

# Mirfield Piano Walk 2026

## Impact report



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## Impact Report

### Executive Summary

On 17 May 2026, the Mirfield Piano Walk transformed the town centre into a unique musical trail, bringing together professional pianists, emerging musicians, local organisations, businesses, volunteers and residents for a free day of live piano performances.

Inspired by the successful Pianowandeling in Edam, the Netherlands, the event created a walkable cultural experience across multiple venues in Mirfield, making high-quality live piano music accessible to audiences of all ages and backgrounds. The programme featured internationally recognised performers, finalists from Channel 4's *The Piano*, local musicians and talented young pianists from two music schools. The event was designed to strengthen community connections, celebrate local heritage, support emerging musical talent and increase participation in arts and culture.

This report outlines the social, cultural, economic and community impact generated by the inaugural Mirfield Piano Walk.

We sent a visitor's survey to 153 people who made a reservation through our booking system. The results are included in this report.

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### Event Overview

|                       |                                                                                                               |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Date:</b>          | 17 May 2026                                                                                                   |
| <b>Location:</b>      | Mirfield, West Yorkshire                                                                                      |
| <b>Format:</b>        | Free cultural walking event                                                                                   |
| <b>8 Venues:</b>      | Churches, community buildings, historic venues, a cricket club, library, fire station and other public spaces |
| <b>16 Performers:</b> | Professional pianists, amateur pianists and young musicians                                                   |
| <b>16 Concerts:</b>   | Classical music, film music, own compositions, piano and violin                                               |
| <b>50 Volunteers:</b> | 5 of our own and the remainder as volunteers at the venues                                                    |
| <b>Audience:</b>      | 1,314 occupied seats, roughly 2/3 of available seats                                                          |





## Audience Reach & Participation:

We introduced our booking system to learn how many visitors to expect and to produce accurate attendee lists for each concert. The booking system opened on 1 April 2026 and closed on 14 May at 21:00. People were requested to bring evidence of their reservation to the concerts. People without a reservation (passers-by) were admitted 10 minutes before the start of each concert if seats were still available. Using the attendee lists alongside headcounts taken at each venue gave us a reasonably accurate measure of the number of occupied seats.

| Reservations and occupied seats           |  |  |
|-------------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Total available seats                     |  | 1,962                                                                               |
| Total booked seats                        |  | 1,079                                                                               |
| Total unique people who booked            |  | 233                                                                                 |
|                                           |  |                                                                                     |
| Estimated actual number of occupied seats |  | 1,314                                                                               |

With roughly 2/3 of the available seats occupied we believe that the event has been a success.

## Volunteer & Venue Contributions

### Volunteers

Attracting volunteers for the Mirfield Piano Walk proved more challenging than expected. People interested in helping could register through our website or via the Kirklees Council volunteering platform. Around one month before the event we had **16 registrations**. However, once we began more detailed communication, volunteers withdrew one by one and stopped responding to messages — in some cases even the day before the event. This reduced the number of volunteers recruited directly by us to **5**.

We were extremely fortunate that each venue provided its own volunteers, which meant the overall impact on the event was minimal. For future years, we will need to explore alternative and more reliable ways of recruiting our own volunteers.

### Venues:

The event transformed eight venues across Mirfield into temporary concert halls, creating a musical route that encouraged audiences to explore the town while enjoying live performances. Venues included St Mary's Church, Moorlands Cricket Club, Eastthorpe Hall, Mirfield Fire Station, Trinity Church, St Aidan's Church, Mirfield Library, and the Mirfield Masonic Hall.

We aimed for a thoughtful mix of settings. Some were traditional concert locations, such as the three participating churches. Others were familiar community spaces that people visit regularly — the library, the wellness centre, and the cricket club — but seeing them repurposed as concert stages made them feel special and unexpected. The Mirfield Masonic Hall and the Fire Station were completely new discoveries for most visitors, adding a sense of curiosity and adventure to the Piano Walk.

## Cultural Impact

### Increasing Access to Classical Music

The Mirfield Piano Walk removed many of the barriers traditionally associated with classical music by:

- Offering all performances free of charge.
- Presenting music in familiar and accessible community venues.
- Creating an informal atmosphere for first-time concert attendees.
- Providing opportunities for audiences to move freely between performances.

Feedback indicated that quite a lot of attendees had little or no previous experience of attending classical piano concerts, demonstrating the event's success in reaching new audiences.

### Enhancing Mirfield's Cultural Identity

The event positioned Mirfield as a destination for cultural activity and innovation. By bringing music into everyday spaces and encouraging residents and visitors to experience the town differently, the Piano Walk contributed to local pride and strengthened Mirfield's reputation as a place that values arts and culture.

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## Community Impact

### Bringing People Together

One of the most significant outcomes of the event was the way it connected people.

Residents, visitors, performers, volunteers, venue hosts and local businesses all contributed to a shared community experience. The walkable nature of the event encouraged conversation and interaction between participants throughout the day.

Participants reported feeling:

- More connected to their community.
- Proud of Mirfield's ability to host a distinctive cultural event.
- Inspired by seeing local venues used in creative ways.

## Accessibility & Inclusion

Accessibility was a core principle of the Mirfield Piano Walk, shaping decisions from venue selection to transport planning. The aim was to ensure that people of all ages and abilities could take part comfortably and confidently.

Two routes, one of which a fully step-free route linked all eight venues. Each location was assessed in advance, with volunteers, ramps, and reserved seating provided where needed to support wheelchair users and visitors with limited mobility. Only one venue remained a problem for wheelchair users which was mentioned in our booking system.

A dedicated accessible transport service ran throughout the event, enabling older residents, and those unable to walk the route to attend multiple concerts with ease.

We tried to stream the opening and closing concerts to the internet so people in care homes could join the event. Unfortunately, due to technical problems this did not work and needs to be improved for the future events.

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## Economic Impact

### Supporting Local Businesses

The event increased footfall throughout Mirfield town centre and across all participating venues. As most local coffee shops are closed on Sundays, one café opened specially to support the Piano Walk and was extremely busy throughout the day. To help meet demand, we also installed a pop-up coffee stall outside one of the venues. Many of our venues offered their own refreshments, serving coffee, tea, cakes, and other treats, while the cricket club provided both drinks and food.

The event attracted international visitors, including **seven guests from the Netherlands and two from Ireland**, who stayed at the Premier Inn for multiple nights. They were joined by the soloists, their families, and two invited volunteers, creating a concentrated period of local hotel occupancy. Over two evenings, the group dined in the adjacent restaurant, providing additional revenue for local hospitality.

A local transport company benefited from the event through the hire of a minibus, which provided airport transfers and in-event transport for the international visitors and performers. This ensured smooth logistics while keeping expenditure within the local economy.

### Leveraging External Investment

The event secured support through sponsorship, grants, donations and community fundraising, attracting investment into Mirfield's cultural sector and demonstrating confidence in the town's ability to deliver high-quality community events.

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## Environmental Impact

The walking format of the event encouraged sustainable travel between venues and reduced reliance on vehicle transport.

By using existing community buildings and public spaces, the event maximised the use of local infrastructure while minimising environmental impact.

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## Talent Development

A core objective of the Mirfield Piano Walk was to support musicians at different stages of their development.

The programme brought together:

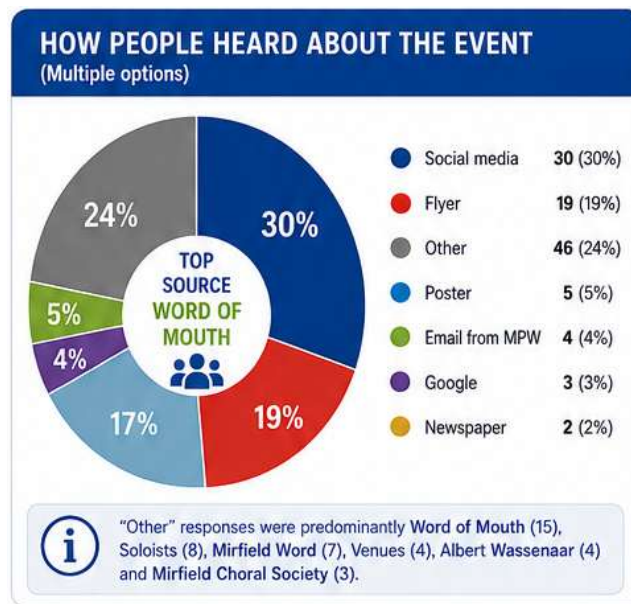
- Internationally recognised performers.
- Local piano students.
- Amateur pianists performing alongside professionals.

Young musicians were provided with a valuable opportunity to perform before live audiences in a professional event setting, building confidence and performance experience.

The Piano Walk competition further strengthened this objective by providing the winning participant with access to an international masterclass programme with Wibi Soerjadi in the Netherlands, creating an opportunity for artistic development beyond the event itself.

One of our aims was to attract conservatoire and university-level graduate or alumni performers. To support this, we contacted several conservatoires and the University of Huddersfield multiple times. We also created a dedicated category in our competition specifically for this group, offering a similar opportunity to attend a masterclass in the Netherlands. Unfortunately, none of the institutions responded to our repeated invitations. We will continue our outreach efforts in the coming years.

## Media Coverage & Publicity



The Mirfield Piano Walk received strong and varied media attention, helping to raise the profile of the event across West Yorkshire and beyond. Coverage highlighted the uniqueness of the concept, the community spirit behind it.

Media that mentioned us:

- Mirfield Word
- Dewsbury Reporter
- Yorkshire Post
- Noord Hollands Dagblad (Dutch)
- Classic FM

### Social Media Engagement

The event generated strong engagement across social platforms, with visitors sharing photos, short videos, and enthusiastic comments throughout the day. Performers, volunteers, and partner organisations amplified this activity, creating a lively online presence that extended the reach of the event far beyond those who attended in person.

### In addition

We distributed 2,500 flyers in Mirfield in December 2025 which was too early. Doing it closer to the event will be more effective. Further we hand delivered our A3 and some A2 posters to shops and cafes during the 3 weeks before the event.

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## Legacy

### Audience Feedback

#### Sample feedback themes included:

##### **Appreciation for free access to high-quality music.**

A huge congratulations on creation of Piano Walk, and a sincere thank you for bringing it to Mirfield. What an amazing, and pleasurable day you and performers provided. Such talent. I watched the tv series of The Piano, never expecting to be audience to the real thing. Such an inspired event. Thank you again.

##### **Discovery of venues not previously visited.**

The organisation of the event was beyond fantastic. The venues were amazing, loved the variety.

##### **Pride in seeing Mirfield host a distinctive cultural event.**

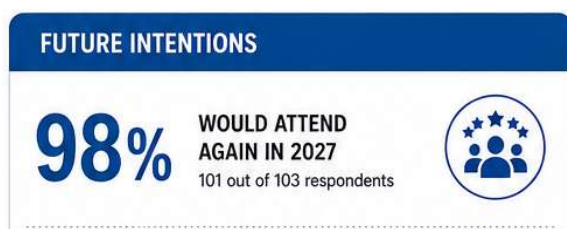
The event you brought from Holland is a wonderful life enhancing bonus for Mirfield. What a lovely idea, brought into reality so perfectly. The amount of organisation was staggering, and every detail was planned and executed perfectly, with love and fun and commitment. Thank you so much for giving such a lovely gift to Mirfield.

##### **Enjoyment of the relaxed and welcoming atmosphere.**

Huge congratulations to everyone involved. To be able to attend concerts throughout the day was superb with a wide range of variety & lots of talent on show. Always a warm welcome & impressed by the confidence & passion. Beautiful to see people walking to and from the venues & Mirfield's support.

##### **Interest in attending future editions.**

- Well done and we look forward to a repeat in the future.
- . I do hope that the event was a success overall and there may be another next year.
- Hopefully next year I may manage more than 2 concerts, but that one will stay with me as a treasured memory.



The 2027 Mirfield Piano Walk will be on 23 May 2027.

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## Looking Forward

The inaugural Mirfield Piano Walk has established a strong foundation for future editions.

- Key priorities for future development include:
    - Expanding audience participation.
    - Increasing involvement from schools and youth groups.
    - Growing volunteer opportunities.
    - Attracting additional regional and national performers.
    - Strengthening partnerships with local businesses.
    - Developing Mirfield's reputation as a cultural destination.
  - The long-term vision is for the Piano Walk to become a recognised annual event that continues to enrich community life, support musical talent and contribute to the cultural and economic vitality of Mirfield.
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## Partnership Impact

**The success of the event was made possible through collaboration with:**

- Mirfield Town Council.
- Kirklees Council.
- Arts Skop Trust
- Venue partners.
- Local businesses.
- Sponsors and donors.
- Volunteers and performers.
- Local Music Schools

These partnerships demonstrated the value of collective action in delivering cultural experiences that benefit the wider community.

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## Conclusion

The Mirfield Piano Walk 2026 demonstrated how music can transform public spaces, connect communities and create lasting cultural value.

By combining artistic excellence with community participation, the event successfully delivered meaningful benefits for audiences, performers, volunteers, local organisations and businesses. The strong public response confirms the potential for the Piano Walk to become an important annual fixture in Mirfield's cultural calendar and a model for accessible community-led arts engagement.

The organisers thank all performers, volunteers, sponsors, partners and attendees whose support made this inaugural event possible.



# MIRFIELD PIANO WALK

MUSIC • COMMUNITY • CONNECTION

## STAKEHOLDER & AUDIENCE SURVEY REPORT

CELEBRATING AN OUTSTANDING DAY OF MUSIC ACROSS MIRFIELD

2026

### EXECUTIVE DASHBOARD

Key results from the 2026 Mirfield Piano Walk Survey



INVITATIONS SENT

153

Invitations with survey link sent on 19 May 2026



RESPONSES RECEIVED

103

Surveys completed by 5 June 2026



RESPONSE RATE

67%

An excellent response rate for our audience survey



OVERALL RATING

96%

Rated the event *Excellent*



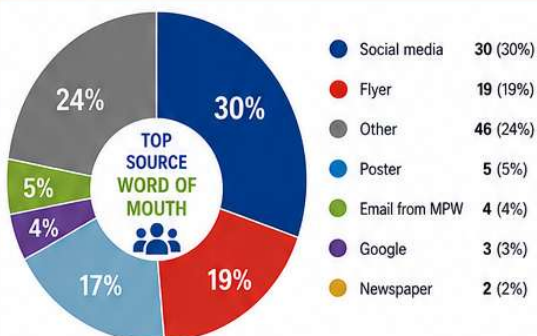
WOULD RECOMMEND

100%

Would advise family and friends to attend

### HOW PEOPLE HEARD ABOUT THE EVENT

(Multiple options)



"Other" responses were predominantly Word of Mouth (15), Soloists (8), Mirfield Word (7), Venues (4), Albert Wassenaar (4) and Mirfield Choral Society (3).

### FUTURE INTENTIONS

98%

WOULD ATTEND AGAIN IN 2027

101 out of 103 respondents



97

FOUND IT EASY TO MAKE A RESERVATION

97 Yes | 4 No | 2 Blank



61

VISITED THE OPENING CONCERT AT ST. MARY'S

61 respondents attended the Opening Concert



### WHAT OUR AUDIENCE LOVED MOST



OUTSTANDING PERFORMERS

World-class talent across all venues



UNIQUE VENUES

A wonderful variety of distinctive locations



COMMUNITY SPIRIT

Warm welcomes and friendly hospitality



QUALITY MUSIC

Diverse repertoire and memorable performances



A DAY TO REMEMBER

A truly special experience from start to finish

“

The Mirfield Piano Walk is a highlight of the year – bringing exceptional music and our community together.



Thank you to everyone who took part in the survey and supports the Mirfield Piano Walk.