

**20 February, 2020**

**Bonfire and Firework Events 2019**

**Ward(s):** St Matthews, Willenhall South, Bloxwich West, Brownhills

**Portfolios:** Health and Wellbeing, Clean and Green

**1. Aim**

- 1.1 To provide a detailed evaluation of Walsall Council Bonfire and Firework Events 2019
- 1.2 To provide an overview of the planning principles for future Healthy Spaces events.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 To note the evaluation of Walsall Council Bonfire and Firework Events 2019 and agree the planning principles for future Healthy Spaces events.

**3. Know**

- 3.1 For at least 15 years, Walsall Council has operated bonfire and firework displays across the Borough. This was extended to include the Arboretum after the Walsall Illuminations ceased in 2011/12. Events in Willenhall, Holland Park and Bloxwich had historically had a far more local focus than the Arboretum event that attracted attendance from across the West Midlands.
- 3.2 Over the same period, fireworks have become more powerful and firework prices in the UK have risen significantly, costing between £8,000 and £10,000 for a single event display in 2019. This reflects increased regulation on the storage and use of high-powered fireworks in crowded places. Since 2014, far more stringent Health and Safety legislation relating to explosives and public display pyrotechnics has added to the need for increasing precautions on public safety. These were all considered in the 2019 events adding to the complexities and costs of putting on a bonfire and firework display but ultimately providing a safer and more enjoyable experience for members of the public. Over the past four years, the council has run these events at a loss. Cabinet has also agreed a Commercial and Income Policy which looks to avoid such losses.
- 3.3 From 1st August 2019, Walsall Council further developed the way in which services operate to improve healthy living, safe green spaces and active lifestyles. To achieve this, as well as a council saving target of £500,000, a new Healthy Spaces Team was formed under Public Health through merging the previous Sport and Leisure Development and Environmental Improvement Team.

3.4 The Healthy Spaces Team was given the task of developing, coordinating and delivering the Walsall Bonfire and Fireworks 2019 events. No prior planning had been put in place aside from the purchase of fireworks and the arrangement for building bonfire. The team had 11 weeks to plan and deliver four events, keeping practice entirely within the PROUD principles and PLATE values. This was alongside a social media campaign encouraging a boycott of 2019 events due to the price increase requested by members.

3.5 A full evaluation (including results from a survey of attendees) has been carried out to ensure lessons are learnt from the Bonfire and Firework events 2019 and this is included at appendix A. Main findings are as follows;

- The new Healthy Spaces Team, together with colleagues from Clean and Green, developed and delivered four professionally run and well received bonfire and firework events within limited timescales.
- For the first time, advance online ticketing to all bonfire events was implemented. Feedback on this was positive from attendees with 94% stating that the ticketing process was either easy or very easy. This also enabled daily updates to relevant officers and councillors (which were well received) providing timely opportunity for informed marketing decisions.
- Following feedback from the public and councillors, arrangements for cash ticket sales were made at the four Active Living and Leisure Centres. An electronic 'Bonfire Box Office' sales outlet was also set up at the park gates to enable the public to buy tickets with a card if they had not purchased in advance.
- The majority of attendees rated the 2019 bonfire and fireworks events as good or very good (87%). Views on the entertainment were also very positive (80%).

*"My 5 year old grandson loved the fireworks and my daughter loved Raksu. I'm looking forward to next years already. Well Done Walsall !!!"*

- Attendance was reduced across all sites in 2019 compared to previous years. This was due to a range of factors including heavy rain in the lead up to the events, other competing events (see table 1 below), late marketing due to delayed confirmation of event schedule and negative comments on social media.

**Table 1. Pricing of Bonfires Events across Walsall and Wider Birmingham and Black Country**

Area	Location	Prices (£)			
		Child	Adult	Family	Other
<b>Walsall Based Events</b>					
Borough wide Council Events	1.Holland Park (Brownhills) 2.Willenhall Memorial Park 3. Arboretum 4. KGV (Bloxwich)	5	7.50 – 10*	18-25*	Under 3s free
Aldridge	Aldridge Cricket Club	4-5 (under 12)	6-7	16-20	N/A
Park Hall	Handsworth Rugby Club (Scouts annual bonfire)	3	6	N/A	N/A
Pelsall	Pelsall Cricket Club	4	4	12	N/A
<b>Birmingham and Black Country Based Events</b>					
Wolverhampton	Wolverhampton Racecourse	4	6	N/A	Under 3s free
Dudley	Himley Hall	5.50	10	24	Premium seating/ tickets available at higher cost
Sandwell	Dartmouth Park, West Bromwich	3	5	12	U2s Free
Birmingham	Edgbaston	5	11	26	Premium seating/ tickets available at higher cost

NB: The above has been sourced through various channels including input from council staff (e.g. Locality Managers), Safety Advisory Group and online sources (such as existing Facebook posts). The details are therefore as accurate as possible based off the information available.

- Feedback from concessions was that they had lost money due to the event costs.

*“I think it was fortunate that the events took place considering the amount of rain encountered during the weeks before, so much so the ground itself was so waterlogged..... I understand that very few advance tickets had been sold in comparison with previous years.....”*

- A large proportion of attendees felt that the events did not offer good value for money (32%) and this was backed up by the comments on both ticket and fairground prices.

*“Overpriced for what was delivered”*

#### **4. Financial information**

- 4.1 Walsall Council Bonfires and Fireworks have historically run at a loss to Walsall Council.

**Table 2: Known attendances, and income for Walsall Bonfire and Firework events (2016 to 2019)**

	2016	2017	2018	2019
Holland Park - Brownhills	(12th Nov) 2,598	(2nd Nov) 2,312	(27th Oct) 1,350 (estimated)	(26 <sup>th</sup> Oct) 493
Willenhall Memorial Park	(29th Oct) 2,129	(4th Nov) 4,618	(1st Nov) 3,000 (estimated)	(1 <sup>st</sup> Nov) 1,489
Walsall Arboretum	(17th Oct) 8,000 (estimated)	(5th Nov) 10,000 (estimated)	(3rd Nov) 10,000 (estimated)	(2 <sup>nd</sup> Nov) 4,066
King George V (KGV) Playing Fields – Bloxwich	(22nd Oct) 2,630	(28th Oct) 3,910	(5th Nov) 8,000 (estimated)	(5 <sup>th</sup> Nov) 4,536
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	£not available	£80,155	£114,210	£118,637
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	£not available	£57,000	£86,000	£64,942
<b>NET LOSS</b>	£not available	-£22,000	-£28,000*	-£53,465*

\* - Net losses were balanced from corporate reserves.

*NB: As far as possible the income figures are comparable – given different models of delivery and different elements offered each year*

## **5. Reducing Inequalities**

5.2 A range of good quality events targeted effectively will help address certain health inequalities and make a greater contribution to marmot objectives. For example, wellbeing and environmental themed events will support “Give Every Child the Best Start in Life”, “Create and Develop Healthy and Sustainable Communities” and “Strengthen the Role and Impact of Ill Health Prevention”.

## **6. Decide**

6.1 Healthy Spaces have undertaken a mapping exercise to identify the current programme of events taking place in parks and greenspaces, including those delivered by external organisations. This is broken down as follows, 45% arts and culture (e.g. music festival such as “Lock, Stock”, carnival), 34% health and wellbeing (e.g. Big Bounce, fun runs) and 21% circus and funfairs.

6.2 Ideas for new events that will add value to existing provision currently include a Walsall Big Day out/ get connected day in Love Parks Week (July), outdoor cinema, community cycling, Dementia walks and sports taster days. These activities have been developed in different authorities in the recent past and resulted in positive community wellbeing, good public image for the authorities concerned and the opportunity to generate income. Where possible, new events will be developed in conjunction with the local community.

6.3. A more detailed review of existing events and a plan for future (events) delivery will be developed based on the following principles;

- provision meets the needs of residents
- adds value to the diversity of existing provision
- reduces financial risk to the council
- addresses corporate priorities

## **7. Respond**

7.1 Feedback on the Bonfire and Firework 2019 event will be used to inform development and delivery of all council events.

## **8. Review**

8.1 Similar to the Bonfire and Firework Events 2019, systems for monitoring and evaluating future Healthy Spaces events will be implemented. This will ensure that the contribution to corporate priorities and satisfaction of residents and stakeholders is assessed and future provision is developed accordingly.

## **Background papers**

Appendix A – Walsall Council Bonfire and Firework Event Evaluation 2019

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# Evaluation of Walsall Council Bonfire and Firework Events 2019

Healthy Spaces Team



## **Evaluation of Walsall Council Bonfire and Firework Events 2019**

### **1.0 Purpose and Overview of report**

The purpose of the report is to provide an evaluation of the Walsall Council Bonfire and Firework Events 2019. This will help to inform the future development of this and other events managed and delivered by Walsall Council. The report will provide a summary of the key aspects (the general approach including pricing and ticketing, staffing, entertainment and catering, sales and attendance) of managing and delivering the Bonfire and Firework Events and as well as feedback from a survey completed by a sample of attendees.

#### **1.1 Insight**

The information that informs this evaluation has been collated from multiple sources including staff feedback, bookings system and Concession providers.

#### **1.2 The Bonfire and Fireworks Events' Survey**

People who bought tickets for the events via the online platform were given the opportunity to consent to take part in a survey. 904 (10% of all attendees) people agreed to receive the survey and 142 (1.4% of all attendees) provided a response. The survey asked a range of questions regarding the event including ticket booking, access, timings and entertainment, to provide insight into attendees' views.

The low response rate is typical of an online survey of this nature. One in eight of the respondents said that they had a person with a disability within their party. Respondents generally described themselves as female (74%), with an age skew (50% of respondents) of around 23-34 years of age.

Each section of this report below includes relevant data from the survey. Other survey findings are summarised in section 7. A copy of responses to all questions are included at **Appendix 2**. It should be noted that these results are for all 4 events and further analysis is needed to split them between locations.

### **2.0 Background**

#### **2.1 History**

For at least 15 years, Walsall Council has operated bonfire and firework displays in different places across the Borough. This was extended to include the Arboretum after the Walsall Illuminations ceased in 2011/12. Events in Willenhall, Holland Park and Bloxwich had historically been far more locally focus compared to the larger Arboretum event that attracts attendees from across the West Midlands.

Over the same period, fireworks have become more powerful and firework prices in the UK have risen significantly, costing between £8,000 and £10,000 for a single event display in 2019. This reflects increased regulation on the storage and use of high-powered fireworks in crowded places. Since 2014, far more stringent Health and Safety legislation relating to explosives and public display pyrotechnics has added to the need for increasing precautions on public safety. These were all considered in the 2019 events adding to the complexities and costs of putting on a bonfire and firework display but ultimately providing a safer and more enjoyable experience for members of the public. Over the past four years, the council has run these events at a loss. Cabinet has also agreed a Commercial and Income Policy which looks to avoid such losses.

#### **2.2 Healthy Spaces Team**

From 1st August 2019, Walsall Council further developed the way in which services work to improve healthy living, safe green spaces and active lifestyles across the borough. To achieve this as well as a council saving target of £500,000, a new Healthy Spaces Team was formed under Public Health through merging the previous Sport and Leisure Development and Environmental Improvement Team. As one of the early priorities, the Healthy

Spaces team picked up the planning for Walsall Bonfire and Fireworks events. The Team, together with colleagues from Clean and Green, began this planning process in mid-August. Managers supporting the Team turned around planning and delivery of the bonfire options within three weeks, and the Team delivered all operational planning, concessions and tendering approaches within six weeks of the first event.

Moving forwards, the team is looking at how we can increase usage of our green spaces to encourage communities of all ages to take part in activities beneficial to health and wellbeing. The team's flexible Borough-wide structure will maximise opportunities for new and existing voluntary groups to grow the number and quality of activities our communities can get involved in. From allotments and community gardens to public events and healthy schools, the Healthy Spaces Team has a range of functions to establish and develop.

## **2.0 Approach to Management of Bonfire and Firework Events 2019**

### ***2.1 Shared Decision Making***

A proposal was shared with key cabinet members in September 2019 to request guidance on how many bonfire and firework events were required for 2019. This paper, together with other supporting documents immediately following it, set out the alternative options on price of tickets and numbers of events.

It was recognised by councillors that the past pricing strategy relating to the bonfire and firework events had not left the Council in a good position to begin any change, but also that that change was needed. The Leader of the Council and supported by other councillors and senior managers on 19<sup>th</sup> September rejected the option of fewer events and lower prices. Instead, the decision was made to move forward with all four events with a higher price in order to understand more about the demand price elasticity and to obtain some clear learning and evidence from a subsequent evaluation.

**Table 1 - Pricing of Bonfires Events across Walsall and Wider Birmingham and Black Country**

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**2.2 Summary of feedback from survey (pricing)**

- 68% stated that the event was good or very good value for money
- Several general comments expressed negative opinions regarding price. For example, “overpriced for what was delivered”

### **2.3 Break-Even Position**

The break-even position was identified as being in the region of 10,000 tickets sold based on a percentage share calculation from 2018 events set against known costs. This assumed that the Arboretum would need to reach 70% attendance with radio advertising support (reasonable given previous years estimates), and the other sites at around 50% attendance. This was not realised in 2019, owing to weather conditions and the availability of several other bonfires, including community bonfires, at lower prices.

### **2.4 Sponsorship**

Attempts were made to secure external sponsorship for the event. The opportunity was promoted through a range of channels including the Council website, social media (including business to business??), Walsall Economic Board and internal and external partner networks. A previous sponsor showed interest, however did not commit due to other financial commitments. Sponsorship packages were priced between £500 and £1,000.

### **2.5 Ticketing**

The decision for an all E-Ticket event was made for the following reasons:

- 95% of UK households have access to a mobile phone. Card and contactless payments are now the most preferred way to pay compared to cash across both the local and national economy.
- Cash transit services are an expensive chargeable service provided by security companies with the costs in 2018 being £6,000. The same security company were approached for the 2019 event, however advised the service was no longer available.
- Improved tracking of tickets sales. This enabled daily updates to relevant officers and councillors providing timely opportunity for informed marketing decisions.
- Previous incidents as a result of cash handling.
- Advice from Risk and Insurance in relation to staff safety and corporate liability.
- Ensured that all revenue generated by the event is processed in the most accountable, transparent and ethical way possible.
- Reduced unnecessary risk to council staff handling and carrying cash through a crowded place.

Following feedback from the public and councillors, arrangements for cash ticket sales were made at the four Active Living and Leisure Centres. An electronic 'Bonfire Box Office' sales outlet was also set up at the park gates to enable the public to buy tickets with card if they had not purchased in advance.

Following a procurement process, *Seaty* were selected as the platform through which e-tickets for the events would be purchased. Amongst other factors, *Seaty* was shown to have the lowest booking fee charged per ticket (to the buyer) compared to other suppliers. The platform was free to use for the council.

#### **Summary of survey (ticketing)**

- 94% stated that the ticketing process was either easy or very easy
- There were some negative comments including "*The website was lagging and wouldn't work on a few phones and credit cards*"

### 3.0 Marketing and Communications

The events in 2019 had a more comprehensive and more digital approach than any previous bonfire event. See **Appendix 1** for a copy of the marketing plan. Minimal spend was incurred through social media which produced the most interaction and prompts to purchase tickets.

Event awareness was ensured through promotional materials (banners, signage and leaflets) that were displayed within each venue and across community buildings within the catchment area of the events. Signage/posters were shown to have an effect in some areas, but less so in schools and other places of education.

#### **Summary of Survey (Marketing)**

- 47% of attendees found out about the events through Facebook
- By contrast, none of the respondents said that radio advertising was a factor in their ticket buying behaviour

### 4.0 Staffing and Security

A full staff plan for each event was created. The plan had reduced the number of staff required as cash handling roles were removed however staff costs in 2019 were higher compared to 2018. This was because of differential agreements for paying for additional hours. The practice acted to add significant costs into the operation of the 2019 events (approximately £12,000 plus time off in lieu). Moving forward, a standard agreement for additional hours for all staff across Walsall Council needs to be in place.

Fencing and security costs were also higher than in 2018 because of concerns from previous years about people trying to force entry once bonfires were built.

### 5.0 Entertainment and Catering

#### **5.1 Concessions, Fun Fairs and Radio Tenders**

Radio station support was deemed essential to promote all the events. It was also a fundamental element of the premier event taking place at the Arboretum which had a live music stage including a headline and supporting acts. In recent years Walsall's Bonfire and Firework events have used one radio station, however it is possible that procurement rules were breached in offering this contract to a single provider.

Therefore a tendering process was implemented in line with council policy and Free Radio were selected as the provider for 2019 event.

The same approach was taken with all other aspects of the events, including funfairs and on-site concessions. Whilst this process took some time, the outcome was an assured and ethical approach to each event.

#### **5.2 Health Switch and NHS Health Checks Promotion**

Work to promote the 'Stoptober' Anti-smoking campaign was done with Walsall FC and a short video was displayed at the Arboretum event. This was in addition to the bonfire and fireworks operations and was seen to add value to the Healthy Spaces messaging that the Team sought to also put across. Healthy options foods at the events had limited availability, and was commented upon by a Concession provider, who cited both lack of time to prepare and their engagement with a council officer who had asked about where the healthy options were.

#### **Summary of Survey (Entertainment):**

- 80% of attendees stated that the entertainment were good or very good
- On the whole comments on the entertainment were positive including *"my 5 year old grandson loved the fireworks and my daughter loved Raksu. I'm looking forward to next years already. Well Done Walsall !!!"*

- There were a number of negative comments regarding the fun fairs including “there was quite clearly much less in the way of funfair rides and catering than previous years but the price was still high”

#### Summary of Survey (Catering):

- 62% stated that the catering was good or very good
- There were some negative comments regarding the catering including “Not enough stalls, years ago there were several stalls offering all sorts of food, this year there were only a handful”

#### 6.0 Sales and Attendance

The history of pricing for Borough-wide bonfire and firework events. Table 2 shows that Walsall Council have made a loss in most, if not all years of operation, as costs have grown but ticket prices and regular income have not.

**Table 2. Known attendances, and income for Walsall Bonfire and Firework events (2016 to 2019)**

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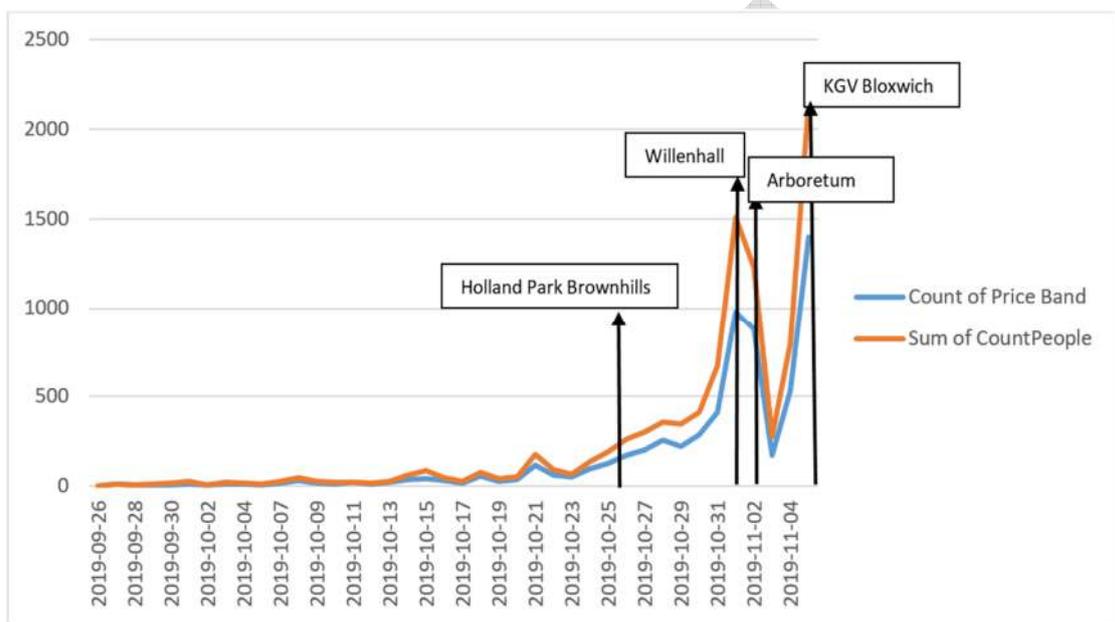
NB: As far as possible the income figures are comparable – given different models of delivery and different elements offered each year

### 6.1 Sales Trends

Daily sales updates were provided to the Leader, the Portfolio Holder and senior executives of the Council so all could see the emerging pattern. Positive feedback was received about this.

Data showed that sales climbed 10 days before each event in response to good digital marketing. The clearest indication, however, are the marked peaks of activity on the days of the event themselves, which tells us people were generally making decisions within 24-48 hours of each bonfire about whether or not to attend. The best indicator of this was the weather. The Arboretum and KGV were notable in this.

**Table 3. Ticket Sales and count of people for each of the events**



### 6.2 Weather Impact

**Table 4. Weather forecast and actual weather conditions for each event**

Date	Location	Weather
26 <sup>th</sup> October 2019	Brownhills	Week forecast leading up to the event: Rain. On the day: Rain for most of the day. 6-7 degrees
1 <sup>st</sup> November 2019	Willenhall	Week forecast leading up to the event: Rain. On the day: Rain and Drizzle at end of the day. 13-14 degrees
2 <sup>nd</sup> November 2019	Walsall	Week forecast leading up to the event: Rain. On the day: Rain for most of the day, clearing later. 9-10 degrees
5 <sup>th</sup> November 2019	Bloxwich	Week forecast leading up to the event: Dry. On the day: Light rain earlier in the day, stopping for the event 5-8 degrees

Source: [www.timeanddate.com/weather](http://www.timeanddate.com/weather)

The events had to cope with significant rainfall in Brownhills and at the Arboretum, which appears to have been a significant factor in people’s attendance, as people became both increasingly price sensitive and aware that they could choose to buy tickets away from the venue. There were several messages from the public sent to the Healthy Spaces email and Facebook page prior to the Brownhills and Arboretum bonfires to ask if the events were being cancelled because of the weather. Despite the team’s effort to respond quickly, some members of public may have believed the events were not going to operate, had already been told about an alternative event or did not feel they wanted to go out in the rain.

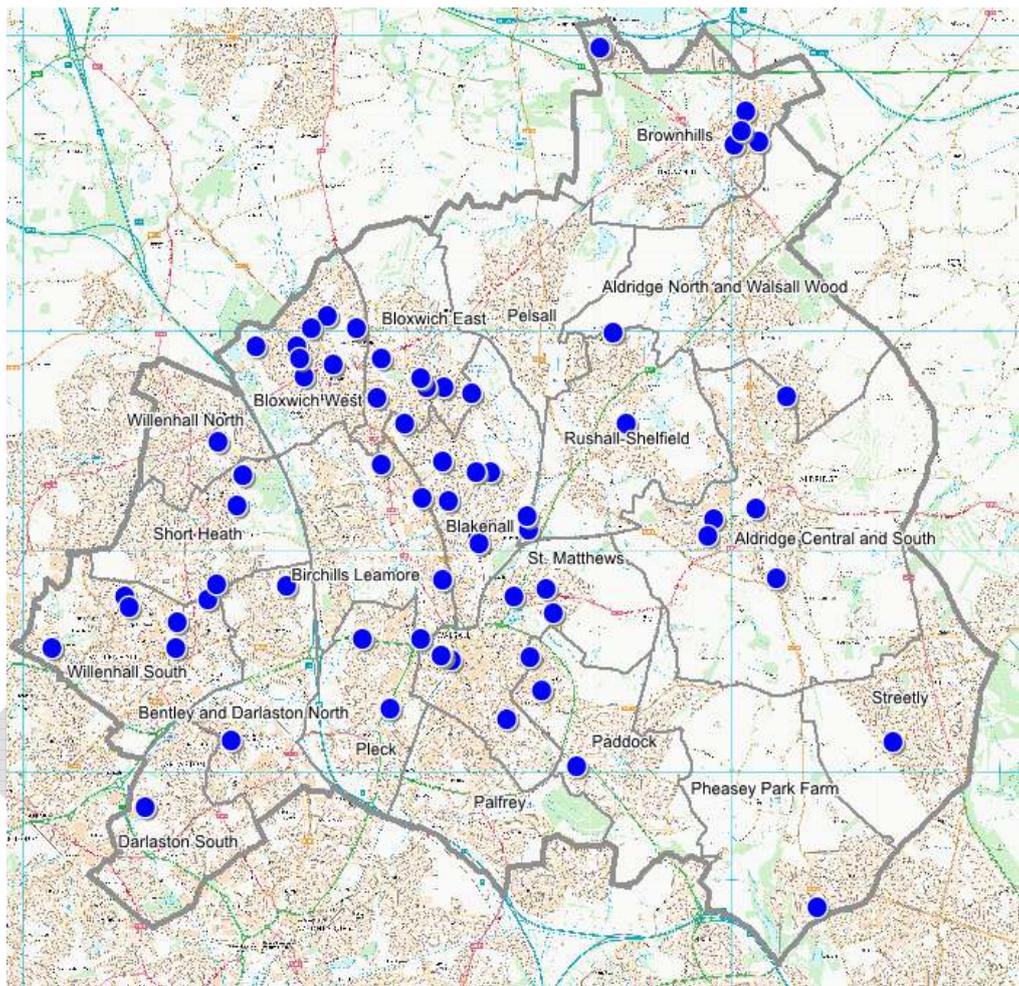
### 6.3 Attendance spread

Data collected from 142 attendees who responded to the survey contained a request for postcode. Responses show that attendees to the four events came from across the Borough.

It is noticeable that there are areas where there is no indicative marker or cluster of markers. This may be because the respondents did not come from those areas. Alternatively it may show that most engagement at the events was within North and South Localities and the least engagement, East and West Localities (13 - 14 survey respondents each). It should also be noted that the sample size (1.3%) of the survey was limited.

For each of the events, clusters of respondents can be seen in the surrounding areas.

**Fig 1: Spread of survey respondents**



**Source:** Attendee Survey 2019, mapped by Public Health Intelligence Team

### 6.4 Availability and Choice for Citizens

This year's Bonfire and Fireworks events were set among a number of similar competing events across most of the other local authority areas, all of which had far longer to prepare. This year also saw two venues celebrating 50 years (Dudley and Drayton Manor Park), therefore expanding on events offered in previous years.

For details of all bonfires: <https://www.expressandstar.com/entertainment/features/2019/10/17/bonfire-night-2019-this-years-top-events-in-the-west-midlands/>

**Table 5: Pricing and types of bonfire event run by councils across the Black Country.**

Council Area	Location	Prices
Wolverhampton 2 <sup>nd</sup> November 2019 (Same date as Arboretum)	Wolverhampton Racecourse	£4 for children under 16 £6 for adults U3s Free
Dudley 2 <sup>nd</sup> November 2019 (Same date as Arboretum)	Himley Hall	£5.50 for children £10 for adults Family tickets £24 Premium seating/ tickets available at higher cost
Sandwell 1 <sup>st</sup> November 2019 (Same date as Willenhall)	Dartmouth Park, West Bromwich	£3 for children 2-17 £5 for adults Family tickets £12 U2s Free

Table 5 shows that the cost of tickets was lower in surrounding areas compared to Walsall, and on the same evenings as the Arboretum in particular. Direct competition on the same date is likely to have had an adverse effect, particularly for travelling guests, and offers a choice of venue for Bonfire events to our residents living closer to borough boundaries.

Community bonfire events in Walsall also occurred at the same time as Walsall Bonfires and Fireworks events.

While the Council was promoting its own bonfire events, Core Brief promoted two other local community bonfire events:

- 20<sup>th</sup> Walsall Scouts Bonfire and Fireworks: nightly from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> November 2019. These events accounted for around 700-1000 people.
- Walsall Wood Football Club Bonfire and Fireworks: 3<sup>rd</sup> November. Marketed as a cheaper alternative to the Holland Park bonfire by the [Brownhills Bob blog](#).
- Walsall Rugby Club Bonfire and Fireworks: 8<sup>th</sup> November 2019

As well as being on or near the same days as our own events, both of these were offered at lower, community-level prices. The Scout's events were on the same day as the Arboretum and KGV Bonfire and Fireworks. It is likely that a proportion of local custom was also lost to these events.

**Summary of Survey (Travel):**

- 33% walked and 53% travelled by car to the event
- 78% stated they would travel over 2 miles to attend a future bonfire and firework event

## 7.0 Other Event Feedback (not included in previous sections)

### 7.1 Feedback from Survey Findings

Overall, 87% of respondents rated the 2019 bonfire and fireworks events as good or very good. When comparing the Arboretum and Non-Arboretum events, respondents felt the Arboretum event represented better value for money (78%) compared to the Non-Arboretum events (68%).

Much of the work to promote the bonfires and fireworks was conducted through social media and direct emails. Because of the two-way nature of the media used, early responses from social media users gave an indication of views about the position taken regarding price.

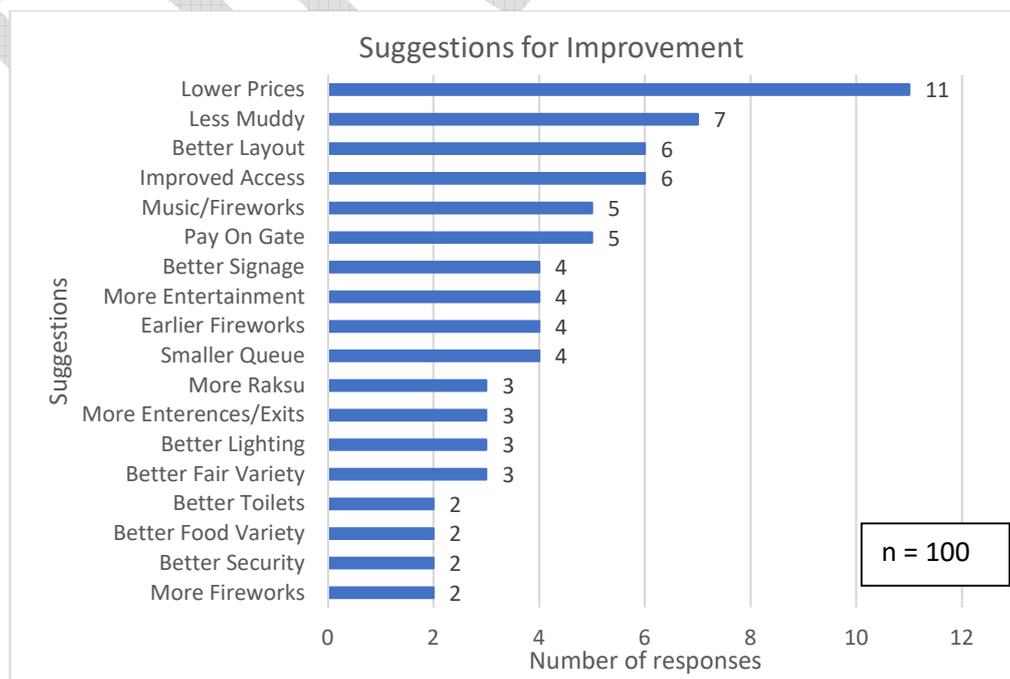
48% of respondents said they found out via Facebook, 18% through the Council Website, 15% via posters / banners and 15% from Word of Mouth. Schools communications accounted for only 1%, indicating messages did not circulate effectively in places of learning. No effect from Free Radio awareness was cited. This may be because it was too limited in reach or effectiveness, or because there were too many competing fireworks adverts on the radio at the same time.

All respondents purchased their tickets online. Of these 94% said that they found it fairly or very easy to purchase tickets in this way. Three people referred to either difficulties with the process. Only one said they would have preferred cash at the entrance.

Timings were generally considered to be about right (78%-88%), though about 23% felt the gates opened too early and 10-11% felt the bonfire and fireworks started too late.

Respondents said that they found sites easy or very easy to find (97%), but 47% of the 142 respondents found it difficult or very difficult to park. Entering the site was found to be easy / very easy by 85%, though there were issues with lighting and mud because of wet conditions. 80% found it easy or very easy to leave, with the same issues cited for those with difficulties. Health and Safety was considered good or very good by 83% of the respondents

Whilst there was a good representation of positive comments, saying that they felt the events were well run and were safe for those attending, a range of suggestions for Improvement were received via the survey. The first 100 responses are presented here:



52% of respondents had previously attended a Walsall Bonfire and Fireworks event; 48% had not. Events were therefore attracting new and existing audiences. 70% of respondents said that they would travel between one and five miles to see a large organised display, putting Himley and Wolverhampton outside the range for most. A further 11% would travel up to 10 miles.

### **7.2 Feedback from Project Management Staff**

From Project Management Staff (e.g. lack of clear process from previous events), there was good evidence of knowledge about previous events within the Healthy Spaces Team but there was little or no prior project planning documents to follow to provide assurance and clarity. The team had to check and assure the approach being taken was in line with expectations of Corporate Procurement, Information Governance and ICT, particularly in relation to the use of the e-ticketing system. Actions were project planned and tracked in meetings by the Healthy Spaces team to ensure timely and quality delivery.

### **7.3 Feedback from Event Staff**

Three responses were received. Views were that the bonfires were “a waste of money” and “should not be making £40,000 loss”. One view was that lasers could be a way forward (this was used at Edgbaston). A debrief of the Healthy Spaces Team is included in **Appendix 3** which outlines what worked and what needs development from an operational perspective.

### **7.4 Feedback from Concessions**

Three responses were received, from those providing the Funfairs. The view was that they had lost money because of the event costs.

One response summed up the position:

*“I think it was fortunate that the events took place considering the amount of rain encountered during the weeks before, so much so the ground itself was so waterlogged it was impossible to place any of the sales-units within Prime Area of the Event. I understand that very few advance tickets had been sold in comparison with previous years, but more importantly I was told by a number of the public that Entrance Charges had almost doubled which obviously made a big difference to the attendance this year. We were some 50% down on previous sales at the main event.”*

Another identified comments at KGV from the Bloxwich and Leamore area about the non-use of cash:

*“Many people don’t use cards or don’t have cards. A lot of people I know in the Bloxwich area told me they’re not going to the bonfire (KGV) due to card payment being the only method of payment. We have a catering trailer on an industrial estate in Leamore, we were advertising and promoting Walsall’s bonfires events, we heard a lot of negative comments about the method of payment.”*

A comment was received on the unequal payments for concessions:

*“As a council you must know which caterers you want and would prefer to attend your bonfires. There were several vendors there selling similar foods but paying different site fees. As a Walsall tax-payer I found it difficult to get in to some of the other bonfires, most of them tend to look after their own constituents first.”*

### **7.5 Feedback from Social Media**

From Social Media, non-attendees view was less supportive, with many citing unhappiness with the price changes and that they could “stand outside and watch”. Regular social media influencer, Brownhills Bob, utilised the commentary to promote an alternative event at Walsall Wood Football Club via his own blog.

## **7.6 Feedback from Councillors**

Informal feedback from Walsall councillors was positive, citing well run events.

## **8.0 Summary**

Events were well run, were of good quality and were safe.

Management of staff volunteers was good, but future event numbers would need to be clearly defined in advance and limited to that number to keep staff costs at the correct level.

All income from the events was properly routed to Council accounts in good time. The ticket sales approach worked and would be feasible to use again – though enabling a card reader box office at the locations would remove the criticism of not being able to pay at the event.

Event dates clashed with other similar flagship events across the region, creating too much choice for travelling guests, who would generally opt to stay closer to home unless there was a specific reason to attend a particular location.

Ticket prices were in line with other flagship events, but locations without either a clear attraction (e.g. a live band) or a premium date (e.g. 5<sup>th</sup> November) suffered most from higher pricing.

The rate of increase (compared to previous years) was felt most at these locations, and there were other community based events that could attract the available audience at a price they wanted to pay.

## Appendix 1: Communications Summary of Communications Delivery for Bonfires Events 2019

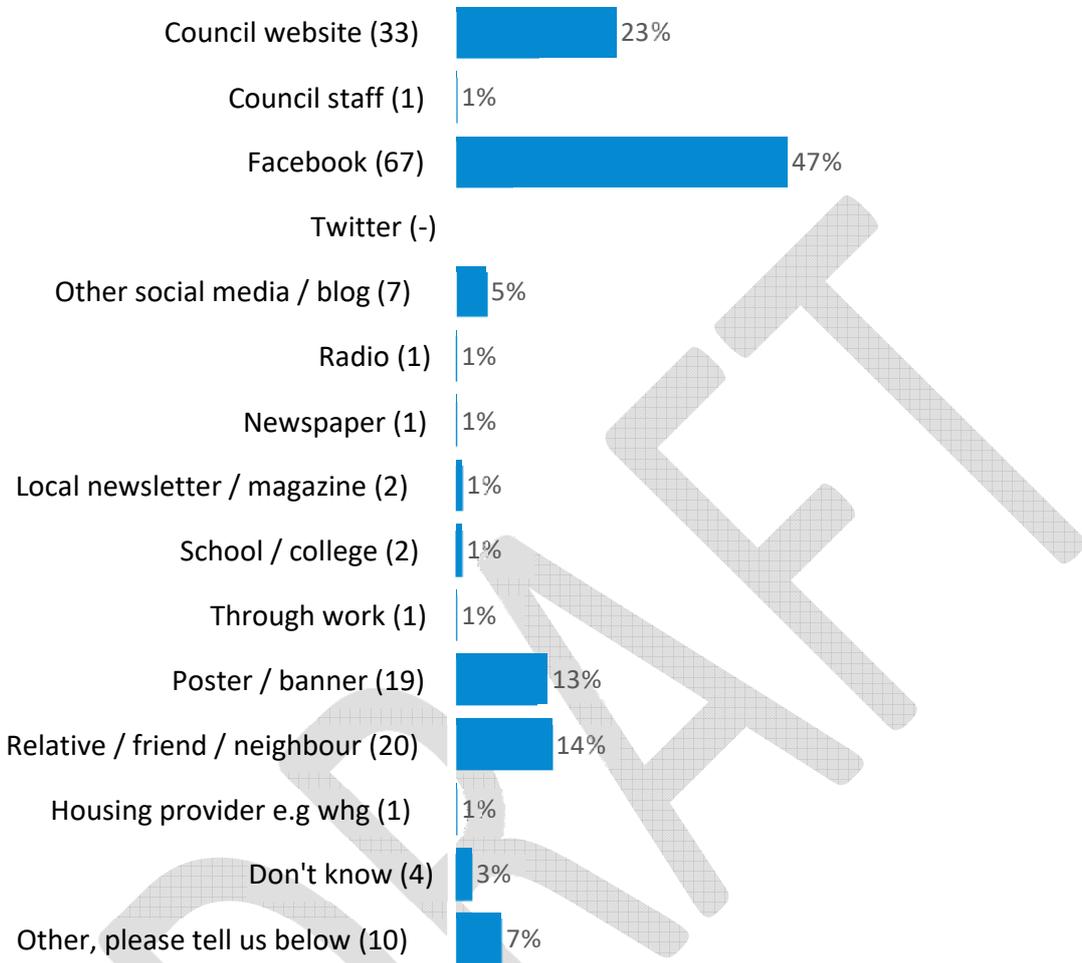
Communication	Channel of distribution	Notes
<b>Digital</b>		
Website	Walsall Council website: <a href="http://www.walsall.gov.uk/Bonfires2019">www.walsall.gov.uk/Bonfires2019</a>	Updated regularly and whenever new information emerged. Added link to purchase tickets.  Walsall Council website front page carried a banner to click for more information and to purchase tickets.
Social media posts and tweets	Regular Facebook posts via Walsall Healthy spaces Facebook account. Shared from major Walsall Council Facebook accounts. Tweets published via @WalsallCouncil and @CleanGreenTweet as Healthy Spaces didn't have a Twitter account at the time.	Boosted posts on Facebook helped to increase the reach of the messages. Posts included a bitlink and this showed the spike in engagement when boosted posts were published. A total of £500 was spent on boosted posts throughout the promotion of the events.
Email to all 119 schools	Email with copy text and digital poster to all schools.	Sent via Nick Perks – requested to go to all school settings for inclusion on websites and in newsletters.
<b>Printed leaflets &amp; posters</b>		
Posters and leaflets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To all 119 schools (nursery, primary, secondary inc academies)</li> <li>• Colleges (Walsall, WACC, Wolves Uni etc)</li> <li>• Active Living Centres</li> <li>• Libraries</li> <li>• Community centres</li> <li>• EDC</li> <li>• Civic Centre</li> <li>• First Stop Shop etc.</li> <li>• To parks for display on notice boards, visitors centre etc.</li> <li>• Promotion to schools via 'postbox' email groups.</li> </ul>	Separate plan for distribution of printed media.
<b>Media release</b>		
Media release X2	Released via Council Comms and 'Newsroom' – pushed out to local press, radio, TV etc	The first media release was issued to announce dates, times & locations of events. The second release was issued when the full entertainment package details for the Arboretum event was confirmed.
<b>Radio</b>		

Free Radio	On air commercials and promotion to purchase tickets via a link on Free Radio website	Free Radio promotion commenced around 8 days before the Arboretum event.
<b>Outdoor promotion</b>		
Vinyl Banners	Positioned outside park/ around park/s hosting events.	14 banners created for the four events. Additional banners created to re-inforce key message of 'Advance Tickets Only'.
Correx Board A2 Posters	Posters around the parks on notice boards/ visitors centre etc	44 A2 correx boards produced for display in parks and on gates etc
<b>Internal Communications</b>		
Internal Communications	Weekly Bulletin Inside Walsall Intranet page First Stop Shop screens Newsroom/front page of website.	When we know what is happening.
<b>Additional items requested</b>		
Queue cards X 4000	Cards requested to give to people in the queue who haven't purchased tickets.	Given out by gate staff on the night of each event.
Cancellation boards X10	Correx A2 boards to be used in the event of cancellation.	

**Appendix 2: Summary report of Attendee Survey Data final results (base 142)**

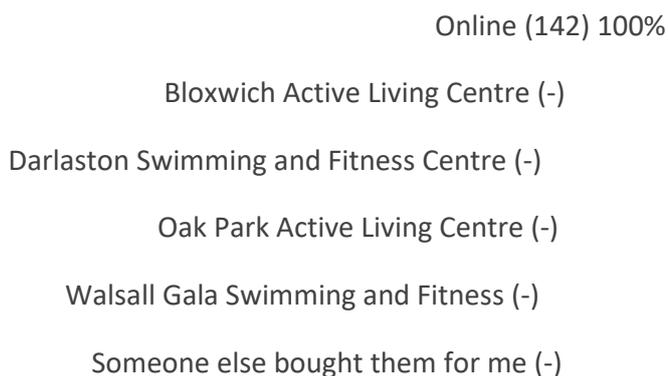
This report was generated on 06/12/19, giving the results for 142 respondents. A filter of 'All Respondents' has been applied to the data.

**How did you find out about the 2019 Which bonfire and firework display did you attend??**

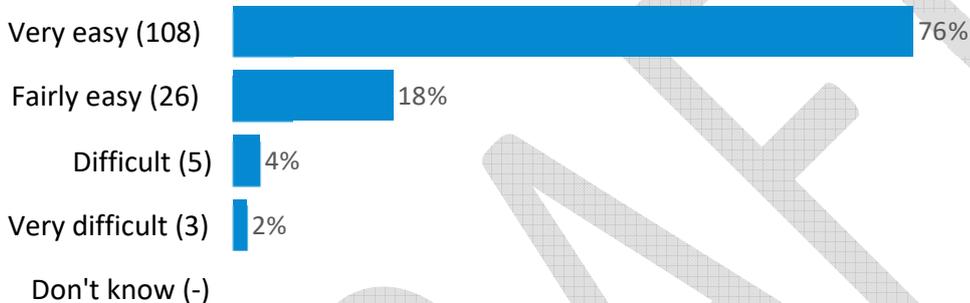


- \_\_\_\_\_ Knew from last year
- \_\_\_\_\_ leaflet through the door
- \_\_\_\_\_ Google search online
- \_\_\_\_\_ Banners at entrance
- \_\_\_\_\_ Rak Su who performed there
- \_\_\_\_\_ Google search
- \_\_\_\_\_ Saw it on the way back home
- \_\_\_\_\_ News online
- \_\_\_\_\_ Looked it up online
- \_\_\_\_\_ Searched firework displays on google

**Where did you buy your ticket(s) from?**



**How easy or difficult did you find buying your ticket(s) for the bonfire and firework display you attended?**



**How easy or difficult did you find buying your ticket(s)?**

- Long process as a card had to be used

---

- Probably my own fault but I wanted 2 adult and 1 child ticket, ended up buying 2 family and 1 child. Gutted

---

- Inconvenient, prefer to pay cash at the entrance

---

- Just not having time to do them and the

---

- The website was lagging and wouldn't work on ca few phones and credit cards

---

- I attempted to buy online and it crashed so I then had to call up

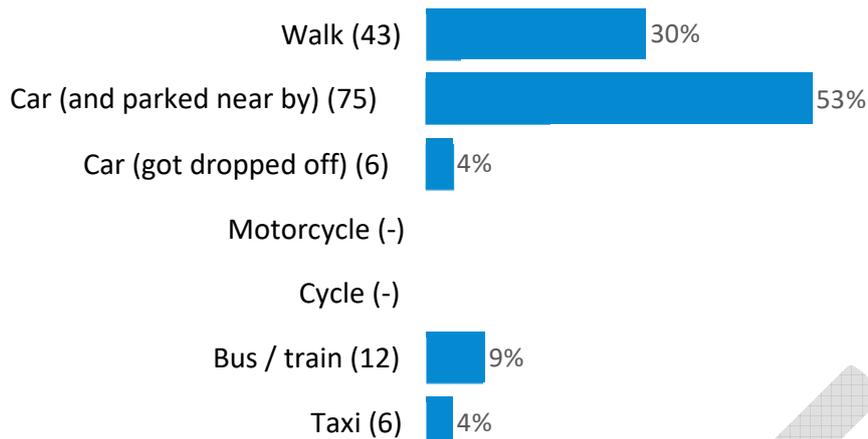
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- The website wasn't working correctly and duplicated the order. I then had to ring to correct this where the tickets were cancelled off and had to wait for refund and more were processed over the telephone

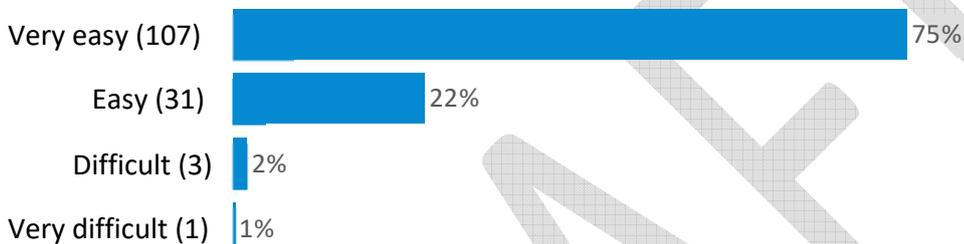
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- The online system was really slow.

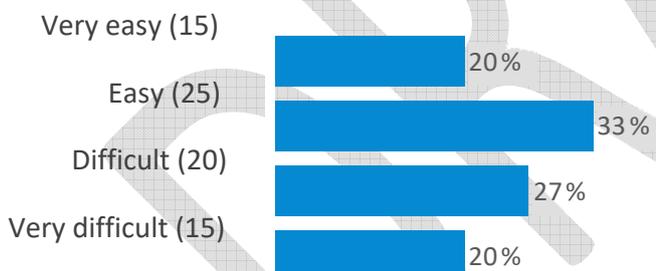
**How did you travel to Which bonfire and firework display did you attend?? Please tick the one that made up the majority of your journey.**



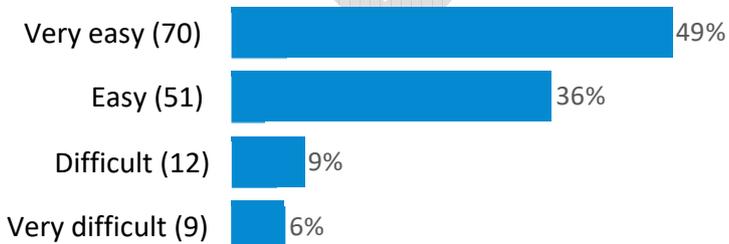
**How easy or difficult did you find each of the following...? (Getting there)**



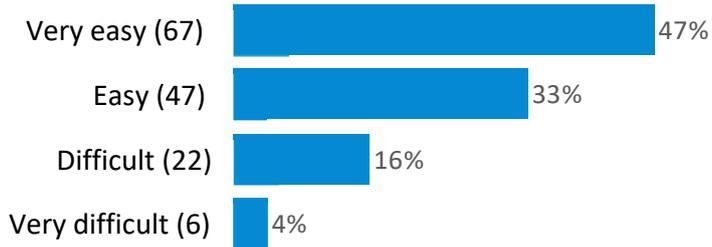
**How easy or difficult did you find each of the following...? (Parking)**



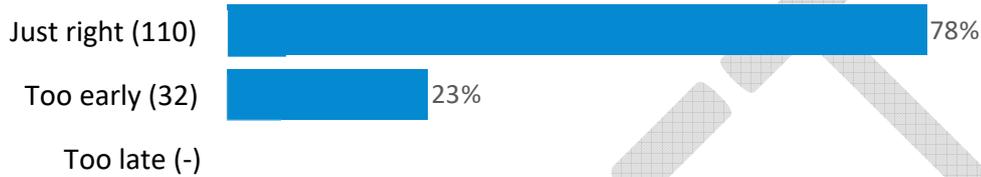
**How easy or difficult did you find each of the following...? (Entering the site)**



**How easy or difficult did you find each of the following...? (Leaving the site)**



**Were the following event timings too early, too late or just right? (Gates open at 5pm)**



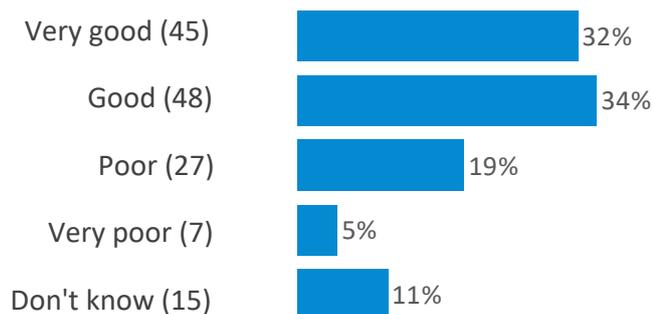
**Were the following event timings too early, too late or just right? (Bonfire lit at 7pm)**



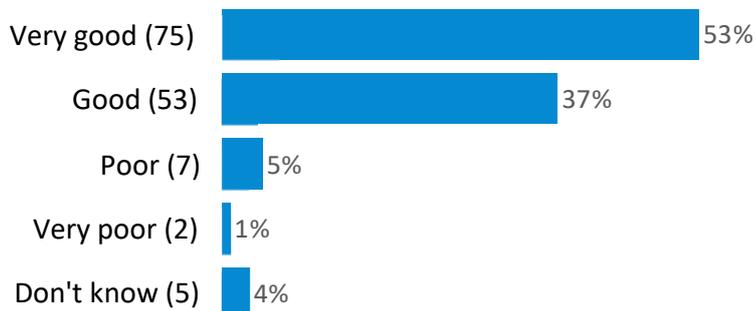
**Were the following event timings too early, too late or just right? (Firework display at 7.30pm)**



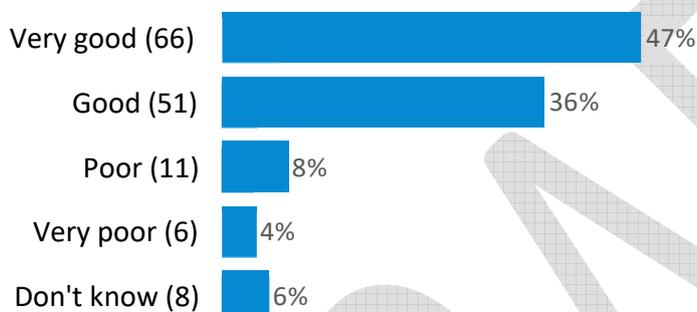
**Please rate each of the following aspects of Which bonfire and firework display did you attend?. (On site signage)**



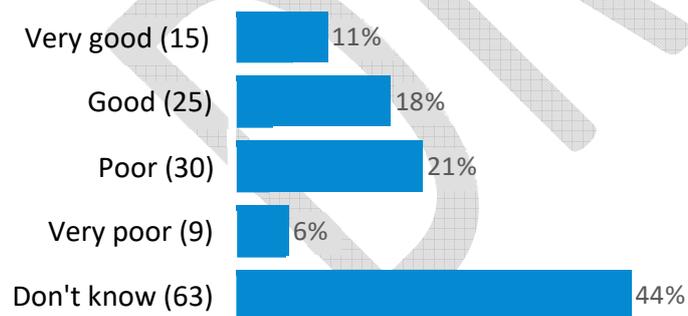
**Please rate each of the following aspects of Which bonfire and firework display did you attend?.  
(Staff & security)**



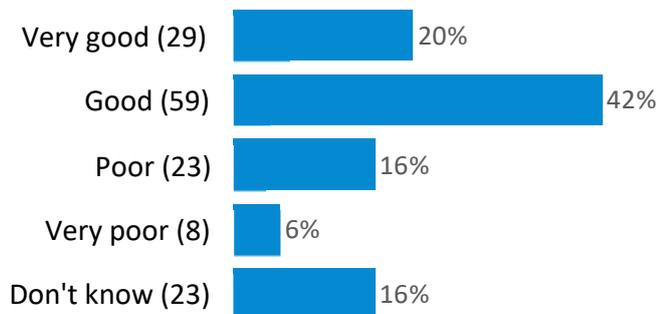
**Please rate each of the following aspects of Which bonfire and firework display did you attend?.  
(Event health & safety)**



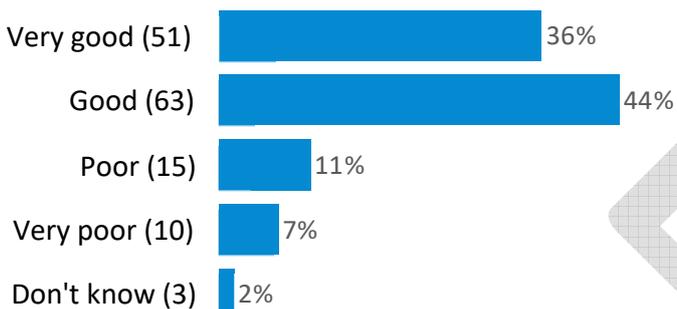
**Please rate each of the following aspects of Which bonfire and firework display did you attend?.  
(Toilets)**



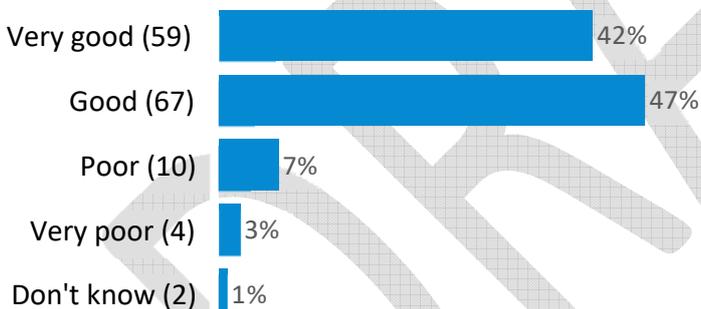
**Please rate each of the following aspects of Which bonfire and firework display did you attend?.  
(Catering)**



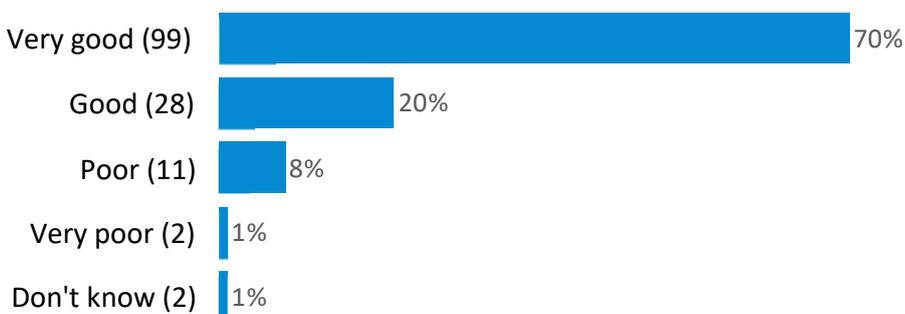
**Please rate each of the following aspects of Which bonfire and firework display did you attend?. (Entertainment)**



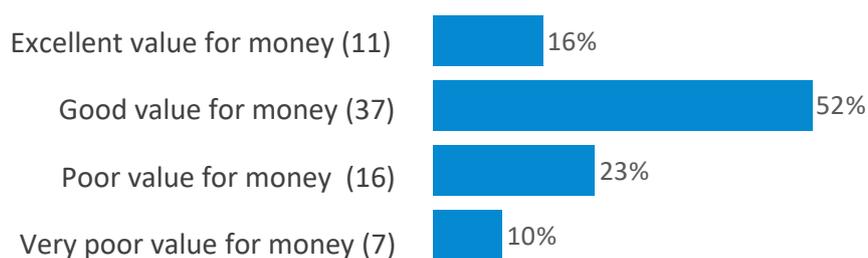
**Please rate each of the following aspects of Which bonfire and firework display did you attend?. (The bonfire)**



**Please rate each of the following aspects of Which bonfire and firework display did you attend?. (The firework display)**



**Taking into account what you paid and your overall experience, to what extent do you think Which bonfire and firework display did you attend? offered value for money?**



**Why do you think Which bonfire and firework display did you attend? offered poor or very poor value for money? (Why do you think Which bonfire and firework display did you attend? offered poor or very poor value for mo...)**

Expensive ticket price. Overpriced food outlets Minimal entertainment Portaloos had no lights

compared to previous years, the funfair was very poor. There was only one catering van (there may have been others nearer the bonfire but we only went that way to watch the fireworks) in the fair and the number of rides was quite obviously far fewer than before. The bonfire and fireworks were perfectly fine, it was let down by the cost cutting of the fun fair. Will think twice before attending next year. I thought the pre-bought tickets were a good idea along with no cash sales on the night.

Over priced for what was delivered

This was because of my getting the booking badly wrong otherwise I would say good value for money

because it lasted 15 mins

Took ages to get in as the online site went down and wouldn't load on my phone to get scanned in. Catering vans didn't have much to offer no pick and mix or big sweet dummies, just candyfloss. Think it was a big flop as it wasn't advertised that well and I know alot of people that forgot it was on and then didn't realise you had to have pre ordered tickets to get in. It was the quietest I have ever seen it and I've been to the last ones the past few years. Has definitely made me re think whether to bother next year especially for £7.50 each .

This year, there were hardly any rides or poor variety of them. The organisation was poor as only one entrance was open and we had to walk all the way around the park which put 20 mins on our journey. The fact that other entrances would be closed was not announced prior to event. It was poor organisation This year was worse than the previous ones. The only good thing was a fireworks display. The increase in price did not reflect the quality.

We paid a lot to get in and there was nothing better than any other years.

Nothing for the adults/older children to do apart from 1 ride the bonfire was miles away.

Prices are too dear and when I was buying the tickets a child was classed as a 15 so I had to buy a adult because I'm 16. Very unhappy for someone who works and had to pay for this herself

---

Because a family ticket was far more expensive than last year and lots of people can't afford that being so close to Christmas, I'm sure if you lower the price you would have had more people attend.

---

Because the fair was too small not many rides and so expensive and the fireworks was amazing but needed more

---

I think it was too expensive this year and could only get tickets online, so hard to get for people who find it hard and still had to queue for a bit before getting into the park

---

Bonfire is kept at a huge distance, fireworks lasted 10 minutes and way too expensive

---

Was not a lot the children could do while waiting around

---

Considering the prices increase this year the firework display wasn't all that good..... I genuinely feel sorry for families who couldn't afford to go this year and the fact of putting an extra charge for booking online was a joke as well !!!!! The field is normally full but not this year .... I wish I would have saved my money now

---

Rides were too expensive for what you paid for tickets and travel it was like £3 per ride/game once the bonfire and fireworks were over there was nothing to do and wasn't much variety as there were 2 dart games right next to each other also need benches round there because my little sister ( age 11) nearly passed out and had to sit on the floor

---

**Why do you think Which bonfire and firework display did you attend? offered poor or very poor value for money? (Why do you think Which bonfire and firework display did you attend? offered poor or very poor value for mo...)**

---

Didn't find the firework display as good as last year and it was cheaper last year

---

It's a local park, so it should be fairly cheap. The staff also indicated that it costs too much. I don't know why the park charges to enter a normal / standard park, where you have rides who have their own price. If this is the case you rather go to a theme park and get a better experience.

---

The rides and food is too expensive

---

Not enough stalls, years ago there were several stalls offering all sorts of food, this year there were only a handful.

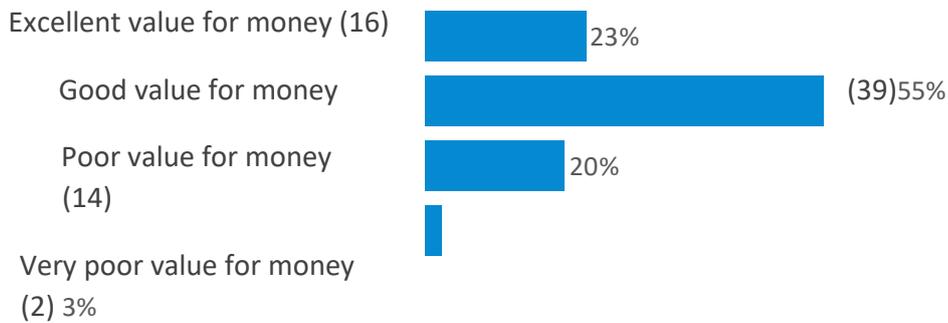
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Hardly any rides for the kids, mainly catered for little kids, and not much choice food wise. No narration or audible alerts for the fire and fireworks.

---

**Taking into account what you paid and your overall experience, to what extent do you think Which bonfire and firework display did you attend? offered good value for money? (Taking into account what you paid and your overall experience)**

---



**Why do you think the display you attended offered poor or very poor value for money?**

Too expensive was not worth £10 each

I parked by the front entrance and it was right at the other end of the park there were no signs. So we had to walk along way through the park in the dark with no lights couldnt see where we was going. And the fireworks works was not very good. And the fair was rubbish. Wasnt worth the money at all.

Prices inside were then ridiculous, staff not monitoring the walkway down to the stage to move people down meaning it was cramped along the walkway could not get through with pushchair. Don't know what I got for £10

Poor due to the fact the rides were mostly £4 each to go on, the entertainment was too early so we missed it and the chicken noodles we have were disgusting and made me feel ill for days after £10 is for and adult is a bit much The only think I like were the fireworks so maybe separate the fireworks from the fair so a ticket for only the fair or a ticket for only the fireworks or a duo ticket You could lower the cost of the individual tickets and then it's up to the person if they wanted to enjoy the fair to. This also could be more cost effective for the council

Access for disabled people to the bonfire was shocking I saw an old man struggle to get his wife out of the mud they were stuck. Everyone was covered in mud there should have been boards down as my feet were full of mud and sludge. The lighting was bad as you couldn't see where you were walking and it was dangerous due to the weather. Maybe warning people who are disabled will not have access to the bonfire and fireworks show as it was too far away and unsafe. Shame as it had the recipe to be a fab event however lack of thought on the customer journey meant it was a horrible night for some. I did enjoy it I just felt bad for other vulnerable people struggling and not getting any support due to being unaware. The fireworks display was great but is it the right place to have it with all the nature you have. As much as I loved the display I would still go without fireworks for the cause and maybe next year you could consider that and you it as a selling point. Also me and my partner were gutted there were no donuts stalls the options were limited. However all the staff and security were friendly and they clearly tried hard. Customer journey is where you need to revisit.

To stand in a field sodden with mud having trekked down a full path of mud when there was a concrete entrance available is not acceptable. The security staff guided is down a pitch black muddy path when we could have walked along a lot hard ground route, not acceptable for the money I paid. The hotdog bread from the Germans burger stand was stale and hard. A waste of my money, won't be back next year.

---

10 pounds for adults are too expensive

---

I think this because you had to still pay £3.00/£3.50 for babe rides

---

£10 is a lot to watch fireworks when im not interested in a terrible boy group. we also had to pay for the rides so nothing else was included other than the fireworks as far as we were concerned.

---

On entrance it was pitch black , very muddy , not very good signing to tell you which way to walk. Around the stage it got extremely rammed , the ground was extremely muddy and people were pushing into each other. Amongst the crowds were mothers with pushchairs and small toddlers / children I felt there should have been stewards around in hi viz jackets to separate the crowds when the entertainment had finished and ensure there were no incidents when everyone was then leaving to go back into the fair I felt it was a real nightmare in crowds and mud with a small child and no lighting and no one to direct us safely back into the fair etc This could be a great event but Improvemntnd need to be made

---

Poor value for money compared to last year. Not nearly enough entertainment and when your charging £4 a ride then the rest of the evening should be cost effective

---

I wont be going again ridiculous prices for an event that cost £26 just to get in then expected to pay the earth for things whilst in there, everyone blocked the exits I couldnt get through with my daughter in her wheelchair! We ended up leaving early because of how crowded it was and the fact that we couldnt move because the crowds weren't moved to safer and more open spaces it was a nightmare from start to finish!

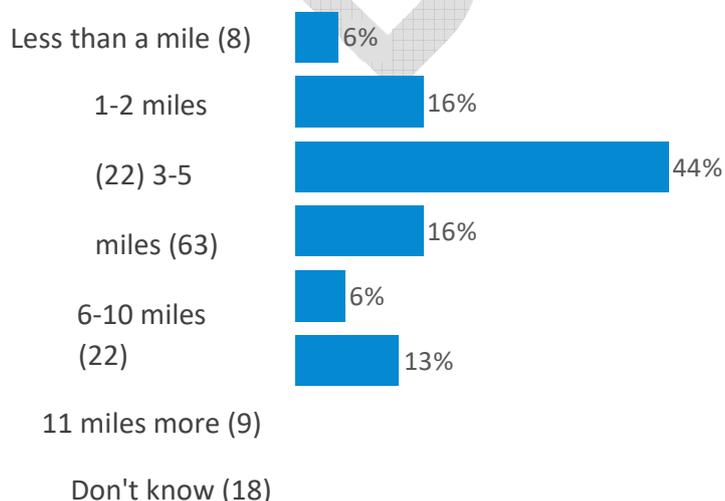
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There was only one firework display £10 was very expensive - we parked the other side of the park and walked in the dark with no signs to get there. I won't be attending again.

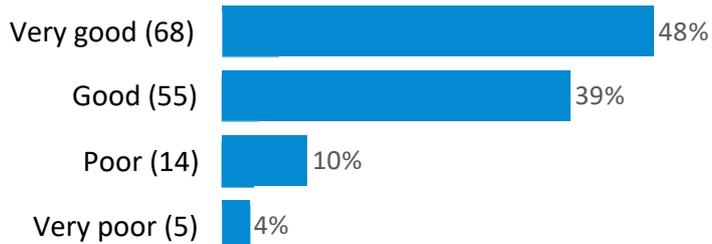
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Poor firework display , very repetitive display and no where near as good as last years , live stage was better this year , but food terrible compared to last year and fair rides extortionate prices for family event

### How far would you be willing to travel to attend a large organised bonfire and fireworks display?



## Overall how would you rate the 2019 Which bonfire and firework display did you attend??



## Please tell us what, if anything, you think would improve Which bonfire and firework display did you attend? in the future?

Absolutely loved it, will be coming again, maybe just lower the price of rides as we didnt go on any but would of loved too x

We had an amazing time. We hadn't been to the arboretum for years so were pleasantly surprised. It was very muddy so Im glad we put our wellies on. My 5 year old grandson loved the fireworks and my daughter loved Raksu. Im looking forward to next years already. Well Done Walsall !!!!

More walkways to be provided due to the poor ground conditions. Better selection of food outlets - all fast junk food.

There is nothing that needs improving was a excellent night for all the family lots going on and lots to do

Nothing it was spot in

The fireworks were absolutely amazing and there were lots of food joints to chose from. The games and rollacosters however don't seem useful considering the event itself takes place in the evening when it's dark and cold. A lot less of these would be better.

Everthing was amazing

Signage approaching the Arboretum, including where the entrance is, was very poor.

More entertainment Better toilet facilities A variety of food outlets

I think the prices for the rides are disgusting considering how much you pay to get in

I think it was just right - can't think there is anything which will improve it.

Getting off the field at the end of the fireworks was a nightmare, the queue didn't move for approximately 15 minutes as we were all trying to get out of one small exit and the mud was terrible. The fireworks themselves were spectacular though!

Better toilet facilities with easier access and maybe a stadium area which you can pay extra for so you can seat down and watch the fireworks

Broader range of catering outlets. Too many sweet vendors, not enough hot food

---

Inadequate lighting and signage provided Paths not lit No idea whereabouts in the park the actual event was

---

the layout was terrible, the fair ground could of been on the carpark adjacent to where catering was. My major concern was the small track from catering to the display field was terrible. very dangerous to the point myself and partner where squashed i would of been very worried had i had small children with me.

---

We were a little unsure where the fireworks were going to be held. We thought they were on the field in front of the music stage, but when we realised they were on the bonfire field we felt we should have positioned ourselves slightly better for a clearer view. Maybe this could have been made clearer but overall a great event and we would attend again in future.

---

More parking, less in price, better staffing organisation inside. Fireworks slightly earlier as quite a wait with nothing else to do but spend money on rides

---

It's always a great event. Keep up the good work.

---

More walkways/matting, it was muddy.

---

Better parking

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DRAFT

The prices of the food and fair rides. Also to make sure the catering has a food hygiene rating as the chicken noodles were not very good and made me ill

---

Please read my response on previous question

---

As in last box

---

Maybe not play the music so loud whilst the fireworks are going off

---

Overall it was enjoyed by all, however, access in and out of the area where the rides were, needed to be improved- very very crowded. Having the characters from Frozen was really lovely, but they were in a terrible location. The children's rides were a bit overpriced. The bonfire and fireworks could have started a little earlier, so that younger children weren't getting tired and irritable (we had to leave before they finished as daughter was too tired). Next year we will look for a bonfire night which has an earlier specified children's firework display.

---

I think that this year, the barriers around the stage area were too far away and got very 'tight' due to have eating huts too close to this and spectators trying to view the acts

---

nothing just entry price

---

Difficult to appreciate that the fireworks were arranged to music. Speakers were too far away from the display. Shame, as louder music would have hugely improved the experience. Could barely hear the music. Otherwise a fab event.

---

I think you should have Rak Su perform every year

---

Area in front of stage was waterlogged so drainage could be improved

---

Get Rak-su to perform again!!

---

Make the rides free and just up the ticket price

---

Synchronised fireworks to music

---

The queue from the Bell Lane entrance should be down Bealeys Lane instead of across Bealeys Lane towards the Robert Peel pub, to join the queue you had to walk into oncoming traffic as the footpath was taken up with the queue and also vehicles were turning into Bealeys Lane through the queue, was the same last year and I thought someone would have had the sense from a safety point of view to change it this year.

---

There was quite clearly much less in the way of funfair rides and catering than previous years but the price was still high. And you have to pay extra for the rides so why wasn't there more there? At least the fireworks started roughly on time as the fair didn't provide enough distraction for my kids.

---

Offering pay on the gate as a lot of older people were turning up with grandchildren but didn't know they had to buy online or by card

---

The display and fireworks were really good but... certain vendors parked on the path which meant getting to toilets were very difficult as my mother is in a mobility scooter and ground quality due to the weather was poor which meant her getting stuck because we couldn't access a path.

---

The time kept being delayed which isn't very nice when the younger kids start getting miserable plus it's very cold. It would be nice to keep to schedule. I think children 5 and under should go for free. I had to leave early because my youngest was getting bored of waiting etc.

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People were allowed to pay by card on the gate. This meant the queue was ridiculously long. It wasn't stated that you could pay on the gate so that should not have been allowed

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When leaving the site it wasn't well lit, lots of people trying to get out of one gate until they opened the bigger gate but could've been opened sooner. Overall the fireworks were great and are every year, our family is never disappointed

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My error with booking was unfortunate but the fact that tickets were non refundable didn't help. Otherwise we had a great time and will give preference to Bloxwich over our own in Gt Wyrley again next year.

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make it earlier, make it more child friendly make it better

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Price and being able to buy tickets on the gate, as the online site server went down and we couldn't get in for ages as it wouldn't load on my phone.

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Go back to the way it was before, more variety, entertainment, keep the prices down

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The only thing that really needs to be improved is how you get in to the event there were no signs to tell you which entrance you had to go to bearing in mind there's 4 plus entrances to the park and we walked to every single one only to be told it's not this one it's that one and it was the last entrance on the total opposite side to where we had parked that you could get in walking the whole way round the park with 4 young children not even knowing where we are going was very difficult and took us around 30 mins to work out where we needed to go! In other years it has been the same entrance and that's where we went this year first of all to only be told no it's that one round the corner, which it wasn't it was the total other side of the park we walked past two other entrances after that to be told the same thing before we found the correct one. Everything else was great.

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Would have liked the fireworks display to have had accompanying music but organisation and safety were of a good standard.

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We witnessed youths break security fencing to get into the event this was located at the top of Bealey's Lane maybe security could have walked the outside of the perimeter.

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Bigger fair and more entertainment before hand if you're gonna open the gates so early, and better weather

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A larger fire and possibly closer viewing as I've been to bonfires in Germany and the distance is about 50 m away and also alcohol is sold on site. Never had any trouble even with wine or beer on site.

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The fair was expensive for how much we paid to get in. I spend so much money as I have 2 kids and I had to go on some rides with them so it was very expensive. Should have been a pound a ride. Not £2.50/£3. Hook a duck was £3.50 and the teddy was ridiculous. 2 kids £7.

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Nearly didn't get tickets as last year (the first year I attended) I just turned up and paid at the gate. Only by chance I found out it was ticket only

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Better entertainment

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The equipment to scan tickets was very poor ques were really bad took too long to enter the site. Paying on the gate worked much better! Security very good searched people and took weapons , alcohol off people. Over all we had a lovely night and will continue to attend further events :-)

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Pay less and when you enter not online or have to get tickets also slightly cheapen the prices for the rides as £4.50 is a lot for just one person

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Wristbands for rides and more fireworks

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I didn't like the music playing with the fireworks. I think it ruined any atmosphere and the sounds of the fire works which I used to love as a child. Its beautiful just to look up and gaze and amazing firework but the music changed the ambiance and emotion.

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Have access for wheelchair users, it was very muddy

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The Health and Safety outside the main gate was terrible, it needed to be made possible so that people queued on the path and not in the main road as we had to, it was very dangerous and there was no traffic control there to assist the amount of pedestrians trying to cross the road to the main gate. Upon leaving if both gates were opened, it would have made the whole process so much easier. That is the only negatives I have, otherwise well done.

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More fireworks and acts and a bigger fair

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Better lighting

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I feel that having to buy tickets beforehand may have put some people off I myself bought them the day before after checking with the weather forecast that it was going to be dry, unexpected things happen especially when you have children so having to buy tickets then not being able to go may have prevented people doing so

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More entertainment and maybe a better system for the queue as it was long and people were all over place

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Needs to be more for tye children to do and cheaper prices

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The prices this year was so silly , so many people could not attend due to the prices which is ashame! The actually firework display was poor aswell considering the price of the tickets so maybe stop thinking of how much money you can make and actually gove people what they pay for as this year was a flop

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Lighting on path towards the fayre.

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Need more signs to the arboreun or may be a bus as I have not been for many years and found it hard to find Nothing it was perfect I felt very safe and the little ones had a fab time Thank you

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video cameras because there were still incidents of fighting there right by the gates and security took time to get there...

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No it was just right

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I bought 2 16 year olds with me and it said online they had to be bought an adult ticket but says online that child was 4 to 16 so maybe make that clearer

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jacket potato stalls

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I think it's good however I the price of the rides have risen since last time and would've been better with wrist bands

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More affordable rides/games and seating around

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Last year's display was better

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Flooring to be put down in walkway to avoid slips and getting stuck in the mud. Larger variety of food vendors, walkway from stage to fun fair to be cleared by security as it was difficult to pass through because of people standing in the walk way, more bins available by the main stage

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The display is excellent, thank you to everyone involved in the organisation of the event.

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Logistics were a nightmare. Large portion of field cut off due to water log which was fair but did not allow enough room for people to pass between fair and bonfire. A small gangway that got clogged with traffic and meant nearly missing the bonfire as no one could move. The entertainment in comparison to last year was very poor, rides were so expensive that ticket prices should reflect this as works out very expensive

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Be prepared for rain and organise the crowd in a safer more workable manner so that wheelchair users can move and exit easily

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Price to get in and facilities interms of lighting. Car park would be ideal.

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Making the fair rides and food a bit cheaper was way to expensive with paying in as well

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A lot of the field was waterlogged and muddy which I didn't expect, perhaps the public could stand on a level ground/paved area?

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Been there for the last 3 years every time it's been amazing they only down fall was the weather and being water logged (which cant be helped) but there was thing in place for safety which was fantastic

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More than one firework display. Better signs for those who park on the other side of the park.

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Was my first time and I was really impressed by it.

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It was very muddy. I know you cant do much about that but it did make getting around a bit difficult

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No, everything was good, kids enjoyed it so happy kids, happy me

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If going to charge as much to get in dont charge so much for food and rides

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I would like to fire work display to go on for alot long

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When you've got young children 7.30 is late. Our 3 year old fell asleep and missed them as she'd been at nursery and was tired anyway.

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Perhaps a larger selection of fireworks

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More stalls also no bins for the rubbish, there was rubbish everywhere. Also need a better system for getting people out of the grounds.

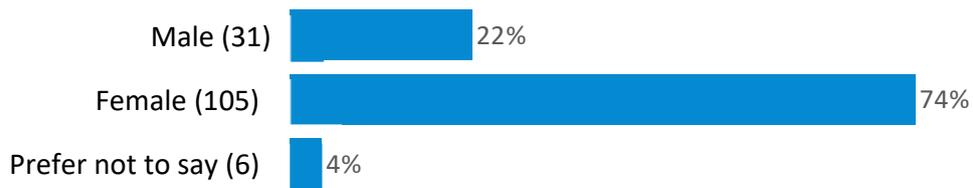
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We live just behind the park and have always accessed via the pathway close to the house. Whilst I understand one entry/exit is better for security, dragging two under 5 year olds on foot on a 30min walk to the main road was not ideal and made us half an hour later than anticipated.

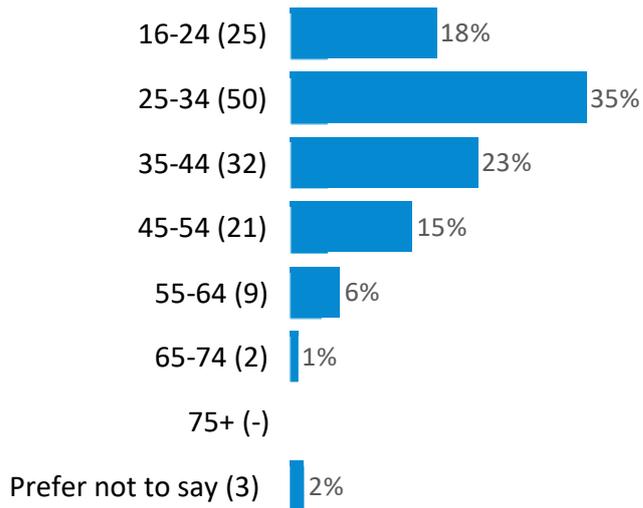
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More to do for the older kids. Better choices of food. A P.A system to announce what was happening, and maybe music to accompany the fireworks.

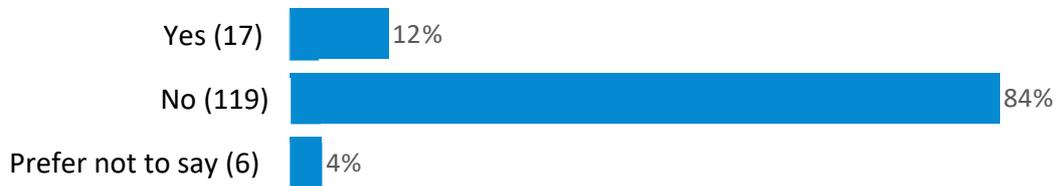
### Are you?



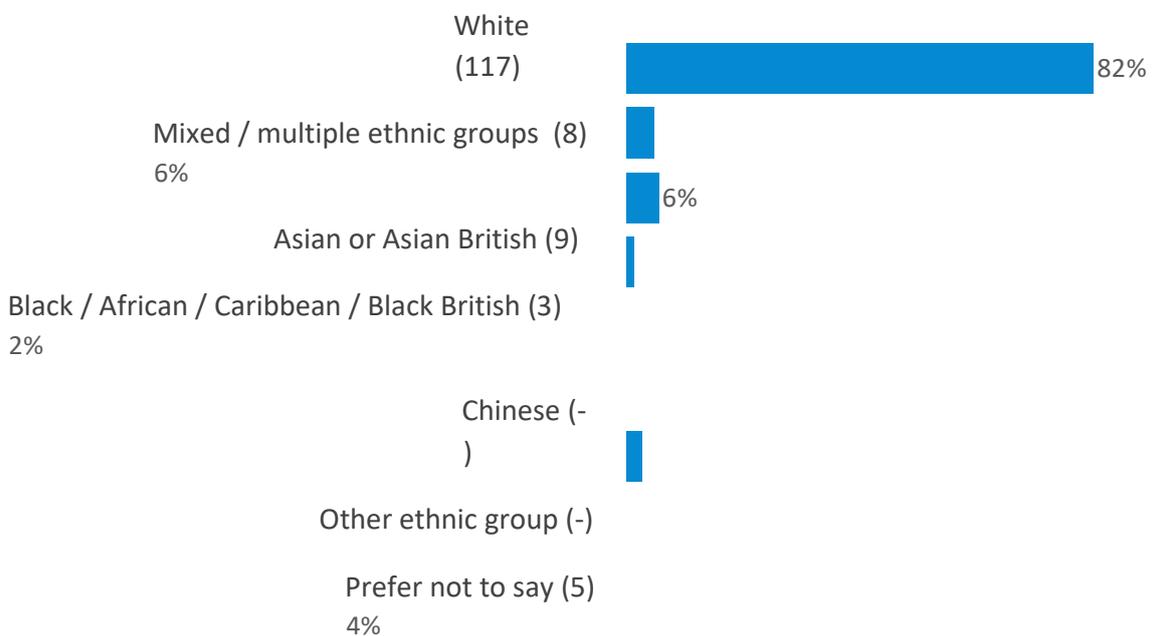
### What age group are you? Tick one only.



**Do you, or anyone in the group you attended Which bonfire and firework display did you attend? with have any long-term illness, health problem or disability which limits your/their daily activities or the work you/they can do (including problems which are due to old age)?**  
**Tick one only.**



**What is your ethnic group? Tick one only. (Ethnic groups )**



## Walsall Bonfires DEBRIEF 2019

# Minutes

TIME: 2.00pm – 4.00pm

DATE: 06 November 2019

	Item
1	Apologies
2	<p>Marketing and Promotion</p> <p><b>Time Frame</b> was a big thing                      Print and Design turnaround was an issue                      Missed Leaflet bin distribution                      Look into Council publications to promote the event next year                      JBD told that schools did not hand anything out through schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Posters / Leaflets (design / locations)</li> <li>• Banners (location)</li> <li>• Website</li> <li>• Facebook</li> <li>• FREE Radio / promotion</li> </ul> <p>Good coverage on their site and sister stations                      Going to provide figures on times and playouts</p> <p><b>Actions</b>                      Check with secondary schools near sites to see if anything was promoted                      Look into other social media next year                      Work with Partners                      Banner points need to be located                      Look into lamp posts                      Melvin Glasbury – shop front promotion                      Bin Lorry promotion on vans                      Missed opportunity to run competition through FREE Radio</p>
3	<p>Tickets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost                              Majority believed cost was too high                              Draft budget was shown and was explained by JBD                              Staff Cost not included</li> <li>• Cash / Card / Booking on line / Leisure Facility Sales                              Cash no issue                              Scanners ok                              Leisure Centre worked                              Needs to be automated in future to avoid corruption</li> <li>• Issues with Leisure Facility Sales?</li> <li>• Free tickets / Concessions / Carers                              Raised in meeting to offer concessions but was agreed to ignore</li> <li>• Sales Progress</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seaty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Problems – site down / bandwidth at every event First port of call to chat through the website Hard system to use, resulting in potential lost business</li> <li>○ Contact Only through website – useless If website was down we could not chat to provider</li> <li>○ Scanners – worked ok</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Action</b> Stamp for people to be investigated in future Early Bird Contactless to be investigated Card readers</p>
4	<p>Health and Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incidents – (lost child, etc?) Holland Park Aggressive Pensioners Youths on Roof of Container Keep Black Path closed</li> <li>• Review of RA's and Emergency Procedures Improvements can be made for future of events Lost child policy</li> <li>• Parking Positive Feedback from Comms about how parking at Arbo was holding</li> <li>• Security <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Staff Enough to reflect the number in attendance</li> <li>○ Locations Seemed to work well Mark going to meet with Tom to discuss positions and how future events can work</li> <li>○ What went well Caterers on Car Park with Fair</li> <li>○ What could be improved Tracking at Arbo caused issues, maybe more needed</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Action</b> Is the Black Path right of way Look into local car parks and providing shuttle bus Parking and what to do going forward Need to know Out of Hours Comms for each event Lost Child policy Improve briefing for security at future events Brief all staff and security together Improve the opening of gates and the communication of that Look into an improved hard standing for future events</p>

5	<p>Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support with setting up / organising More information about where HST are and who is available Conflict with Half Term Lanes and gates needed more detail Use resource in Clean and Green going forward</li> <li>• Event staff</li> <li>• Cost of staff / Job Descriptions?</li> <li>• Issues / Communication problems Communciation with staff needs to improve</li> <li>• Briefing – timing / getting information to staff Briefing got better per event</li> </ul> <p>Action Plan needed for fencing in the future Another Van might be needed for the team in general Understand what vehicles come under HST Job Description needed in future HST to take a lead on staffing Go out to all council staff Staff arrival times need to improve Better interaction between staff and security More radios needed for future</p>
6	<p>Site Plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public version</li> <li>• Staff Version</li> <li>• Site issues?</li> </ul> <p>KGV – investigate the rabbit runs in the woods</p>
7	<p>Other Businesses (what went well / not so well?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fairground providers</li> <li>• Concessions Holland Park was reduced Friends Group at Willenhall didn't work Issues going forward</li> </ul> <p>Actions Tenders to be out for longer next year Environmental Health were not needed at event and it was felt they took advantage of the situation Artisan Food suppliers for events working on Council events liking to Corporate – include in future comms regarding concessions Other colleagues for Corporate Consultation</p>
8	<p>Site Specific – e.g. Set up / Take down – issues / concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holland Park No Black Path in the future Or no Holland Park going forward Fence off Field</li> <li>• Willenhall Gate needs additional security in the woods off Dartmouth Ave Bridge at the back</li> </ul>

	<p>Police helped</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arboretum</li> </ul> <p>Set up was an issue due to weather  Concessions in right location  Look for stage location 2020  Lighting through the park from the splash pad  All future bonfires should follow the Arboretum timings for next year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KGV</li> </ul> <p>Review security  Wooded Area needs a review  Fencing should come in front of the path allowing access to vehicles into the woods</p>
<b>9</b>	<p>Contingency Plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor weather plans (wet / windy) – issues (Parking / Safety / Reinstatement Costs)  Communication number needed in future  When it comes to winds when would the cut-off be  Delay to see if wind strength would change  Bell Lane – queuing single file so they needed to be put in queues of 4 or 5 and there would have been no issue.  Never go back to cash again  Contactless is a must</li> <li>• Internet / Seaty down  Look into other suppliers and see what else is out there  Feedback to go back to SEATY</li> <li>• Other?</li> </ul>
<b>10</b>	<p>Review SAG documentation –</p> <p>Documents are in place to use for future events</p>
<b>11</b>	<p>FUTURE:</p> <p>11.1 Consultation – gone out to attendees back 24<sup>th</sup> Nov</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check questionnaire – does it cover everything?</li> <li>• Who should it go to? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SAG Committee – Member Organisations</li> <li>• Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Staff HST / Clean and Green</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>11.2 Report to Members – need to clarify what and when</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of Bonfires 2019</li> <li>• Suggestions for Bonfires 2020 (including consultation results)</li> </ul>
<b>12</b>	<p>AOB</p> <p>Due to the processes put in place the Healthy Spaces team avoided an internal audit</p> <p>Concessions were charged VAT for the first time</p>

## Appendix 4: Cabinet Paper 18<sup>th</sup> September – Options for Bonfires and Fireworks



Cabinet-CMT report  
on bonfires provision