



Aberdeen 2022 Christmas Village Research Evaluation Results



Prepared for: Aberdeen City Council, JCPF Ltd & Aberdeen Inspired

Prepared by: The Research Chamber, Aberdeen & Grampian
Chamber of Commerce

Wednesday 25th January 2023



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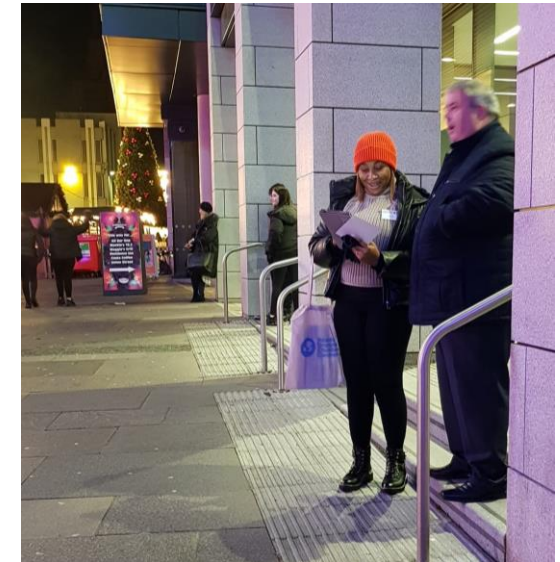
Why this project matters

Who we talked to (Village Visitors, Village Vendors & City Businesses)

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Why this project matters; measuring the success of the 2022 event, part of the City's continued recovery

The Aberdeen Christmas Village event can play a key role in the City's continued recovery. The event has, in previous years, brought a vibrancy to the City, offering visitors a range of attractions (including ice rink, fairground rides, food, drink, local market, live music). It has brought the festive season to life for the visitors and for local businesses.

Aberdeen City Council/JCPF Ltd/Aberdeen Inspired are eager to evaluate the success of the 2022 event with a focus on visitor and business experience.





Who we
talked to



Research with three groups, village visitors, village vendors and with City Businesses

Who	Village Visitors	Village Vendors	City businesses
How many	202 in street interviews 50 QR Code poster	35	22
How surveyed	In person interviews at the Village & by QR code publicised/distributed at the Village	Mailed by Aberdeen Inspired	Canvassed by Codona's Management team. Link also sent to AGCC members.
	Range of times/venues/days during the event	X vendors invited to participate, mailed throughout the Village	27 City Businesses invited to participate, via Codona management team, 75 AGCC members received the link.

Note: Village attendance/interviewing/footfall at times impacted by poor weather

SCAN HERE TO LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK OF THE CHRISTMAS VILLAGE



As a thanks, you will be entered into a prize draw to win a **£25 gift voucher**.



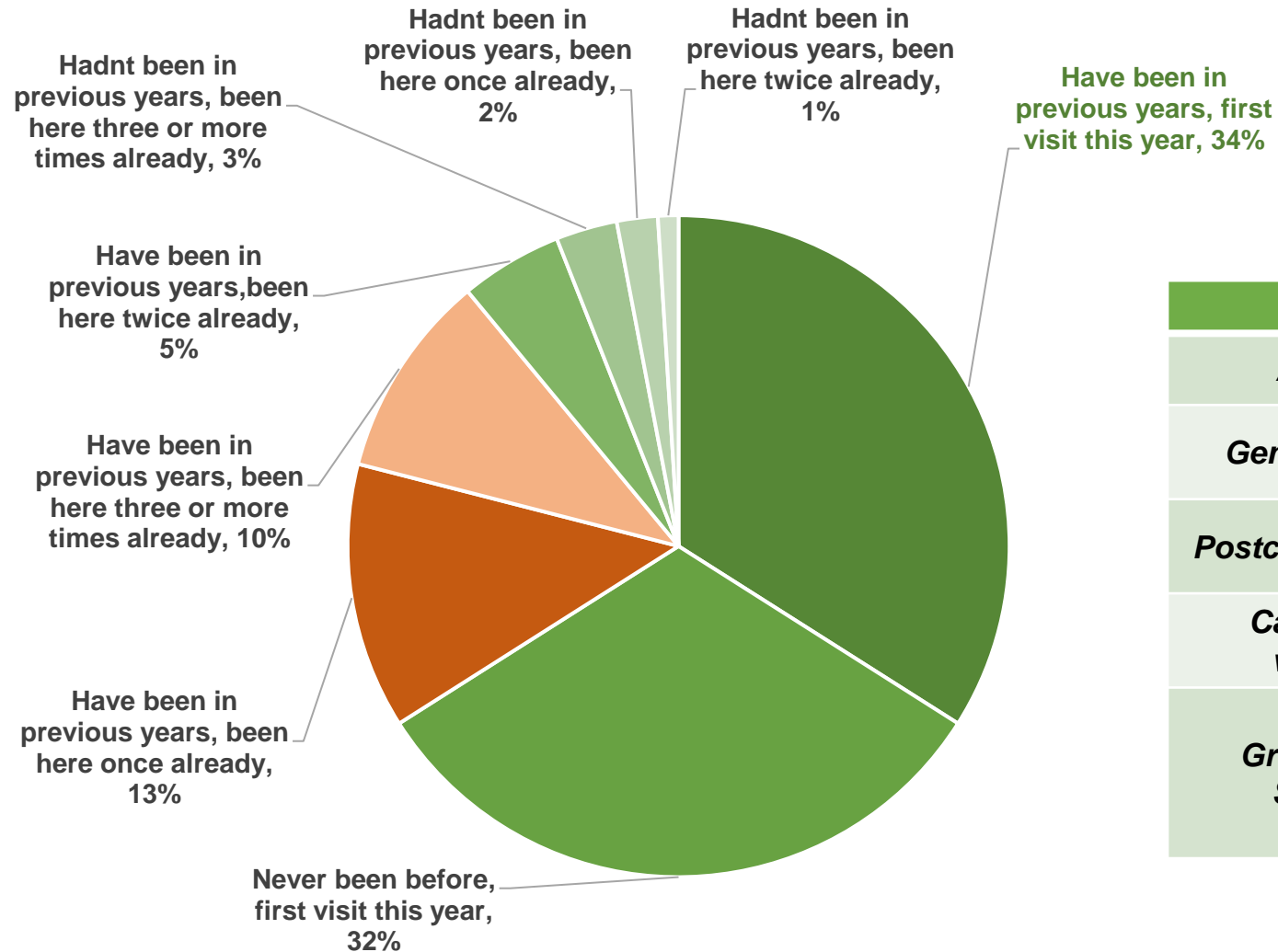


**What they said,
the sixteen key
facts**



Q: Is this your first visit this year? Have you been in previous years?

1. The typical Village Visitor was a young woman from the City who came with family. They had been to the Village in previous years, but this was their first 2022 visit.



Age	49% 25-44
Gender	50% Women 46% Men
Postcode	59% City 24% Shire
Came with	40% With family 26% With Friends
Group Size	Mode was 2 Mean was 3 33% of groups included children



Q: How does this year's Christmas Village compare to when you went in previous years? Why do you say that?

2. Village seen by most as about the same compared to previous years, however one in three believe it is better/ much better.



Example comments:

Better:

Better atmosphere and the stalls look great!

More activities for adults, more food stalls and recognised a vegetarian food option.

About the same:

All equipment and entertainment were the same as last year.

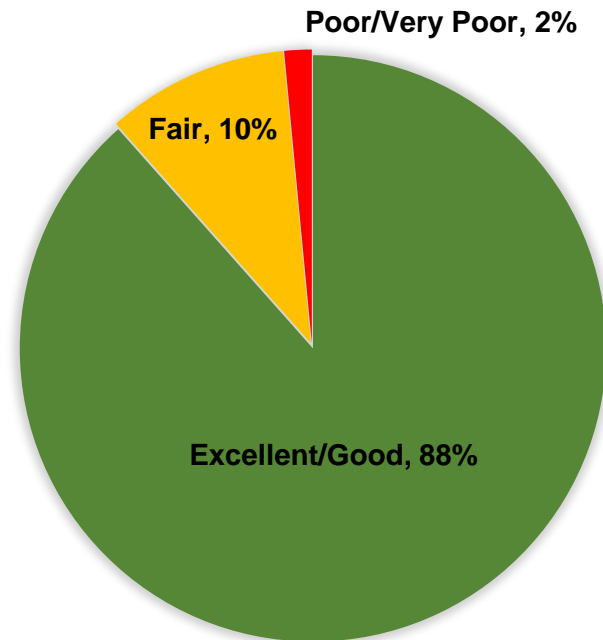
Everything feels the same as last time but its nice.



Q: How would you rate your experience of the Christmas Village? To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements below?

3. Highest score for 'overall experience' to be rated excellent/good. Almost all visitors said the Village felt like a safe environment and would like it to be repeated in Aberdeen next year.

Overall Experience Rating



	Agree	Neither/nor	Disagree	DK
The Christmas Village felt like a safe environment	96%	3%	0%	1%
I would like the Christmas Village to be repeated in Aberdeen next year	95%	3%	1%	1%



Q: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements below?

4. Village enhances perception of the City and increases visitors' pride in Aberdeen.



Positive impact on my perception of Aberdeen



Increased my pride in Aberdeen

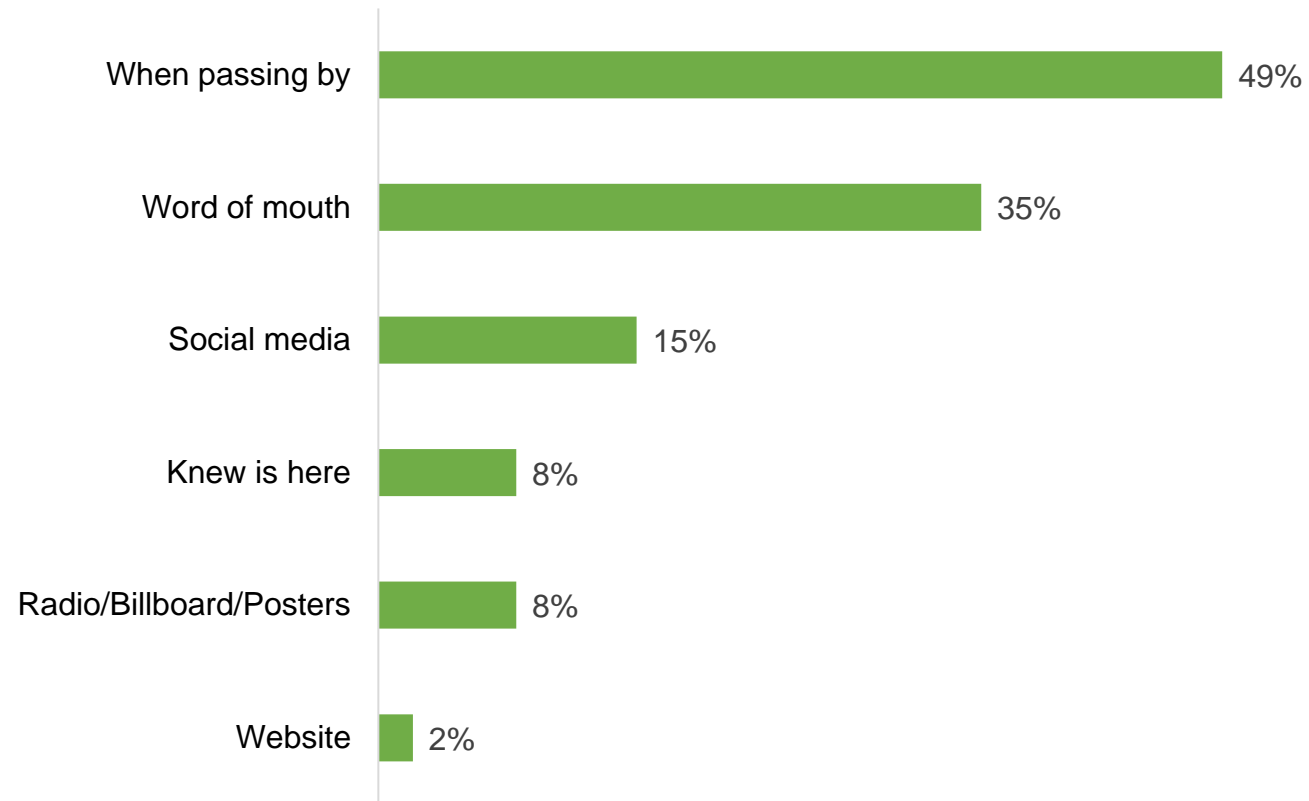


■ Agree ■ Neither/Nor ■ Disagree ■ DK



Q: How did you hear about the Christmas Village this year?

5. Most of the Village visitors had heard about it when passing by and through word of mouth.

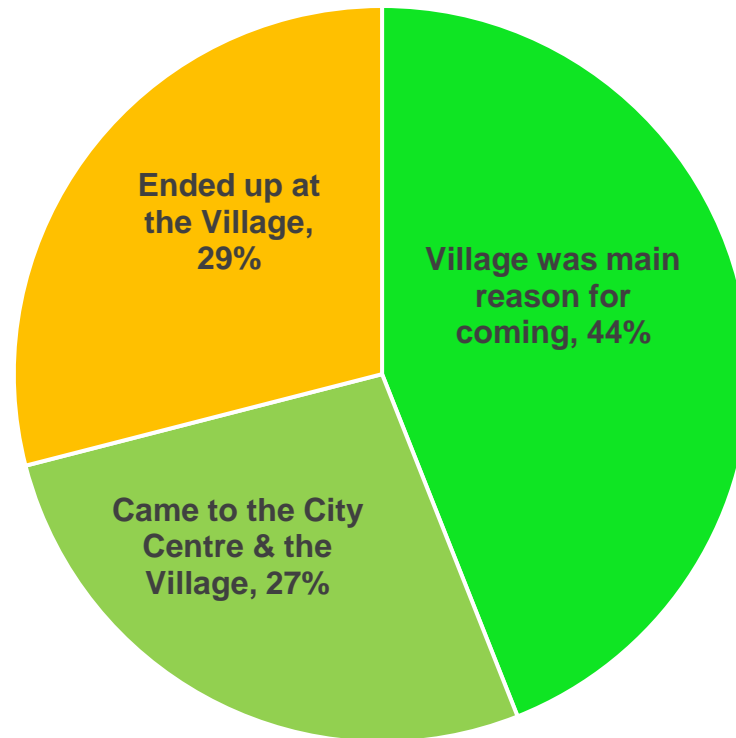




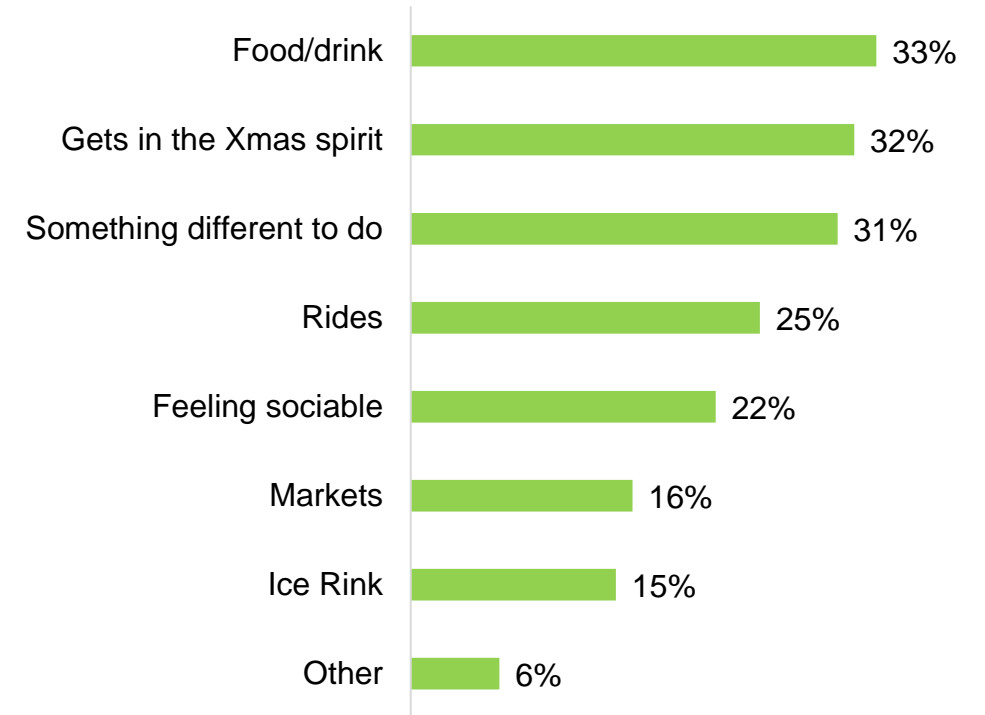
Qs: Which of the following statements about coming is most true of you? What was your main reason for coming to the Aberdeen Christmas Village today?

6. Vast majority of visitors came to the City Centre to visit the Village. Their main reasons were the food/drink, get into the Christmas spirit and for something different to do.

Statements about coming to the Village



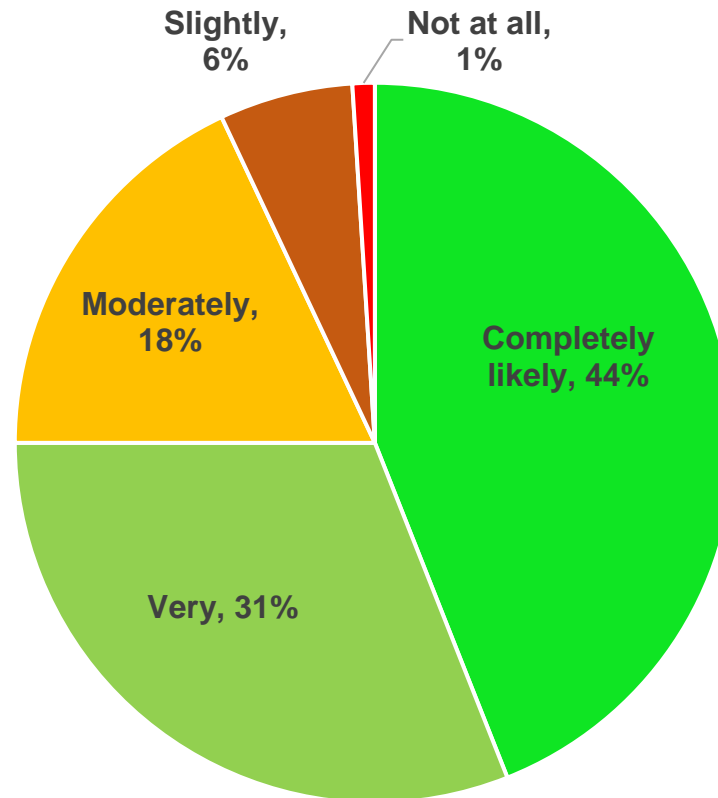
Main reason for coming to the Village





Q: How likely or unlikely are you to recommend friends and family to visit the Christmas Village in the future? Why do you say that?

7. Three quarters of visitors are completely/very likely to recommend the Village to friends and family as they believe the Village is a safe place with nice atmosphere and fun.



Example Comments:

Good family day out.

A great festive addition to the city centre.

Allows you to come out and be sociable.

Safe and family friendly, Christmassy feeling.

Very enjoyable and good selection of things to do & eat.

It was a complete package both in entertainment & security.

I enjoyed it and would definitely come back next year.

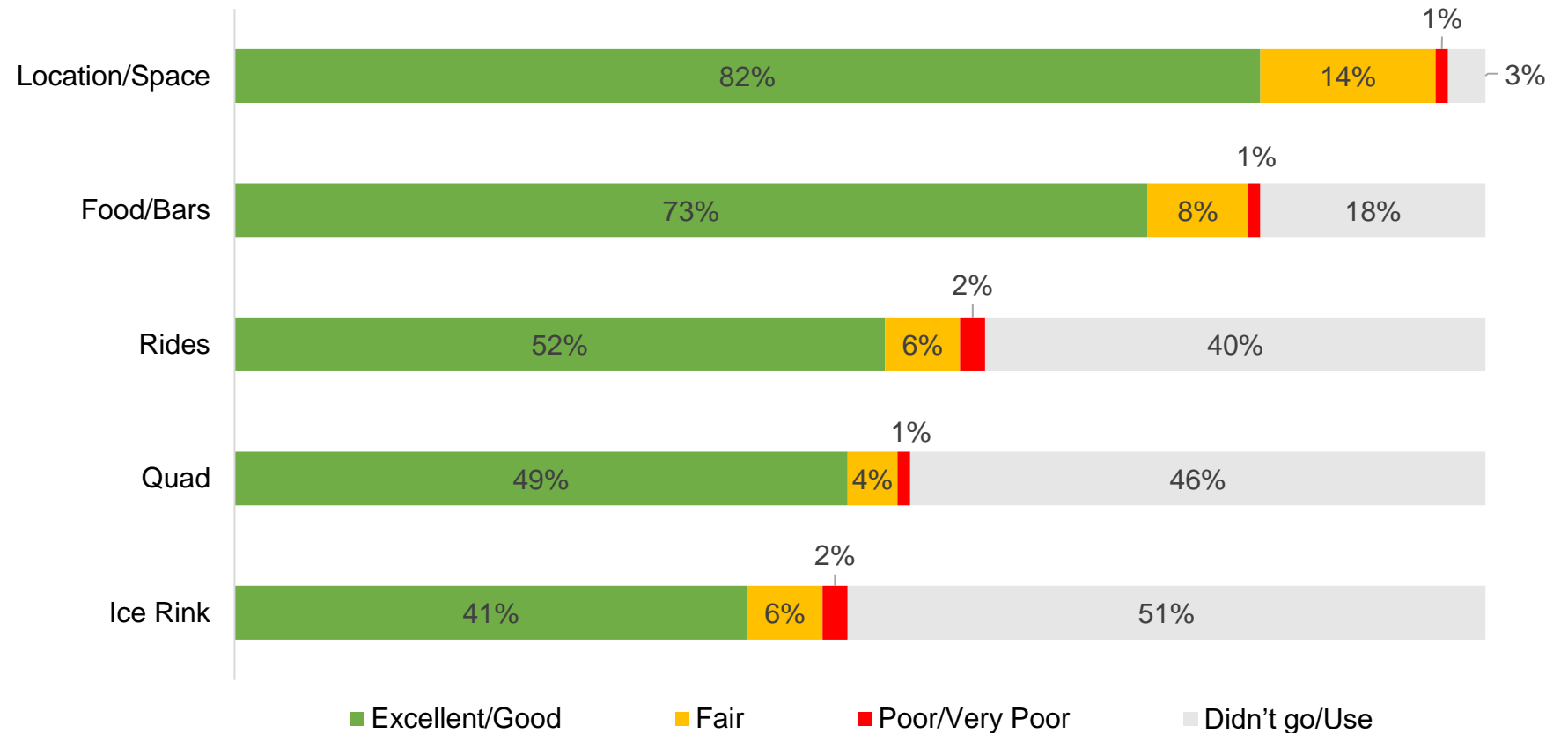
I keep coming back with my kids because it is a lovely & safe place to be in this season.





Q: How would you rate your experience of the Christmas Village?

8. Largely positive responses to village features, though some less well used. The location/space & food/bars were rated the highest.





Q: Please let us know if you have anything else to add, or anything you would like to see at the Christmas Village in the future.

9. Village Visitors shared their ideas of how to enhance the experience, to make it even better.

Bigger/ Better	Would like:
<i>Extend further down school hill. Quad market could be open all week. More activities or businesses in the market. More stalls, more to do. Needs to be marketed better. Should be bigger better.</i>	<i>Bigger food court that serves everything. Vegetarian/ Halal food options. Music, Santa, sport goods stalls. Would like it bigger, more rides. More local food/craft.</i>

More Value for Money

*It's too expensive. Struggle with cost of living.
Ice skating is very expensive for how long you get.
Adults having to go in with children makes it more expensive.*





Q: Approximately how much do you expect to spend today on the following?

10. Visitor total spend was up versus last year, driven by spend in the Village itself and other shopping outside the Village.



<i>Spend per 'party group'</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>	<i>Difference 2022 v 2021</i>
Total Spend	£42	£65	+ £23
<i>Inside Christmas village</i>	£20	£25	+ £5
<i>Outside Christmas Village *</i>	£22	£40	+ £18
<i>Food, drink outside the event</i>	£8	£10	+ £2
<i>Other shopping/ anything else</i>	£12	£20	+ £8
<i>Overnight Accommodation</i>	£1	£6	+ £5
<i>Local travel, i.e. to get to Aberdeen City Centre</i>	£1	£4	+ £3

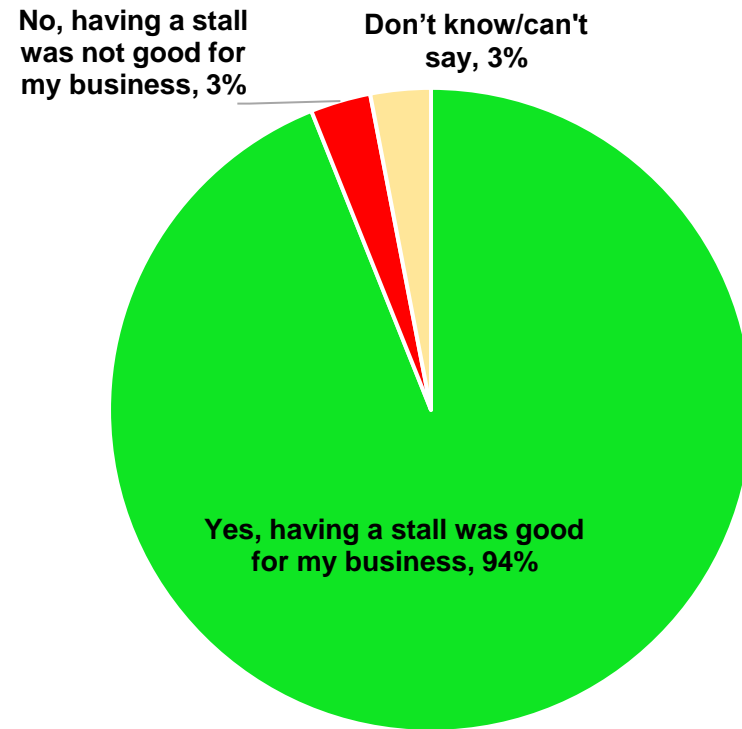
* All spending outside the Village

Note: numbers are rounded



Q: Was having a stall at Aberdeen Christmas Village market good for your business?

11. Vast majority of Village vendors believed that having a stall was good for their business.



Reach new customers	<i>It's a great way for us to meet new customers face to face and get a new audience to try our products.</i>
Selling opportunity	<i>It was extra income for my business over and above the usual.</i>
Other	<i>Good value for money to run a city centre location for a few days at a time. The proximity to the Christmas village made it easier to market our attendance.</i>

The Christmas village is my biggest source of income every year

Life is precious

CURATED IN THE QUAD

OPEN

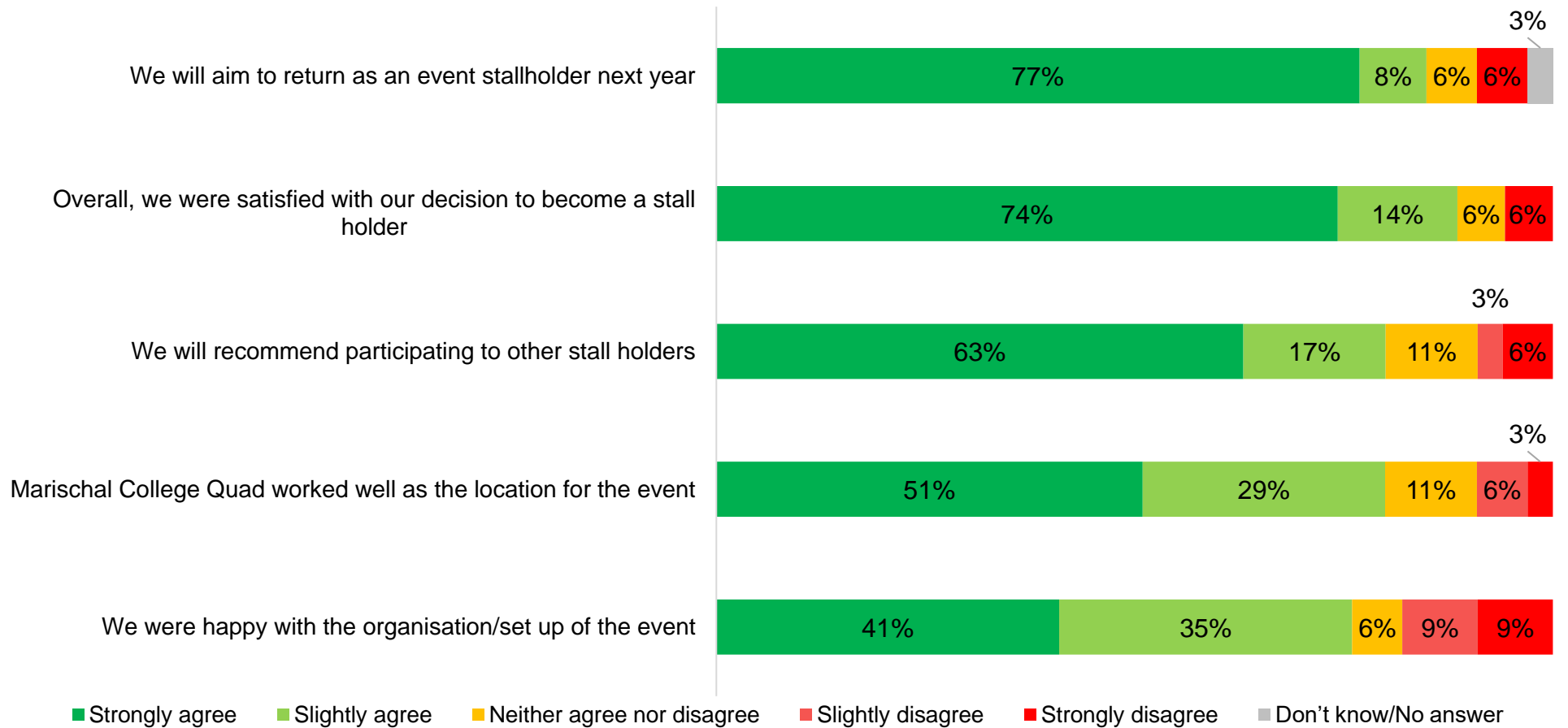
Saturday: 11am-7pm

Sunday: 11am-8pm



Q: How much do you agree or disagree about these Christmas Village stall holder statements?

12. Vast majority of Village vendors were satisfied and aim to return as an event stallholder next year.





Q: Please let us know if you have anything else to add, or anything you would like to see at the Christmas Village in the future.

13. Largely positive feedback from vendors, some ideas for improvement and only a handful of issues.

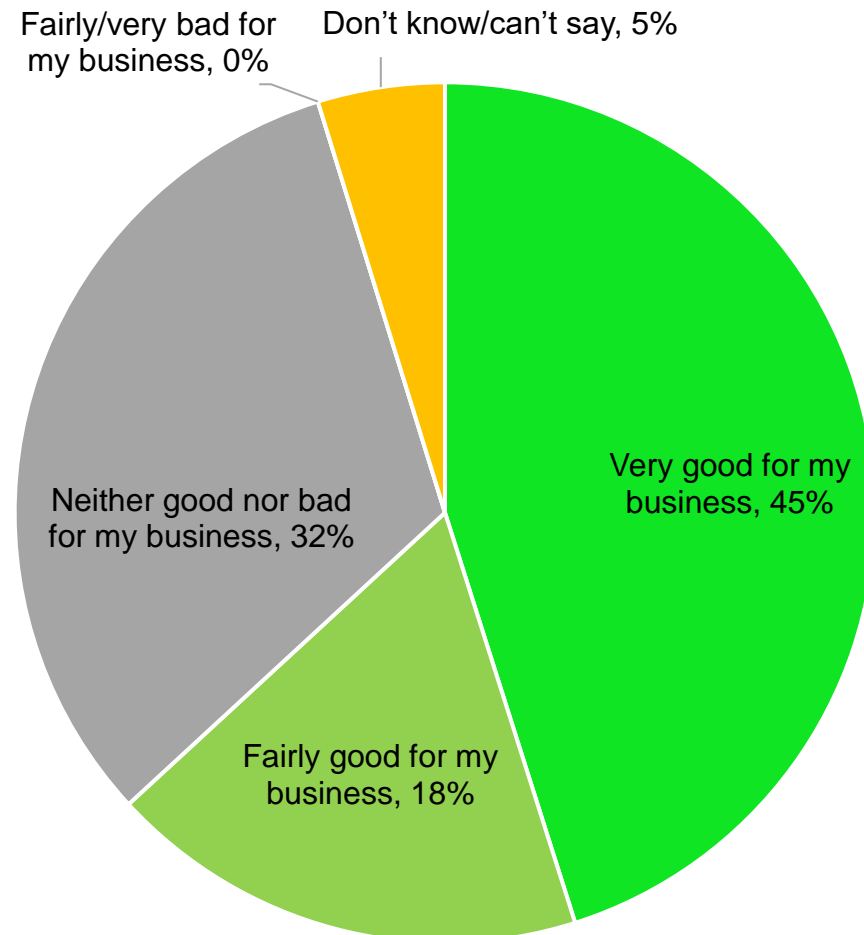


Good event/location	Village set up/logistics	Village Promotion/Expansion
<p><i>it's a great opportunity for any small business to have a city centre location for a very reasonable fee.</i></p> <p><i>This is a good event with good footfall.</i></p> <p><i>We find the quad a lovely location for the market but we had feedback that a number of members of the public didn't realise it was there.</i></p> <p><i>The quad is a great location in theory but in reality, only trickles of people from the outside food court & rides come through to the college.</i></p>	<p><i>Accessing the quad for the setup is problematic. The stairs aside, accessing the loading bay is difficult. Getting parked is a bit of a nightmare. Once parked, the journey up the stairs and across the quad isn't ideal.</i></p> <p><i>Main thing I would like to see is that if it's wintry conditions again...then ensure all ice is cleared and paths are salted prior to the market opening.</i></p> <p><i>The stalls should be insulated and heating provided as a minimum.</i></p>	<p><i>I would love to see more signage around the village itself to show where the market is as it can be easily passed by.</i></p> <p><i>From what I saw the signage has improved since the first year but it could be better, more signs at eye level and perhaps arrows pointing in towards the double doors.</i></p> <p><i>Would also be nice to have a section to offer to some traders to trade every day throughout the Christmas Market.</i></p>



Q: Thinking of your business, would you say that the Aberdeen Christmas Village was: Why do you say that?

14. Most City businesses saw the Village as good for business.



Why do you say that...

Very/fairly good for business

Bringing people that wouldn't normally come to this end of town.

Increase business by 50%.

More people at weekends.

Neither good nor bad for business

No evidence of increased rooms sold because of the Village.

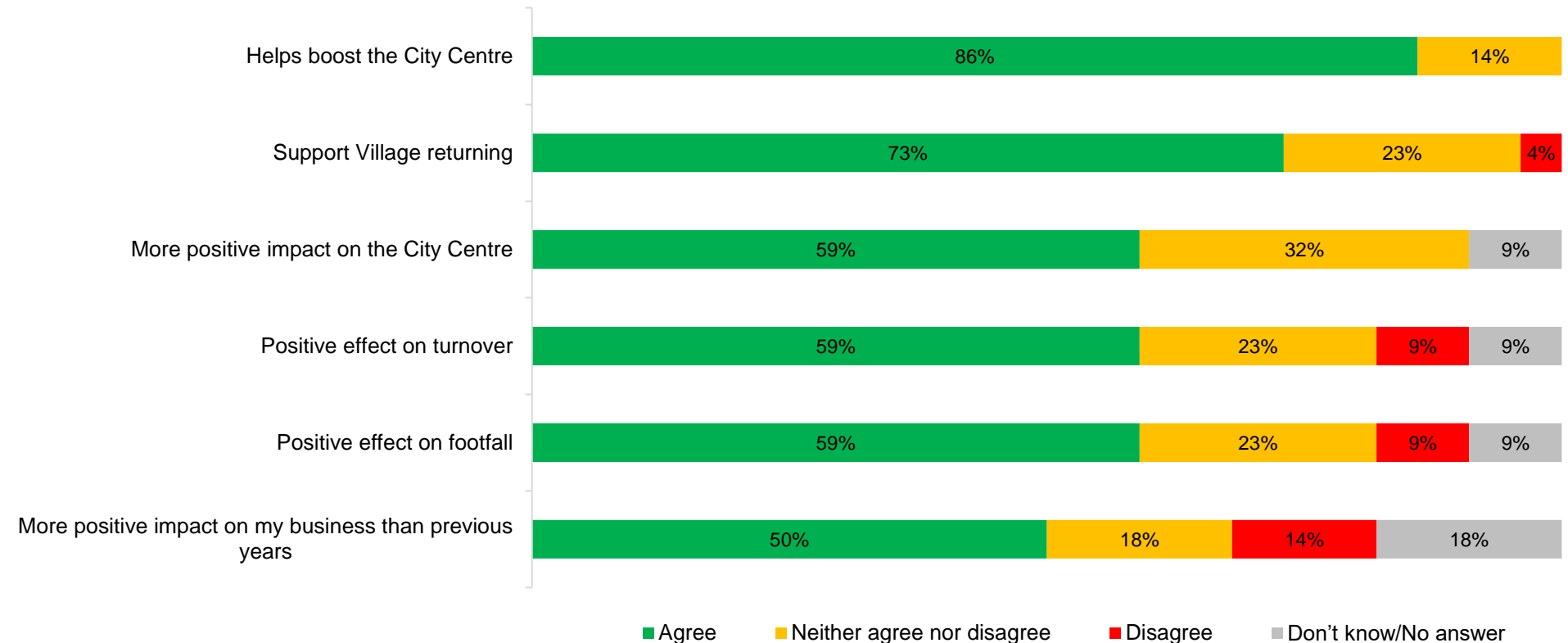
Too far away from the hotel to make a difference and wrong demographic.





Q: How much do you agree or disagree about these Christmas Village City business statements?

15. Overall positive views of the Village from City businesses. Nine in ten believe that Christmas Village helps boost the City Centre.





Q: Please let us know if you have anything else to add, or anything you would like to see at the Christmas Village in the future.

16. City Businesses want to see the Christmas Village bigger and better in the future.

Make it bigger	Make it better
<p><i>Can we expand on this any further, great to see local small traders with a place to be seen in the city centre.</i></p> <p><i>Why not run a Christmas street food/drink festival at the same time on, for example, Belmont Street.</i></p>	<p><i>The terrace offers a lot more space and is better for the Aberdeen City centre economy as a whole.</i></p> <p><i>The focus should be on celebrating and promoting local cuisine and artists...</i></p>
<p><i>Good for city centre.</i></p> <p><i>City centre needs more investment.</i></p> <p><i>Think the market is getting better each year.</i></p> <p><i>We need more activities around the city centre to make it a better attraction.</i></p>	





Summary: Ten key Village Visitor facts from the research

Key Facts

1. The typical Village Visitor was a young woman from the City who came with family. They had been to the Village in previous years, but this was their first 2022 visit.
2. Village seen by most as about the same compared to previous years, however one in three believe it is better/ much better.
3. Highest score for 'overall experience' to be rated excellent/good. Almost all visitors said the Village felt like a safe environment and would like it to be repeated in Aberdeen next year.
4. Village enhances perception of the City and increases visitors' pride in Aberdeen.
5. Most of the Village visitors had heard about it when passing by and through word of mouth.
6. Vast majority of visitors came to the City Centre to visit the Village. Their main reasons were the food/drink, get into the Christmas spirit and for something different to do.
7. Three quarters of visitors are completely/very likely to recommend the Village to friends and family as they believe the Village is a safe place with nice atmosphere and fun.
8. Largely positive responses to village features, though some less well used. The location/space & food/bars were rated the highest.
9. Village Visitors shared their ideas of how to enhance the experience, to make it even better.
10. Visitor total spend was up versus last year, driven by spend in the Village itself and other shopping outside the Village.





Summary: Six key Village Vendor/City Business facts from the research

Key Facts, Village Vendors

11. Vast majority of Village vendors believed that having a stall was good for their business.
12. Vast majority of Village vendors were satisfied and aim to return as an event stallholder next year.
13. Largely positive feedback from vendors, some ideas for improvement and only a handful of issues.

Key Facts, City Businesses

14. Most City businesses saw the Village as good for business.
15. Overall positive views of the Village from City businesses. Nine in ten believe that Christmas Village helps boost the City Centre.
16. City Businesses want to see the Christmas Village bigger and better in the future.





Conclusions & Thoughts for Next Actions



Conclusions & Thoughts for Next Actions

Conclusions	<p>Village visitors The Village attracted people to the City Centre who would not have come otherwise, despite mainly non-paid for promotion.</p> <p>When they got there, the vast majority enjoyed the experience; spending more than in previous years.</p> <p>They are keen for even a bigger and better Christmas Village next year.</p>	<p>Village vendors/City businesses The vendors saw coming to the Village as a worthwhile experience, helping them reach new customers and sell more.</p> <p>The vendors were keen for the Village to iron out the handful of logistics issues, to offer a section everyday throughout the market and display better visible signage.</p> <p>The City Businesses saw it as a footfall driver for the Centre and were keen to see more activities around the City Centre.</p>
Thoughts for Next Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Continue to run the Christmas Village in 20232. Make it bigger; consider ways to increase its footprint, consider ways to promote it3. Make it better; iron out the handful of vendor issues	



Data Tables



Thank you from your Research Chamber team