



GRAVESHAM PRIDE 2024

END OF EVENT REPORT

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Borough of Gravesham has a long history of social integration. Ours is a multihued and widely diverse population which has a long tradition of welcoming and enfolding new ideas and new cultures. However, despite having a large LGBTQIA+ population in the Borough of Gravesham, we do not have adequate representation and support within the area.

In March 2019 a core committee of LGBTQIA+ individuals were elected during a community meeting with a view to organising a Pride event in the borough of Gravesham which would highlight the existence of LGBTQIA+ people within the area, educate others about the community and promote cohesion and social integration. This core committee grew in number as the project progressed leading to the formation of Gravesham Pride Community Interest Company (No. 12069934) which is operated by volunteers.

1.1. HISTORY

2020 – Gravesham Pride CIC had big plans for a physical Pride event in 2020, but when the pandemic hit, those plans were cancelled. Undeterred, they partnered with Medway Pride CIC to deliver Kent's first-ever virtual Pride event. It was a groundbreaking success, attracting over 10,000 viewers from not only the local area but 32 different countries across the globe.

2021 – Gravesham Pride CIC returned with a COVID-cautious Pride event, offering a limited number of free tickets and excluding the traditional foot march. Even with these restrictions, it was a huge hit: all 500 tickets were snapped up within just four days, and nearly 1,000 people were left on the waiting list. A post-event survey showed overwhelming support, with 98.2% of respondents agreeing that there should be another Pride in 2022.

2022 – The first full-scale Gravesham Pride event, including the long-awaited traditional foot march, took place in 2022. Despite the disruption caused by National Rail strikes, over 2,065 tickets were reserved, and more than 1,500 attendees came to celebrate. Following the event, 100% of survey respondents supported holding another Pride in 2023.

2023 – Tragedy struck in late 2022 when Gravesham Pride CIC fell victim to a significant fraud, wiping out all their reserve funds. With no external financial support, the event seemed impossible. However, the committee's passion and commitment never wavered. They pooled their personal resources at the last minute to ensure Pride, including the beloved foot march, could still go ahead. With only five weeks' notice, the event drew an impressive 1,205 attendees. Afterward, 100% of surveyed ticket holders backed the idea of another Pride event in 2024.

The success of the last four years led to the planning of Gravesham Pride 2024 on the 10th August 2024 at Fort Gardens, Riverside Leisure Area, Commercial Place, Gravesend, DA12 2BH from 11.00pm to 7.30pm including a traditional foot march.

The purpose of this report is to bring together all of the learning obtained by Gravesham Pride CIC following this event.

2. SCOPE

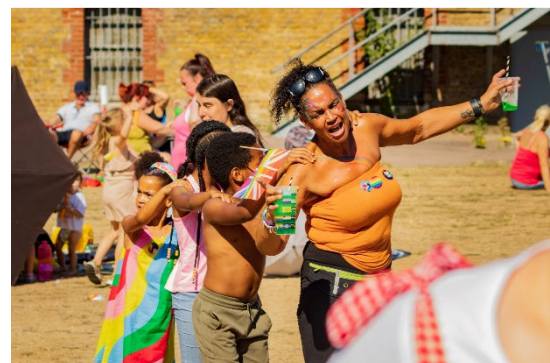
The scope of the project was to hold an LGBTQIA+ Pride event in the Borough of Gravesham on Saturday 10th August 2024 at Fort Gardens, Riverside Leisure Area, Commercial Place, Gravesend, DA12 2BH from 11.00pm to 7.30pm including a traditional foot march which would not only celebrate the local LGBTQIA+ community, but also offer avenues for support and information.

The plan was for Gravesham Pride 2024 to celebrate LGBTQIA+ culture and diversity as well as support equality. In essence the project was to create a community cohesion event inviting everyone to come together, to break down barriers and develop understanding and acceptance of each other.

It was to start at 11am with a traditional foot march which would began with the raising of 5 Intersex Inclusive Pride Flags on Community Square, Windmill Street, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 1AU followed by participants marching on foot to Fort Gardens where the main event would be held from 12pm.

From 12pm there would be a staged event utilising the existing bandstand situated within Fort Gardens to deliver a mixture of entertainment including musicians, dancers, DJ's and singers most of which local in nature. There would also be stalls selling items relevant to the event and stands for local charities and organisations as well as a food concession, a children's area, and a bar on site.

The opening ceremony would be to demonstrate publicly the support and allyship of the local council and leaders for the LGBTQIA+ community in the borough with the traditional foot march designed to highlight the visibility of the LGBTQIA+ community and our allies in the area and provide an avenue for celebrating our history, culture, social and self-acceptance. The aim of the staged entertainment element would be to draw in a wider audience from other sections of the community to encourage cohesion and inclusion which would raise the profile of the area and promote local businesses, charities and services.



3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The main aims and objectives of the event were to;

- Create an event to raise awareness of the existence of the LGBTQIA+ community within the borough of Gravesham and give LGBTQIA+ people the freedom to be themselves.
- Highlight the existence of LGBTQIA+ people within the borough of Gravesham to demonstrate that support and services are needed within the area.
- Raise awareness and educate the public about the issues and difficulties affecting the lives of LGBTQIA+ people.
- Gather support for staging an annual LGBTQIA+ Pride event as well as other smaller events throughout the borough of Gravesham for the LGBTQIA+ community in a safe environment throughout the year.
- Cultivate a sentiment in favour of equality and diversity through celebrating the diversity of the LGBTQIA+ community.

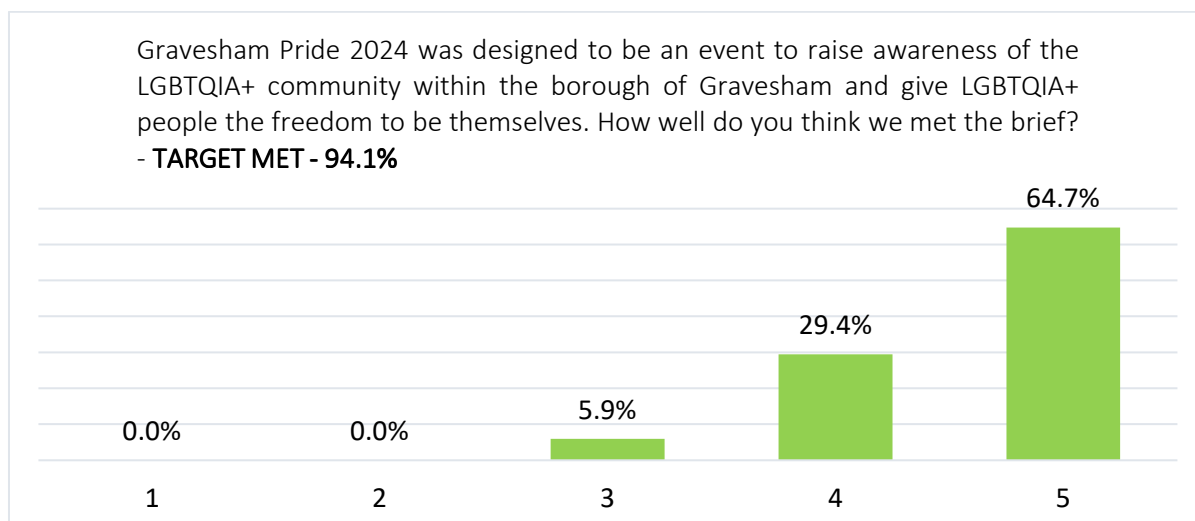
Upon the successful completion of Gravesham Pride 2024, we reviewed our booking system and discovered that 1938 free tickets were reserved to 634 individuals with many bookings made for couples or groups using one e-mail address.

Once we had identified the unique e-mail addresses, we sent each of them an invitation to complete a survey to help us discover how well we met our aims and objectives, and we had a 2.68% response rate. Each question requested answers on a numeric scale with 1 being “Not Very Well” and 5 being “Very Well”. We set a target for ourselves to receive 80% of responses within the top end of the scale (4 and 5).

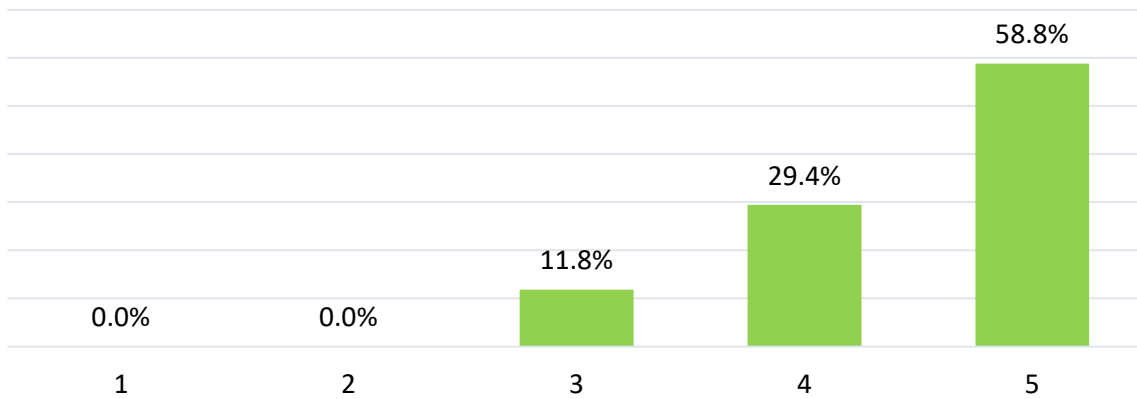
GRAPH KEYS

1	2	3	4	5
Not Very Well	Not Really	OK	Well	Very Well

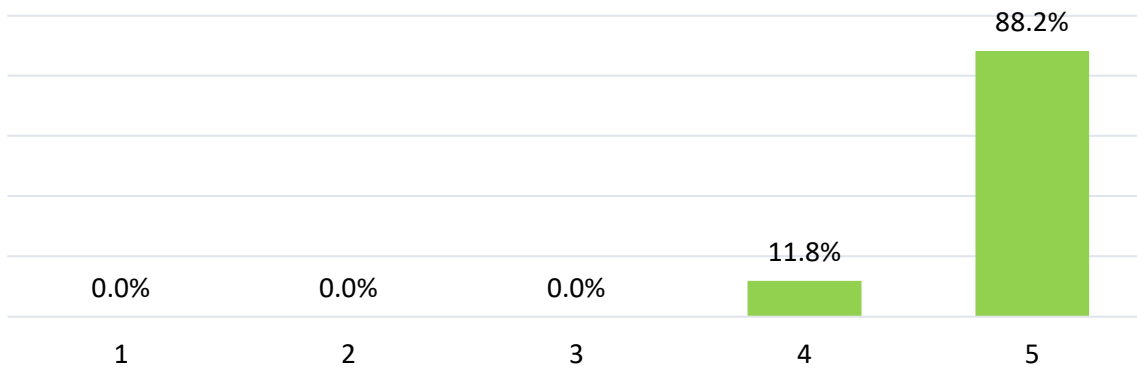
Target Missed	Target Bordered	Target Met
0% - 69%	70% - 79%	80% - 100%



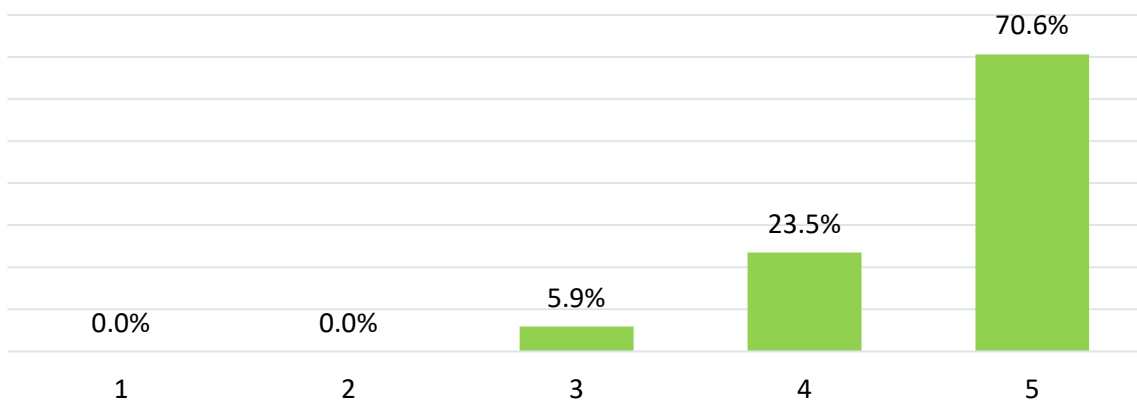
Do you feel that the LGBTQIA+ community and culture was adequately represented throughout Gravesham Pride 2024? - **TARGET MET - 88.2%**



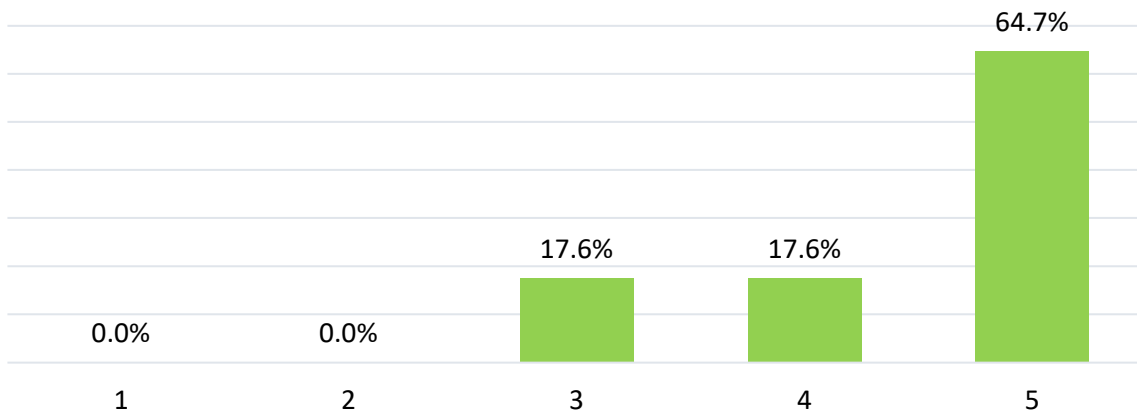
Although Gravesham Pride 2024 was designed with the LGBTQIA+ community in mind, it was important to us to make sure that everyone felt welcome. Do you think that the event was welcoming to all people? - **TARGET MET - 100%**



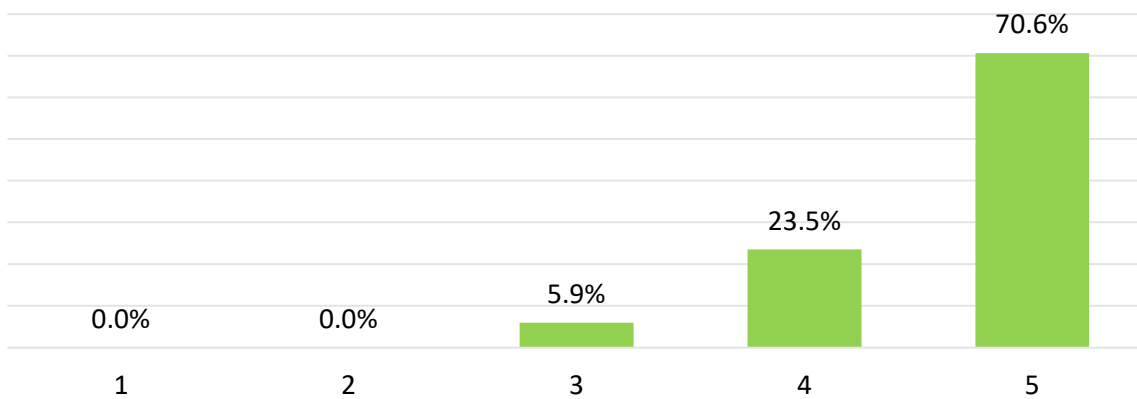
Do you feel that Gravesham Pride 2024 brought the people of Gravesham together? - **TARGET MET - 94.1%**



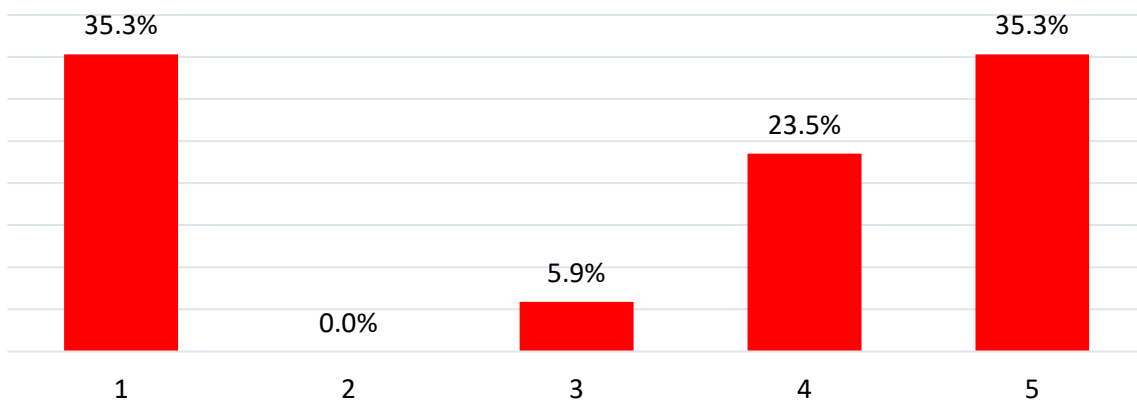
Do you feel that Gravesham Pride 2024 adequately represented the area and the people who live here? - **TARGET MET - 82.3%**



Do you feel that Gravesham Pride 2024 added value to the people of the borough of Gravesham? - **TARGET MET - 94.1%**

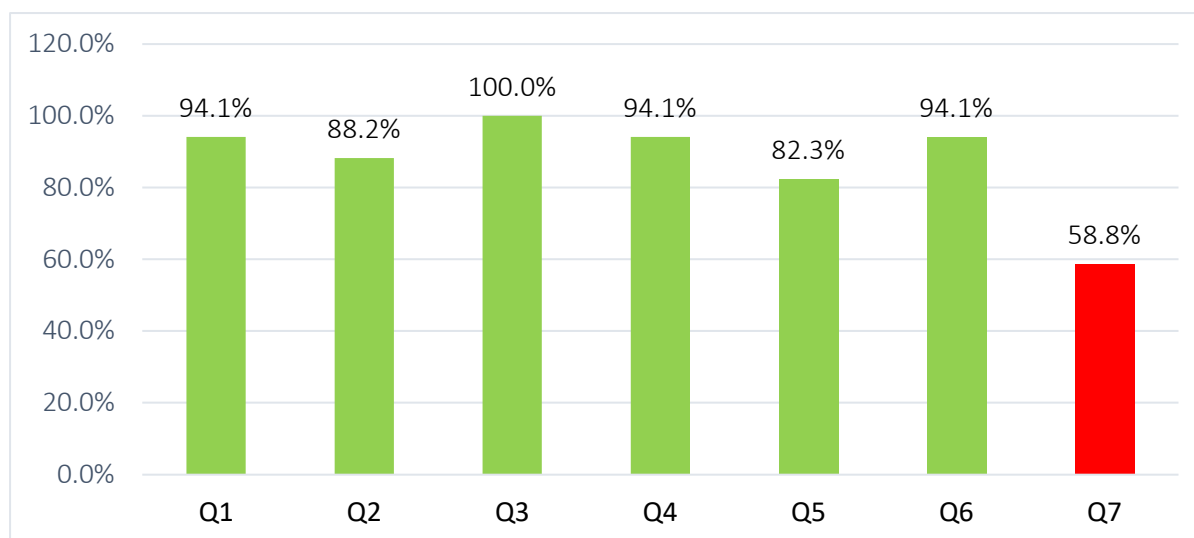


Do you feel that Gravesham Pride 2024 is an event which showcases the area in a good light to those from outside the borough? - **TARGET NOT MET - 58.8%**



Overall, from looking at the 7 key questions we asked attendees the project had;

Target Missed (0% - 69% of responses in 4 and 5)	Target Bordered (70% - 79% of responses in 4 and 5)	Target Met (80% - 100% of responses in 4 and 5)
1	0	6



Below is a comparison of from 2021 – 2024 looking at the 7 key questions we asked attendees.

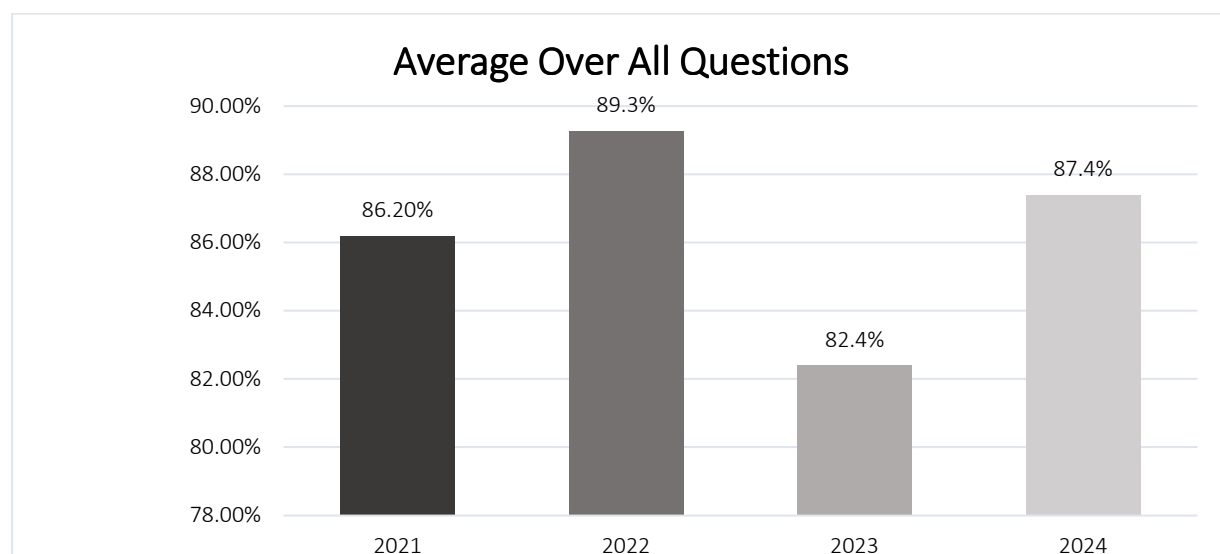
YEAR	QUESTIONS						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2021	90.7%	88.9%	94.4%	76.0%	75.9%	85.2%	92.6%
2022	92.6%	95.6%	95.6%	88.2%	89.7%	95.6%	67.7%
2023	91.4%	85.7%	94.3%	80.0%	74.3%	77.1%	73.3%
2024	94.1%	88.2%	100%	94.1%	82.3%	94.1%	58.8%

It is particularly disappointing that we missed our self-set target of 80% for the question, *"Do you feel that Gravesham Pride 2024 is an event which showcases the area in a good light to those from outside the borough?"* - especially given our strong performance in all other areas. Gravesham Pride CIC acknowledges that this has been a challenging area for us for three consecutive years, and we remain focused on improving this aspect of the event. However, as a single organisation, there are limits to what we can achieve, particularly when many of the influencing factors lie beyond our direct control and addressing this area fully will require external efforts.

While Fort Gardens is undeniably a beautiful venue, it is clear that the surrounding area requires further investment, and this fact is hard to overlook. Attendees traveling to Gravesham Pride 2024 would have encountered a number of visual cues that highlight underinvestment in the borough, including several empty shopfronts along the march route and the unfinished construction site known as The Charter, which many local residents describe as an "unwanted embarrassment."

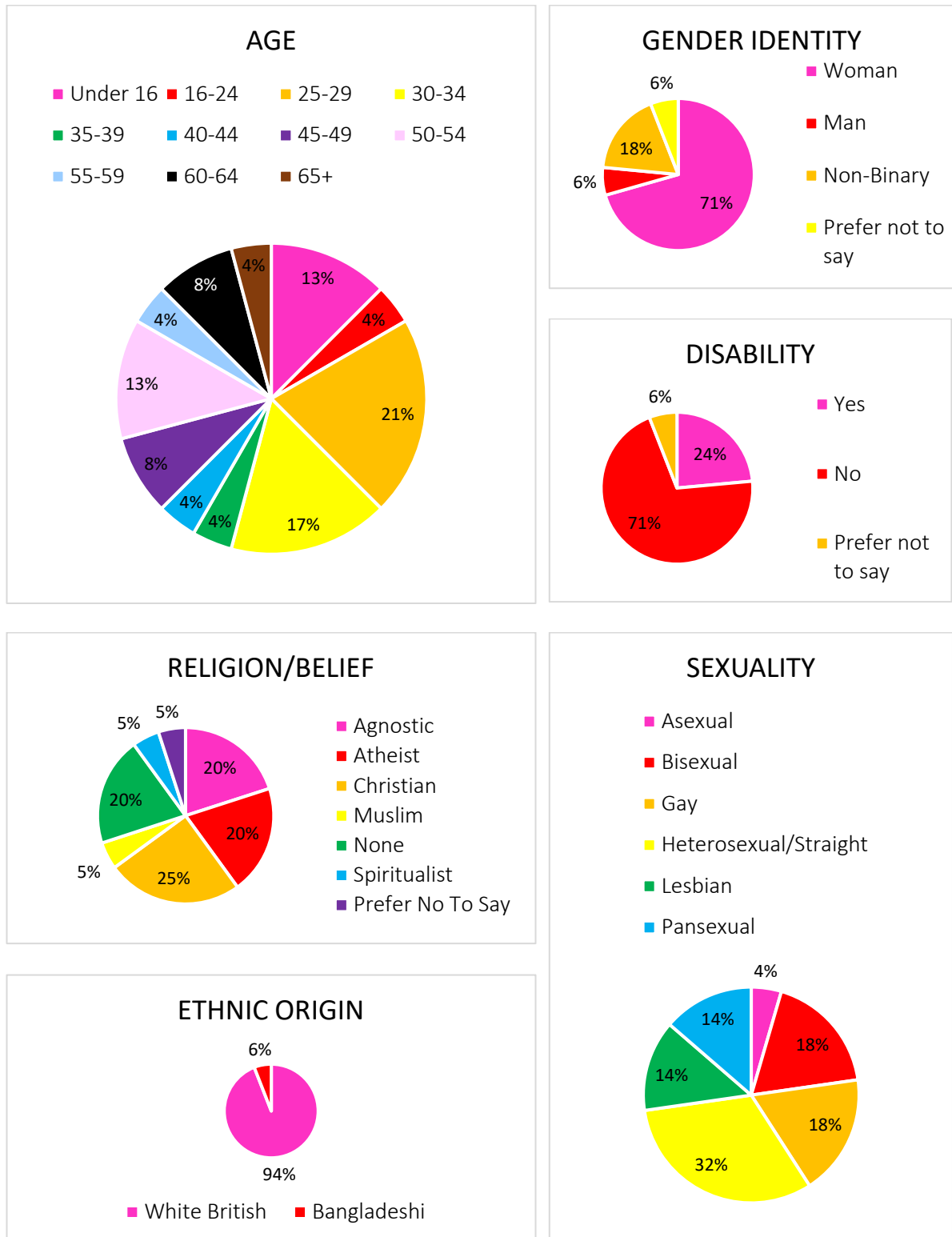
Gravesham Pride 2024 also took place during a period of heightened racial tension across the country, and our borough was further affected by a social media post made by our local MP just a week before the event. This post escalated tensions to the extent that Gravesham was placed on a "risk list" for potential race riots predicted to occur on the same day as our event. Consequently, many people contacted us in the run-up to express safety concerns, which ultimately led to a reduction in attendance.

It should be noted that we received excellent feedback in all other areas and in the case of questions three and four we achieved our highest scores to date. Furthermore, the average score this year across all 7 questions is 87.4% which not only exceeds our self-set target of 80% but also made Gravesham Pride 2024 our second most successful year to date.



4. DIVERSITY DATA

Our questionnaire includes optional questions about diversity to understand the demographics of Gravesham Pride 2024 attendees. As in previous years, the ethnicity data provided was limited, despite offering a range of options. This year's data was especially disappointing, likely due to heightened racial tensions nationally and Gravesham being placed on a "risk list" for potential race riots, leading to reduced attendance, and possibly affecting participation from ethnically diverse groups who would have usually attended.

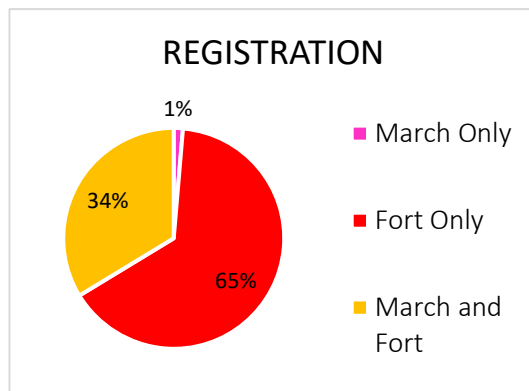


5. FEEDBACK

As part of our questionnaire, we asked respondents some questions in relation to their overall experience of Gravesham Pride 2024 and offered an opportunity to provide feedback regarding how we can improve on the event in the future.

5.1. THE MARCH

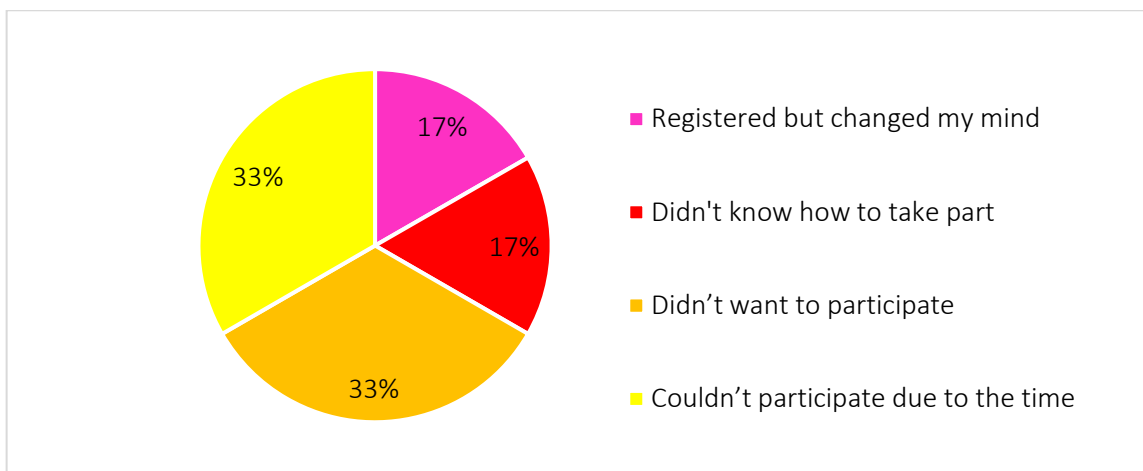
The Gravesham Pride 2024 opening ceremony and Pride march were organised separately from the staged event and therefore we opted to take feedback individually for this.



The previous year, 559 people registered to participate in the Pride march and it was our hope to achieve 700 participants this year. We offered 3 types of free tickets for public to register for, two of these options included participating in the march.

In total, 679 people registered to participate in the Gravesham Pride 2024 march which was slightly under our target but this may have been as a result of the racial tension nationally.

In our post event questionnaire, we asked participants who did not attend the march their reasoning behind this decision.



Based on these results we can offer the following comments in relation to this feedback;

REGISTERED BUT CHANGED MY MIND

Gravesham Pride CIC understands that offering free tickets for all aspects of our event means people may register early when they first see them advertised but later change their minds as their plans evolve. While this is disappointing, we currently have no further feedback on this issue, making it difficult to identify ways to improve this in the future.

DIDN'T WANT TO PARTICIPATE

This is the third year we have held the traditional foot march with the same joining instructions, timings and starting point. Furthermore, it was featured on our website and on all social media from June 2024. It should also be noted that everyone who completed this survey was a registered ticket

holder and will have seen it advertised on the Eventbrite system which also featured full joining instructions for the march.

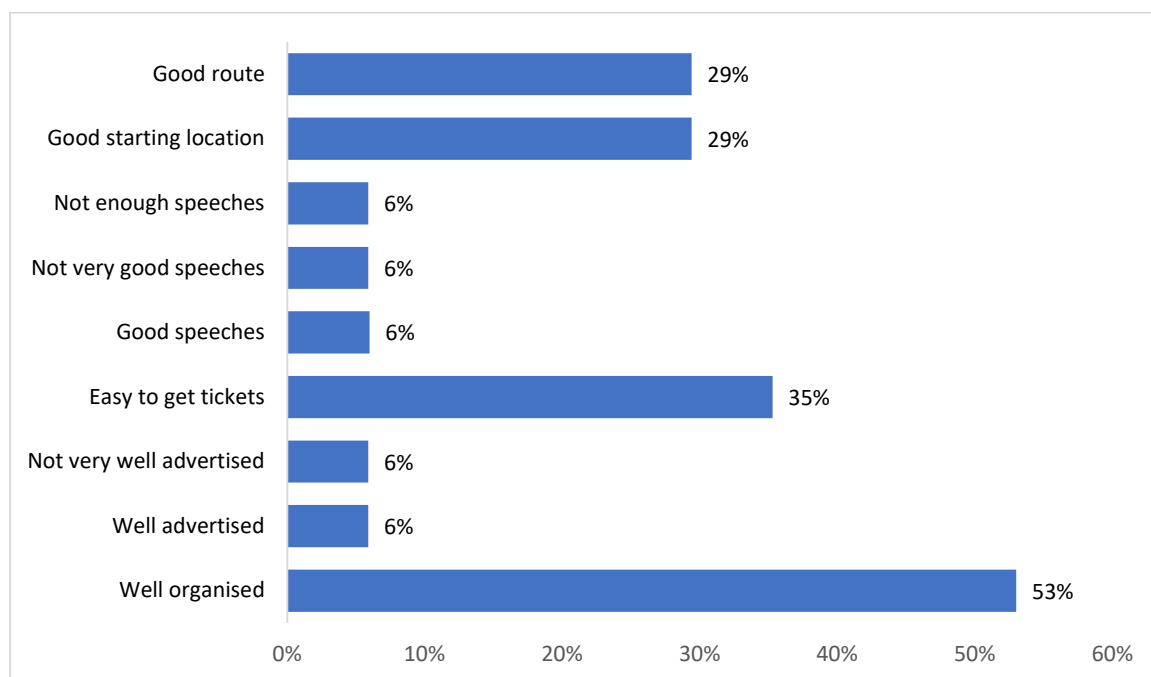
DIDN'T WANT TO PARTICIPATE

Gravesham Pride CIC understand that some people do not wish to participate in the march element due to personal choice which is why we opted to have a variety of ticket options.

COULDN'T PARTICIPATE DUE TO THE TIME

Historically, Pride marches are held prior to the main event where people travel from a designated starting point to the event ground. The opening ceremony and march took place from 11am with the main event starting at 12pm. It is our hope that as time goes on and people become more aware of the march element of Gravesham Pride they will be able to factor this into their diaries if they wish to participate.

In the end of event questionnaire we asked those who participated in the march to tell us what they thought of this element and the below feedback was provided.



We also gave participants with the opportunity to provide additional feedback on the march elements which we can be used when planning future events.

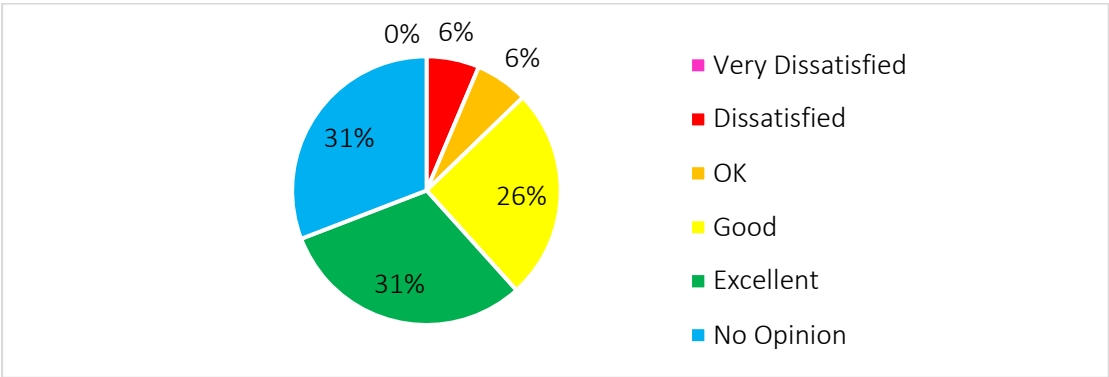
- *The march was amazing and it was longer this year. I liked that we had more than one flag this year.*
- *I wonder if it could have been on a longer route?*
- *I have had a difficult year and find crowds difficult too. I never, at any point felt uncomfortable and, even though I was on my own for a lot of the event I felt safe and like part of the community. I sang so hard almost all day!*
- *I will attend all future Pride marches. Had the best of times!*

5.2. THE STAGED EVENT

From 12pm there was a staged event utilising a purpose-built temporary stage to deliver a mixture of entertainment including musicians, dancers, DJ's and singers most of which local in nature. There was also stalls selling items relevant to the event and stands for local charities and organisations as well as food concessions, a children's area, and two bars on site.

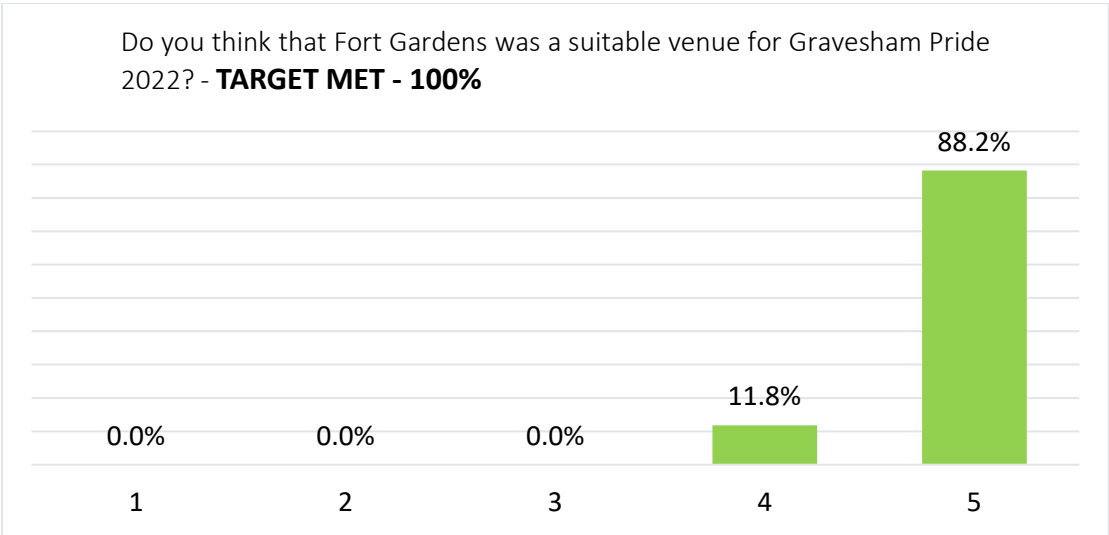
5.2.1. ACCESSIBILITY OF THE SITE

31% of our respondents had no opinion regarding accessibility leaving 69% who used the scale to score it. Whilst 31% felt accessibility was excellent, on the other end of the scale 6% felt dissatisfied with the accessibility however, no further feedback was given in relation to this in the spaces provided and therefore we are unsure as to how improvements can be made going forward.



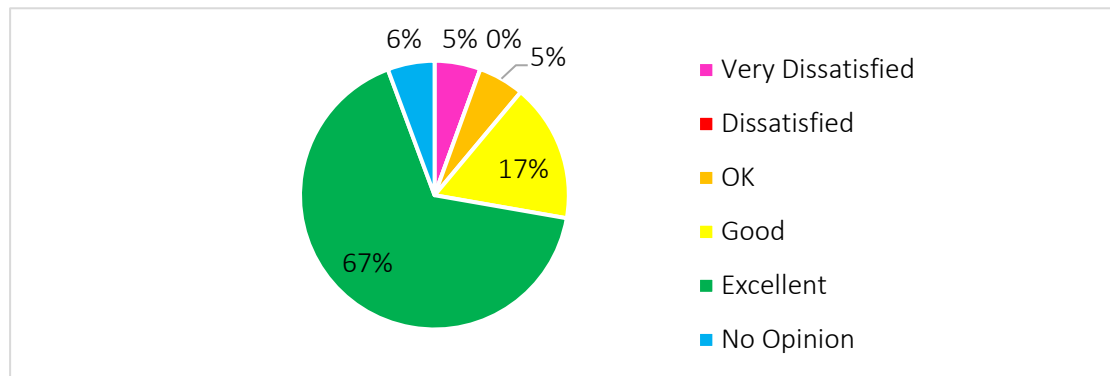
Gravesham Pride 2024 was held at Fort Gardens, which is a public park owned by Gravesham Borough Council and it is marked as an accessible location on their website. Although the site is split level, both levels are flat lawn and they are ringed entirely by a flat level concrete/asphalt pathway which leads to all entrances/exits, toilets and some of the seating.

Interestingly, despite 6% of respondents stating that they were “dissatisfied” with accessibility, when respondents were asked whether Fort Gardens was a suitable venue for Gravesham Pride 2024, 100% of respondents scored it within the top end of the scale (4 and 5).



5.2.2. COMMUNICATION

As a committee we were extremely pleased to see that a total of 84% of respondents found our level of communication “Excellent” or “Good” which is an improvement of 9% from last year.



There was also a 3% decrease in people saying that they were “very dissatisfied” with our levels of communication however, no further comments were left regarding this therefore we do not know how to improve things further.

5.2.3. FOOD AND BEVERAGES

Food and beverages were one area in which the Gravesham Pride committee show extra attention every year because we know from feedback that this is very important to our attendees.

Last year we had difficulty sourcing appropriate vendors who could work on the site because Fort Gardens has limited access to electricity and no running water which meant that any vendors needed to be fully self-sufficient and this dramatically reduced the number of vendors who would be able to work on the site.

However, because of this we were able to obtain a lot of rich feedback from attendees to improve this element for the future. This included;

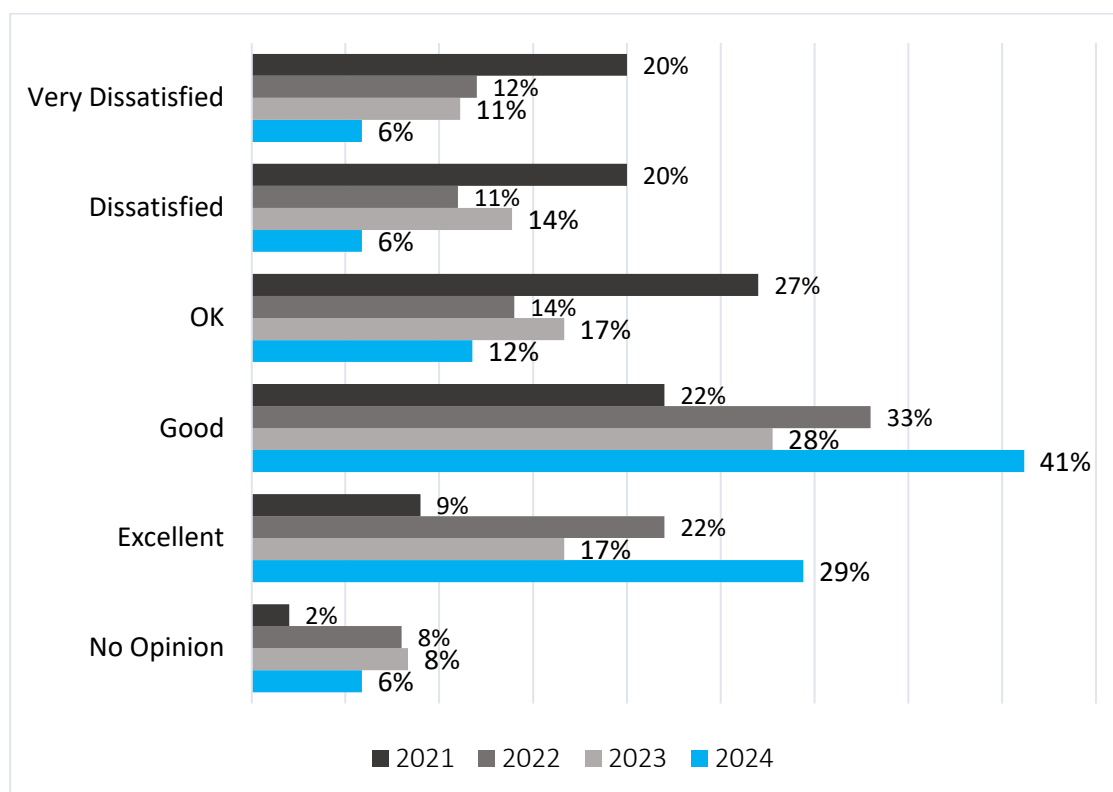
- Not enough variety.
- Vendors were not local in nature.
- Expensive.
- Limited options for children.
- Limited vegan/vegetarian options.
- Limited options for food allergies.
- No teas and coffees

We took all this feedback onboard for the planning of Gravesham Pride 2024 and managed to secure a festival generator which could supply our vendors and therefore open us up to more variety. This was a difficult decision for us because of concerns regarding the environment however, despite asking Gravesham Borough Council for information in relation to the electrics on the site and its capabilities they were unable to provide us with any information and it was felt by our electrical engineer that it would be unsafe to have multiple vendors using the power on the bandstand.

As the power supply enabled us to have a wider variety of vendors, we had Pizza, Mexican, Jamaican, Vegan, Ice Cream and a Bakery as well as a bar for alcohol and soft drinks and a mobile barista all of which were local in nature. Unfortunately, our Burger vendor did not turn up on the day.

Prior to booking, we asked all vendors to provide us with a copy of their menus and price lists to confirm that they all had vegetarian and children's options with three vendors also having a vegan option. We also checked that their pricing was fair and reasonable and made them fully aware that they were prohibited from increasing the prices during the event as was the case with one vendor the previous year.

When comparing this years survey scores with previous years, it was pleasing to see that the changes we made improved attendee experiences significantly with 70% scoring the food and beverage provisions in the "Good" or "Excellent" categories which is an improvement of 25% from last year and our best score to date.



Despite making all of these improvements, there were still some negative feedback in relation to food and beverage vendors;

- Nowhere to refill water bottles
- No free water provided to attendees
- No Burger Van

Our responses to these comments are as follows;

Water – The comments relating to water are reoccurring every year for Gravesham Pride and the issue of water/hydration is always discussed at length by the Gravesham Pride committee who spend a huge amount of time researching what other events like ours are doing and answering questions from member of the public about this.

We always have a huge number of questions from the public about bringing reusable water bottles to Gravesham Pride so that they can refill them throughout the day. Unfortunately, this is not possible as there is no running drinking water at Fort Gardens. However, people are welcome to bring empty reusable bottles to decant drinks they purchase on site or water they have brought with them in factory sealed containers to

keep them cool or for ease of drinking e.g. for small children or people with dexterity issues who require specific containers.

This led to people enquiring whether they could bring in several reusable bottles which were prefilled with water or larger prefilled water containers so that they had enough to last them the entire day. Unfortunately, this is something which was prohibited at the event because the liquid within these bottles could be contraband alcohol, drugs, acid or flammable liquid and whilst security could ask people to do a sip or sniff test on these liquids on entry, there have been numerous cases at festivals of people panicking during these tests and either drinking the liquid which could be hazardous to their health or throwing it on security staff or the other people in the queue and for us public safety is our paramount concern.

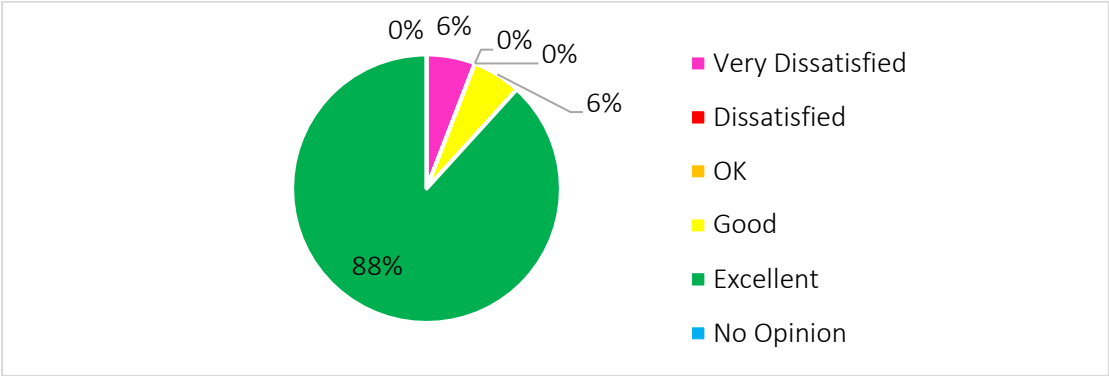
During these enquiries people are always reminded that they were welcome to bring with them unlimited amounts of factory sealed bottled water and it is suggested that to reduce costs and plastics they could bring larger 2-4 litre factory sealed water bottles which could then be decanted into more manageable reusable containers. However, this often lead to complaints that we were encouraging people not to be environmentally friendly.

Due to the potential for high temperatures, combined with the lack of running drinking water on the site and the security measures, some members of the public often state that we should therefore provide free unlimited bottled water for attendees at the event. This is something that we discuss at length every year as a committee as well as with our security staff and members of the UK Pride Organisers Network and an overwhelming majority agreed that because Gravesham Pride is a free event where the public were allowed to bring in unlimited amounts of factory sealed bottled water if they wished which could be purchased from manufactures using recycled and recyclable materials, there was no obligation to provide free water to attendees. However, it was available for performers, security staff and volunteers.

No Burger Van – In January 2024 the Gravesham Pride committee booked a burger van to attend our event but unfortunately, we had no option but to cancel them in June 2024 because they reached out to say they could only come if we also allowed their fairground rides which is something that was against our agreement with Gravesham Borough Council and our Public Liability Insurance provider. We booked another burger van in July 2024 but they sadly did not turn up on the day.

5.2.4. **OBTAINING TICKETS**

From reviewing the results of our questionnaire, a total of 94% of respondents found that the process of obtaining tickets for Gravesham Pride 2024 was “Excellent”, “Good” or “OK”.

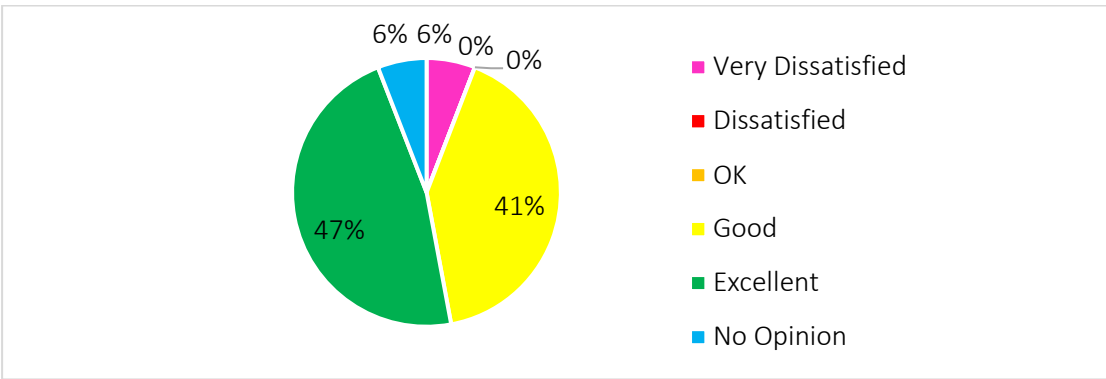


Gravesham Pride 2024 was a free event however, attendees were required to register for tickets via Eventbrite so that we could monitor approximate numbers and make sure the appropriate infrastructure was in place on the day such as the number of toilets and security staff.

Even though 6% of respondents stated that they were very dissatisfied with the process for obtaining tickets, there was no further information in relation to this in order for us to improve processes in the future.

5.2.5. RULES AND RESTRICTIONS

As a committee we were extremely pleased to see that a total of 88% of respondents found the rules and restrictions at Gravesham Pride 2024 “Excellent”, “Good” or “OK” which is an improvement of 6% from last years results.



It was disappointing to see that 6% of respondents were “very dissatisfied” or “dissatisfied” with the rules and restrictions, particularly when reading the feedback in this area because it all centred around attendees not being able to bring in prefilled reusable water bottles which they could then refill with water on site when needed. This is upsetting to us because there is no running water on the site for this to have been possible and this is something which is entirely beyond our control.

Attendees were allowed to bring in unlimited factory sealed bottled water if they wished to cut down costs and they could bring with them unlimited empty reusable water bottles if they wished to decant that water once on site in order to keep it cool or for ease of drinking however, they couldn’t bring in prefilled reusable water bottles because the liquid posed a genuine security risk and there was no running water on site for them to fill reusable water bottles.

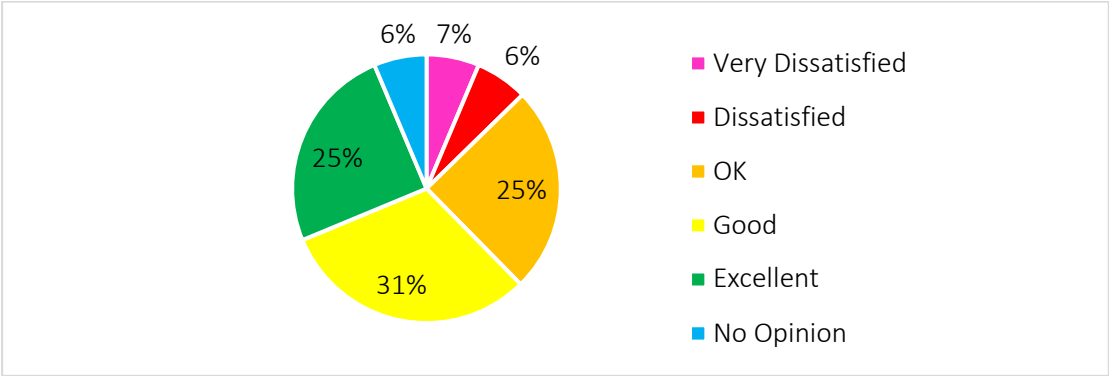
Following the event, the Gravesham Pride committee discussed this at length and had we allowed attendees to bring in prefilled reusable water bottles not only would this have posed a genuine security risk but it may also have led people to assume that they could refill them with water on site during the event which would have been a health and safety concern as attendees may not have been adequately prepared for the fact that there was not a free water source available to do so leading to dehydration therefore we still feel that these were fair and reasonable rules and restrictions and it is disappointing that our scores were reduced in this area as a result.

5.2.6. SEATING AREAS

According to our questionnaire, 81% of respondents found the seating at Gravesham Pride 2024 “Excellent”, “Good” or “OK”. As a committee we were happy with this as it is a 7% increase on last year.

Gravesham Pride 2024 was held at Fort Gardens which is a public park owned by Gravesham Borough Council. The area features a bandstand that was first constructed in the 1900’s with amphitheatre style seating cut into the landscape in front of it.

Although we opted to use a temporary stage for Gravesham Pride 2024 it was located directly in front of the bandstand so that the amphitheatre style seating cut into the landscape could still be used.



We noted that 13% of respondents were “very dissatisfied” or “dissatisfied” with the seating and from reading the feedback in this area this is predominantly because the temporary stage took up a lot of the lawn space in front of the bandstand and people like to use this area for dancing. The feedback also highlighted that the sound booth at the side of the stage obstructed the view for some people.

We opted to use a temporary stage because feedback from previous years was that the bandstand was not big enough for performers to move around and the fixed railings impacted viewing. However, when the stage company arrived on the morning of the event the doors would not open on their truck causing a 3 hour delay in installation. When they were able to enter the vehicle, because time was limited they did not position the stage exactly as per plan with it being 10 foot further forward than it should have been taking up more of the lawn than we had hoped.

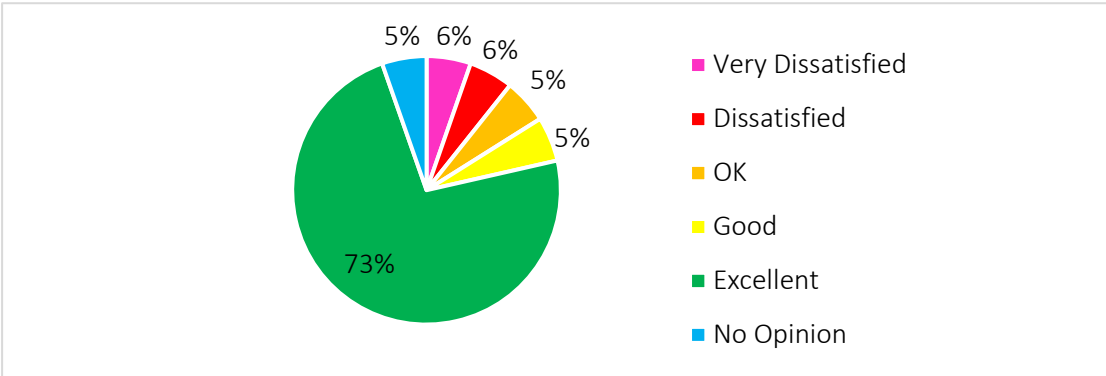
This was further impacted by the sound booth which was situated at the side of the stage and impacted the view of the entertainment for those sitting on the lower levels of the amphitheatre style seating on the right-hand side. This is a fair assessment and something which we can review again during the planning of next years event.

5.2.7. SECURITY STAFF

The Gravesham Pride committee took the safety of our attendees at the event very seriously whilst at the same time wanting to ensure that our attendees continued to feel comfortable and confident to be themselves. The security firm we used were the same company we have used for all our events who are Pride event specialist. They are an LGBTQIA+ family run company who fully understood the needs of our community and they went through a rigorous interview process with us to make sure that they were right for the task.

With this in mind, we were extremely pleased to see that 83% of our attendees scored our security team “Excellent”, “Good” or “OK” and when we reviewed the feedback received, the

negative comments were relating to rules and restrictions regarding attendees not being allowed to bring in their own water rather than the security team themselves.

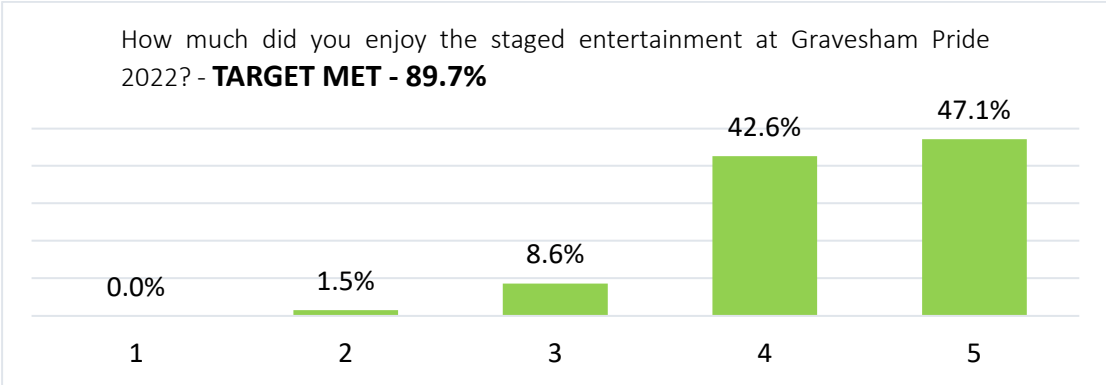


There was feedback provided that when the gates initially opened, there was some confusion regarding what items were allowed to be brought onto the site and this needed to be clarified by the Gravesham Pride chairperson on the gate causing delays. We feel that this feedback is fair.

Prior to the event, we did meet with the managers of the security firm at Fort Gardens to go through the event plan and we also provided them with all associated paperwork. However, on the day there were massive delays in setting up the site due to road closures caused by a fire at a hotel in the surrounding area. This led to delays in getting all volunteers, security staff, equipment and vendors onto site meaning that it was all hands-on deck right up to the gates opening and often people started work immediately as they arrived. This meant that the scheduled 10am briefing between the security staff and Gravesham Pride volunteers was not attended by everyone. We will be mindful of this in the future and have agreed to put a contingency plan in place for next years event.

5.2.8. STAGED ENTERTAINMENT

Gravesham Pride 2022 was a staged event with a mixture of entertainment including musicians, dancers, and singers most of which were local in nature. We asked respondents to score how much they enjoyed the staged entertainment on a numeric scale with 1 being “Not Very Much” and 5 being “Very Much”. We set a target for ourselves to receive 80% of responses within the top end of the scale (4 and 5) and it was found that 89.7% of people scored the staged entertainment within the top end of the scale (4 and 5) exceeding our self-set target of 80% and this was an improvement of 2% from last year’s results. We also received a lot of useful feedback from our attendees in relation to the staged entertainment which we will be using to improve future events.



Last year we received feedback from attendees which included having a band, having local performers, and having celebrity acts. We utilised this feedback heavily when booking the entertainment for 2022. They were;

- Amanda Bang (Drag Act)
- Dancing Dames (Dancers)
- Fire Performers (Sideshow)
- Gay Elvis (Singer/Tribute)
- Kings of Dhol (Drum and Dance)
- Making Noise Choir (Singers)
- Robbie White (Singer)
- Satch (Band)
- Star Turning Tina (Singer/Tribute)
- Stevi Richie (Singer)
- Stilt Walkers (Sideshow)
- Velvet Diamond (Band)

For 2022 we featured two bands, Velvet Diamond and Satch with all but 3 acts travelling no further than approximately 30 miles to attend the event. The Kings of Dhol and the Making Noise Choir are both Gravesham Borough community staples and the Dancing Dames was an act arranged by the Gravesham Art Society.

In terms of celebrity performers, this was something we found difficult to arrange initially because it was a concern that we would need a larger budget to cover the cost and although many Prides choose to do this by either charging an entry fee or obtaining corporate sponsorship we are well aware that by doing this they reduce the accessibility of their events and often the visibility of community groups in favour of corporate advertising and we wanted to stay true to our roots by continuing to be a free and accessible event which places the LGBTQIA+ community, our allies and the organisations who support us at its heart. With this in mind, we reached out to local talent agents who were able to put us in contact with Robbie White from Heartstopper and Killing Eve and Stevi Ritchie from the X-Factor and Celebrity Big Brother who were within our budget.

Although we were able to action all of the feedback from our 2021 results regarding the staged entertainment and this did lead to a 2% increase within the top end of the scale (4 and 5) we still had some suggestions from respondents on how we could make improvements for next year including;

- More than one drag performer.
- More variety other than just singers.
- DJ's who play dance music.
- Original music rather than covers.
- More local acts.

5.2.8.1. PERFORMER FEEDBACK

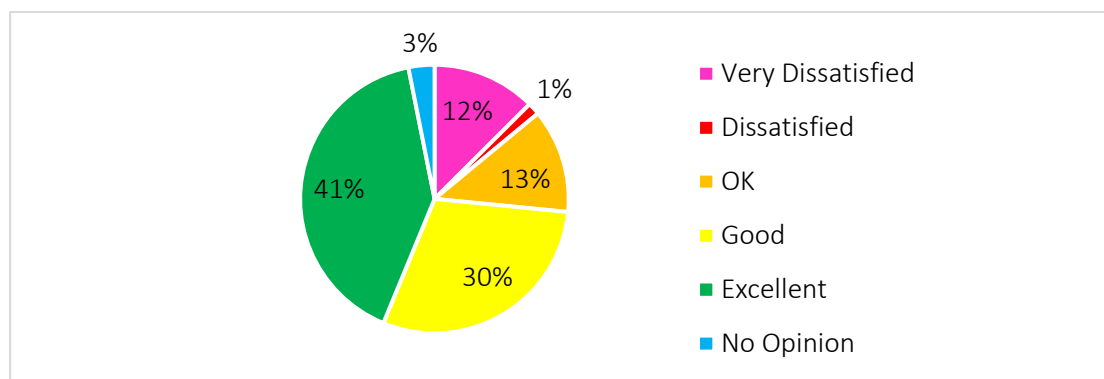
When obtaining feedback for Gravesham Pride 2022 we also produced a questionnaire for our performers to find out about their experiences of working at the event. The feedback received was extremely positive with 100% of the artists being happy to work with Gravesham Pride CIC again after finding our volunteers, sound engineer and stage management team professional and easy to work with both during the planning stages and the event itself which was identical to the score received the previous year.

The only feedback we received from the performers was that a digital screen backdrop would be helpful to improve the visuals for the audience. This was something that we did

discuss at length during the planning stages and we were initially at a 50/50 divide as a committee. It was eventually agreed that as we were making significant changes to the staging arrangements from the previous year already by fitting a temporary stage, a large LED/LCD screen would be a step too far however, if the improvements this year were successful we would add a screen thereafter.

5.2.9. STAGING AND DECORATIONS

From reviewing the questionnaire responses, it was noted that 82.7% of respondents found that the staging and decorations were “Excellent”, “Good” or “OK” which was a decrease of 0.3% from the previous year despite making significant changes based upon feedback provided at the time.



During Gravesham Pride 2021 we utilised the existing bandstand for our staged entertainment which was first constructed in the 1900’s and we decorated this with multicoloured balloons and banners. However, it was fed back by performers, audience members and our volunteers that the decorative balloons and banners made it difficult to see the performers on the stage and to take photographs of the event. It was also reported that the stage was too small for some of the more energetic staged entertainment. As a result many of the acts opted to perform on the grass in front of the bandstand which was not fenced off meaning that the attendees could touch and interact with the performers or become so close to them it obstructed the view for some of the audience.

With this in mind, we commissioned the construction of a professional temporary stage on the grass in front of the existing bandstand where acts had opted to perform the previous year. We then used the existing bandstand as a backdrop. We made sure that this stage was fenced off to prevent audience members from touching the acts whilst performing and we made sure that this fencing was unobscured by decorations to improve the view.

From looking at the feedback regarding the staging and decorations from this year, most seemed to centre around the audience having to use the amphitheatre style seating cut into the landscape or sit on the lawn in front of the stage in order to see and neither of these locations had any shade from the sun.

Both the way in which the seating is set out and the level of shade at the venue is largely out of the control of the Gravesham Pride Committee however, we did discuss options relating to this once we discovered that the temperatures would be so high on the day. Unfortunately, there is no way in which we could provide shade which covered all the amphitheatre style seating. The only option we had would have been to erect a series of large gazebo/canopies on the lawn in front of the stage. However, this area is not large enough to seat all those who attended and would have impacted the view of those using the amphitheatre style seating.

Attendees were welcome to bring their own shade options such as small tents, parasols and gazebos and some members of the public did so situating themselves on the top level of the amphitheatre style seating of their own accord so that they did not obscure the view for others.

There was further feedback regarding the sound and stage engineer's gazebo being situated next to the stage which obscured the view on one short side. We are unsure how to rectify this for the future as this team needs sight of the stage in order to carry out their job and needs to be close enough to monitor sound levels however, we plan to take this feedback to the team in order to work on a possible solution for next year.

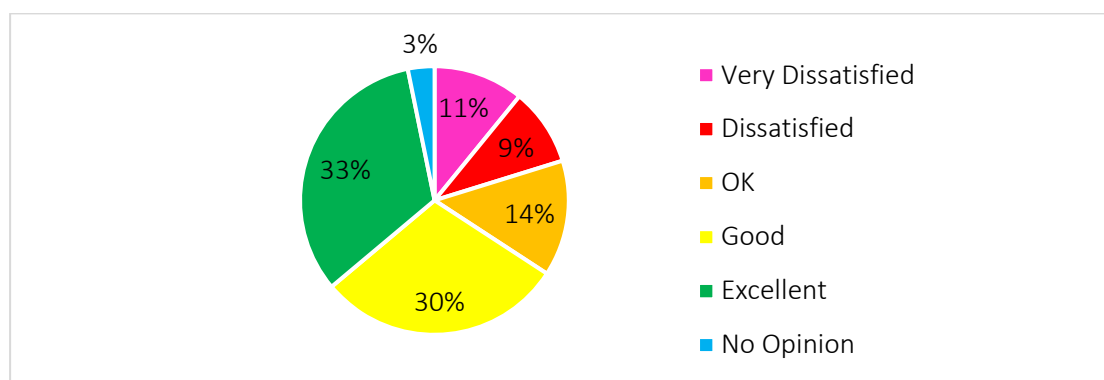
In terms of the decorations, the only feedback we had was that some of the community flags on display made a parent uncomfortable because they had to answer questions from their child about what the flag meant. The flag in question was the Polyamory flag which is a symbol used by sections of the community who practice ethical non-monogamy that involves committed relationships between two or more people which was displayed by one of our stall holders.

Gravesham Pride CIC designed Gravesham Pride 2022 as an event to raise awareness of the existence of the LGBTQIA+ community within the borough of Gravesham and give LGBTQIA+ people the freedom to be themselves. It was also designed to raise awareness and educate the public about the lives of LGBTQIA+ people.

With this in mind, we welcome all sections of our community and do not censor attendees, stall holders or volunteers providing that they are not breaking any rules and regulations of the event, guidelines placed by Gravesham Borough Council or laws of this country. Therefore we will not moderate our event in order to appease those who are not familiar with sections of our community.

5.2.10. STALLS FOR SALES AND INFORMATION

Gravesham Pride CIC were interested to see the feedback in relation to the stalls for sales and information as last year this had been very mixed providing limited clarity regarding how improvements can be made. Unfortunately, the feedback from this year seems to be no clearer.



Whilst there was a 3% decrease in people who were "Very Dissatisfied" with the stalls for sales and information there was a 4% increase in people who were "Dissatisfied" with them and whilst there was a 4% decrease in people who found the stalls for sales and information "Good" there was a 9% increase in people who found them "Excellent".

When we group these scores together, 20% of respondents stated that they were either "Very Dissatisfied" or "Dissatisfied" with the selection of stalls for sales and information which was a 1% increase on the figures from last year with 63% of respondents stating that they found the stalls for sales and information "Good" or "Excellent" which is an increase of 3%.

At last years event, Gravesham Pride CIC felt that it was important to use the day as a way to showcase the help and support available for our attendees through various local charities and LGBTQIA+ organisations rather than being a commercial enterprise however, attendees fed back that they wanted more retail stalls which were local in nature and activities for children.

Gravesham Pride CIC took this feedback on board when planning our 2022 event where there were six stalls selling locally crafted items (4 more than last year) three of which were LGBTQIA+ small business owners. There was also six stalls providing information from LGBTQIA+ organisations and other local charities. For children we had facepainting, a childrens zone provided by a local charity and also a laser tag arena for older children and adults which was provided by a Gravesend based company.

However, despite making these changes the feedback in relation to the stalls for sales and information has remained the same with attendees wanting more retail stalls available at the event and more free activities for children as well as entertainment such as a bouncy castle. This is something which we have taken on board and will investigate however, we are limited due to the size and layout of the event ground. It was also fed back that activities for children should be provided for the entire day and that times for the different activities should be published so that parents and children know what is happening and when. This is very useful and something which can be easily introduced.

5.2.10.1. STALL HOLDER FEEDBACK

When obtaining feedback for Gravesham Pride 2022 we also produced a questionnaire for our stall holders to find out about their experiences of working at the event. The feedback received was extremely positive with 99% being happy to work with Gravesham Pride CIC again after finding our volunteers professional and easy to work with both during the planning stages and the event itself which was a decrease of 1% from previous years. It should be noted that the 1% was marked as a “maybe” and they provided some constructive feedback for us to utilise for future events.

This feedback was that there appeared to be some confusion regarding where stall holders should pitch on arrival. This resulted in them feeling confused and having to move at the last minute in a rush. They were not happy with the pitch they were ultimately provided however, this could not be changed because all other areas had been taken by the time the gates opened. They fed back that this could be rectified with a site map being provided to vendors prior to the day so that they know where they have been allocated in advance, can raise any queries before the event and can arrive and set up more easily. Gravesham Pride CIC felt that this feedback is absolutely justified.

Gravesham Pride CIC created a site plan 9 months prior to the event based upon vendors being entirely self-sufficient because there is no running water and a lack of power supply. It also allocated vendors maximum pitch sizes. The plan was that a month before the event, vendor applications would be closed so that a site map could be finalised and then all vendors would be supplied a site map prior to the event taking place with their pitch numbered and then these numbers should be flagged/marked on the site on the day. The role of managing/monitoring this was allocated to a volunteer.

However there were the following issues;

- When the vendor applications were viewed in order to finalise the site map it became apparent that many of the vendors had not provided the sizes of their pitches therefore the map could not be finalised until these were obtained by the volunteer allocated the role of vendor liaison.

- When the vendor liaison volunteer was chasing up the pitch sizes it was discovered that all but two of the food vendors were not self-sufficient meaning that a power supply needed to be sourced and the map could not be finalised because locations were dependant upon the power supply.
- Despite making requests to Gravesham Borough Council regarding the power supply at Fort Gardens no information was received and therefore a generator needed to be rented. This proved difficult due to it being the season for outdoor events and one was found just 5 days before.
- An onsite meeting with the electrical engineer was required to confirm where the generator and associated cables could be placed safely before we could allocate the final pitch locations, and this could not be carried out until the night before the event.

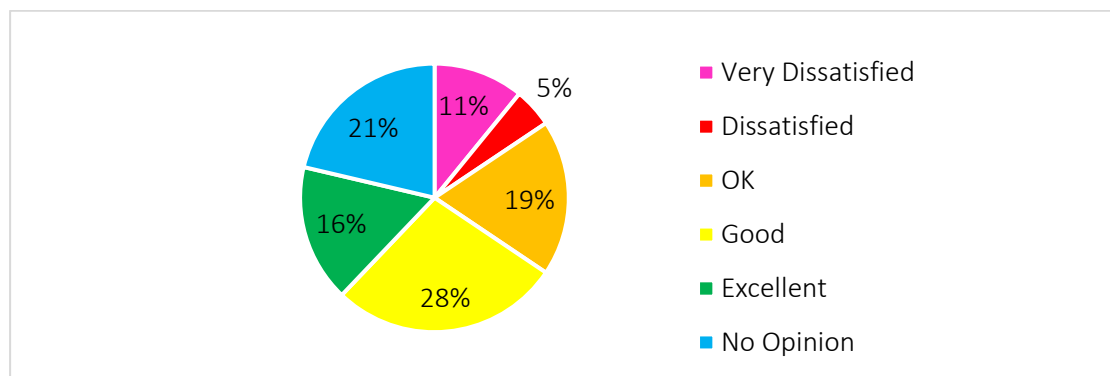
Due to the issues mentioned above there was no way to finalise the site map until the night before Gravesham Pride 2022 was due to take place. By this time all volunteers were in the middle of other allocated duties relating to the immediate infrastructure as per the event schedule. The vendor liaison volunteer opted to take responsibility of meeting and greeting the vendors on the day, which included physically walking them to their pitches.

However, on the morning of the event the vendor liaison volunteer was delayed arriving to the site because of road closures due to a hotel fire nearby. This led to vendors arriving and volunteers already on site being unsure of the exact locations of their pitches. Whilst the electrical engineer and the chairperson were aware of the zones in which the vendors would be located based on their stall type, both were unsure of exact positions. Both were also setting up equipment which was delayed due to the road closures and often could not be available immediately upon vendor arrival. The chairperson was also liaising with security, police and fire services on site regarding the hotel fire as well as officials at Gravesham Borough Council and Cohesion Plus on the phone meaning that they passed on vendor locations to other volunteers rather than manage this themselves which may have caused confusion.

We are aware that these issues could have been limited at the planning stages had the vendor applications been checked at the time of submission and vendors contacted immediately to confirm their pitch sizes and needs. This is something which we will be implementing going forward.

5.2.11. TOILETS

Gravesham Pride CIC were not surprised by the feedback from respondents in relation to the toilets at Gravesham Pride 2022 as we had no choice but to provide port-a-loos and they are never positively received at events.

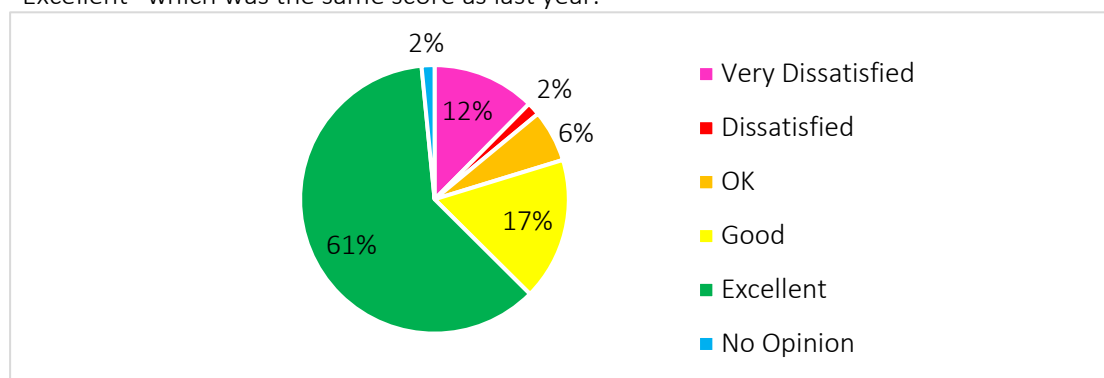


Gravesham Pride 2022 was held at Fort Gardens, Riverside Leisure Area, Commercial Place, Gravesend, DA12 2BH which is a public park owned by Gravesham Borough Council. The site has its own toilet block however, this was closed initially due to the covid-19 pandemic and there are no plans to date open it again to the public. With this in mind, we arranged for six standard port-a-loos and one disabled port-a-loo with baby changing facilities which were situated next to the original toilet block. The artists and volunteers had their own allocated port-a-loo situated behind the stage. We sent volunteers to check the toilets every hour to refresh toilet roll and hand sanitiser to make them as pleasant as possible however, many attendees voiced disappointment that they could not use the toilet block on site with just 63% of respondents stating that the toilet facilities were “OK”, “Good” or “Excellent” which is exactly the same score as last year.

Also, it was noted from some feedback that attendees didn’t realise that the toilets were there and so left the site to use nearby facilities elsewhere. This is something we have taken note of for the future and plan to provide signage at future events.

5.2.12. VOLUNTEERS

Gravesham Pride CIC is a registered community interest company that is run entirely by volunteers. Without them our event and other projects would not be possible. As a committee we were extremely pleased that 84% of respondents scored our volunteers as “OK”, “Good” or “Excellent” which was the same score as last year.



Sadly, 14% of respondents stated that they were “Very Dissatisfied” or “Dissatisfied” with our volunteers which was also the same as last year however, limited additional feedback was provided in order to make any improvements.

There was some feedback from one individual that they came to the Gravesham Pride Tribe Hub tent and found one volunteer rushed off their feet with a queue whilst others were sitting around and not engaging with visitors. From looking at feedback provided by the volunteers themselves this would appear to be fair and will be explained in the next section.

5.2.12.1. VOLUNTEER FEEDBACK

When obtaining feedback for Gravesham Pride 2022 we also produced a questionnaire for our volunteers to find out about their experiences of working at the event. 100% stated that they would volunteer again and 100% were happy with their assigned duties however, there was feedback that some volunteers were taking extended breaks and others were covering for them by doing extra duties.

Following last year’s event, it was feedback that although volunteers were provided unlimited water and a voucher to obtain lunch from one of the food vendors, it was difficult for volunteers to have an uninterrupted break because they did not have a private area to relocate for a set period and because they were wearing high-visibility vests and

branded t-shirts they were easily recognisable and therefore would often get enquiries from members of the public.

To rectify this, plans were put in place for a separate gazebo to be erected featuring two sofas and a coffee table for volunteers to have uninterrupted breaks. However, due to delays in setting up as a result of a hotel fire nearby, this was configured incorrectly with the gazebo reserved for the volunteer breaks being attached to the Gravesham Pride Hub gazebo so that it was one large structure.

This resulted in volunteers on their breaks sitting in the same area as the hub making it appear as though they were ignoring visitors when they were actually having their allocated rest periods. It also meant that some volunteers who were working in the hub would use this seating because it was more comfortable whilst others would sit at the front desk making them easily visible and therefore the first point of contact for visitors leading to them taking on the lions share of the work.

In full transparency there were some volunteers who hung out at the hub for extended periods because of the additional seating the break area provided. This led to those who were stationed at other points on the site to be more visible and easily accessible when assistance was needed by an attendee, performer or security.

It quickly became apparent that the site manager planned to spend the entirety of the event at the hub however, this was not practical due to the level of responsibility they held and so the chairperson took away this role two hours into the event. This led to the chairperson, who was originally designated as deputy site manager because they were responsible for the march element and overall event PR to step up as site manager as well as continuing with their assigned duties and the volunteer coordinator stepped up as deputy event manager whilst also continuing their existing role.

There have been some valuable pieces of learning from this which we will be utilising for future events.

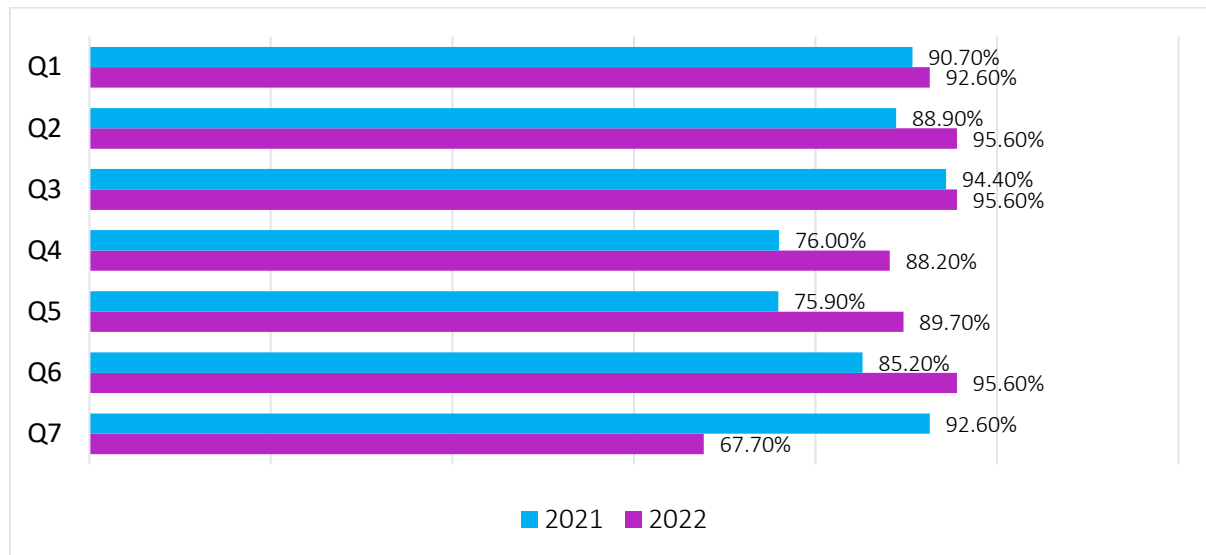




6. LEARNING AND RECOMMENDATIONS

When looking at our scores as a whole it is clear that we took on board recommendations from the previous year and made improvements to the event in several areas.

When we look at the scores in relation to our aims and objectives, whilst it is disappointing that we missed the self-set target of 80% on one of the questions, it should be noted that when we compare this year's individual scores across all 7 questions with the scores from the event last year, there was improvement in all other areas. Furthermore, the average score across all 7 questions is 89.3% which not only exceeds our self-set target of 80% but it is also an improvement on last years overall average score of 86.2%.



6.1. DIVERSITY DATA – LEARNING

We will continue to make changes to the ways in which we capture the diversity data of our attendees however, because providing this information is voluntary by law, we are reliant up those who register being willing to provide it and being open and honest when they do. We know this is something which poses an issue for all public, private and voluntary sectors and we are currently looking at best practice from other organisations to see if the wording we use when could be more encouraging and we make the request therefore successful.

6.2. THE MARCH

- Continue to investigate the march element can through things such as engagement at other



– LEARNING

other ways in which be promoted locally community events in the borough.

- Use the Eventbrite system for participants to book spaces on the march from the outset.
- Make sure that those who give speeches at the opening ceremony better reflect Gravesham Pride CIC and the LGBTQIA+ community in terms of representation.
- Publicise the march route in advance on all social media, our website and booking pages.
- Negotiate with Gravesham Borough Council for a more favourable route which provides maximum visibility so that tradition is followed and participants do not feel “tucked away”.
- Make it clearer on both our advertising and our booking pages that participants are welcome to bring sound systems, whistles, horns etc.
- Talk to our sound engineer about providing a better portable sound system at the front so that the music travels further.
- Work with Cohesion Plus, The Woodville Theatre and GAS to potentially book musicians/performer to situate within the march.
- Work with Gravesham Borough Council and the security team to ensure that march participants can access the site earlier than those entering for the staged entertainment such as having a separate entrance.

6.3. THE STAGED EVENT – LEARNING

One of the key things we learnt in relation to the planning of the staged event was that we needed more time to set everything up, particularly due to the fire at a local hotel which led to road closures and long delays in getting both volunteers and supplies to the site.

With this in mind;

- Liaise with Gravesham Borough Council about setting up as much as possible the night before with night security put in place to prevent damage to the set up.
- If the above is not possible then utilising either two vans working together in unison or one larger van to reduce the amount of trips required and get equipment to site quicker.

6.3.1. FOOD AND BEVERAGES

- Look into ways in which water can be provided on site for free, particularly in high temperatures. Whether this be by providing bottled water at a designated stall, having a temporary water bottle filling station such as a bowser or sourcing funding for a permanent option such as a water fountain.
- Arranging either two separate drinks vendors or a larger vendor who can attend to customers quickly. The drink vendor/s must also be able to fulfil the brief in terms of supplying drinks in festival cups.
- Advertising food vendors including prices in advance so that people are aware of who will be at the event and costs before they arrive. Particular attention should be paid to vegetarian, vegan and children’s options.
- Increasing the advertising regarding people being able to bring their own picnics.

6.3.2. RULES AND RESTRICTIONS

- Enhancing advertising around the rules and restrictions regarding water and water bottles.

6.3.3. SEATING AREAS

- Liaise with our sound and electrical team regarding a better placement of their gazebo to improve the view for those sitting on the lower levels of the amphitheatre style seating on the right-hand side e.g. the possibility of locating them on the opposite side of the stage.
- Specific advertising required attendees being able to bring their own seating and shade however, consideration needs to be had regarding how to manage this without restricting viewing.

6.3.4. SECURITY STAFF

- Liaising with our security team around making sure that all volunteers and security staff have had a full security briefing together in case there is an issue on the morning of the event to prevent this. Suggestions such as all meeting together in person the night before for a walk through of the site or doing it via video link have been suggested.

6.3.5. STAGED ENTERTAINMENT

- Provide our feedback/brief to local talent agencies to source a greater variety of performers.
- Continue working with Cohesion Plus, The Woodville Theatre and GAS to source local performers.
- Network with the G-Town Boys and Gifted Young Gravesham to see if they have interest in performing at the event.
- Look into putting together local open auditions to source performers.
- Speak to our contacts at GlitterBeam Radio which is based in Gravesend in order to source DJ's for sets.

6.3.6. STALLS FOR SALES AND INFORMATION

- Investigate children's entertainment options and make sure that any provided can be for the entire day and that times for the different activities are published in advance so that parents and children know what is happening and when.

6.3.6.1. STALL HOLDER FEEDBACK

- Make sure that there is an accurate map produced no later than one month before the event and this is provided to vendors so that they know where they are located.
- Find a way in which pitch areas can be marked out on the site.
- Make sure that it is clear on all vendor information that they must be entirely self-sufficient to prevent the need for additional power.

- Check the vendor applications as soon as they arrive to confirm that they have understood the terms and conditions and completed all information required to complete the site map well in advance.

6.3.7. TOILETS

- Make sure that there is signage to clearly indicate where the toilets are located.

6.3.8. VOLUNTEERS

- Make sure that the area for volunteer breaks is separate from the Gravesham Pride hub so that attendees do not feel like they are being ignored by volunteers who are on their breaks.
- Ask volunteers to make sure that they use the location provided for their breaks rather than the hub so that there cannot be any confusion.

6.3.8.1. VOLUNTEER FEEDBACK

- Clearly define the roles and timetables for volunteers.
- Provide a deputy for the volunteer coordinator to make sure there is additional support for them.
- Clearly outline breaktimes and the location of breaks.