

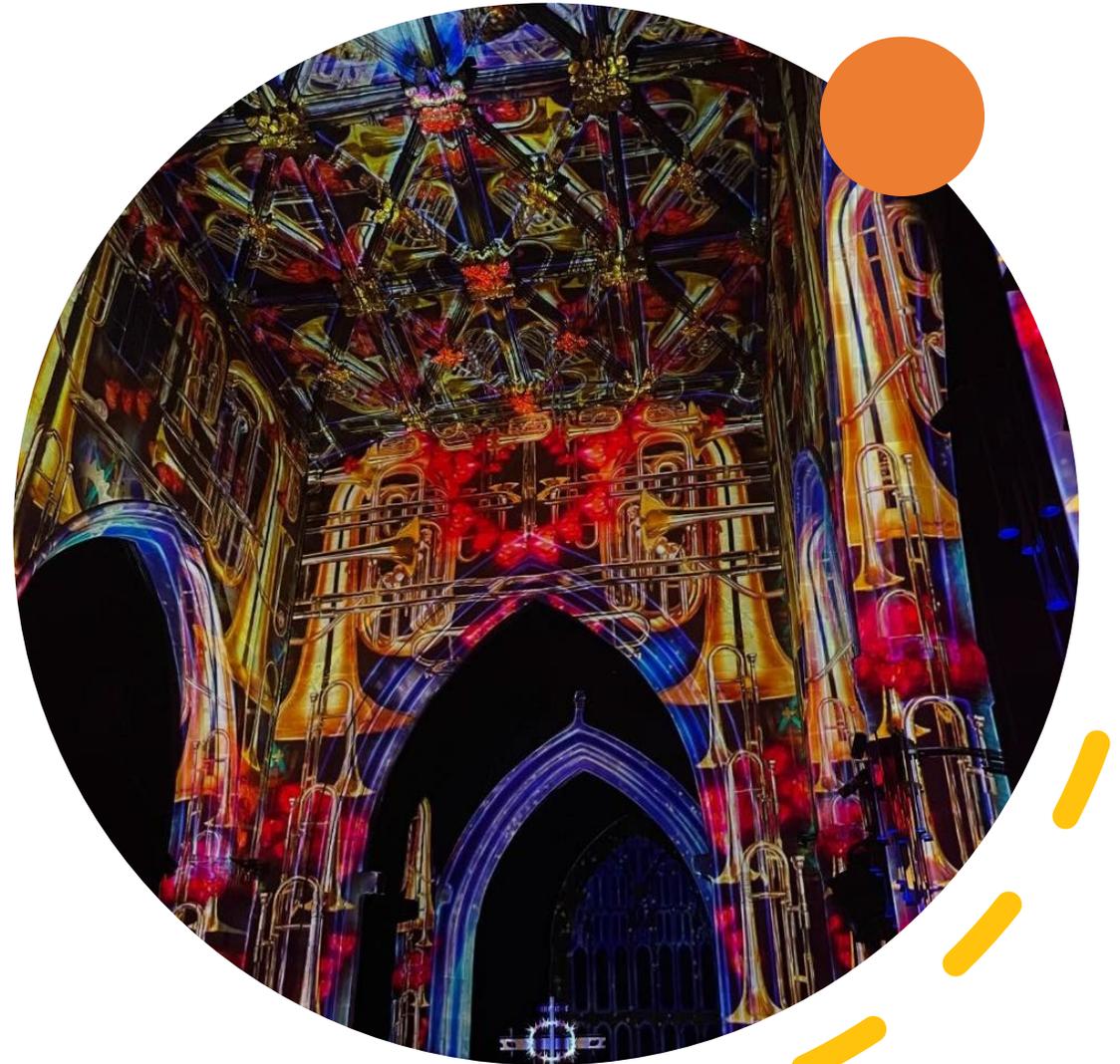
# IPSC Review of Events 25/6 10<sup>th</sup> March 2026

[www.rotherham.gov.uk](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk)



# Strategic Context

- Rotherham Cultural Strategy 2019-2026: Amazing Events
- Introduce a focus on participation as well as visitor numbers. In 2019 at the start of the Cultural Strategy Rotherham's participation levels were 10% below the national average.
- Events currently provide the largest mass opportunity to engage with our communities, and audiences from outside of Rotherham
- Three core objectives for RMBC Led events:
  - Promote community cohesion
  - Increase Civic Pride
  - Improve profile and reputation of Rotherham



# Role of RMBC Events Team



## Delivery:

- Borough Events (large-scale, mass audience)
- Town Centre Events (specific focus on Town Centre footfall)
- Civic Events (aligned to national commemorations)
- Major Events (changing programme of touring and one-off events)

## Community Events Support:

- Acting as secretariat for Rotherham Events Safety Advisory Group (RESAG)
- Development of key protocols for event organisers e.g. Sustainability Code of Practice, Access Guides
- Processing of Event Application Packs for events that take place on Council land

## Events Support including:

- Delivery of engagement activities and workshops leading up to event delivery e.g., Roots Carnival Banners
- Community partnerships for major events e.g., Diversity Festival/REMA for Rotherham Show
- Support for partner events e.g., Flux Rotherham programme, Rotherham Music festivals and concerts, CCoC programme
- Fundraising and evaluation for events and festivals

# 2025/6 Events

## Borough Events

- Rotherham Show
- Bonfire Night
- Christmas Lights' Switch On

## Town Centre Events

- Roots: Rotherham Street Carnival
- WOW Festival
- Uplift Festival

## Community Events

- Led by communities supported by RMBC Events

## Civic Events

- Holocaust Memorial Day
- Mayor's Parade
- Armed Forces Day
- Armistice Day/Remembrance Day
- Reclaim the Night

## Major Special Events (One-off)

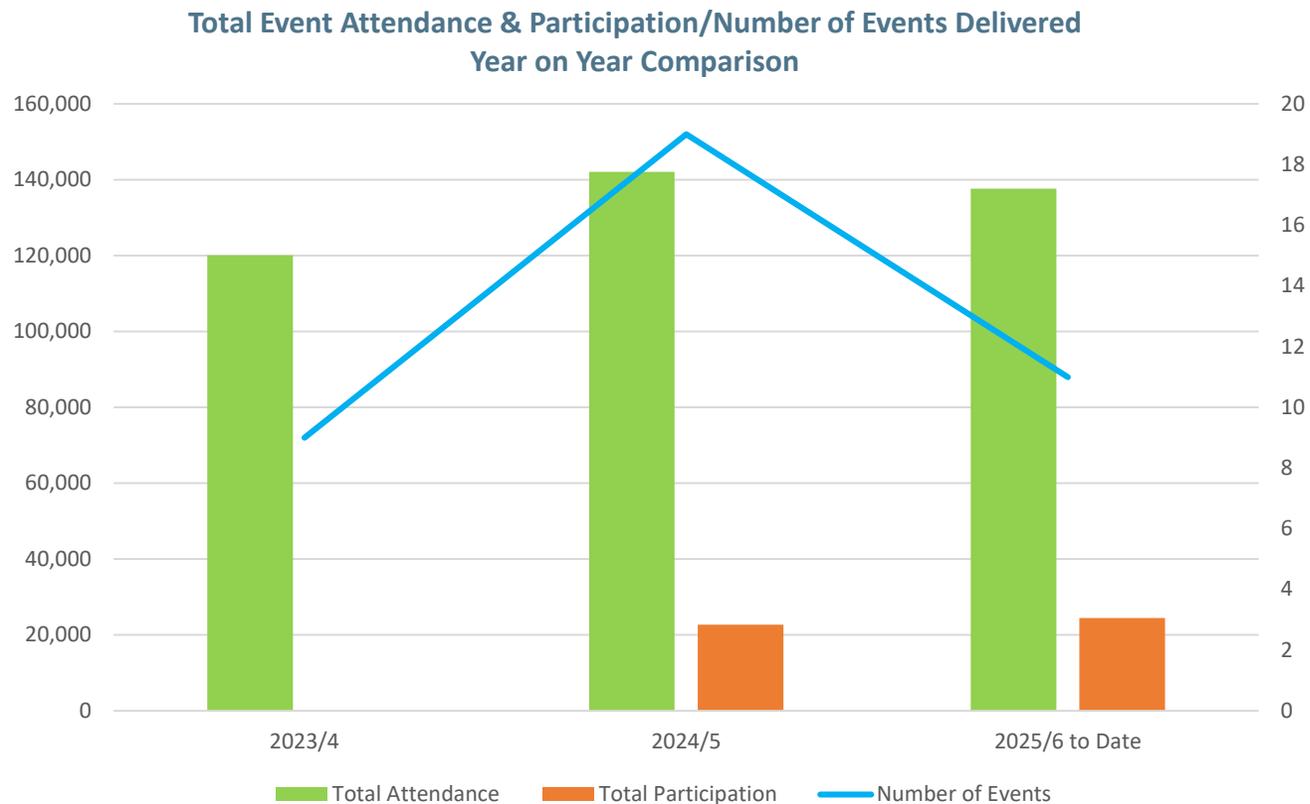
- Children's Capital of Culture Festival Year



# 2025/6 Overall Events

**Council Plan Objective 1:** Contribute to increased visitor numbers at cultural events and venues

**Council Plan Objective 2:** Contribute to increased engagement with cultural activities



- Figures shown in the following charts relate only to events that were delivered by or in partnership with RMBC Events Team
- Despite delivering fewer events in 2025/6 overall the growth in audience attendance as a result of volume of events has been maintained demonstrating audience appetite for the programme and a reputation for delivering a high-quality experience.
- Over the two years of data there has been a slight increase in participation

# Borough Events

- Rotherham Show
  - Bonfire Night
  - Christmas Lights' Switch On
- 
- **Description:** Large-scale, mass appeal, attract larger attendances. Events have more public visibility and scrutiny and require increased security and safety provision
  - **Objectives:** Build cohesion, increase civic pride, improve reputation locally and regionally
  - **Combined annual attendance:** 63,000 – 117,000
  - **Economic Impact:** Higher economic impact e.g. For every £1 the Council invests in Rotherham Show there is an ROI to the local economy of between £13.06 and £14.65

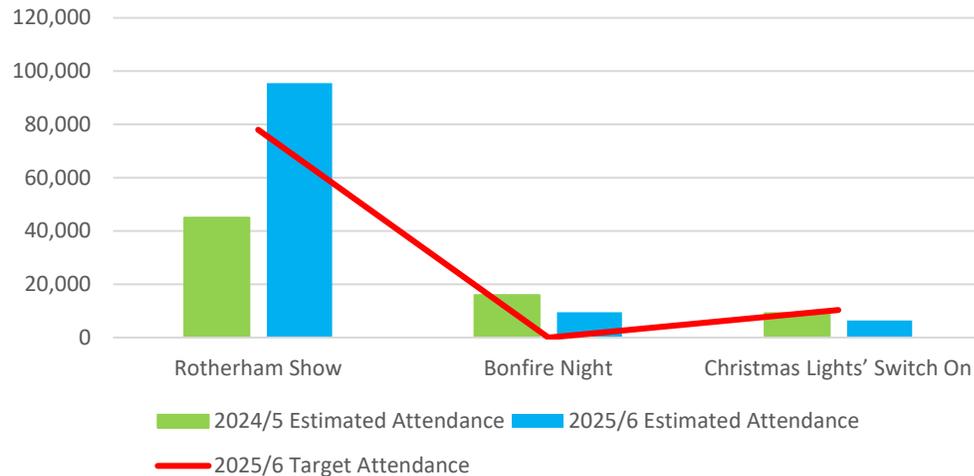


# 2025/6 Borough Events

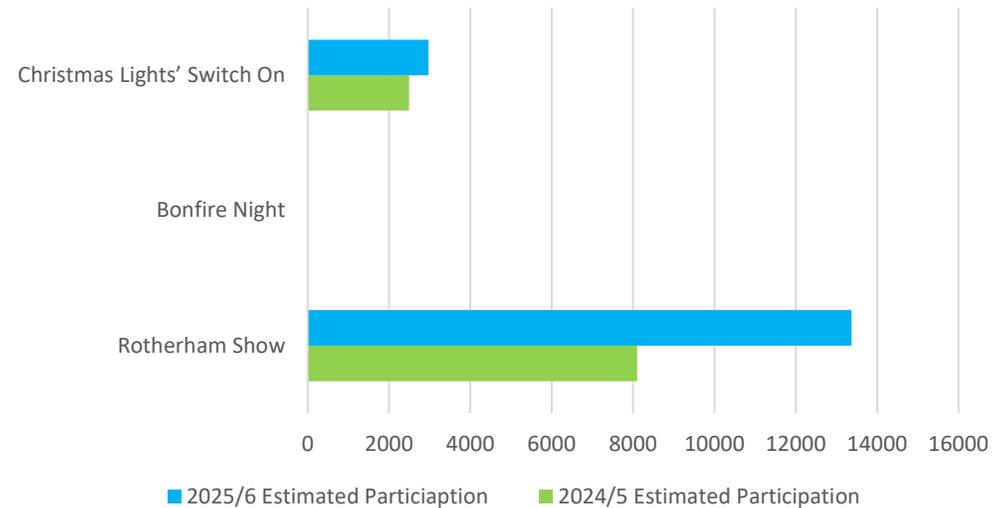
**Council Plan Objective 1:** Contribute to increased visitor numbers at cultural events and venues

**Council Plan Objective 2:** Contribute to increased engagement with cultural activities

Borough Event Estimated Attendance vs. Target Year on Year



Borough Events Participation Year on Year



**Objective 1:** Bonfire Night only became a Borough Event in 2024 and therefore had no baseline to set a target or set methodology for estimating attendance which is why there was a dip in 25/6, poor weather for the Christmas Lights saw a drop in audience for this event but better weather for Rotherham Show saw a significant increase for this event.

**Objective 2:** Bonfire Night is a spectator event so participation data is not collected. Despite lower attendance participation increased at Christmas Lights and Rotherham Show audiences almost doubled participation.

# Town Centre Events

- **Roots: Rotherham Street Carnival**
- **WOW Rotherham**
- **UPLIFT Festival**
  
- **Description:** Larger scale Town Centre specific events, focused on attracting specific demographics back to the Town Centre.
- **Objective:** Increase Town Centre Footfall, improve perceptions of safety among target groups (e.g., women and girls, young people), reconnect communities and Town Centre, support local businesses
- **Combined Attendance:** circa 30,000
- **Economic Impact:** Events generate an average of £3.64 for every £1 the Council invests

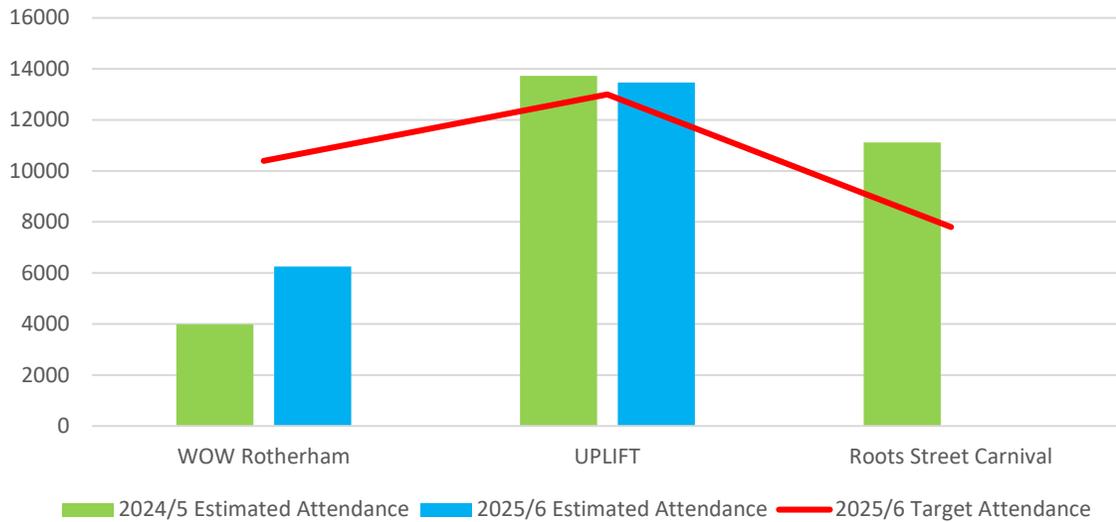


# 2025/6 Town Centre Events

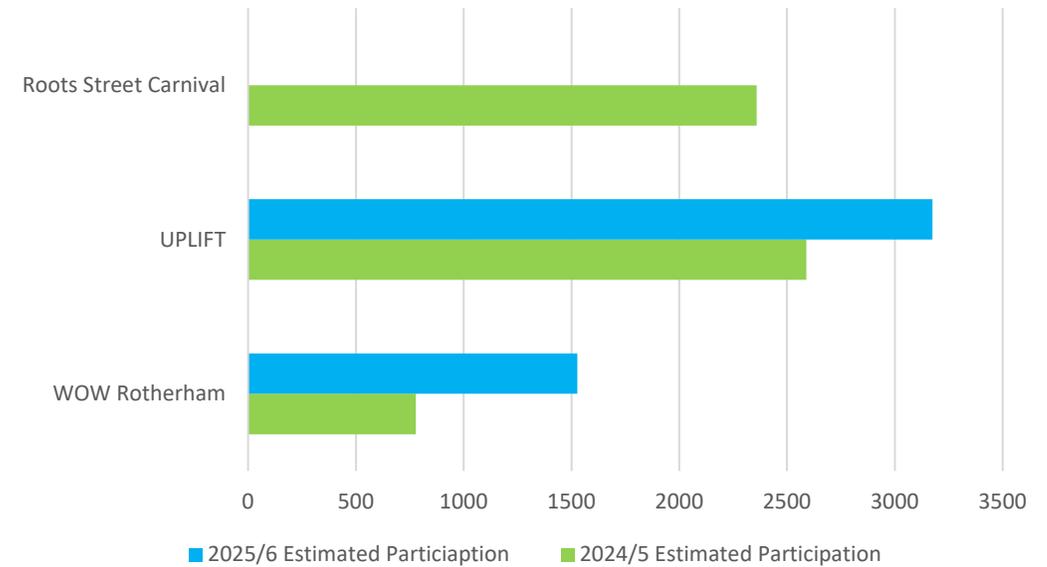
**Council Plan Objective 1:** Contribute to increased visitor numbers at cultural events and venues

**Council Plan Objective 2:** Contribute to increased engagement with cultural activities

Town Centre Event Estimated Attendance vs. Target Year on Year



Town Centre Events Participation Year on Year



**Council Plan Objective 1:** WoW Festival was below target in 25/6, although the Wow Festival audience saw an increase year on year, UPLIFT remains consistent and performs above target, Roots Carnival has taken place yet but generally performs above target

**Council Plan Objective 2:** With only two years of participation data no target has been set but the data for 2025/6 so far shows increased levels of participation across all Town Centre events.

# Community Events

Across 2025/6, the Events Team processed **62 Event Applications** for Community Events across **19 wards**.

The team also supported the coordination of Remembrance Parades in 10 wards alongside colleagues in Highways.

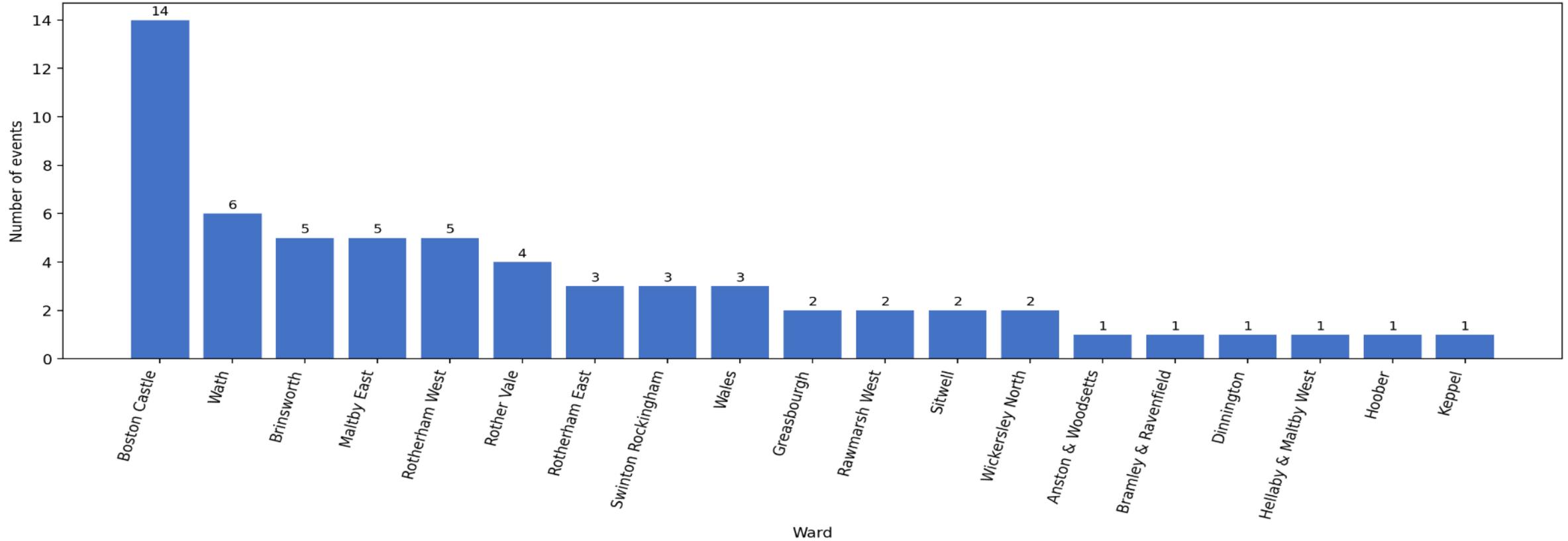
The wards where no events have taken place through the event application process in 2025/26 to date include:

- Aughton and Swallownest
- Dalton and Thrybergh
- Rawmarsh East
- Thurcroft and Wickersley South
- Kilnhurst
- Swinton East

The team may look to prioritise pop-up events and community engagement workshops in these locations to increase participation.



Locations of each event by ward



Through the Children’s Capital of Culture programme and partnerships with organisations such as Flux Rotherham, the annual programme of summer festivals was supported with engagement support, programming from across Culture, Sport & Tourism services and promotions.

The relationships with community festivals will continue to be strengthened with commissions across the festivals that also connect to Town Centre Events (Root Street Carnival) and Borough Events (Rotherham Show).

# Civic Events

## Civic Events Programme

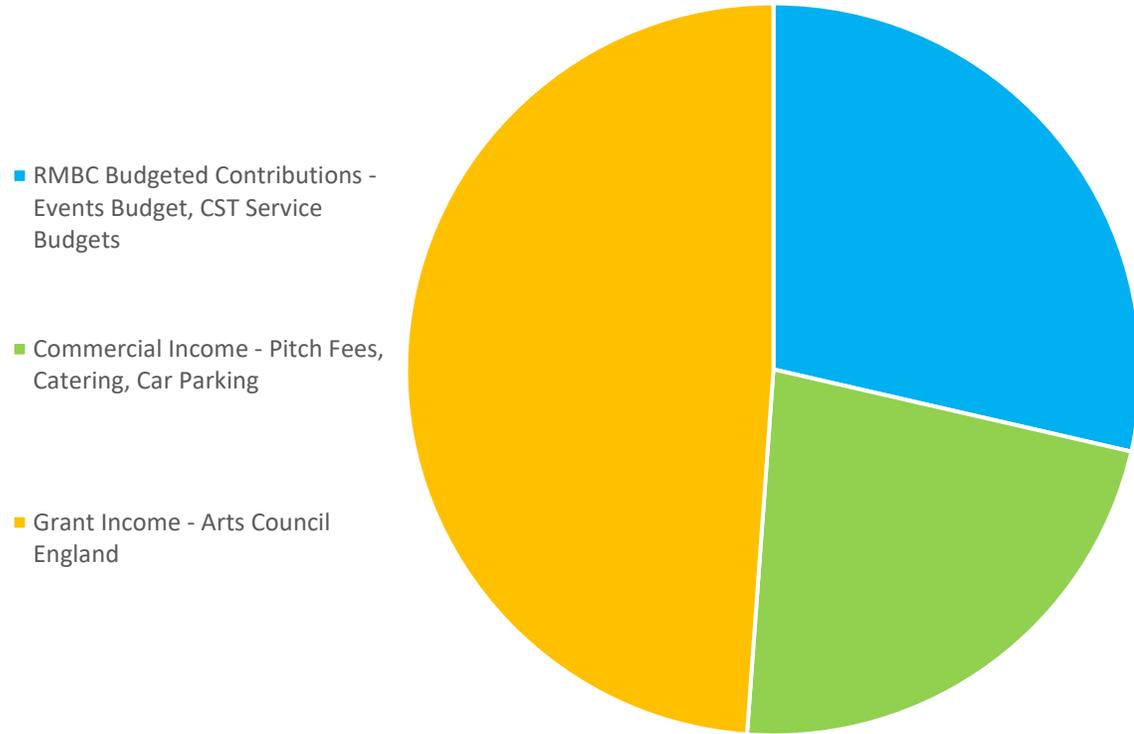
- **Holocaust Memorial Day**  
Clifton Park, January: Average attendance: 150
- **Mayor's Parade**  
Rotherham Town Centre, May: Average attendance: 500
- **Armed Forces Day**  
Rotherham Town Centre, June: Average attendance: 1500
- **Armistice Day & Remembrance Day**  
November – Average attendance: 950
- **Reclaim the Night**  
November – Average attendance: 250



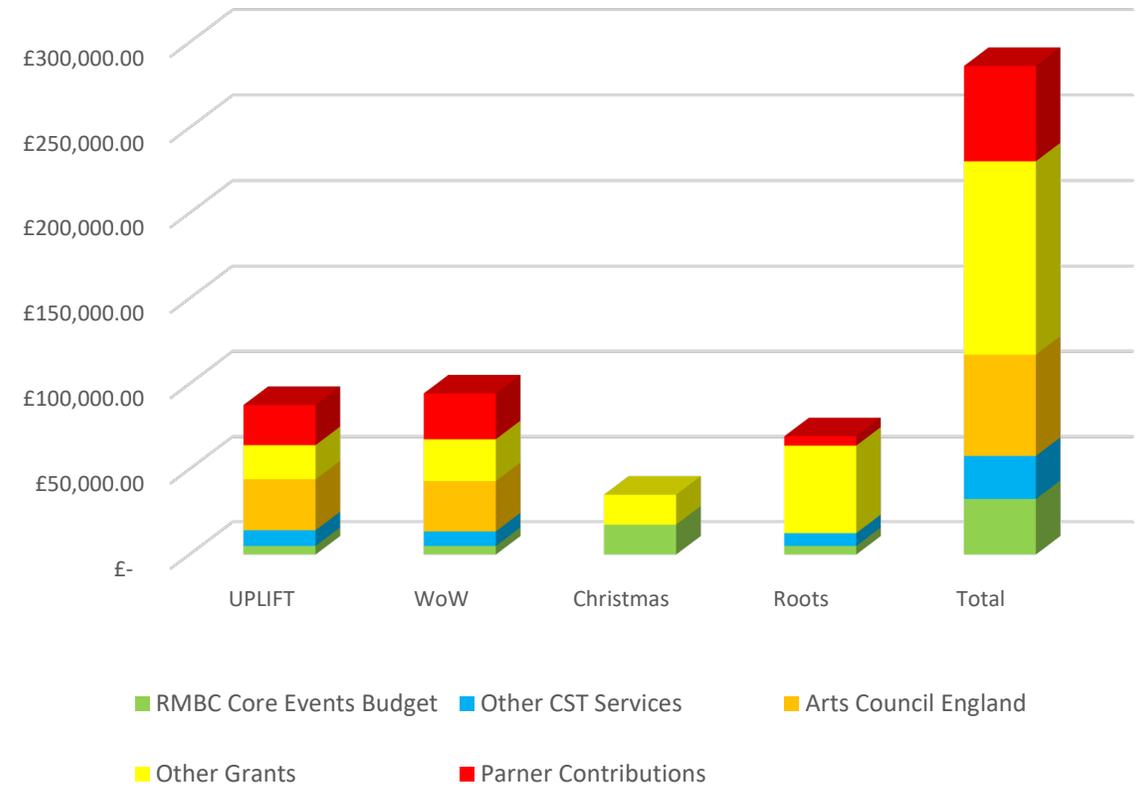


# Fundraising for Events Delivery

Rotherham Show 2025 Budget Breakdown by Income Source:  
£253,643



Town Centre Event Budgets by Funding Source



# Major Events

## Events Programme

Ad hoc special events from touring programmes, bidding rounds for major events and tournaments or speculative one-off enquiries

**2022 – UEFA Women’s Euros Tournament**, four matches over a two-week period with Fan Zone programming and wider creative programme.

**2023 – Yorkshire Day Celebration**, hosting of civic ceremonies, public parade and wider summer season programme

**2024 – The Reytons’ Homecoming Gig** at Clifton Park, **Tour of Britain Ride Through Stage**

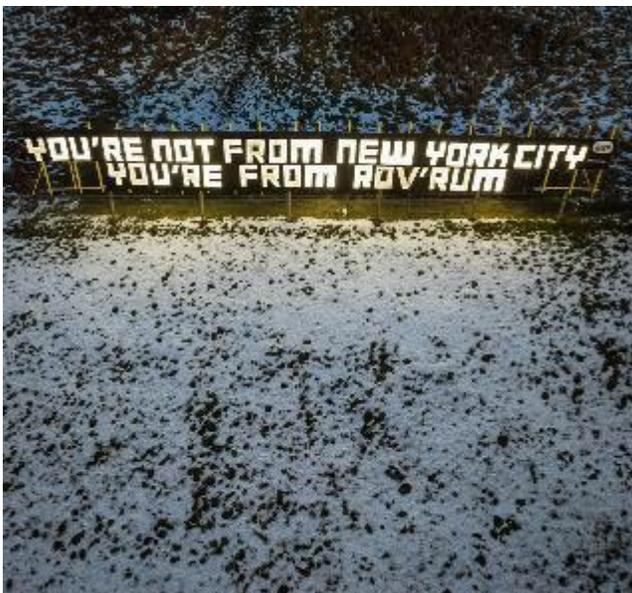
**2025 – Children’s Capital of Culture Festival Year**

## Evaluation & Impact

- **Women’s Euros:** Volunteer Satisfaction 97%; £5.1m Economic Impact; 24,000 visitors over two-week
- **The Reytons’ Homecoming Gig:** £1m economic impact for Rotherham, £1.36m for South Yorkshire region; 18,500 attendance; NPS +73.2 which gives a satisfaction rating of Excellent, Rotherham Resident Satisfaction was even higher at +78
- **Tour of Britain:** Economic Impact (SY): £1,729,566; estimated Rotherham attendance of 7,000; overall Y event had a satisfaction rating of 94%







# Festival Year 2025

## Launch Programme

**By Children's Capital of Culture across x3 Green Spaces and community locations in every ward**

### First three months

Three large-scale land art installations marking the start of the festival year including the infamous Arctic Monkeys lyric which could be seen across the south of the borough and Sheffield. Pop-Up programme in school yards, supermarkets, family hubs and hospitals.



## Otherham

**By Flux Rotherham & Grimm & Co**

**January 2025**

Five large-scale, captivating projections across town centre presented an alternate reality Rotherham sprung from the imaginations of children and young people.

## Signals Music Festival

**By Rotherham Music**

**February 2025**

A nine-day festival of new music celebrating the talents of young people from across the borough, including large-scale installations and sound art commissions.



# Festival Year 2025

## Roots: Rotherham Street Carnival

By RMBC Events

March 2025

Large-scale street festival which welcomed a giant inflatable 'jitterbug' to the town centre, creating a pop-up classroom which hosted two days of workshops and making, and a finale street parade and performances.

## House of Fun

By Wentworth Woodhouse

April 2025

A reimaging of a country house with new commissions from artists Bruce Asbestos and Pippa Hale taking over the state rooms and gardens. Culminating in WE Wonder Festival in August.



## Festival of Stories

By Grimm & Co

May 2025

Two weeks of storytelling, magic and mischief, Grimm & Co's Festival of Stories returned with a week of school-based workshops and a week of guest authors, actors and performers



# Festival Year 2025

## **WOW Rotherham X CCoC**

**By RMBC Events & Flux Rotherham  
May 2025**

Town centre events supporting women, girls, trans and non-binary communities, accompanied by a school engagement programme and featuring talks, performance and a body positive pool party.

## **One Voice**

**By Rotherham Music  
June 2025**

More than 1,500 children and young people from across primary, secondary and Special Schools showed off their singing skills alongside the Rotherham Music teaching staff band at two days of performances at Magna.



## **School Baton Relay & Festival of Sport**

**By RMBC Sport & Leisure, Yorkshire Sport Foundation & School Games**

**June/July 2025**

84 schools participating in a 10-day school baton relay criss-crossing the borough and culminating in a Festival of Sport at Herringthorpe Stadium.



# Festival Year 2025

## **RHS Flower Show**

**By Wentworth Woodhouse**

**July 2025**

In partnership with Royal Horticultural Society, the gardens of Wentworth Woodhouse bloomed with gardens created by young landscape designers collaborating with local school children.

## **UPLIFT Urban Sports Festival**

**By RMBC Events & Yorkshire Sport Foundation**

**July/August 2025**

Three-day town centre takeover featuring roller skating, BMX, skateboarding, parkour, workshops, music, DJs and dance performances.

## **Summer of Play**

**By Children's Capital of Culture in partnership with Green Spaces, RMBC Events, RMBC Sport & Leisure**

**August 2025**

Month-long programme of play and adventure from town centre play commissions to the re-opening of Clifton Park Water Splash and playful interventions across the borough.



# Festival Year 2025

## Plug In & Play

**By CCoC, the National Videogame Museum & RMBC Events  
Oct 2025**

A free, family festival of games and gaming. Featuring a trail of games co-created by professional designers and local primary school students, as well as music-making and story-shaping workshops aimed at teenage audiences.

## Rotherham Opera

**By Rotherham Music, Grimm & Co & Royal Opera & Ballet  
November 2025**

The UK's largest community opera featuring more than 2,000 children and young people performing stories of Rotherham's spirit and imagination over two days.

## Land of Lights

**By Gullivers  
December 2025**

Large scale lantern festival with an installation designed by children and young people from the CCoC programme and wrap around family friendly activities.



# Children's Capital of Culture in Numbers: Events



In 2025 we **hosted hundreds of events** that have had **over 513,709 participations** from children, young people, families and residents from across the borough and wider region.

Alongside the events including the official Festival Programme we have signposted to **75 event and activities** in the borough through our Spotlight Programme, celebrating the homegrown culture and leisure offer that has been developed in Rotherham over the last five years and beyond.



Crucially for Rotherham, where participation tracked at 10% below the national average in 2019 when the programme began, we have achieved **83,743 active participations** in activities during our 2025 Festival year.

Collectively, Children's Capital of Culture and its partners have provided **651 volunteering opportunities** for local people to support events and activities through the Festival Year.



*"I loved volunteering it was so much fun and I met so many new people too! I would love to do that type of thing again, it was amazing"*

**Volunteer, 16**



There are now **86** registered volunteers in the Culture, Sport & Tourism Volunteer Programme, which began with Women's Euros in 2022.

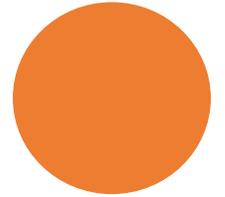


# What Next?

The Festival Year saw a marked uplift in delivery as is appropriate to a one-off a festival, however it also gave an opportunity to test and trial events that could be delivered on an annual basis.

The following events were either developed for or piloted during the Festival Year:

- Otherham (Flux Rotherham) - **REFOCUS**
- Signals Music Festival (Rotherham Music) - **CONTINUE**
- WoW Rotherham – **CONTINUE FOR 1 MORE YEAR**
- Festival of Stories (Grimm & Co) - **CONTINUE**
- UPLIFT Urban Sports Festival - **CONTINUE**
- RHS Flower Show (Wentworth Woodhouse) – **3 YEAR**
- Plug In & Play - **STOP**
- Land of Light (Gullivers) - **CONTINUE**



# Future KPIs?

- **Contribution of events to local visitor economy** – tracking the number of visitors from outside of the borough e.g. day visits, economic spend
- **Contribution of events to health and wellbeing** – specific evaluation questions linked to volunteering opportunities, participation, loneliness and isolation and mental health
- **Contribution of events to profile raising and perception change** – tracking press coverage and specific evaluation questions linked to perception analysis
- **Contribution of events to community cohesion** – tracking via specific evaluation questions, diversity of audience demographic, diversity of/engagement with community and partner organisations



# Agreed RMBC Events Programme for 2026/7

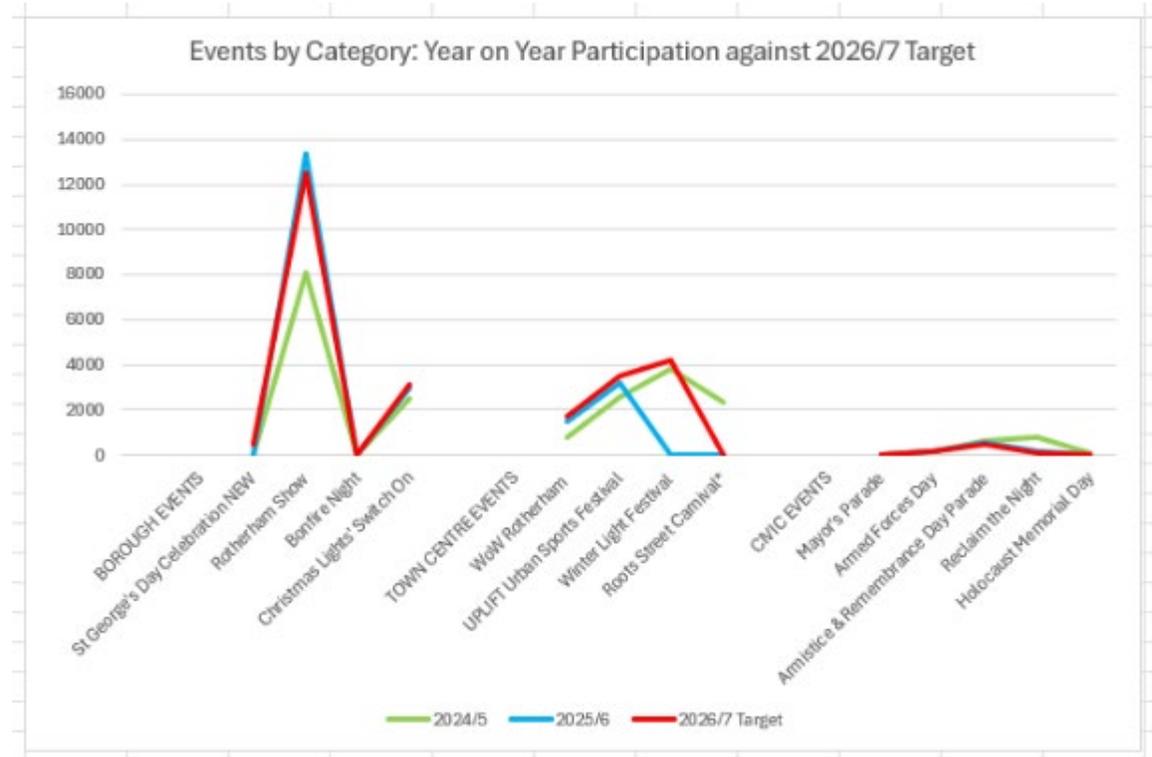
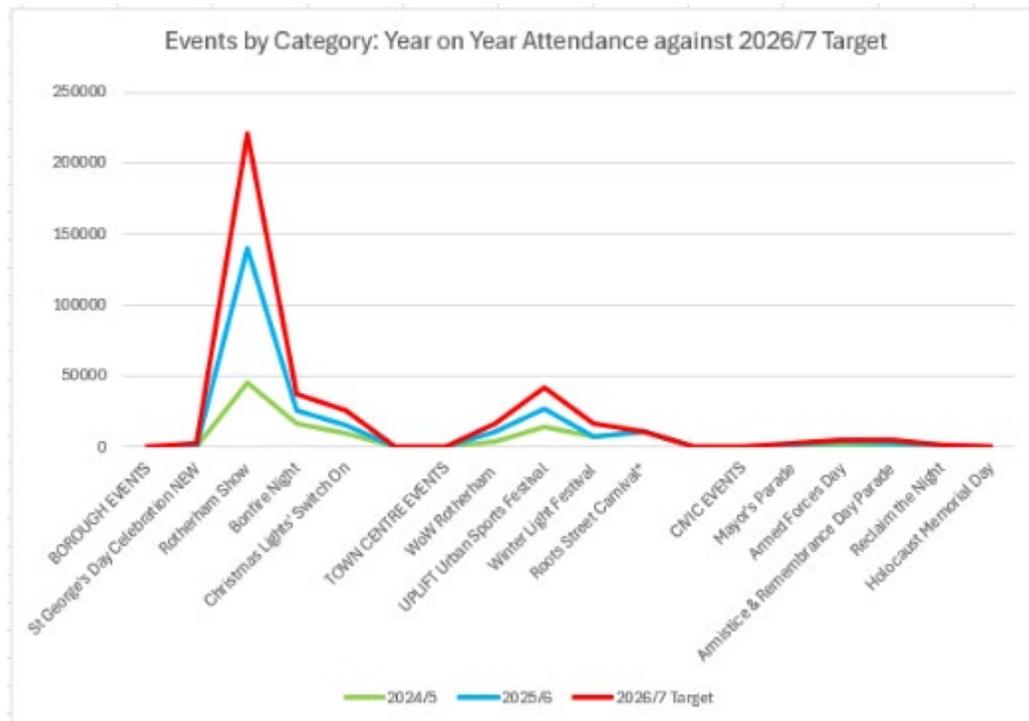
- April - St George's Day Celebration - **NEW**
- May - WoW Rotherham
- May - Mayor's Parade
- June - Armed Forces Day
- July - UPLIFT Urban Sports Festival  
(reduced to Friday evening and one day rather than three)
- September - Rotherham Show
- November - Bonfire Night
- November - Armistice & Remembrance Day Parade
- November - Christmas Lights' Switch On
- November - Reclaim the Night
- January - Holocaust Memorial Day
- January/February - Winter Light Festival - **NEW**



# 2026/7 Events Performance Targets

**Council Plan Objective 1:** Contribute to increased visitor numbers at cultural events and venues. Target: 140,284

**Council Plan Objective 2:** Contribute to increased engagement with cultural activities. Target: 26,350

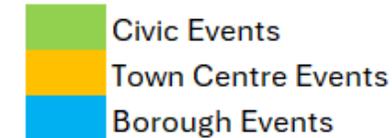


**Council Plan Objective 1:** The target for 2026/7 shows an uplift in visitor numbers of 3% which acknowledges growth but also accounts for no major events planned for 26/7 and Roots Street Carnival falling out of the Financial Year.

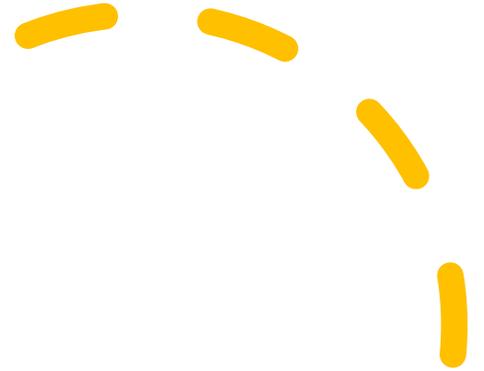
**Council Plan Objective 2:** The target for 2026/7 shows an uplift of 19% on participation however this equates to 4,400 more participations and both new events will have a heavy focus on participation and collective co-creation.

# New Annual Events Calendar

|  | Jan          | Feb                | Mar | Apr            | May                | Jun          | Jul                | Aug            | Sep | Oct | Nov            | Dec |
|--|--------------|--------------------|-----|----------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|----------------|-----|-----|----------------|-----|
| Holocaust Memorial Day                 | Civic Events |                    |     |                |                    |              |                    |                |     |     |                |     |
| Winter Story Festival <b>NEW</b>       |              | Town Centre Events |     |                |                    |              |                    |                |     |     |                |     |
| St George's Day Celebration <b>NEW</b> |              |                    |     | Borough Events |                    |              |                    |                |     |     |                |     |
| Mayor's Parade                         |              |                    |     |                | Civic Events       |              |                    |                |     |     |                |     |
| Roots Street Carnival                  |              |                    |     |                | Town Centre Events |              |                    |                |     |     |                |     |
| Armed Forces Day                       |              |                    |     |                |                    | Civic Events |                    |                |     |     |                |     |
| UPLIFT Urban Sports Festival           |              |                    |     |                |                    |              | Town Centre Events |                |     |     |                |     |
| Rotherham Show                         |              |                    |     |                |                    |              |                    | Borough Events |     |     |                |     |
| Bonfire Night                          |              |                    |     |                |                    |              |                    |                |     |     | Borough Events |     |
| Armistice & Remembrance Day Parade     |              |                    |     |                |                    |              |                    |                |     |     | Civic Events   |     |
| Christmas Lights' Switch On            |              |                    |     |                |                    |              |                    |                |     |     | Borough Events |     |
| Reclaim the Night                      |              |                    |     |                |                    |              |                    |                |     |     | Civic Events   |     |



- WOW Rotherham will move to a year-round community programme delivered in partnership with Flux Rotherham
- Roots Street Carnival will move to May to allow capacity to deliver an annual Winter Story Festival in February
- St George's Day will be added as an annual event for the borough
- This leaves three months where delivery is not taking place which allows time for the team to fundraise, support engagement programmes and complete reporting and evaluation



# Contact Us

**Leanne Buchan**

Head of Creative Programming & Engagement

[leanne.buchan@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:leanne.buchan@rotherham.gov.uk)

**Amy Lilley**

Creative Programming & Events Manager

[Amy.lilley@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:Amy.lilley@rotherham.gov.uk)

