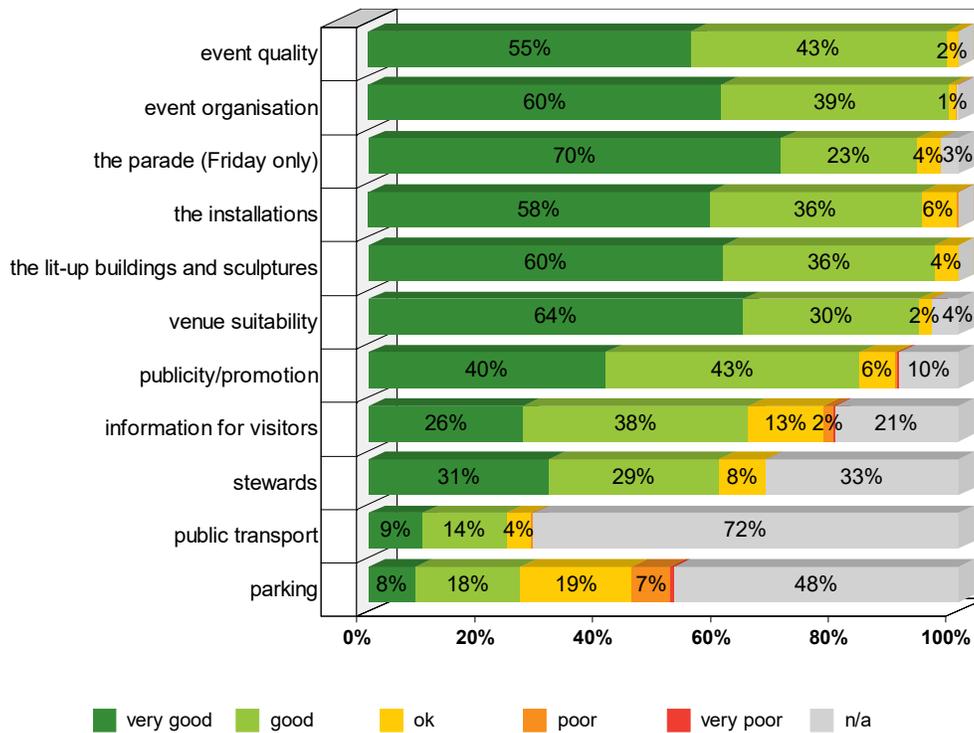


96% of people rated Baylight '24 positively, as either 'very good' or 'good'.

Satisfaction Breakdown

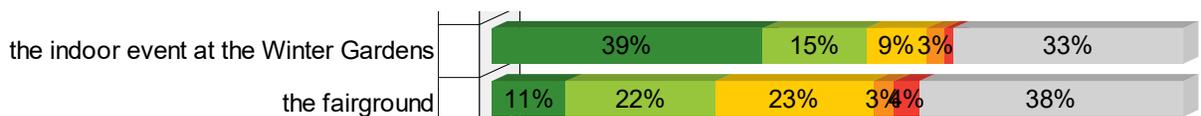
When asked to rate individual aspects of the event, ratings were also very positive, with only a handful of negative ratings. Combining ratings of 'very good' and 'good' together resulted in positive scores of:

- 🚦 98/99% for event quality and event organisation
- 🚦 96% for the lit-up buildings and sculptures
- 🚦 94% for the installations and venue suitability
- 🚦 93% for the parade
- 🚦 83% for publicity and promotion



Not everyone could rate the information for visitors, stewards, public transport or parking, depending on their use of them/mode of travel but those that did gave mainly positive ratings too. There were more just 'ok' ratings for stewards (8%), information for visitors (13%) and parking (19%). Parking also received the highest proportion of negative ratings, at 7%.

The online survey asked additionally about the indoor event at the Winter Gardens, and the funfair. 39% rated the Winter Gardens as 'very good'. A third (33%) gave the funfair a positive rating, but 23% said it was just 'ok' and 7% rated negatively.



Improvements

People were asked if there was anything that could have improved the event. Responses are shown below as a word cloud. Word clouds are used as a visual representation of literal comments. The most frequently mentioned words are shown in the largest size. This word cloud shows the top 20 words.



All responses are shown verbatim in appendix one and two. Lots of people said no, there was nothing that they would change¹.

Suggestions for improvements included:

- ✚ more lights/installations in general and in particular more that were interactive
- ✚ better parking – more car parks open, make it free to park
- ✚ live music
- ✚ cheaper fairground rides
- ✚ cover/shelter from poor weather
- ✚ more for younger children
- ✚ to have the event on earlier for children
- ✚ extend to the west end
- ✚ have a bigger parade and maybe the parade on for two nights
- ✚ extend to include the Sunday night as well

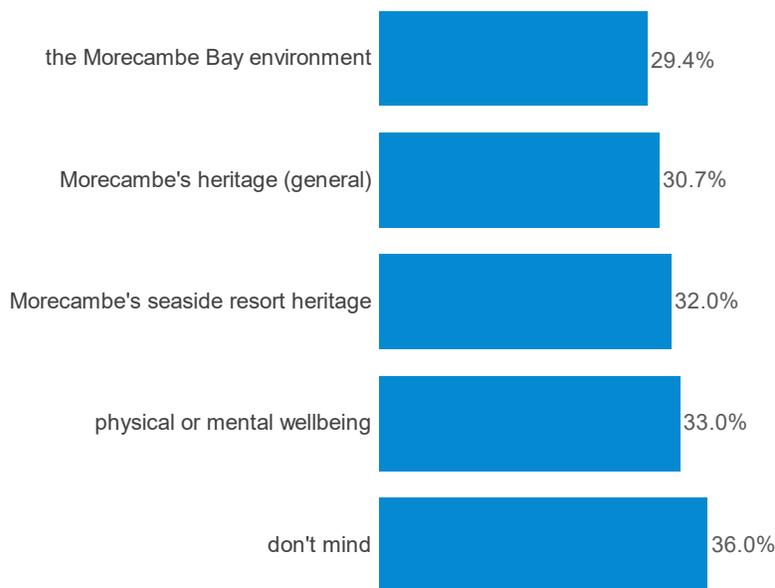
¹ All 'no' responses have been excluded from the word cloud analysis.

Future Plans and Recommendations

95% of the people interviewed said they would like to come to another, similar event in Morecambe in future and 94% would also recommend the event to others (*corresponding figures were 92% and 91% in the online survey*).

Future Baylight Events

People were asked if they would like any particular themes/focus for future Baylight events. Similar numbers were interested in all of the options put forward, and 36% said they didn't mind.





95% OF THE PEOPLE AT BAYLIGHT '24 SAID THEY WOULD GO TO ANOTHER , SIMILAR EVENT IN MORECAMBE IN FUTURE

Light Festival Attendance

People were asked if they had been to any other light shows/light art events. Only 18% said they had, much lower than 52% at the previous year's event. So in 2023, 48% of people at Baylight were new to light festivals – this rose to 82% in 2024, suggesting that Baylight is attracting new audiences to this kind of activity.

Blackpool illuminations were mentioned by 20 people, followed by (Light up) Lancaster, mentioned by 10.

Venue	Mentions
Blackpool	20
Lancaster	10
Leeds	7
Carlisle	7
Durham	7
London	1
Manchester	1

Refreshments

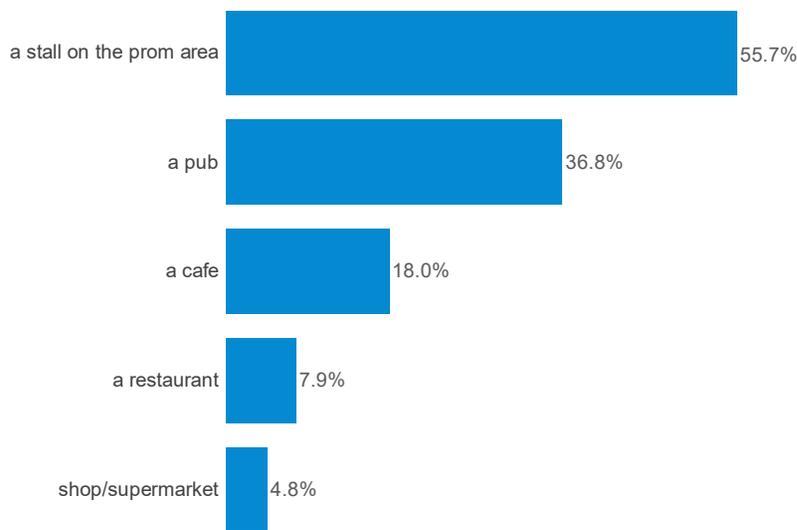
75% of people bought food or drink while in Morecambe, down from 85% in 2023. *(63% in the online survey).*

They were asked what kind of refreshments they had bought, and where from.

The proportions of visitors spending in all categories (except sweets/ice cream) has fallen compared to last year – possibly a result of the cost of living crisis having an impact on spending behaviour.

Refreshment Type	Respondent 2023	Others in Group 2023	Respondent 2024	Others in Group 2024
drink	79%	67%	60%	47%
snack	43%	34%	30%	28%
meal	32%	29%	15%	11%
sweets/ice cream	11%	8%	11%	12%

Most people had bought their items from a stall on the prom area (56%, but down from 73% in 2023). 37% had been to a pub (an increase on 29% in 2023) and 18% to a café (up from 13%). *(44% in the online survey had been to a café, but just 27% to a pub).*



These people were asked if they were able to get refreshments easily. The majority (179) said yes. Ten people said they had had to wait a while or queue, but they seemed to expect this.

People who had not purchased any food or drink were asked if there was a particular reason for that. Some people said they had no need to/had already eaten, or that it was too expensive (9). Seven groups said it was too wet to stop and get something, four groups had brought their own, and two mentioned the long queues.

Retail/Other Activities

People were asked if they bought any merchandise/gifts/souvenirs while in Morecambe and if so, where from. Most spend was along the promenade area, as it was in 2023.

Venue	Respondent 2023	Others in Group 2023	Respondent 2024	Others in Group 2024
a shop	4%	5%	2%	2%
a stall in the town	1%	1%	-	2%
a stall on the promenade area	22%	15%	9%	24%

16% of groups had also visited an amusement arcade (down from a quarter in 2023).
(10 % in the online survey)

Activity	Respondent 2024	Others in Group 2024
visit an amusement arcade	16%	12%
visit an attraction	2%	2%
visit an historic building	1%	1%
social activity e.g. live music, quiz night etc	1%	2%
other	3%	2%

Expenditure

People also provided information on what they and their party had/would spend in town on the evening – with 305 groups representing 899 people in total.

In total these groups spent £14,685 in town – averaging at £48.15 per group and £16.33 per person *(just £10.93 in the online survey)*. These figures were below those in 2023 (probably due to the ongoing economic climate) with spend per person in 2024 down by 19% from £20.20 in 2023.

Category of Spend	Total	Average per Group	Average per Person
food	£6,016	£19.72	£6.69
drinks	£5,177	£16.97	£5.76
retail (e.g. gifts, clothes)	£1,320	£4.33	£1.47
retail (groceries, essentials)	£463	£1.52	£0.52
amusement arcades	£852	£2.79	£0.95
other leisure/recreation activities	£362	£1.19	£0.40
travel	£207	£0.68	£0.23
parking	£198	£0.65	£0.22
anything else	£90	£0.30	£0.10
TOTAL	£14,685	£48.15	£16.33

Compared to 2023, spend on food and drink, in the arcades, and on travel and parking were all down, while spend on retail and other leisure/recreation activities were increased.

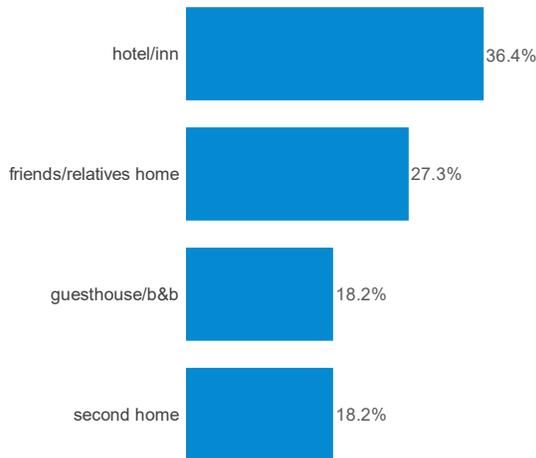
If these groups are representative of the 28,180 people attending the event, total spend in town is estimated to be £460,179, an 8% increase on £424,826 estimated for the 2023 event.

2.3 Tourists

Staying Visitors

Most people were on a day trip from home. 11 groups were staying overnight in Lancashire.

These groups were staying an average of 2.2 nights (up from 1.7 nights in 2023), with hotels the most common accommodation type (36%), followed by (free) friends' or relatives' homes (27%, half that in 2023 at 55%).



Trip Expenditure

The 11 staying visitor groups (37 people) spent on average £87.46 per person during their overall trip staying in Lancashire (66% more than £52.77 per person in 2023 – partly due to accommodation costs).

These staying visitor groups were 3.6% of the sample. If this sample is representative, then an estimated 1,014 of the 28,180 attendees were tourists from outside of Lancashire, staying overnight.

Total additional trip spend generated in the area by tourists is therefore estimated to be £88,684, a 21% increase on the £73,245 estimated for the 2023 event.

Average spend per person at Baylight '23 was just over £16, generating an estimated £460,179 in town during the event.

3. Economic Impact Assessment

Methodology

This evaluation follows some of the guidelines originally set out in the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) RDA Evaluation: Practical Guidance on Implementing the Impact Evaluation Framework.

This takes into account not just simple spend levels, but a wider economic impact, including spend on-site at the event, and off-site as part of a wider trip, as well as factors including:

- deadweight (that is the level to which expenditure would have happened anyway)
- leakage (the extent to which expenditure may have benefitted areas outside of Lancashire)
- multiplier effects (the additional economic activity generated through purchases along the supply chain, employee spending rounds and longer term effects)

Category of Spend	Total
Event spend	£460,179
Tourism spend	£88,684
Total	£548,863

To make an assessment of deadweight (that is the level to which expenditure would have happened anyway), figures are used from the survey to indicate the extent to which people would have already been spending in the area. 97% of people stated that a motivation for their visit to Morecambe was a result of the draw of Baylight '24.

To make an assessment of leakage (the extent to which expenditure may have benefitted areas outside of the locality) a judgement must be made as to the extent of any spend occurring outside of the county. This would only apply to tourism spend, as all other spend categories were known to be within Morecambe. There were no staying visitor groups staying overnight outside of Lancashire, and so no leakage.

Direct expenditure can have 'knock on' effects on the local economy. Known as multiplier effects (the additional economic activity generated through purchases along the supply chain, employee spending rounds and longer term effects), these also need to be assessed. HM Treasury suggest a figure of between 1.5 and 1.7. As the cultural and visitor economy is known to have significant indirect impacts, the figure of 1.7 has been used here.

Category of Spend	Amount	Result
Gross expenditure on site (event spend + additional activity spend)	£460,179	
Gross visitor expenditure off-site (tourism spend)	£88,684	
Direct expenditure	£548,863	
Deadweight (97% of total direct expenditure included, 3% excluded)	-£16,466	£532,397
Leakage (none)		£532,397
Multiplier effects (x1.7)		£905,075
Total economic impact		£905,075

The total economic impact of Baylight '24 is estimated at over £900,000. At £905,075, this is 11% up on £812,852 estimated for the 2023 event.

Return on Investment

The event spend for Baylight '24 was £249,339, with 49% of this invested within Lancashire (£122,402). With an overall economic impact of £905,075, return on investment is calculated at £3.63, so for every pound invested in the event, over £3 was generated for the local economy (an 8% increase on 2023).



*THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF BAYLIGHT '24 WAS £905,075.
EVERY POUND INVESTED IN THE EVENT GENERATED THREE MORE .*

4. Business Survey

Methodology

Feedback from businesses was also collated via a short online survey, the link for which was sent out by email to businesses following the event.

The survey asked about opening times during Baylight, changes in footfall and turnover, as well as future participation. 22 businesses completed the survey, which was kept anonymous to maintain business confidentiality and ensure responses were honest.

Surveys were completed by a broad range of businesses, including shops, restaurants, cafes, pubs, attractions and professional services.

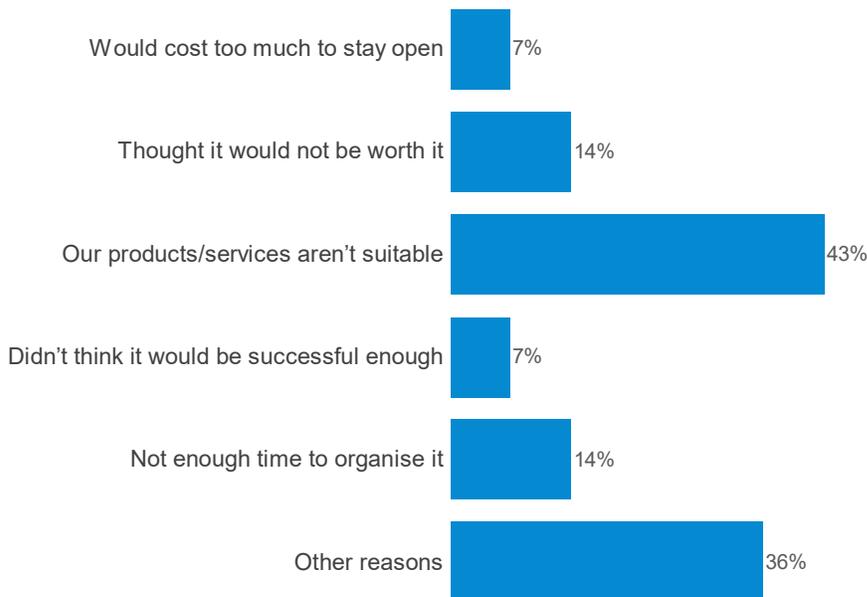
36% of businesses (8) surveyed stayed open during the Baylight '24 festival between the hours of 5pm-10pm (down from 68% in the 2023 survey).

45% of the sample (10) said they opened during the 2023 event.

Closed Businesses

Those that didn't open were mostly aware the event was on (just one business was not aware).

Reasons for not opening during the event were mainly due to not feeling that their products/services were suitable.



Other reasons included businesses being located in the west end.

"Lights did not extend to west end so didn't see the point"

"In west end event doesn't cover that far so wasn't worth it"

"I trade in the local shopping centre and it shuts at 6"

79% of the businesses that did not open during Baylight '24 said they had seen information on how it went, and 29% (4) said they would be likely to take part next year (4 businesses definitely wouldn't, and another 6 were not sure, because they felt their products or services were not suitable/it wouldn't be worthwhile).

Other reasons given about potentially not opening during Baylight in future were:

“Ease of involvement - we have a space that has the potential to be used as a quiet space for people who have enjoyed some of Baylight but got somewhat overwhelmed (or want to avoid getting to that stage) - e.g. people who have Autism”

“Again in west end not paying £750 to have a stall in town I'm a small business”

Open Businesses

The eight businesses that did open during Baylight '24 were asked for feedback on footfall, turnover, extra activities and ratings of the event.

Additional Activities

Five businesses did extra promotion on social media, and four businesses stayed open for longer in the evening. Three businesses either took on extra staff or did extra advertising.

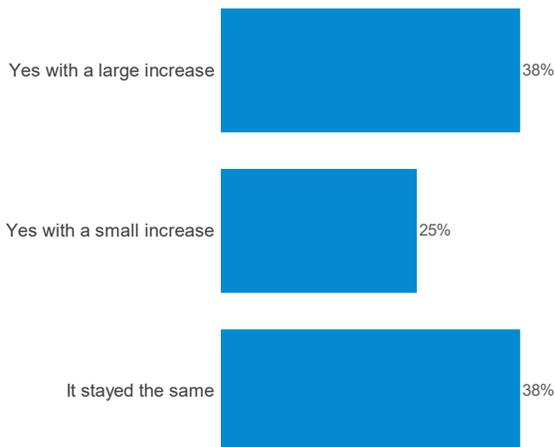
Two businesses increased their capacity and two provided special offers.

“As suggested by Sparkle we 'leveraged' the event and put on Disney character events across all three days which proved successful”

“Most people seem to come for the Friday carnival. Thursday night was disappointing for us once again.”

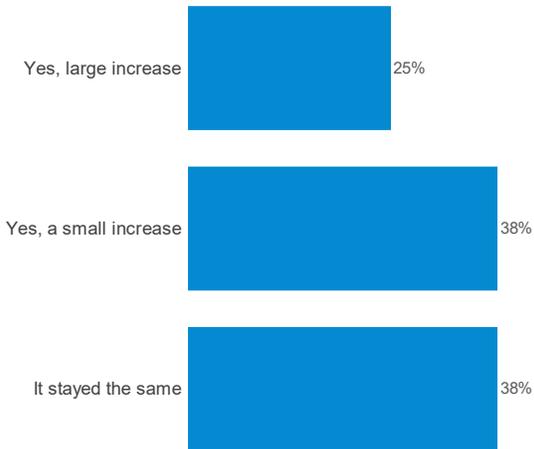
Footfall

38% of businesses (3) had a large increase in footfall during Baylight '24 compared to other winter days, and 25% had a small increase (2 businesses).



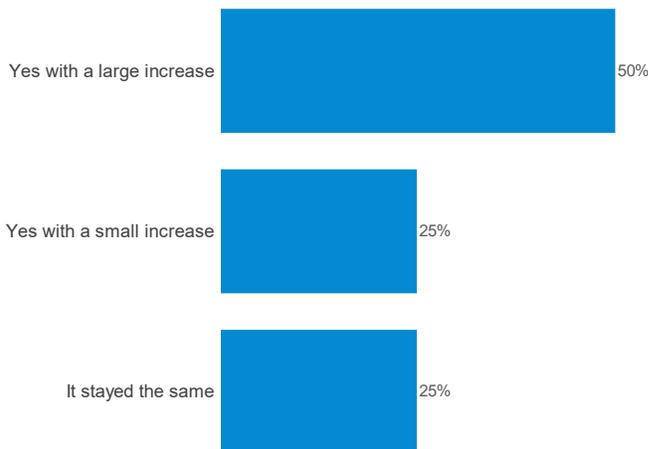
Turnover

25% of businesses (2) had a large increase in turnover during Baylight '24 and 38% (3) had a small increase – 63% (5 businesses) saw an increase in turnover to some extent.



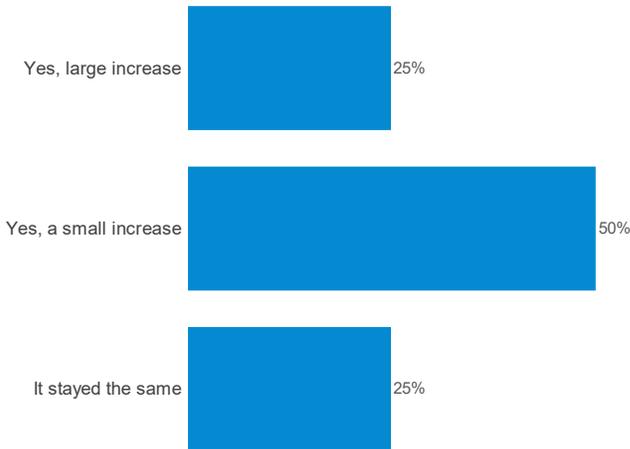
Footfall – Friday Night

Businesses were then asked specifically about the Friday night, when the parade took place. 50% of businesses (4) had a large increase in footfall on the Friday compared to other winter days, and 25% had a small increase (2 businesses).



Turnover – Friday Night

25% of businesses (2) had a large increase in turnover during the Friday night and 50% (4) had a small increase – 75% (6 businesses) saw an increase in turnover to some extent.



"With more businesses open this year and more food outlets we didn't see the same increase in sales at 2023"

"Friday night with the parade was busy but Thursday & Saturday night were poor compared to last year, this was evidenced by our delivery drivers who last year were gridlocked in traffic for much of Saturday night but this year there were no traffic issues"

"Visitor numbers doubled from Thurs and Saturday"

"Overwhelming success can't praise the organisers enough hats off to you. Well done."

"Thursday night was pretty much the same as last year. Saturday night was also not as busy as the first year but this could have been the weather or because of how popular Friday night was."

Those businesses who were open during both years of Baylight were asked about any differences in the two years. Opinions were mixed:

"We didn't have as many family visitors as last year"

"We did not have any special events last year, but overall taking away our own events which were during the day the event was very disappointing in terms of extra footfall especially Saturday night which was very poor."

"Huge increase in visitor numbers - doubled from last year"

"We are a hotel, significant upturn and accommodation"

"The carnival Friday night was the big draw this year. Replicate Friday over 3 days would be an even bigger success."

"We were in a different location to the first year meaning we could have more attractions than last year"

Ratings

Businesses were asked what they thought of Baylight '24 overall. 75% rated the event as 'excellent' and 25% as 'good'.

Comments on Baylight '24

Businesses were asked for comments or suggestions on Baylight '24:

"The event was amazing for the town and it's a testament to how Morecambe people will come together for events, it's a fabulous town!"

"Think need more installation was just lot of split lights in the middle of town lighting up the beach rocks in 2023 was better"

"Let small businesses take part not just peddlers"

"Not as many interactive displays"

"Improved engagement and communication with non-Morecambe BID local businesses"

"More interactive elements would be great"

"I really have no idea why it was so much quieter than last year, but we advertised our own events in store and handed out the Baylight leaflets and were surprised by how few people knew about the light festival so maybe look at how the event is advertised and where. We also heard some comments that the lights themselves were not as good and event not as big as last year - (pure hearsay and unable to verify how accurate this was)"

"Fantastic wonderful event which enabled us to be part of a wider town-wide event"

"Extremely well organised"

"There weren't enough interactive opportunities as in previous years. It appeared more like a fair ground."

"Whilst we didn't open because I don't think the office opening would add any benefit to the event or our business my wife and I came down on the Friday night and had evening dinner in town before walking along the promenade, with the throngs of other people, and enjoying the event - family event that didn't have to cost the earth, but really great to see those establishments that had remained open were busy and well patronised."

"Town was very busy and boosted trade with visitors shopping during the day before and after the event."

Future Baylight Events

All businesses, whether they opened or remained closed during Baylight '24, were asked if they would like to see Baylight happen in future years, and 100% said that they would.

Businesses were asked for comments or suggestions about future Baylight events.

"As a school, we'd love to be involved, we were asked to design a GOBO, which we would love to be involved in. We feel it would work better as an in school project and to do that, we'd need to know about it much earlier, we got the email on 18/12, the last week of term and schools are manic at that time. There isn't time to plan and timetable the work. Would it be possible to know the theme in sept/oct so that artwork can be planned and created in plenty of time? We would love to be involved and a huge amount of our children attended the event."

"Needs to include the other end of the prom to the west end"

"Need to include all Morecambe - West End gets left out but there are nice buildings you can light up, local artist have shops, playhouses there but stops at Midland Hotel I know that's because it's funded by Morecambe BID and they just do town or businesses who can afford to be in the BID"

"Not focus everything on one night - try and spread the footfall"

"Some/more physical posters/banners around town with details of what's happening when."

"The success of the Friday night parade would suggest more organized participation events might boost attendance."

"More interaction but more wider production support"

"Please do signpost and advertise the two large car parks next to the Townhall and boat yard car park, residents were complaining they couldn't get on their driveways as people were just abandoning their cars on residential streets. (These car parks were empty.) Thank you."

"More light shows, venues taking part, interactive events. Bigger parade, perhaps involving more local clubs and businesses. More buildings/venues with themed objects on them like the grand octopus, for people to find via a map with quiz? Winning prize etc."

"More interactive features. Engage with business along the front with light features to compliment the displays."

"Just a little disappointed the parade was as short as it was. Not sure how you encourage other business's/organisations to think of sponsoring a float."

"We plan to open the store next year."



100% OF BUSINESSES WANT TO SEE BAYLIGHT HAPPEN AGAIN IN FUTURE YEARS .

Appendix One: “Would anything have improved the event today? Is there anything you would change?” (from face-to-face interviews)

"A family ticket for the rides would be good. £4 each is expensive with a few children"

"A few more lights would be good"

"A few more lights"

"A free bus service or park n ride"

"A rain cover over the seats by food stalls near Midland Hotel"

"Advertise it more"

"All good"

"Another car park"

"Better installations"

"Better parking"

"Better parking"

"Bigger parade"

"Bigger parade"

"Car parking"

"Cheaper fairground rides"

"Cheaper prices for rides for kids. It spoils the night when you can't afford to let them go on rides"

"Cheaper rides for kids"

"Cheaper rides"

"Could be put on earlier as kids bed time"

"Cover for rain free umbrellas"

"Didn't know kit was on, just came to shop at Aldi and saw it so it needs more promotion"

"Expensive food and rides"

"Food prices expensive on stalls"

"Free parking"

"Free parking"

"Great last night with parades but spoilt by weather tonight"

"Have all car parks open"

"Have all the car parks open"

"Have fireworks"

"If it was a bit earlier for young kids"

"Information about the installations"

"It's great, kids love it"

"It's not as good as last year. No mirrors and not interactive enough for kids"

"Just awkward to park"

"Just keep getting bigger, Morecambe needs events like this"

"Just make it bigger and possibly start earlier as kids getting tired"

"Just make it bigger"

"Just the weather"

"Just weather"

"Lasers seem a bit average, needs something better"

"Less pricey"

"Live music" **x7**

"Make it bigger"

"Make it longer"

"Maybe more lit up buildings"

"Maybe provide some cover from the rain"

"Maybe some shows on for young kids"

"Maybe something inside out of rain"

"More about local heritage"

"More about Morecambe history"

"More car parking"

"More exciting installations, some are a bit boring"

"More exciting installations"

"More food stalls"

"More for little ones"

"More for little ones"

"More information"

"More installations at west end of sea front"

"More installations" **x10**

"More music" **x3**

"More parades"

"More parking" **x9**

"More sculptures" **x3**

"More stalls and music"

"More to see" **x4**

"Music and weather"

"Music"

"No it couldn't be bettered"

"No it's good"

"No it's great"

"No it's very good despite the weather"

"No the parades are great"

"No" **x55**

"No. It's a good thing for the town. Keep doing what you're doing"

"Nothing it's great for kids on a winter night"

"Nothing it's great"

"Nothing" **x6**

"Parade could have been later. Missed it"

"Parking more spaces"

"Parking" **x8**

"Put music on"

"Rides expensive family ticket"

"Shelter from rain"

"Some music"

"Some music"

"Something for kids inside a tent where it's warm"

"Take lights further along seafront and make it bigger"

"The rides are too expensive"

"The weather!"

"Think it's all great. Just make it bigger and attract more people to the town"

"Undercover areas for rain"

"We had problems getting parked"

"Weather" **x5**

"Would like seafront lit up all year round"

Appendix Two: "Would anything have improved the event today? Is there anything you would change?" (from online survey)

"More lights towards the west end, more food stalls maybe night market."

"2 parades over 2 nights"

"2023 was better lights this year just look like string lights anyone's garden etc plus too dear local trades stall £750 small business cannot afford that and it's about them in Morecambe"

"A couple of pinch points with people trying to go in 2 directions, so very congested, but generally a lot of space elsewhere"

"A dry evening! Seriously, it would have been nice to see installations all along the Stone Jetty."

"A longer parade"

"A n event on each evening to give people a reason to come on all three nights"

"Add a small pop up market and add a few more attractions"

"Advertise better so you don't miss it."

"Apart from the parade, the event seemed to be lacking it's local feel. Greeted in the centre by the awful fair and endless cheap tat for sale. Thought it was supposed to be a light trail - these areas were too separate. Seemed fewer, more expensive but less interactive for children this year."

"As its now a longer route, a few more"

"Being honest, I thought 2024 was a huge let down to 2023 Baylight, and we travelled from Darwen"

"Better installations including more interesting projections perhaps"

"Better installations, more interactive ones, not as good as last year. Could have done a much better immersive show in winter gardens where you felt connected to birds and sounds."

"Better installations, local food stalls"

"Better spacing of installations. More interesting inspiring installations. No people selling cheap plastic light goods. Installations that engaged you for more than a couple of minutes. Is there an artistic vision - connecting to the locality?"

"Bigger and more light displays, bigger parade that moved quicker"

"Bigger fairground, more interactive installations as in 2023, spread out more along the prom"

"Bigger parade. More advertising. It was excellent!"

"Brilliant event, keep building."

"Can't help the weather. More fair ground rides. More information on the instalments"

"Difficult to find start time for Birdsong"

"Disabled parking. Footpaths very difficult to navigate in poor light. Local so know where the problems are. Difficult to see the lights against the fun fair and other lighting. Thought the installations were on a poor scale, not bright enough or enough of them. It really was a big distance between tiny items. We'll carry on telling people it was excellent in the winter gardens. Even the tentacles looked better in daylight"

"Extending the lights down to the west end and more interactive exhibits"

"Fairground rides quite expensive. Ferris wheel was good value at £4 per person but hook a duck was £5 each"

"Few more installations, more to do and see"

"Fewer of the installations than last year were interactive. And the best interactive installation was hidden behind the RNLI building and may have been missed by many visitors."

"For smaller kids it's too spread out last one is too far to walk maybe concentrate it a bit closer to each other"

"Friday was way too busy and dangerously busy for children. My 3 year old could not enjoy it fully as he wasn't able walk on the prom with the amount of the people on it. We had to stop at the clock tower as it was just not fun with how busy it was. I know you cannot control how many people turn up. But don't have food stalls and extras (big wheel) that queue onto the prom. It was so busy around the clock tower cafe it was unreal. More needs to be done to steward the crowds too. People on bikes, dogs off leads. My little boy was so looking forward to it and came home disappointed as he couldn't see everything. Definitely more days needed so it's not as crowded. We loved the parade (my son loves the Samba drummers). However unfortunately we won't be watching it next year with it being so busy. We are going to give it one more try next year and try the 1st day and hope it's not as busy (friends say that was the quieter day)."

"Get more affordable fairground and food stalls"

"Have a proper in/out system for Winter Gardens that goes along the length of the theatre & neighbouring properties rather than sticking out into the road. People passing, not queuing, struggled to get through the queue especially those with prams/ wheelchairs/ the elderly. This experience within was a personal highlight for us. More interactive installations too would be welcome. Maybe condense some kids stuff somewhere so adults without kids could enjoy the possibility of other installations without necessarily being disturbed. E.g. the stone jetty lights was superb but ruined for us by parents not caring about their kids running round screaming. The effect therefore was hugely undermined & we fled after only 5 mins."

"How disappointing that after doing so well last year you chose to go in this direction. Bigger not better. Huge amount of wasted public money. What looked like very expensive installations with little interactivity. Very little represented a 'light trail' - felt like Blackpool with a few token pieces. Our kids had had enough (as had we) within half an hour."

"I actually didn't know or hear anything about the indoor event. So maybe more advertisement for that"

"I didn't visit for long as Disabled and only had my walking stick. But what I saw was amazing."

"I enjoyed last year's more because there was more interactive things."

"I felt like the exhibitions in 2023 were much more interactive and engaging than 2024. The majority of 2024 exhibitions didn't allow you to become involved or emerged within it. This was disappointing, especially having children who were excited to interact."

"I felt it needed more installations (seemed more last year). Maybe repeat procession on Saturday Continue into Sunday"

"I forgot to download a booklet and thought people may have been handing them out, but the only place I saw that happening was in the Winter Gardens, which was the last place I visited."

"I had a really great time. Unfortunately I had to leave early after feeling unwell - however the medical staff on site were great - made me feel better and helped me back to my car so I was over the moon."

"I love down west end and I think it would have been nice to see a few lights while walking up to the main part like from battery or even near old frontier land was, it will make more people come see the west end part of the prom"

"I missed the Friday parade which by all accounts was superb, but there wasn't much happening on the Saturday and most of the shops were closed, which would have provided the many people who braved the rain, somewhere to go"

"I thought it was very poor this year not like last year lots more to do"

"I was disappointed to see that workshops were held at Stanley Road Baptist Church as the venue owners have a history of non-inclusive behaviour in relation to their comments over banning conversion therapy."

"I went to the event last year and found the light displays much better and there were so many more. I found this year along the front was very sparse for light displays, especially interactive ones compared to last year."

"I would have liked if the organising committee looked into the weather forecast for the days that were chosen for the festival. It was raining on the day I went and I couldn't enjoy properly. More food trucks or stalls would have been nice. Some projectors on the buildings explaining Morecambe's heritage would have been a good idea. Overall, I think the weather plays a huge role in how well things could go. However, great effort taken to hold the event - looking forward for more in the future. Thankyou."

"Include Sunday as well? Publicity so good that place too crowded for me!"

"Increase the parade size"

"Is there the possibility of park and ride? Apologies if this was in place but I didn't see anything."

"It got very congested in the area near and behind Eric. I think you shouldn't allow any vendors or installations in that zone."

"It looks like most the money was spent on the Winter Gardens installation and admin as other years were far better. The West End seemed to be like the poor relative as you gave it a string of lights on Regent Road. Morecambe installations needed on the West End part of the prom."

"It was good the lights were on before the advertised time of 6pm and I'd encourage this. We tried to see as much as we could before the parade on Friday. Don't have events inside as the queue was huge and I wasn't prepared to wait in it. I enjoyed just going in the winter gardens last year to see the building."

"It was good while the road was closed on Friday. On other nights you would have had to deal with cars. It would be much more pleasant if it was closed every night."

"It was perfect"

"It's a brilliant family event and the parade is brilliant - hope its even bigger next time."

"Last year there were food concessions spread out all the way up the prom and these were reasonably priced from local businesses. This year they were all in one place, crowded and there was little choice of savoury food beyond sausage and chips"

"Last year was brilliant and there were lots of installations and inclusive installations right down the prom, it made me want to go again this year. This year they were boring and few and far between. If I hadn't gone on the night when the parade was on I would have been very disappointed indeed. If I'm to come again next year there needs to be lots more next year please."

"Leaflets being handed out on the night so I didn't have to keep looking at my phone"

"Less commercialisation. Wasted so much of your grant money on website, staffing, promotion. Forgetting why Baylight was conceived. Allocate more funds to a policing the cheap stalls that littered the prom. Or a campaign that discourages locals from buying from them (they'll soon learn they are not welcome). More support for your local market stalls and street food priced out by your insane trading prices. They are local businesses too who deserve to benefit. Who are 'Baylight'? Are you even local? The event felt like there were only splashes of Morecambe painted across our beautiful buildings and landscape. The amount of money you wasted could have funded probably 20 years of kite festivals. Do better."

"Less people selling tat"

"Light up more of the existing structures/infrastructure."

"Local food vendors (bay chowder?). Reasonable priced fair (£5 for hook a duck is ridiculous). More interactive attractions"

"Loved it"

"Make it more central to the jetty"

"Maps available at the far end rather than just the headquarters at the main end, few stewards with a bag would do"

"Maybe a few more lights along the long stretch as I found most of it was walking on the prom and not seeing many child friendly interactive lights."

"Maybe a list of food providers and where they were. Hard work arriving with young children and not know what food there was and how far we would need to walk. Felt that the installations were good but not as interactive as last year"

"Maybe have a larger installation on the jetty. Position the fairground rides inbetween installations to generate lighting and movement along the promenade. Extend the lighting on the lamposts towards the West End"

"Maybe kept the prom road closed a little longer on the Friday night. It was really busy and much better being able to walk in the road."

"Maybe more stalls there's only lights to buy and the price of the lights is so high"

"Maybe offer events like the parade on every night."

"Maybe some merchandise that could be bought to help the event. Reasonable light up toys that are branded etc. Fireworks on one of the night."

"Missed purchasing Bay Chowder this year. It was the best food last year."

"More accessible parking/signage for parking (for those from outside of Morecambe that haven't a clue where to park)."

"More affordable light up devices for children £8 and £10 is too much"

"More and better light installations with interactive elements for toddlers"

"More 'disabled only' parking. More interactive displays"

"More displays like last year"

"More floats in the parade and a market/stalls selling different things"

"More food stalls, a bigger parade , better parking"

"More food vendors. some areas of the trail, had long gaps between exhibits, simple festoon along trail would help"

"More for smaller children and better management of traffic"

"More in procession."

"More info points. I had no idea about the indoor part. And I missed one of the displays. The parade was much better than I expected. The octopus was publicized but not the yellow submarine."

"More installations and longer event. Should include the west end"

"More installations like last year."

"More installations"

"More installations"

"More installations, everything felt very spread out!"

"More installations, last year there was so much more interactive options"

"More installations, there were far fewer installations than the previous year. Most of the light came from the fairground rides and the toy sellers with the carts."

"More installations."

"More interactions with lights not much for kids to thought were more lights last year. More food stalls were needed."

"More interactive, something to do not just look and see, especially for children"

"More interactive and varied light installation"

"More interactive displays for kids to get involved with"

"More interactive displays like last year"

"More interactive displays like Mapp and let local food stalls who trade on the promenade all year trade for free during Baylight"

"More interactive elements like 2023. My 10year old really missed all the joining in experience."

"More interactive installations like last year"

"More interactive installations like last year.....not enough this year, although the big installations this year were super.....you also need to advertise it better, let's face it you've cancelled the Kite festival, so should have money in the pot."

"More interactive installations"

"More interactive installations"

"More interactive installations, bigger parade involve the public allow them to enter under that years theme whether it be float or individual or group, possibly engage local dance troops etc or schools."

"More light installations as nowhere near as many or interactive things for the kids to do."

"More lights and stuff for little ones"

"More lights down the main road (like the illuminations). Local light based crafts rather than tacky plastic lights from generic vendors. Something in The Platform. Focus on local community. Bigger parade with less drums, the noise was too loud for our little boy"

"More local businesses having stalls along the prom and less of the general stalls found at every festival."

"More of a parade."

"More people in the parades. There were only about 6 things to see in the parade."

"More projections onto buildings especially along the parade route.. The parade could be a little longer, and use up bigger spaces..I saw lots of underused areas that could have been amazing if utilised properly.."

"More space for interactive displays, the queue for the emoti-sphere was in the way of the flow of people, and the light playground was too small for children to really enjoy"

"More stewards on car parks when leaving the event"

"More things in the West end side"

"More to see towards the town hall end, better advertising outside area. Maybe park and ride"

"More undercover events with bad weather."

"Move the fairground and street food stalls so that the lights and sounds coming from them do not compete with, and detract from the installations. Also, there were too many pedlar stalls on the promenade all selling the same expensive, poor quality tat!"

"Needs more in the actual parade."

"Needs more installations and better installations, for free. only been going two years and already feeling like a cash grab"

"Needs more interactive installations, perhaps some created by local groups."

"No event exceeded expectations"

"No everything was amazing"

"No" " **x7**

"Not enough interactive displays this year, nothing really from lifeboat to Midland. 2023 was bigger displays that you could interact with."

"Nothing, it was great!"

"Nothing, it was great."

"Parade on the Saturday or later on the Friday evening"

"Parking charges during events. Cost me £8 to park"

"Parts of the prom had no lights in between other lights. Felt a bit sparse in places."

"Perhaps the angel wings, I suggested maybe local schools could make them to not only be more cost effective but a good interactive process to involving the local population and perhaps children that don't get the opportunity to attend any paid events."

"Please put some lights in the West End. Businesses deserve to have custom there too. The lights in Regent Road were not connected to the other route."

"Prices of things to buy could be cheaper"

"Return to the quality of 2023"

"Sailing Club end was weaker which meant the other end at the Stone Jetty and Fair were quite crowded at times"

"Second parade on Saturday or similar"

"Shorter parade time for people taking part. More installations - I felt the fair ground overtook this year & took away from the event"

"Some of the installations seemed less interactive this year. Add more interactive installations aimed at younger children."

"Some of the installations were quite spread out so we walked and saw nothing for a bit. It just felt like there could have been more. There were a number of people climbing over the rocks and through the railings onto the closed off sections of beach. More stewards were needed to stop this as these people (some were children) were putting themselves in danger and ruining the experience for others."

"Some of the interactive features were not easy to find"

"Spaced the two bands out more in the parade as they played over each other."

"The cenotaph wasn't lit up, it should have been a large part of the display. It's something uniquely British honouring our fallen, it should be part of this great event"

"The fair rides were very overpriced. A few of the installations were very impressive but there were less than we hoped for. We would have paid to attend if there were more installations"

"The food options were limited later on and a lot of places closed fairly early. The paraders struggled a bit to find food, especially those of us with special dietary requirements (e.g. gluten free)"

"The parade ended up taking longer than expected. They spread out and slowed down. Longer time should have been given so I could plan around that."

"The parade was great and could be made bigger, also good new light installations compared to last year. If some changes every year, so people will come every year. Great also in the Winter Gardens. Great event to brighten up February half term, and give businesses a real boost."

"The weather"

"The weather"

"The website was very confusing and difficult to navigate. It was not clear what was on and where e.g. the Winter Garden event was not obvious at all."

"There was some very good light installations this year, but I feel there was much more last year...there didn't seem to be anything near as many this year"

"There wasn't much by the Town Hall like there was last year"

"There wasn't very much interactive installations! 2023 was better for this"

"There wasn't as much going on as last year, there was less to do interactively, e.g. no angel wings or anything for the children to try"

"There weren't as many interactive light displays this year, nothing after the lifeboat. Last year there were some fabulous installations at the yacht club, plus many more interactive activities. I raved about it, but was a bit embarrassed bringing other people this year. Not much to do after the parade. Stretches of the prom were very dark too. Great to see so many people but glad I hadn't travelled far."

"Thought there would have been more lights, etc."

"Thought there would be craft stalls on the promenade"

"Thursday was very quiet, it would have been nice to have had some music along the prom on that night. More local sellers for food and drink."

"Traffic management - we parked on Morrisons and it took approx 45 minutes to get out - a great event spoilt by the time it took to get off the car park"

"Traffic was backed up trying to get in - can this be managed? Had to park up wherever we could and then walk to centre with 2 small children - had to rely on the kindness of bar owners for toilets facilities (Brittle Star/Midland Hotel) and only knew where to find suitable ones for the children to use as we were with family who live locally"

"Unfortunately you can't control the weather !!"

"Very quiet on the Thursday no atmosphere. No music, overpriced food and drink too many people selling lights, not enough interactive displays. Enjoyed the winter gardens display and being able to go inside."

"We didn't manage to see all the displays due to accessibility on a mobile scooter. Difficult with so many people around,"

"We were there early on the Thursday so not a huge crowd there (good in some ways), which made the shows seem very widely spaced apart. I went last year on the Saturday and it didn't seem so spread out, but possibly because it was much busier."

"Weather!"

"Whilst the parade was good it was very short and lasted only a couple of minutes when passing, would have been better for it to be a lot bigger and included more floats etc"