

Evaluation – the role of data

Resilient Theatres: Resilient Communities



Made possible with

Heritage
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Host and chair

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Introducing Evaluation

Catherine Bloodworth

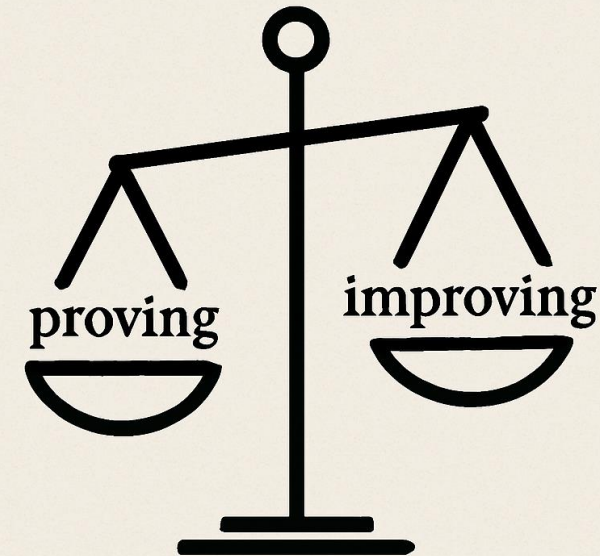
Evaluator, Facilitator and Mentor

Bright Culture

What is Evaluation?

Evaluation is the subjective analysis and interpretation of data & evidence collected to find out if what you have set out to do has been achieved.

Evaluation involves more than just demonstrating success; it is also about fostering improvement.



Evaluation helps theatres to...



- Clarify goals
- Encourage reflection & learning
- Understand audience needs and behaviour
- Support inclusivity and relevance
- Strengthen relationships
- Reveal hidden impacts
- Inform strategic planning
- Demonstrate value to funders and stakeholders

MYTHS

Evaluation is just about measuring success

You need to be an expert to do it well

You can only use numbers and data

It takes too much time and money

REALITIES

Evaluation is about learning and improvement

You can use practical, common-sense approaches

Gathering stories and feedback is valuable

Evaluation can be adapted to your resources



What should we be evaluating?

Audience Experience

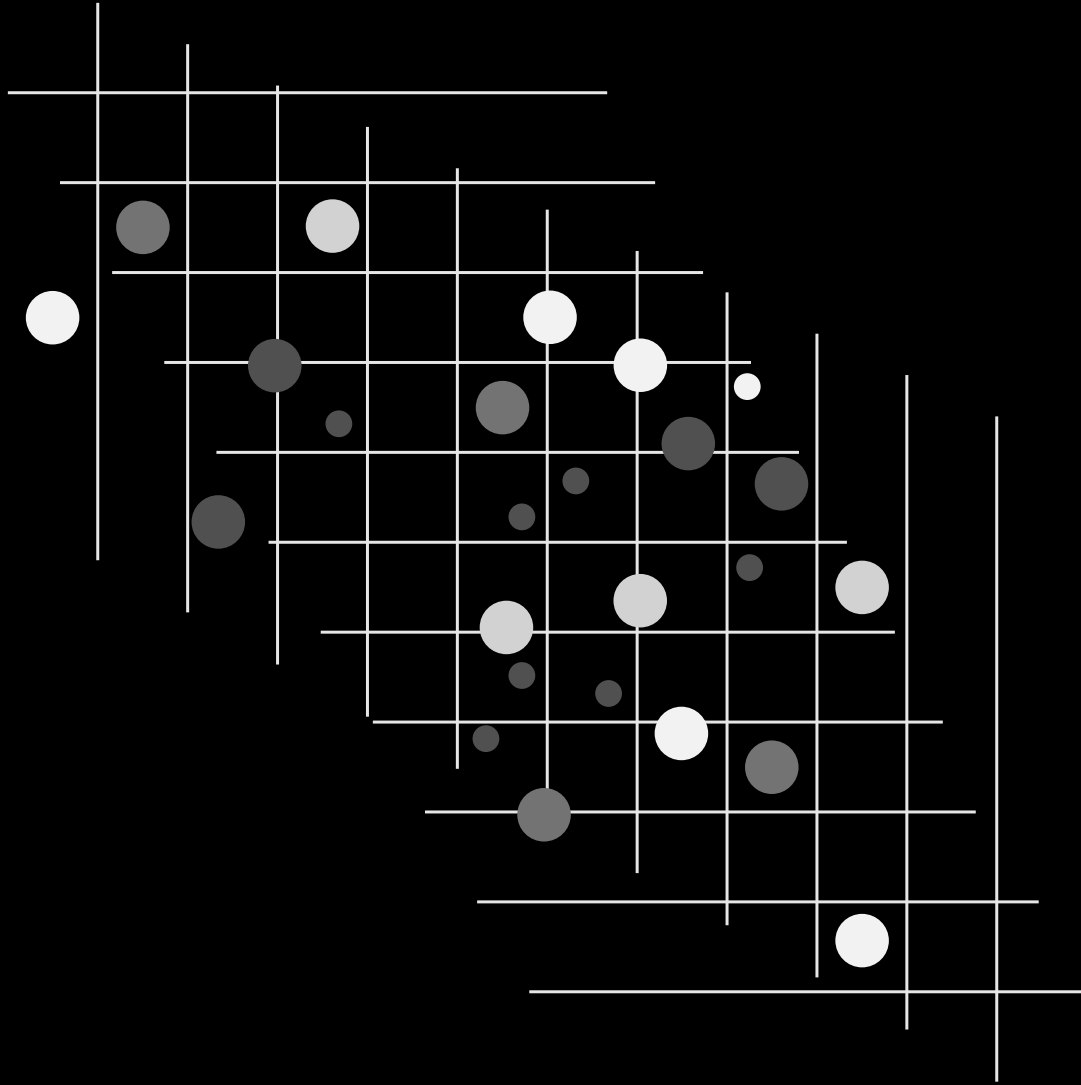


Impact on Communities

A man with glasses and a light blue button-down shirt stands in the center of a dark room, gesturing with his right hand as he speaks to a group of people. The group, consisting of several young adults, is arranged in a loose circle around him. They are all wearing black clothing. The background is a dark, draped curtain, and the floor appears to be a dark, polished surface. The lighting is focused on the man in the center, creating a dramatic effect.

Artistic & Organisational Growth

Economic Sustainability



Top tips for evaluation



Define clear goals
from the start



Pilot and test different
ways of collecting
evidence & feedback



Use both Quantitative
and Qualitative Data



Listen to and seek
opportunities for all voices
to be heard



Gather feedback from
multiple sources



Be realistic and
proportional in the
collection of evidence and
data



Reflect on artistic intent
and outcome



Build evaluation into the
process



Ensure the language &
feedback method don't
create barriers for your
intended audience



Be honest and curious



Consider community
impact



Use insights to shape
the future

Thank you for listening

Catherine Bloodworth

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BrightCulture

Measuring Your Economic Impact

Abbi Roberts

Development and Communications Director

The Mercury Theatre, Colchester

Rationale and Planning

- Mercury Theatre's Capital Project
- Continuing local authority funding
- Show value in separate organisations and collectively
- Spread cost



What data and how?

Areas of data needed led by consultants – DC Research

Direct Impact

- venue-specific employment, spend/turnover and GVA impacts

Indirect impact

- the supplier linkage effects: spend/turnover, GVA and employment generated elsewhere in the local economy due to the venue

Induced Impact

- the income multiplier effects: spend/turnover, GVA and employment generated in the local economy as a consequence of the spending of wages/salaries of those employed through both the direct and indirect impacts

What data and how?

How data was collected - keeping methods fair and comparable

Software

- ticketing CRM
- feedback and survey software
- HR & finance

Audience relationships

Existing reporting for stakeholders

- NPO, local authority and Trusts & Foundations

Means of engagement

- What are people visiting for? How is this being captured?

Challenges

Working across organisations

- Different existing data
- Different priorities
- Different levels of investment/resource

Skewed data based on programming and audience specific surveying

Findings

- Offsite spend per adult visitor
- Average number of visits per adult per year
- Visitor geography
- Total economic impact of each organisation and overall



Impact of the Report



- Success of capital funding
- Local authority funding
- NPO co-working
- Corporate giving



Thank you for listening

Abbi Roberts

Development and Communications Director, The Mercury Theatre

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Morecambe Winter Gardens: a journey in data collection and evaluation

Prof Vanessa Toulmin

Voluntary Chair

Morecambe Winter Gardens Preservations Trust Ltd



The Building

- Grade 2* listed building
- National Buildings at Risk Registry and also Theatres at Risk
- Formally 2500 capacity variety theatre currently 969
- Opened in 1897 closed in 1977
- Years of risk, salvation and now operated solely by the Winter Gardens Preservation Trust Limited since October 2020 who own the building



Volunteer Led and Delivered



The Bad...No Data



- Where Do I start?
- No Visitor Information
- Generic and untruthful narratives
- No baseline data for growth and development to measure impact
- No volunteer register
- No idea at all!

Types of Data Desktop - National

National Data from Audience Agency or other organisations

Index of Deprivation

Historic England Buildings at Risk

Historic Gradings percentage in the case of a heritage building

Arts Council Ranking of Engagement etc

Nesta

UK Performing Industry and other organisations

Types of Data Desktop - Regional

North West or
Lancashire Specific
in our instance

Organisational
breakdowns by
sector in the regions
or Local Authority

Visitor Economies if
known

Number of
businesses similar
operating in the
same sector

Involvement in
regional cultural
strategies

Audience profiles

Raw Data – Quantitative

Recording everything to create a baseline for measuring impact

Collection of
numbers current
baseline

Collection of visitor
demographics from
wherever possible

Collection of box
office data from
hirers, promoters

Counting the
number of volunteer
hours across the
different groups

Counting the
number of users
and local
businesses that
benefitted

Online Presence

Creating and measuring our online presence on a monthly and annual basis for the following platforms:



FACEBOOK



WEBSITE



INSTAGRAM



X



YOUTUBE

Examples of Data Recording

Three different
Grants

ACE/DCMS CDF 3 –
See Steer Report

UKSPF - See
examples

Pilgrim Trust -
Number of visitor
enjoying the benefits
of the heritage asset

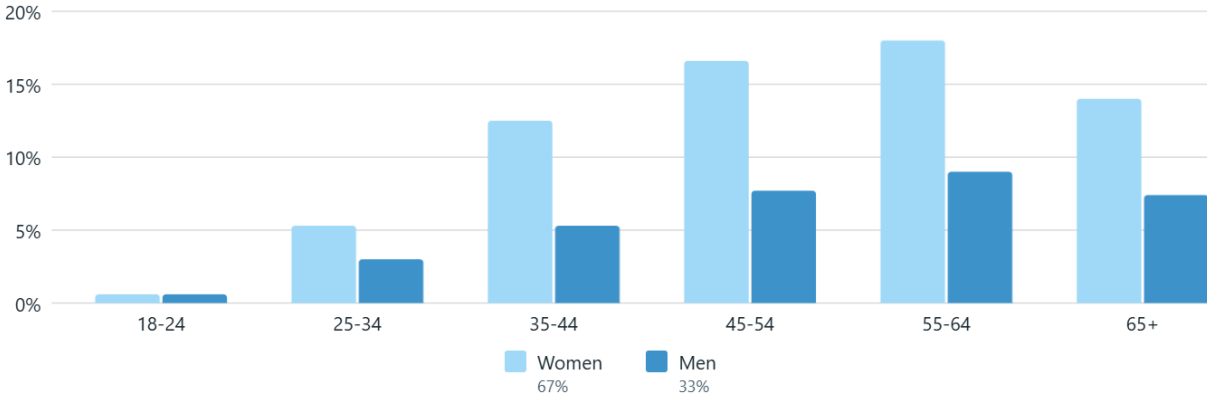
Heritage
improvement so a
report on the actual
heritage asset and
how it was improved

Followers ⓘ

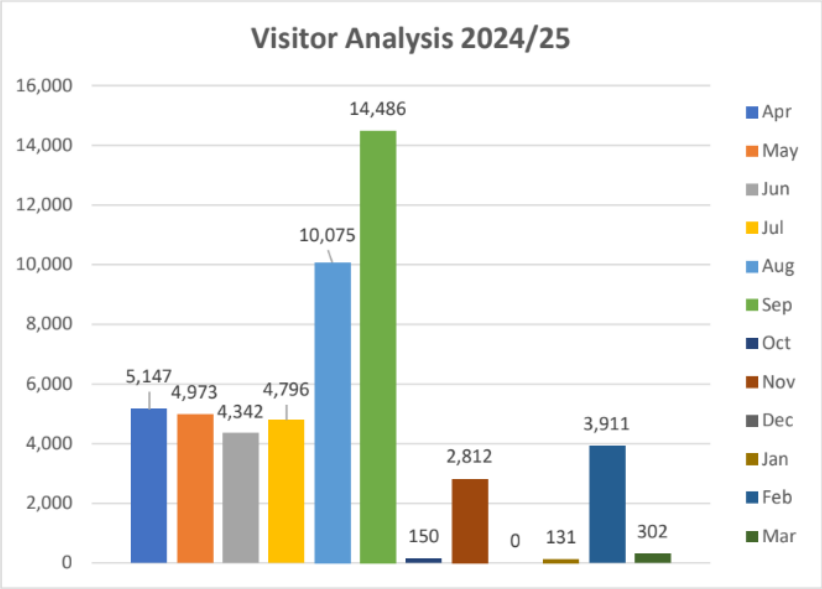
Lifetime

6,697

Age & gender ⓘ



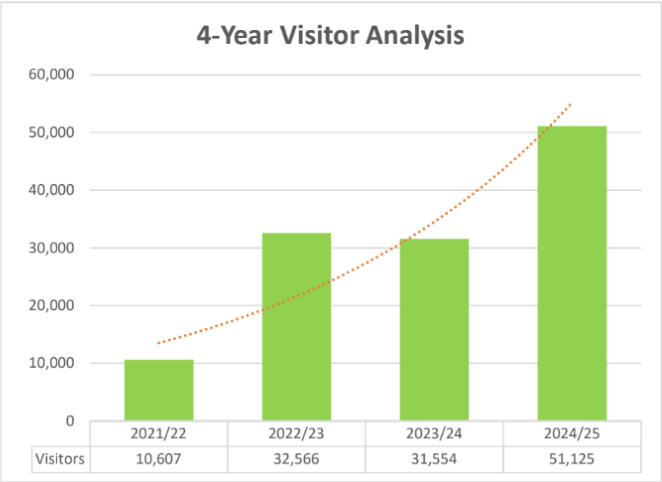
YEAR 2024/25 VISITOR ANALYSIS



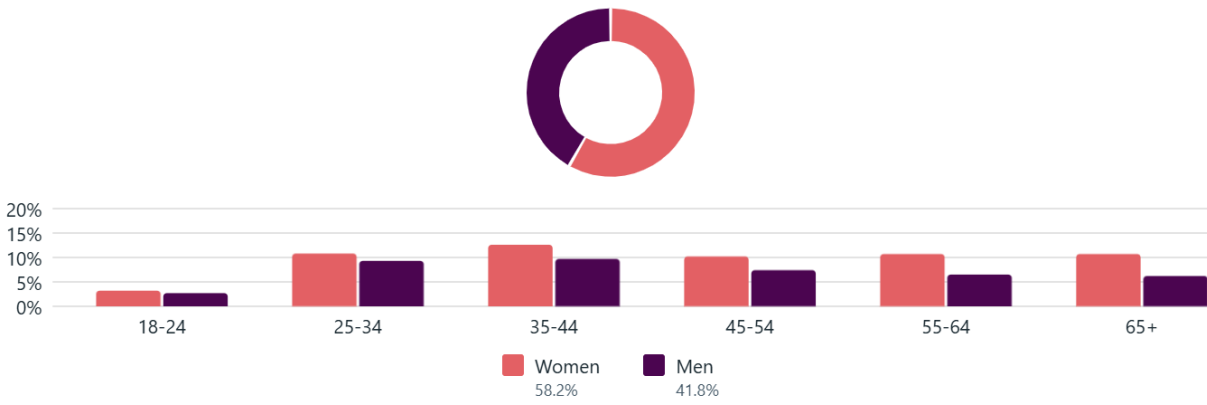
VISITOR ANALYSIS

2024/25 ANNUAL TOTAL = 51,125
(162% INCREASE ON 2023/24)

ANNUAL VISITOR COMPARISON – 2021/22 THROUGH TO 2024/25



Age & gender ⓘ



Green Book Evaluation – Benefits Cost Ratio

In essence, the Green Book provides a framework for systematically assessing and evaluating the value for money of public sector projects by:

Quantifying as many costs and benefits as possible in monetary terms.

Discounting future costs and benefits to their present value.

Calculating the BCR to assess the overall profitability of the project.

Considering qualitative factors that may not be easily quantifiable.

Conducting sensitivity analysis to assess the impact of different assumptions.

Monetary Benefits

Monetary Benefits: Direct economic impacts

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graph TD; A[Monetary Benefits: Direct economic impacts] --> B[Visitor spending]; B --> C[Job creation and skills benefits]; C --> D[Revenue generated from ticket sales or memberships]; D --> E[Impact on businesses within the area];
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Visitor spending

Job creation and skills benefits

Revenue generated from ticket sales or memberships

Impact on businesses within the area

Non Monetary Benefits

These are more challenging to quantify, but include:

- **Social and Economic Impacts:** Improvements in well-being, education, skills development, and community cohesion
- **Cultural Impacts:** Preservation of heritage, cultural identity, and artistic expression
- **Economic Impact Assessment (EIA) and Economic Footprint Analysis:** These methods can be used to assess the direct and indirect economic impacts of cultural organisations, including the benefits of increased tourist spending, job creation, and wider business activity
- **Contingent Valuation (CV) and Social Return on Investment (SROI):** These methods can be used to assess the value of the wider benefits people gain from culture, even in cases where there is no direct monetary exchange, such as free museums

What are you measuring?

DCMS/ ACE

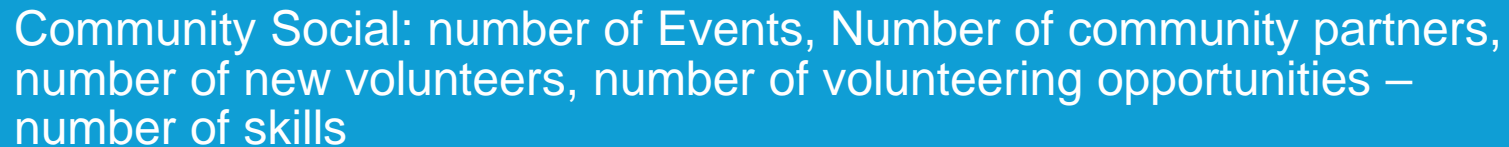
Economic: Number of Businesses Receiving Support and Company Reg number - Number of Businesses Engaging or using the space/venue - Number of FTE created at supporting business or your business



Cultural: Types of events, number of local partnerships, number of marketing campaigns



Community Social: number of Events, Number of community partners, number of new volunteers, number of volunteering opportunities – number of skills



Venue or Project Specific: Young Creatives, New Volunteers



Fund Level Indicators							
				Metric relevant to project?	Overall project target (if relevant)	Target Date (if relevant)	April
	#	Metric	Indicator				
Economic	1	Number of business engaging with/using support hubs	For projects that included business support hubs: How many businesses have physically used support hub facilities? By used support hub facilities, this means they have used the space or equipment to deliver business activities.	Yes			
Cultural	2	Number of new local partnerships created	Following funding award, how many new organisations or businesses have been involved with or contributed to the delivery of your project? By contributed or been involved with, this means any of the following: they have provided funding, they have supported the delivery of, or they have delivered specific activities as part of the project, they have been involved in promoting the project to beneficiaries or wider stakeholders. If there are other ways in which new businesses or organisations have been involved with your project, please add further information in the comments section below.	Yes			
Community / Social	3	Number of event attendees	How many people attended the event/s? Please include any further detail on the overall number and type of attendees in the comment section below.	Yes			
Additional Project Specific Metrics	4	Number of volunteering hours		Yes			

SUPPORTING BUSINESSES Q4 2024/25

BUSINESSES SUPPORTING MORECAMBE WINTER GARDENS

We have partnered with Lancaster and Morecambe College for their 16-18 year old students attending Arts & Creative courses to gain invaluable experience first-hand in our Theatre.

Six events – across 7-days - were held in the theatre during Q4 2024/25 (*See pages 3 & 4*) supported by the businesses listed in the table below:

BUSINESS	EVENT	DATES
Lancaster University	AI Lab (Pro) for business	31/01/2025
Lancaster University	AI Lab (Public)	01/02/2025
ABBT	ABBT Technician Training	17/02/2025
Baylight	Baylight	21/02/2024 – 22/02/2025
Lancaster City Council	Eden Project Community Conversations	04/03/2025
Tom Hingley	Tom Hingley plays Inspiral Carpets	22/03/2025

Thank you for listening

Vanessa Toulmin

Voluntary Chair, Morecambe Winter Gardens Preservation Trust Ltd

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Instagram: @morecambewintergardensofficial



Audience Q&A



Host and Chair

Siân Eagar Theatres at Risk Advice Manager and
Resilient Theatres: Resilient Communities Programme Manager, Theatres Trust

Speakers

Catherine Bloodworth Evaluator, Bright Culture

Abbi Roberts Development and Communications Director, The
Mercury Theatre

Vanessa Toulmin Chair, Morecambe Winter Gardens Preservation
Trust Ltd