

Durham Lumiere light festival 'bigger and better'



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AN ARRAY of new and enhanced attractions is promised for next month's Lumiere light festival in Durham City.

Organisers have worked on plans to ease crowd congestion from previous events by extending its hours and by lighting more buildings outside the central area.

A free peak hours ticketing system for the peninsula is designed to further ease congestion.

One of the new outlying attractions is a giant sun over Durham University's science site.

It features the world's largest spherical hot air balloon, and the projection can be manipulated by visitors who have an iPhone or iPad.

Those without an Apple gadget can participate in another new installation by having their eye scanned and projected onto the side of the university's Bill Bryson library.

New sponsor Carillion Developments is contributing to a visual jukebox on the exterior of Milburngate House, currently home to the Passport Office and Department for National Savings.

Other attractions include a fish-filled phonebox, a giant three-dimensional elephant, and a 9m tall Christmas tree made of carrier bags. Durham County Council leader Simon Henig is looking forward to Lumiere.

"It is part of a wonderful year of culture for us," said Coun Henig.

"The council contributes about £500,000 to Lumiere, but we have more other funders than ever this time.

"The economic benefits last time were estimated at £4million, so it has to be money well spent.

"We are already getting reports of hotels and restaurants filling up.

"Lumiere brings people from near and far into Durham and I'm confident this year's experience will be spectacular."

Lumiere runs from Thursday, November 14, to Sunday, November 17, and is open from 4.30pm to 11pm.

Visitor information will be posted on the website www.lumiere-festival.com.

The same site has details of how to book advance peak time tickets for the peninsula.