the audience agency

Audiences to Live Literature Events

January 2020

Contents:

An enormous range of Live Literature events take place across the country, in many different settings – the author event in a bookstore, the poetry slam in a bar, the open mic in a café, the literary festival in a marquee, the literary talk in a village hall... Although Live Literature can be enhanced by the technical resources of well-equipped venues, it doesn't always need them and can flourish in unofficial settings and quiet corners.

We love that Live Literature exists in all these ways and freely acknowledge that this report can't (and doesn't try to) cover all of them. Instead, it draws together what we know of Live Literature from the many hundreds of organisations that contribute booking and survey data to Audience Finder. Even then, Live Literature events represent a small slice of Audience Finder data: roughly 1% of bookers and 0.5% of tickets. But one of the advantages of having such a large overall dataset is that this small proportion still represents a lot of information – over a 100,000 bookers from more than 100 venues and 12,000 surveys.

This is also a big enough pool of data to allow us to recognise the great variety within it. We can see how different particular types of Live Literature are from each other, the extant to which audiences differ by place and the role that different groups' varying motivations play in that diversity. The rich variety of Live Literature events is matched by the heterogeneity of its audiences. Moreover, while the overall satisfaction is remarkably high (98% good or very good), we can break those numbers down by groups and demographics to prompt reflection on what can be done to further grow audiences and increase the impact of future Live Literature events.

Beyond the use – and comparisons with – the overall figures given here, we hope that this report will encourage greater appetite among Live Literature organisations to better understand their audiences. The Audience Agency provides a wide range of courses, services and tools that can help, including Audience Finder itself, but we want to learn from literature organisations too. If you have insights and analysis of Live Literature audiences that you'd like to share with us, we'd be very interested to see them.

Oliver Mantell, Policy Research Director and lead for Literature
Anne Torreggiani, CEO

The Big Picture

What do we know about Live Literature Events audiences?

Young adults – 16 to 24 year olds – are underrepresented in Live Literature audiences, compared with both broader cultural consumption and the population.

50% of audiences to Live Literature Events belong to the most highly engaged Audience Spectrum segments, though Poetry and Spoken Word is more successful at attracting lower engaged groups.

Over 50% of all audiences at Live Literature events listed intellectual stimulation, learning and inspiration among their key motivations for attending.

Over 80% of Live Literature bookers attend an event in the region in which they live, higher than is typical for other artforms.

Whilst over 40% of Live Literature audiences enjoy the event in adult groups, typically in pairs, a third attend alone – significantly more than is typical of many artforms.

Whilst typically low engaged groups rate their satisfaction at attending Live Literature Events the most highly, this enthusiasm does not translate into likelihood to recommend the events.

Who attends Live Literature Events?

Both box office and survey data from literature events show an attender profile that is spread across the population, but with higher concentrations in the higher engaged Audience Spectrum segments. Metroculturals are particularly over represented in the data compared with the population, as were Commuterland Culturebuffs and Experience Seekers. Whilst 58% of audiences to these events are over 45, younger groups are better represented in BAME audiences.

Age × Live Literature × Audience Finder Benchmark × Population

Live Literature Events / Audience Finder Benchmark / Population

● 16-24   ● 25-34   ● 35-44   ● 45-54   ● 55-64   ● 64 or older
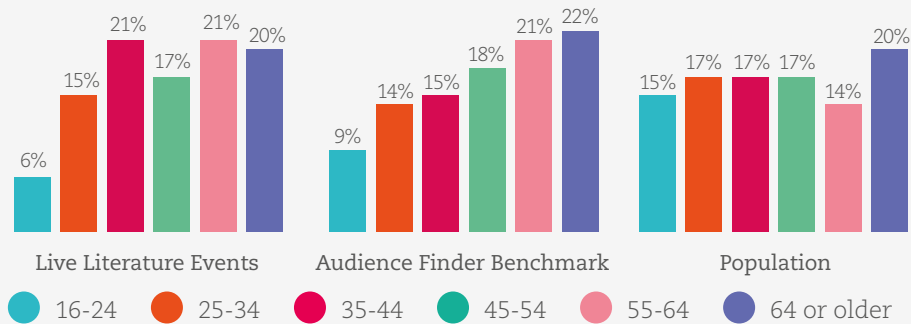
Young adults are underrepresented in Live Literature audiences, compared with both broader cultural consumption and the population.

35–44 year olds, however, are significantly more engaged in this artform then we typically see from this age group.

Ethnicity × Live Literature × Audience Finder × Population
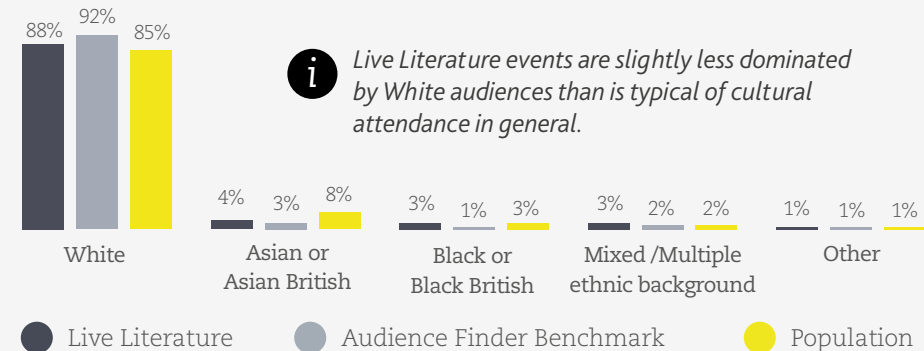
Live Literature events are slightly less dominated by White audiences than is typical of cultural attendance in general.

● Live Literature   ● Audience Finder Benchmark   ● Population

Age × Ethnicity

● 16-24   ● 25-34   ● 35-44   ● 45-54   ● 55-64   ● 64 or older
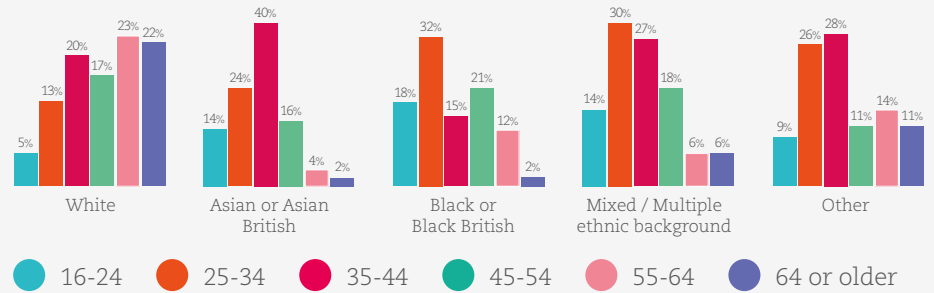
White audiences tend to be older, whilst Black and Mixed ethnicity audiences are more likely to be millennial, which is in line with the demographic make up of the population.

Interestingly, the 35 – 44 year old age bracket, which is unusually highly represented in Literature Events audiences, is dominated by Asian and Asian British Audiences.

Spotlight on Asian / Asian British audiences

Quality of Live Literature Events

	Overall	Asian / Asian British
Quality	72%	66%
Value for Money	63%	57%
Whole Experience	69%	66%

● Overall   ● Asian / Asian British
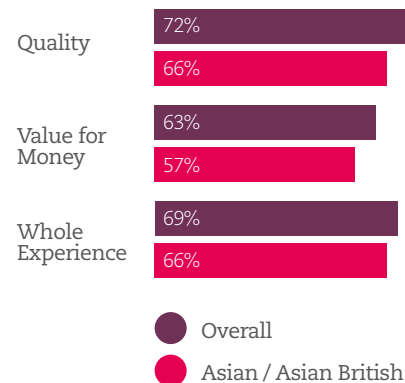
Asian / Asian British audiences inside and outside of London

	Population	Asian / Asian British
London	18%	11%
Outside London	6%	3%
England	8%	4%

● Population   ● Asian / Asian British
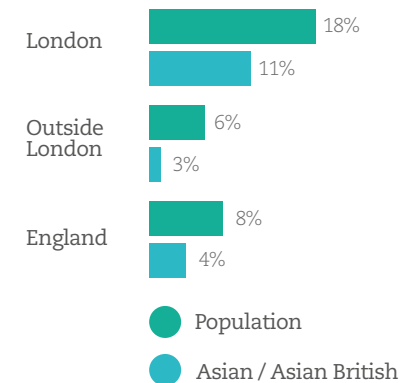
Notably, not only were Asian/Asian British audiences underrepresented compared with the population, both within and outside of London, but they also returned lower event quality ratings.

This effect was not found with other minority ethnic groups and is particularly pronounced over the age of 55.

TOP TIP: *Use the information about the Audience Spectrum segments on the Audience Agency website to find out more about each groups tastes, preferences and behaviours, to help you tailor events to those you are trying to reach.*

	High engagement			Medium engagement			Low engagement		

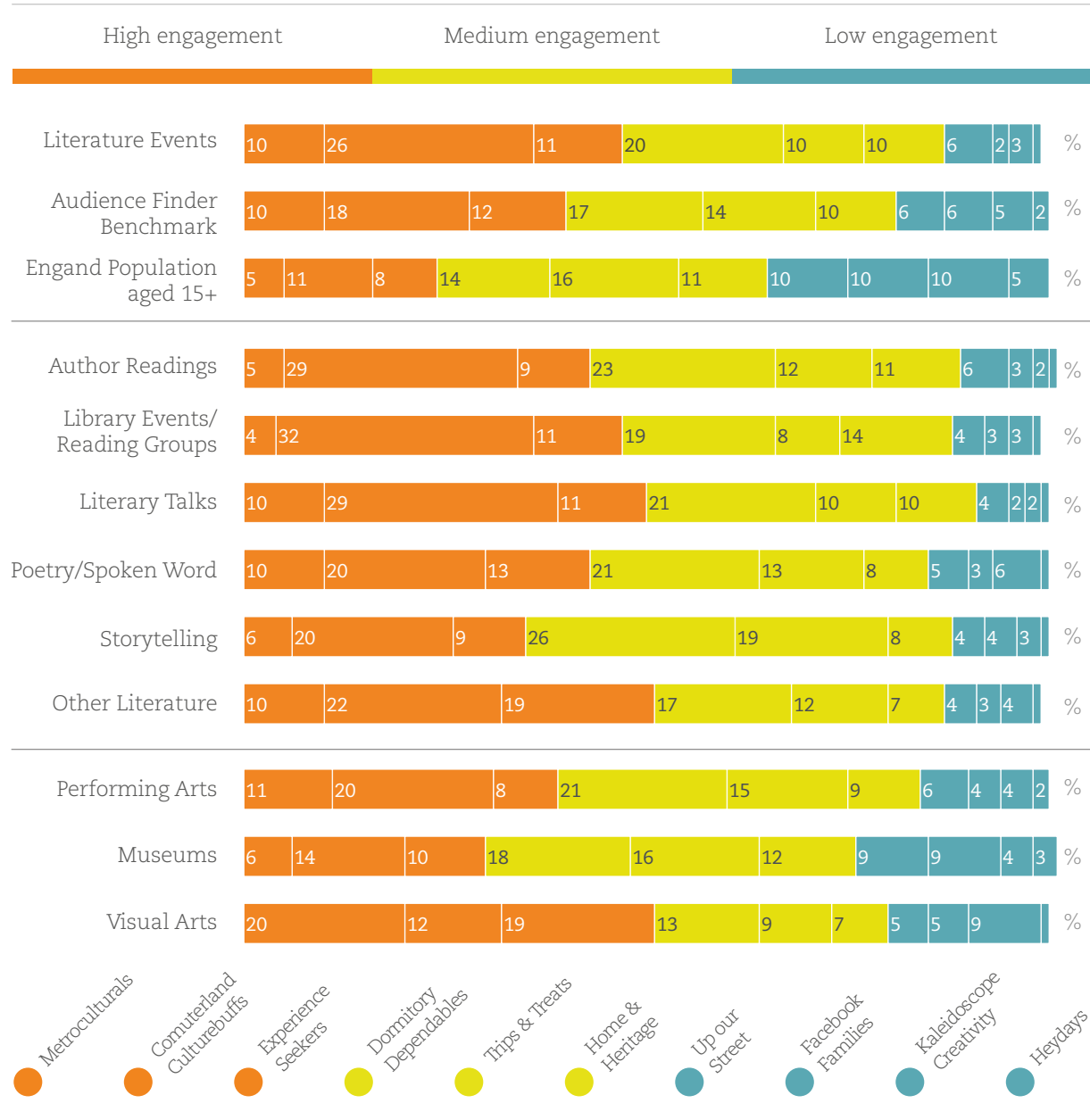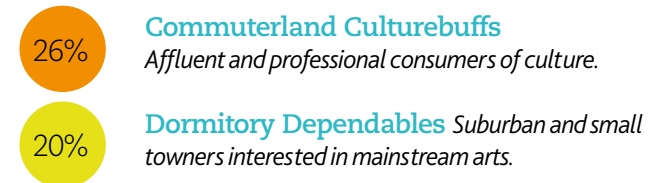	Literature Events	10	26	11	20	10	10	6	2	3	%
Audience Finder Benchmark	10	18	12	17	14	10	6	6	5	2	%
Engand Population aged 15+	5	11	8	14	16	11	10	10	10	5	%

Author Readings	5	29	9	23	12	11	6	3	2	%
Library Events/ Reading Groups	4	32	11	19	8	14	4	3	3	%
Literary Talks	10	29	11	21	10	10	4	2	2	%
Poetry/Spoken Word	10	20	13	21	13	8	5	3	6	%
Storytelling	6	20	9	26	19	8	4	4	3	%
Other Literature	10	22	19	17	12	7	4	3	4	%

Performing Arts	11	20	8	21	15	9	6	4	4	2	%
Museums	6	14	10	18	16	12	9	9	4	3	%
Visual Arts	20	12	19	13	9	7	5	5	9	%

Metroculturals · Comuterland Culturebuffs · Experience Seekers · Dormitory Dependables · Trips & Treats · Home & Heritage · Up our Street · Facebook Families · Kaleidoscope Creativity · Heydays

Top Audience Spectrum Groups:

Almost half of all audiences to Live Literature come from just 2 Audience Spectrum groups :

26% **Commuterland Culturebuffs** *Affluent and professional consumers of culture.*

20% **Dormitory Dependables** *Suburban and small towners interested in mainstream arts.*

Different kinds of Live Literature Event:

Whilst **50% of audiences to 'Literary Talks'** belong to the most **highly culturally engaged groups**, 'Poetry **and Spoken Word**' is more successful than other Literature Event Types at attracting audiences who are usually **low cultural engagers**.

Storytelling, on the other hand, is dominated by **mid-engaged** and **family-heavy groups** and has the lowest percentage of highly engaged groups.

Live Literature vs other artforms:

Live Literature audiences' engagement levels are quite closely aligned to those for the Performing Arts in general:

	High	Medium	Low
Live Literature	47%	40%	12%
Performing Arts	39%	45%	16%
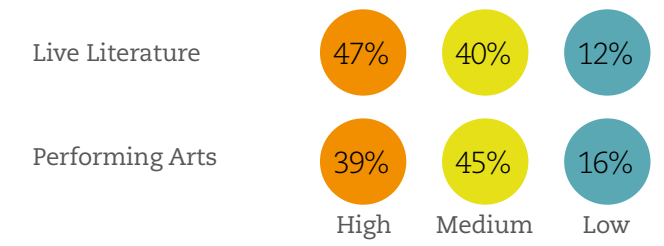
**FOOD FOR THOUGHT:** *The low satisfaction, quality ratings and NPS scores of Asian / Asian British audiences suggests an area in which the literature sector could do better if it wishes to serve all parts of the population, perhaps through more diverse recruitment, better support for Asian/Asian British artists and greater consultation with Asian/Asian British communities around programming.*

Where do audiences come from?

Audiences to literature events are notably local. That said, variations by audience type remind us that these patterns result partly from where different groups live and partly from where they go. Most of the UK's Metroculturals, for example, live in London or other major cities, so benefit from a high proportion of nearby cultural opportunities. At the same time, though, these hyper-cultured Metroculturals are also more likely than other groups to travel further afield, given the right offer, with 1 in 5 journeying more than 50 minutes from home to an event. The similarly local and urbanite, though typically younger and more diverse, Experience Seekers, on the other hand, don't tend to travel such long distances.
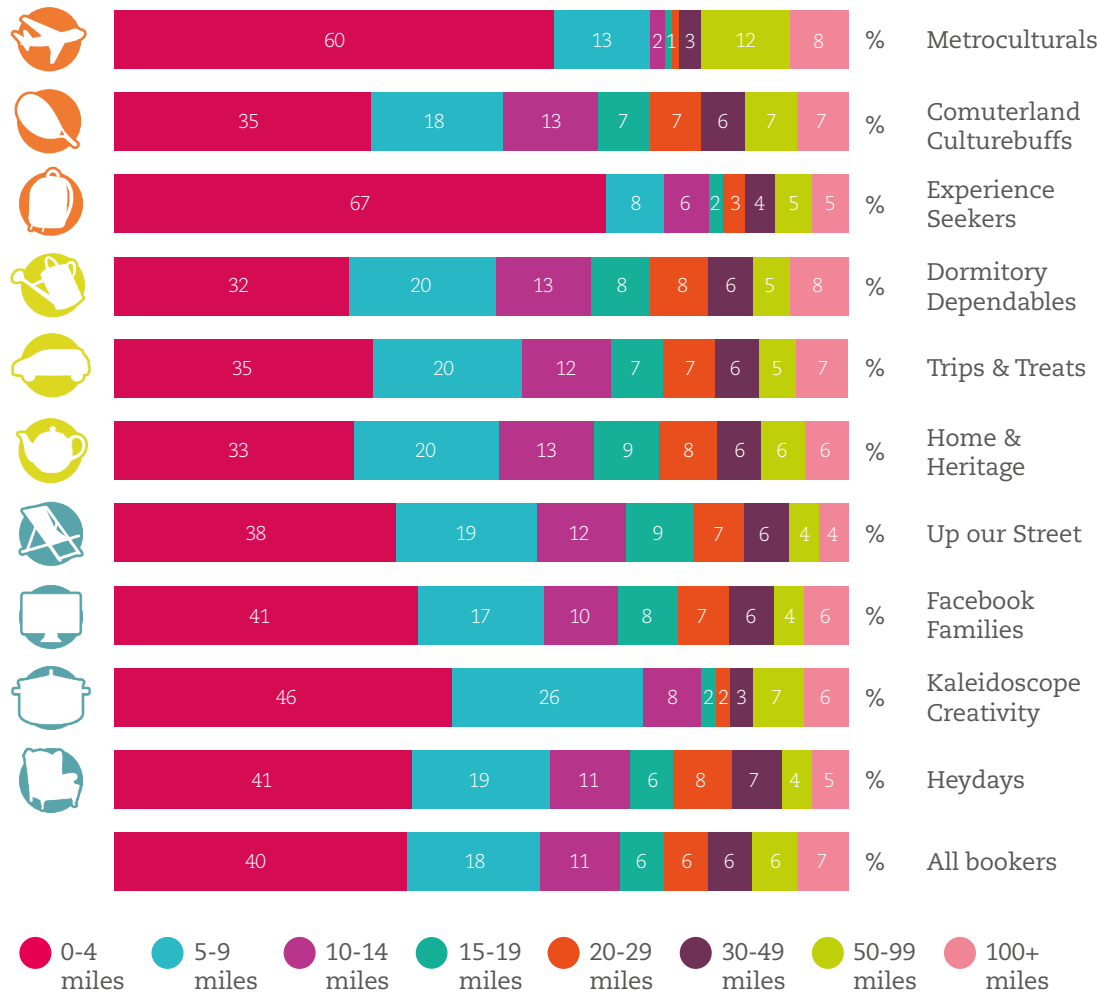
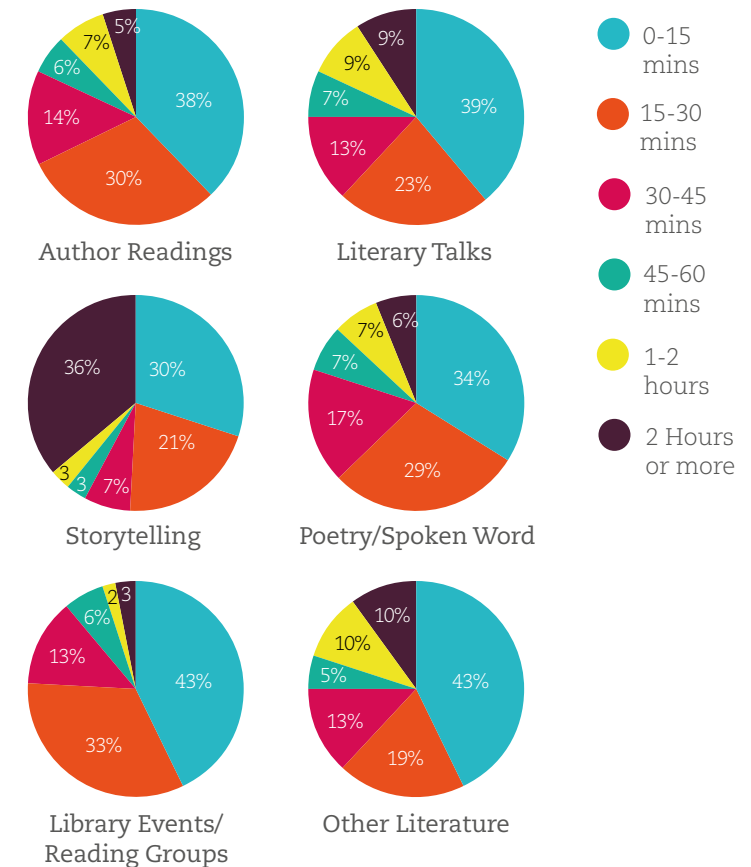**1/3** — Over a third of all bookers live within 15 minutes of the event they attend.
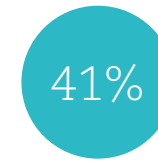
41% — 41% of literature audiences travel fewer than 5 miles to the event.

Distance travelled × Audience Spectrum

Audience	0-4 miles	5-9 miles	10-14 miles	15-19 miles	20-29 miles	30-49 miles	50-99 miles	100+ miles
Metroculturals	60	13	2	1	3		12	8
Comuterland Culturebuffs	35	18	13	7	7	6	7	7
Experience Seekers	67	8	6	2	3	4	5	5
Dormitory Dependables	32	20	13	8	8	6	5	8
Trips & Treats	35	20	12	7	7	6	5	7
Home & Heritage	33	20	13	9	8	6	6	6
Up our Street	38	19	12	9	7	6	4	4
Facebook Families	41	17	10	8	7	6	4	6
Kaleidoscope Creativity	46	26	8	2	2	3	7	6
Heydays	41	19	11	6	8	7	4	5
All bookers	40	18	11	6	6	6	6	7

(values in %)

Legend: 0-4 miles · 5-9 miles · 10-14 miles · 15-19 miles · 20-29 miles · 30-49 miles · 50-99 miles · 100+ miles

Literature event type × drivetime

Author Readings: 0-15 mins 38%, 15-30 mins 30%, 30-45 mins 14%, 45-60 mins 6%, 1-2 hours 7%, 2 Hours or more 5%

Literary Talks: 0-15 mins 39%, 15-30 mins 23%, 30-45 mins 13%, 45-60 mins 7%, 1-2 hours 9%, 2 Hours or more 9%

Storytelling: 0-15 mins 30%, 15-30 mins 21%, 30-45 mins 7%, 45-60 mins 3%, 1-2 hours 3%, 2 Hours or more 36%

Poetry/Spoken Word: 0-15 mins 34%, 15-30 mins 29%, 30-45 mins 17%, 45-60 mins 7%, 1-2 hours 7%, 2 Hours or more 6%

Library Events/ Reading Groups: 0-15 mins 43%, 15-30 mins 33%, 30-45 mins 13%, 45-60 mins 6%, 1-2 hours 2%, 2 Hours or more 3%

Other Literature: 0-15 mins 43%, 15-30 mins 19%, 30-45 mins 13%, 45-60 mins 5%, 1-2 hours 10%, 2 Hours or more 10%

Legend: 0-15 mins · 15-30 mins · 30-45 mins · 45-60 mins · 1-2 hours · 2 Hours or more

TOP TIP: *Use Audience Finder to compare the profile of your local and non-local audiences. Our Drive Time and Distance Report can help you define what 'local' means for you and better understand your catchment area.*

8

% of bookers attending Live Literature events in the region in which they live

92% South East

92% West Midlands

91% East

90% North East

88% Yorkshire & the Humber

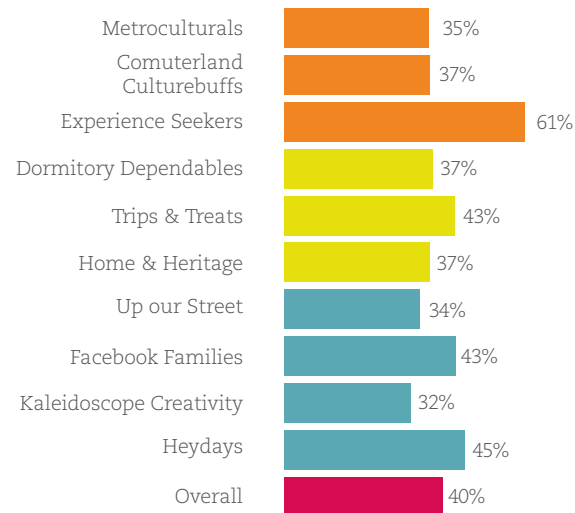80% North West

78% London

71% East Midlands

71% South West
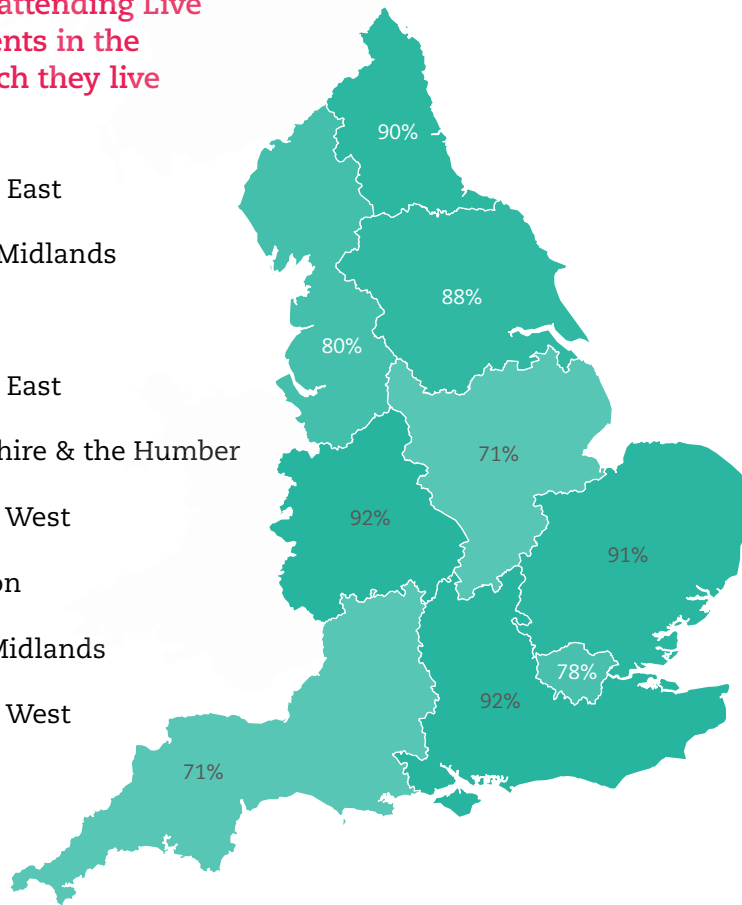
81% On average, 81% of Live Literature event bookers attend an event in the region in which they live. Whilst this number does vary across the country, the percentage of audiences attending events in their home region is higher than is typical for other artforms.

Local Audiences

Given that, at a regional level, literary event attenders tend to stay relatively close to home, it's interesting to dig a little deeper into this idea of literary localness. At Local Authority level, 40% of all bookings were for events in the booker's home Local Authority, although this varies considerably by audience profile and the type of literature event they are attending.
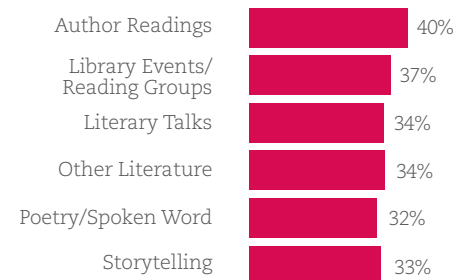
% of bookers attending in the Same LA × Audience Spectrum

Audience	%
Metroculturals	35%
Comuterland Culturebuffs	37%
Experience Seekers	61%
Dormitory Dependables	37%
Trips & Treats	43%
Home & Heritage	37%
Up our Street	34%
Facebook Families	43%
Kaleidoscope Creativity	32%
Heydays	45%
Overall	40%

Whilst prosperous, urbanite Metroculturals account for just 12% of bookings within the same local authority and 17% of those outside it, the proportions are reversed for the more diverse and digitally minded Experience Seekers.

Experience Seekers are in fact by far the most local literature audiences, with 61% of this group booking to attend events within their own Local Authority area.

% of bookers Attending in the Same LA × event type

| Event type	%
Author Readings	40%
Library Events/ Reading Groups	37%
Literary Talks	34%
Other Literature	34%
Poetry/Spoken Word	32%
Storytelling	33%

In terms of literary event type, Author Readings and Library Events (including Reading Groups) attract the most hyper-local audiences, which is perhaps unsurprising given libraries' known appeal to a broad cross-section of local communities.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *This hyper-localness has implications for programming and how to reach an inclusive audience. What are the best ways to stage events close to the communities that you want to reach? Or what changes to your event formats might even reach an audience from further afield?*

How do they attend events?

Live Literature audiences within Audience Finder crossover a lot with other artforms, while differing substantially between 'types' of literature. We don't therefore see a unique 'Live Literature' audience as such, but one that commonly attends a variety of artforms. Where audiences have exclusively attended Live Literature events, however, they tend to stay loyal to a particular type. More so than is typical of many artforms, Live Literature audiences are new, growing, explorative and uncommonly eager for a solitary experience.
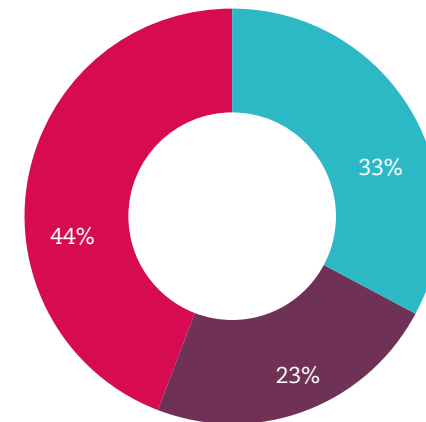
Frequency

average group size

3 people

63% — 37%
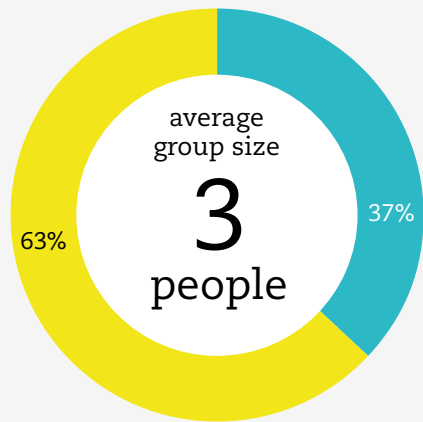
- First Time Attenders
- Repeat Attenders

Crossover

20%

80%
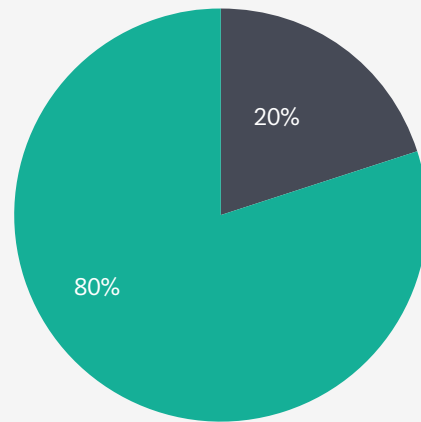
- Literary event only bookers
- Other artform bookers
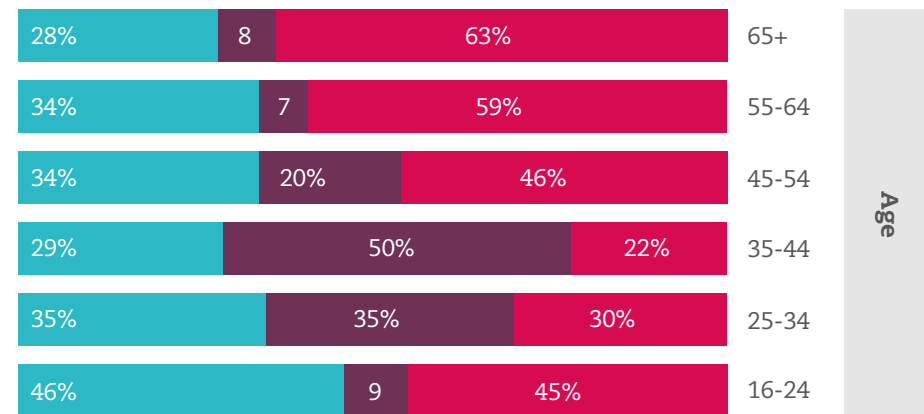
Group type × Age

44% — 33% — 23%

- Single adult
- Families
- Adult groups

Whilst over 40% of Live Literature audiences enjoy the event in adult groups, typically in pairs, a third attend alone significantly more than is typical of many artforms.

However, different group types have very different age profiles, with respondents attending as part of a family particularly likely to be 35–44 and the proportion of single adults highest for 16–24s.
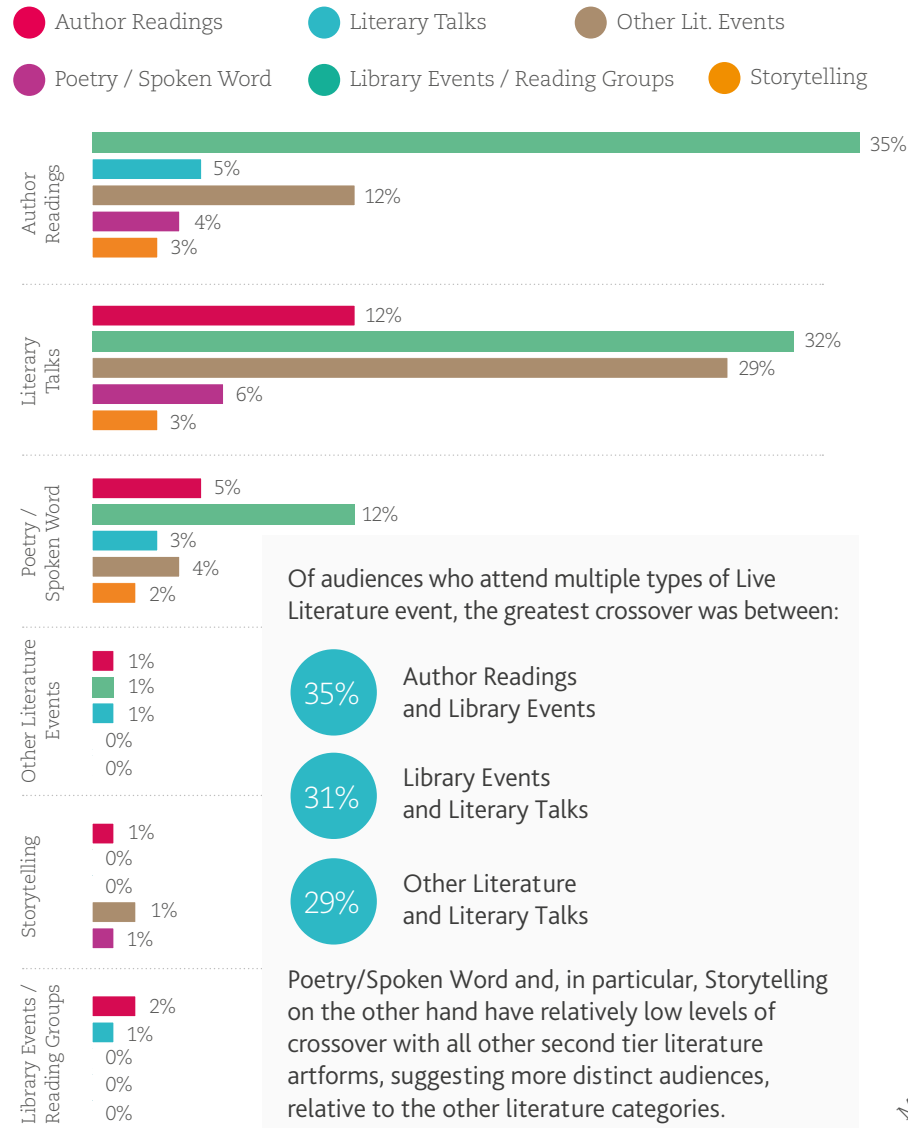
24% of Live Literature audiences booked for just one event.

76% of Live Literature audiences booked on more than one occasion. Most of these additional bookings, however, were for non-literature events.

60% of repeat bookers only booked once for Live Literature Events.

80% of literature bookers also booked for other artforms in the same year.

20% booked only for Live Literature events. Broken down:
- 16% were one time bookers
- 4% booked more than once for literature without booking for other artforms as well

Single adult	Families	Adult groups	Age
28%	8	63%	65+
34%	7	59%	55-64
34%	20%	46%	45-54
29%	50%	22%	35-44
35%	35%	30%	25-34
46%	9	45%	16-24

TOP TIP: *Given the low crossover between types of literature, but high crossover with other art forms, cross-promoting with other artform events that have similar topics or target audiences could help grow your audience.*

% crossover between different types of Live Literature Event

- ● Author Readings
- ● Literary Talks
- ● Other Lit. Events
- ● Poetry / Spoken Word
- ● Library Events / Reading Groups
- ● Storytelling

Author Readings
- 35%
- 5%
- 12%
- 4%
- 3%

Literary Talks
- 12%
- 32%
- 29%
- 6%
- 3%

Poetry / Spoken Word
- 5%
- 12%
- 3%
- 4%
- 2%

Other Literature Events
- 1%
- 1%
- 1%
- 0%
- 0%

Storytelling
- 1%
- 0%
- 0%
- 1%
- 1%

Library Events / Reading Groups
- 2%
- 1%
- 0%
- 0%
- 0%

Of audiences who attend multiple types of Live Literature event, the greatest crossover was between:

- **35%** Author Readings and Library Events
- **31%** Library Events and Literary Talks
- **29%** Other Literature and Literary Talks

Poetry/Spoken Word and, in particular, Storytelling on the other hand have relatively low levels of crossover with all other second tier literature artforms, suggesting more distinct audiences, relative to the other literature categories.

6% of audiences booked for **multiple types of Live Literature event**.

25% of audiences booked **multiple times for the same type of Live Literature event**.

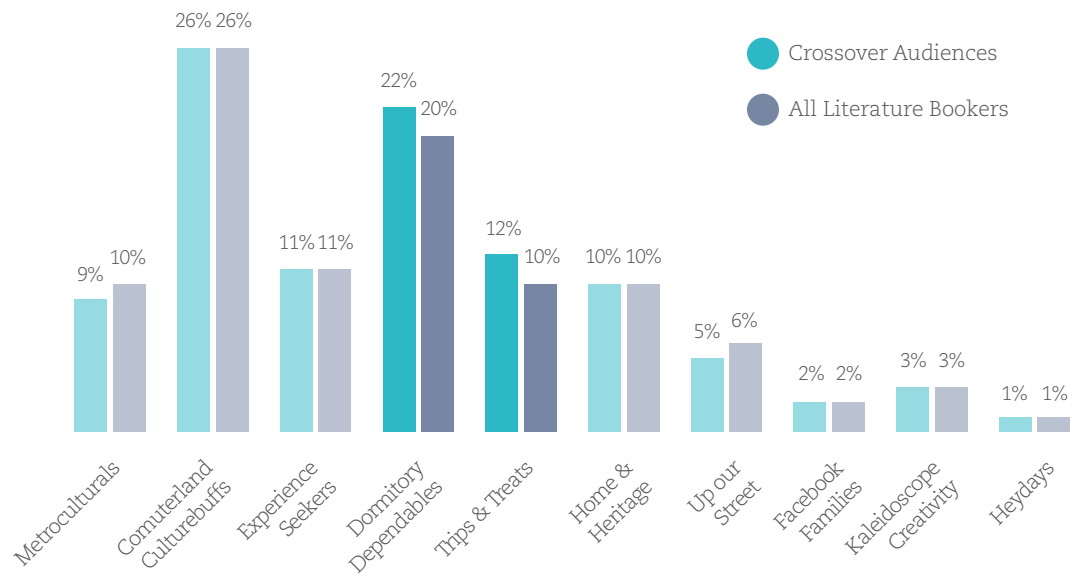**40%** of **repeat bookers attended multiple Live Literature events**. Broken down:
- 33% booked again for the **same event type**.
- 7% booked for **another type** of Live Literature.

Audiences who attended **more than one type** of Live Literature Event are more likely to be from **Medium Engagement Audience Spectrum segments** that are typically based **outside of London**. Most notably **Dormitory Dependables** and **Trips & Treats**.

Event type crossover × Audience Spectrum

- ● Crossover Audiences
- ● All Literature Bookers

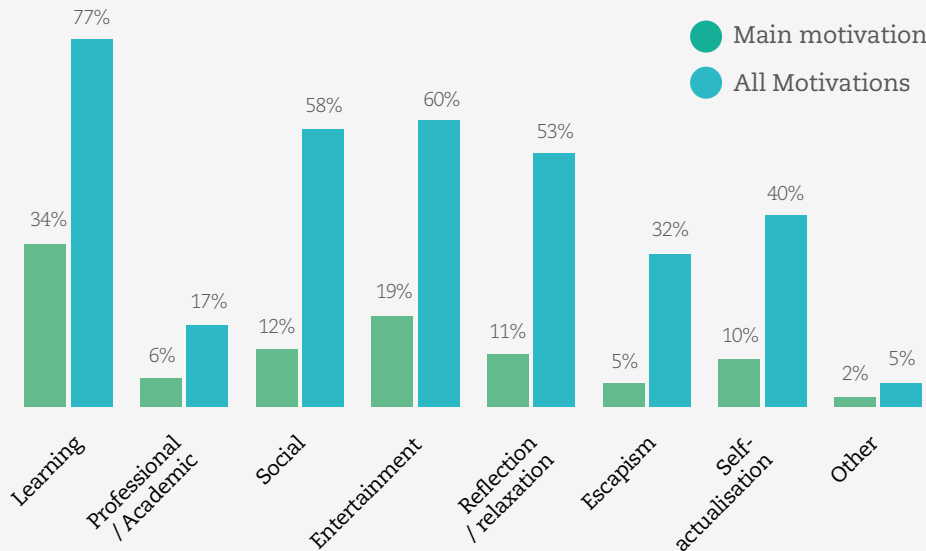| Segment	Crossover Audiences	All Literature Bookers
Metroculturals	9%	10%
Comuterland Culturebuffs	26%	26%
Experience Seekers	11%	11%
Dormitory Dependables	22%	20%
Trips & Treats	12%	10%
Home & Heritage	10%	10%
Up our Street	5%	6%
Facebook Families	2%	2%
Kaleidoscope Creativity	3%	3%
Heydays	1%	1%

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *Poetry and Spoken Word and Storytelling audiences are particularly distinct from other literature audiences: perhaps further analysis would reveal more detailed sub-types within these categories as well.*

Why do people visit?

Motivations vary by Audience Spectrum segment. Overall, Learning motivations are highest among highly culturally engaged groups, while Social motivations are more popular among the typically low engaged and Entertainment rated particularly highly for those of medium engagement. It is notable that live literature audiences are more likely to be motivated by learning than even museum and visual arts audiences, previously the highest activity categories we've seen for this type of motivation. This doesn't seem to be linked to current participation in formal education, since it progressively increases with age.

Motivations: Main/All

- ● Main motivation
- ● All Motivations

	Learning	Professional / Academic	Social	Entertainment	Reflection / relaxation	Escapism	Self-actualisation	Other
Main	34%	6%	12%	19%	11%	5%	10%	2%
All	77%	17%	58%	60%	53%	32%	40%	5%

77% of all audience members identified **Learning** intentions to be among their **motivations** for attending a Live Literature event.

⅓ Furthermore, more than a third of people identified **Learning** as their **main motivation,** above Entertainment (19%) and Social (12%).

What were your motivations for attending this event today?	All	Main
To be intellectually stimulated	57%	18%
To learn something	56%	12%
To be entertained	53%	13%
To be inspired	50%	10%
To enjoy the atmosphere	41%	2%
Literature is an important part of who I am	41%	12%
To spend time with friends/ family	30%	9%
To do something new/out of the ordinary	26%	4%
For reflection	15%	1%
To entertain my children	14%	5%
To educate/ stimulate my children	14%	5%
For professional reasons	14%	6%
To escape from everyday life	9%	0%
For a special occasion	7%	1%
For academic reasons	6%	1%
For peace and quiet	2%	0%
Other	6%	3%

Over 50% of all audiences at Live Literature events listed intellectual stimulation, learning, entertainment and inspiration among their motivations for attending.

Live Literature audiences express more cerebral motivations than is typical for audiences of many other artforms.

For example:

Learning was the Main Motivation of:

34% of **Live Literature** audiences

24% of **Museum** audiences

22% of **Visual Arts** audiences

7% of **Outdoor Arts** audiences

and **Self Actualisation** was the Main Motivation of:

10% of **Live Literature** audiences

7% of **Museum** audiences

15% of **Visual Arts** audiences

6% of **Outdoor Arts** audiences

whereas **Socialising** was the Main Motivation of:

12% of **Live Literature** audiences

28% of **Museum** audiences

19% of **Visual Arts** audiences

38% of **Outdoor Arts** audiences

Motivation × Age
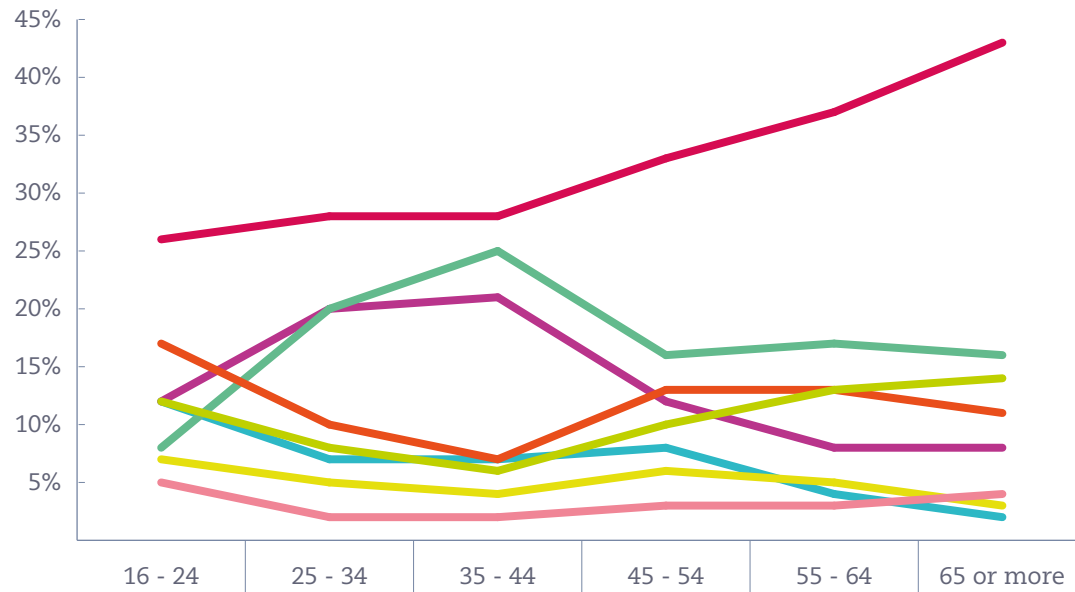
Learning ● **Reflection/relaxation** ● **Self-actualisation** ● **Professional/Academic** ● **Escapism** ● **Other** ● **Social** ● **Entertainment**

Motivations vary notably by age, with **Learning** (whilst always popular) becoming more prominent as **age increases**.

Entertainment increases starkly among age **groups with young families** then drops away again after middle age, as do **Social** motivations.

Reflection and relaxation and **Self-actualisation** as motivations dip towards middle age, but (mostly) rise thereafter.

16–24 year olds ' motivations differ significantly from other age groups. For the youngest adults **Reflection and relaxation**, **Social** and **Self-actualisation** are second, third and fourth, behind **Learning**.

Main Motivation × Engagement Level

High engagement, Medium engagement, Low engagement
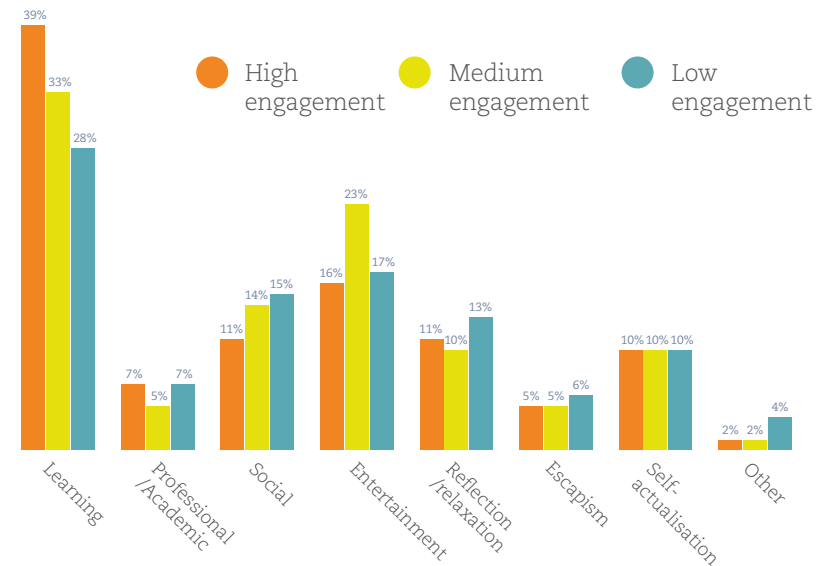
Main Motivation × Group Type

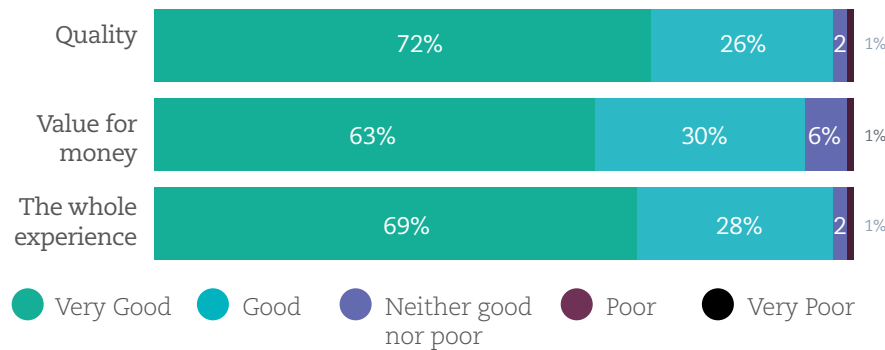
Single adult, Families, Adult Groups
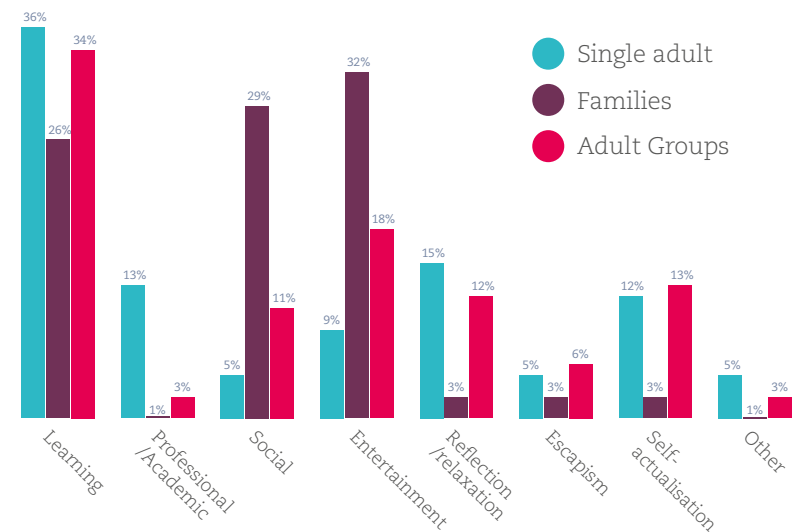
FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *Live Literature events, then, play different roles for different ages and group types. Considering motivations in your planning can be key, as audiences will be larger where motivation and target groups align.*

What do they think of the experience?

Respondents are asked to rate their visit in terms of quality, value for money and their overall experience. The Net Promoter Score (NPS) asks visitors to rate how likely they would be to recommend the experience to friends and families. Satisfaction is high overall, and highest for some of the typically lower-engaged groups, despite their attending literature events less than other groups, relative to their proportion in the general population. This doesn't, however, necessarily translate into higher levels of recommendations by these groups.

% Rating *Value for Money* as 'very good' × Audience Spectrum

- ● High Engagement
- ● Medium Engagement
- ● Low Engagement

67%	59%	65%	61%	65%	63%	67%	69%	69%	66%
Metroculturals	Comuterland Culturebuffs	Experience Seekers	Dormitory Dependables	Trips & Treats	Home & Heritage	Up our Street	Facebook Families	Kaleidoscope Creativity	Heydays

How would you rate….?

	Very Good	Good	Neither good nor poor	Poor
Quality	72%	26%	2	1%
Value for money	63%	30%	6%	1%
The whole experience	69%	28%	2	1%

- ● Very Good
- ● Good
- ● Neither good nor poor
- ● Poor
- ● Very Poor

Quality ratings vary by Audience Spectrum group, with ratings for value for money and the whole experience being higher among middle and lower engaged segments

Attenders from the groups typically least likely to attend gave the highest ratings for all three categories.

Notably though, this enthusiasm from lower engaged groups does not necessarily translate into likelihood to recommend the events.
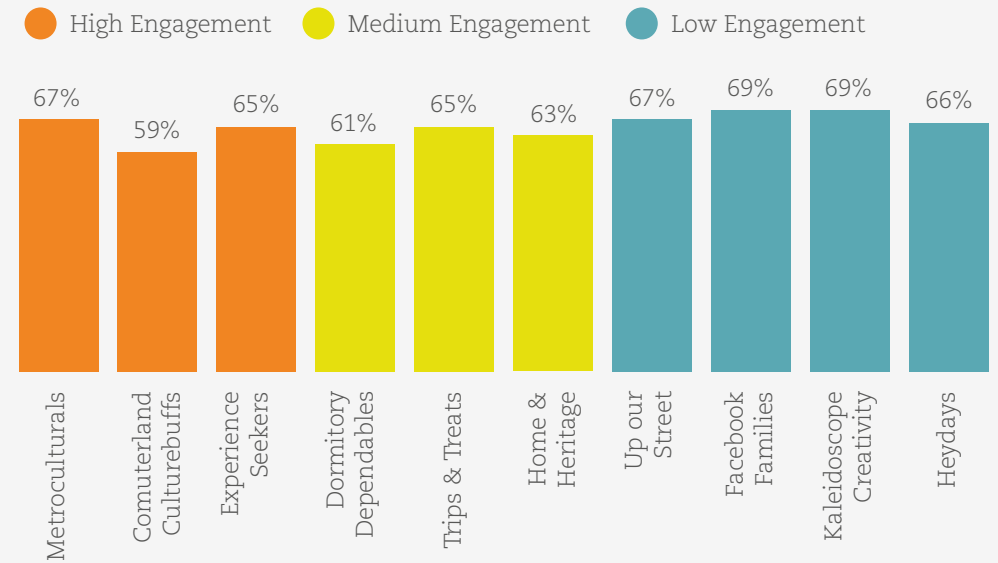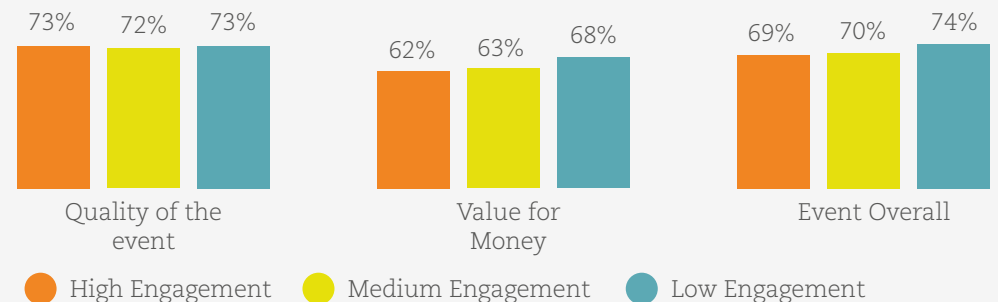
98% of respondents rated the quality of Live Literature events as 'Very Good' or 'Good'

72% 72% rating satisfaction with Quality of the event as very good is markedly higher than other artforms:

- **63%** Outdoor arts
- **67%** Museums
- **64%** Visual arts

% Rating 'Very Good' × Engagement Level

	High Engagement	Medium Engagement	Low Engagement
Quality of the event	73%	72%	73%
Value for Money	62%	63%	68%
Event Overall	69%	70%	74%

- ● High Engagement
- ● Medium Engagement
- ● Low Engagement

TOP TIP: *Net Promoter Scores are included in Audience Finder. Use this function to calculate your overall NPS, as well as to drill down into satisfaction responses from different audience segments.*
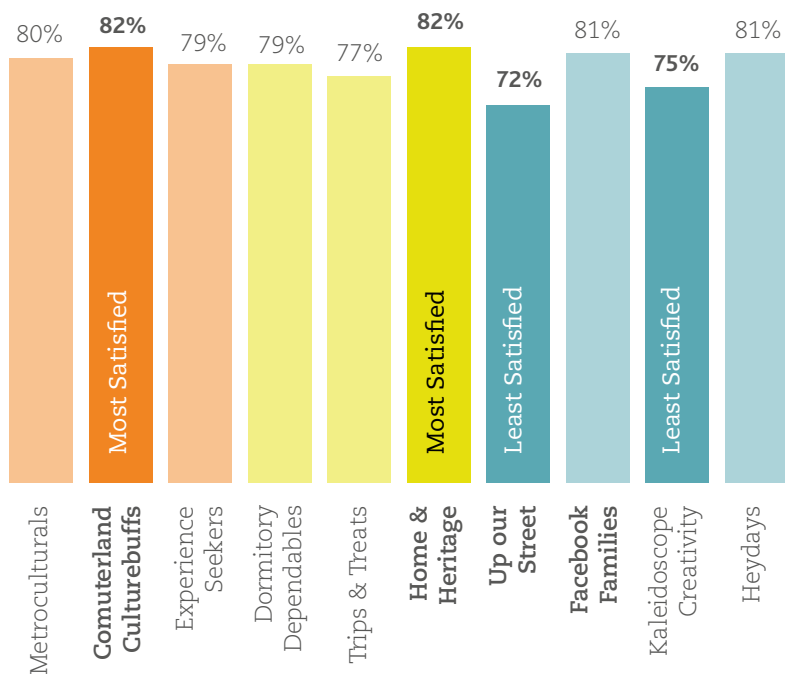
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Net Promoter Scores

Your Net Promoter Score (NPS) is an average score based on how likely your audiences are to recommend you to other people.

NPS × Audience Spectrum

Metroculturals	80%
Comuterland Culturebuffs	82% — Most Satisfied
Experience Seekers	79%
Dormitory Dependables	79%
Trips & Treats	77%
Home & Heritage	82% — Most Satisfied
Up our Street	72% — Least Satisfied
Facebook Families	81%
Kaleidoscope Creativity	75% — Least Satisfied
Heydays	81%

The **most satisfied** Audience Spectrum groups are **Comuterland Culturebuffs** and **Home & Heritage**

The **least satisfied** Audience Spectrum groups are **Kaleidoscope Creativity** and **Up Our Street**

At 79%, NPS scores for Live Literature events are above the Audience Finder average of 74%.

Older audience members were more likely to recommend events, as were White audiences, although the main difference, as noted previously, was with Asian/Asian British audiences.

Spotlight on: Up Our Streets

This group appears to have lower satisfaction with the quality of events (but not with events overall) and a lower likelihood to recommend literature events.

One factor for the latter may be because this group is particularly likely to be motivated by events being 'entertaining' (second highest out of the ten segments).
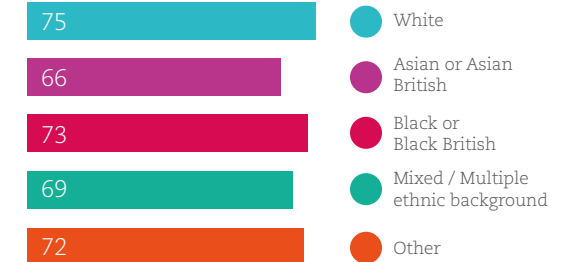
Interestingly, a relatively high proportion of this group reports that '*literature is an important part of who I am*'

Net Promoter Score by...

...Age

16-24	66
25-34	72
35-44	72
45-54	77
55-64	76
64 +	76

...Ethnicity

White	75
Asian or Asian British	66
Black or Black British	73
Mixed / Multiple ethnic background	69
Other	72

...Group type

Adult Groups	79
Families	74
Single adult	70

...Visitor frequency

Repeat visit	77
First visit	70

Spotlight on Event Types

If you're a writer or promoter, Showstats.org can provide insights into a tour across multiple venues. Compare results with peers to get more specific comparators.

There is, of course, a wide variety of literature activity, much of which is outside the scope of this report: events where tickets are not sold, or where no transaction data is captured, or in venues which are not part of Audience Finder. There is also, however, considerable variation even amongst the literature events we do have data for. Comparing different types of Live Literature event highlights how much the average scale and size varies. Storytelling events, for example, tend to have audiences of just a few dozen people with tickets costing under £5, whereas Author Readings are typically more than double that in size and price.
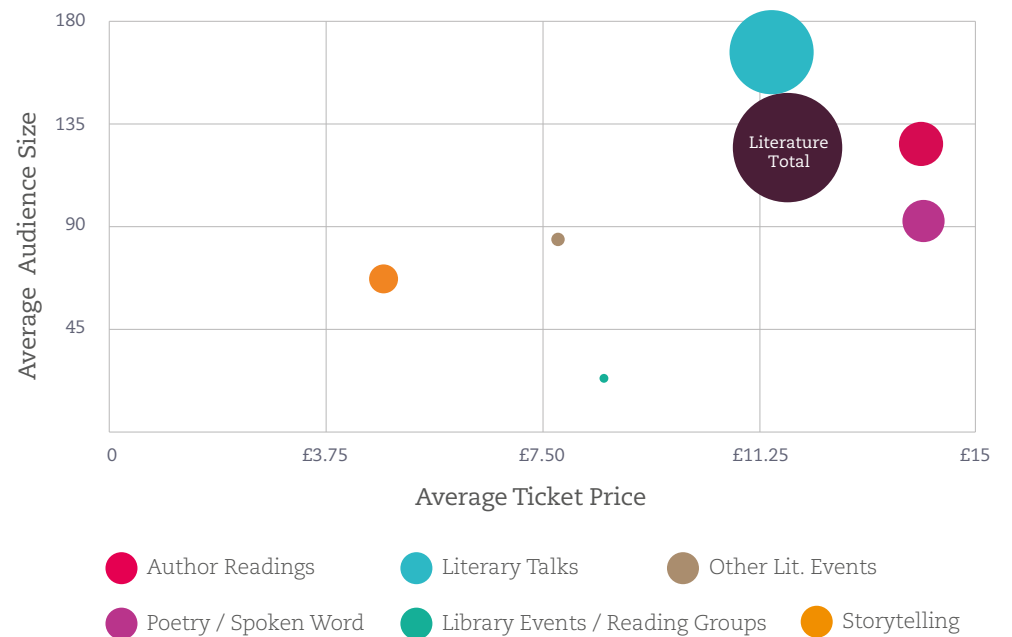
The bubble plot chart shows tickets per performance vs average ticket price by Live Literature Event type, scaled by number of performances. We can see the stark difference in scale and price of Storytelling and Library Events, compared with other event types, in particular Literary Talks, which are the most highly attended.

These differences between types of event, coupled with the relative lack of crossover between types of literature (compared to within specific types of literature or with arts engagement in general) highlight the benefit of being more specific when talking about 'literature' audiences.

	Scale of Events	Average number of tickets sold	Price range	Average income per ticket
Author Readings	Mid	126	High	£14.04
Library Events / Reading Groups	Small	23	Mid	£8.56
Literary Talks	Large	167	Mid	£11.46
Poetry / Spoken Word	Mid	92	High	£14.09
Storytelling	Small	67	Low	£4.74
Other	Mid	85	Mid	£7.76

Ticket Price vs Event Size (scaled by No. Tickets)

- Author Readings
- Literary Talks
- Other Lit. Events
- Poetry / Spoken Word
- Library Events / Reading Groups
- Storytelling

Within **Poetry/Spoken Word**, it was unusual for there to be more than 1,000 people at an event (c. 0.2% of performances) but some of the poets drawing the biggest audiences included Pam Ayres, John Cooper Clarke, Kate Tempest and Benjamin Zephaniah: showing the range of poets and poetry than can achieve popularity.
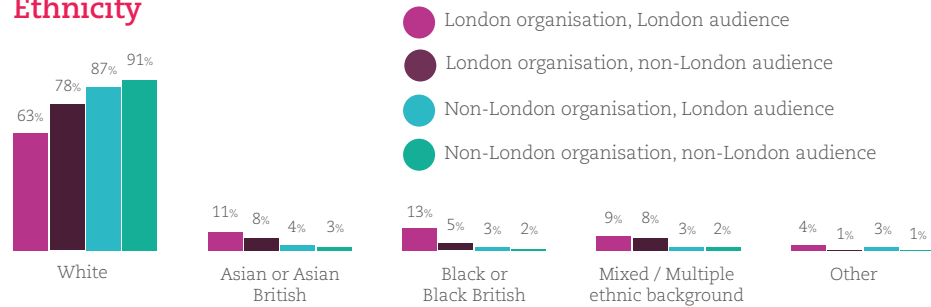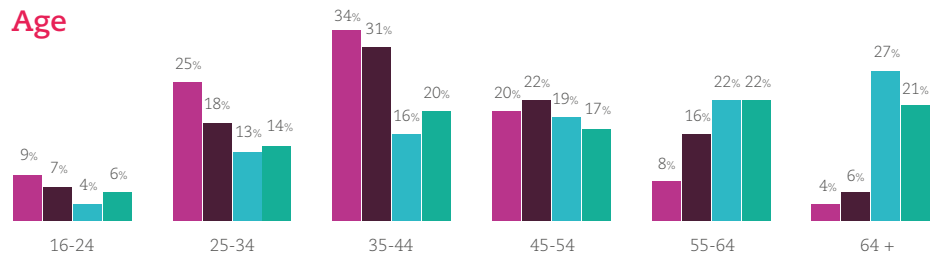
FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *Storytelling has below average ticket yield and smaller than average event sizes, but longest travel times (36% over 2 hours): what opportunities might this indicate?*

Spotlight on London

The make-up and motivations of London and non London audiences vary, partly because of the different profile of London's population. London audiences are younger, more diverse, with more Metroculturals (who are strongly over represented, even compared to the population) and more motivated by learning/professional and academic reasons. Interestingly, it is the location of the organisation, not where people visit from, that seems to make the most difference to audience profiles.

Ethnicity

Legend:
- London organisation, London audience
- London organisation, non-London audience
- Non-London organisation, London audience
- Non-London organisation, non-London audience

White: 63%, 78%, 87%, 91%
Asian or Asian British: 11%, 8%, 4%, 3%
Black or Black British: 13%, 5%, 3%, 2%
Mixed / Multiple ethnic background: 9%, 8%, 3%, 2%
Other: 4%, 1%, 3%, 1%

Age

16-24: 9%, 7%, 4%, 6%
25-34: 25%, 18%, 13%, 14%
35-44: 34%, 31%, 16%, 20%
45-54: 20%, 22%, 19%, 17%
55-64: 8%, 16%, 22%, 22%
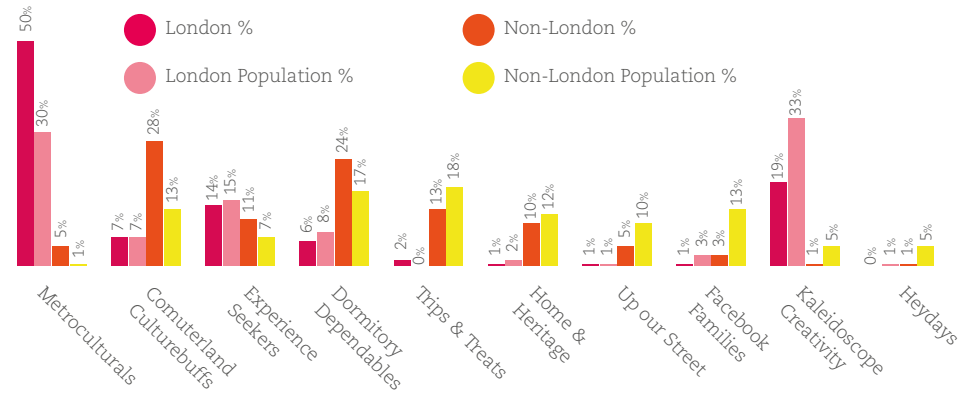64 +: 4%, 6%, 27%, 21%

Audiences attending events in London were more similar, whether they came from within the capital or further afield, than visitors to Non-London venues, who have a far more varied profile.

When local audiences to organisations are compared to the population, they are mostly representative, except that 35 44 year olds are over represented in London and 55 64 year olds outside of it.

Many of the non London responses, however, came from areas with below average proportions of BAME people within the local population.
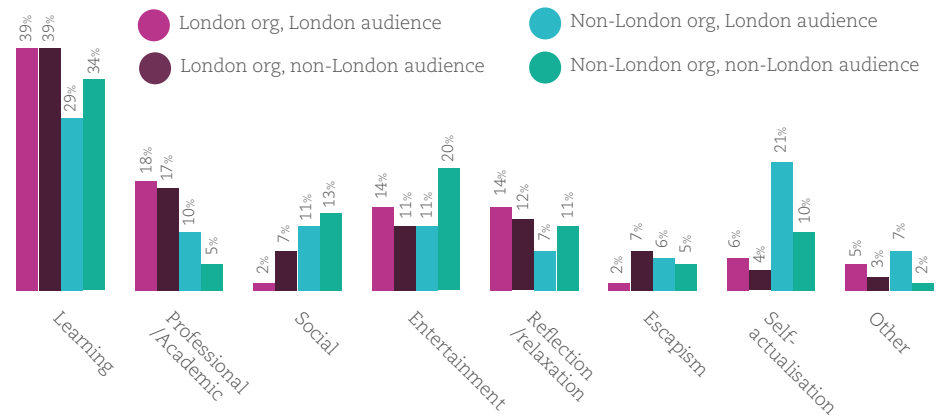
In both areas, those of Mixed/multiple ethnic backgrounds are over represented, but of Asian/Asian British backgrounds under represented.

Audience Spectrum

Legend:
- London %
- Non-London %
- London Population %
- Non-London Population %

Metroculturals: 50%, 30%, 5%, 1%
Commuterland Culturebuffs: 7%, 7%, 28%, 13%
Experience Seekers: 14%, 15%, 11%, 7%
Dormitory Dependables: 6%, 8%, 24%, 17%
Trips & Treats: 2%, 0%, 13%, 18%
Home & Heritage: 1%, 2%, 10%, 12%
Up our Street: 1%, 1%, 5%, 10%
Facebook Families: 1%, 3%, 3%, 13%
Kaleidoscope Creativity: 19%, 33%, 1%, 5%
Heydays: 0%, 1%, 1%, 5%

- Only Metroculturals were substantially over represented in London.

- Outside of London, Commuterland Culturebuffs, Experience Seekers and Dormitory Dependables were also over represented (but other groups, under represented).

Motivations

Legend:
- London org, London audience
- London org, non-London audience
- Non-London org, London audience
- Non-London org, non-London audience

Learning: 39%, 39%, 29%, 34%
Professional /Academic: 18%, 17%, 10%, 5%
Social: 2%, 7%, 11%, 13%
Entertainment: 14%, 11%, 11%, 20%
Reflection /relaxation: 14%, 12%, 7%, 11%
Escapism: 2%, 7%, 6%, 5%
Self-actualisation: 6%, 4%, 21%, 10%
Other: 5%, 3%, 7%, 2%

- 'Learning' was the most frequent main motivation type given by both London and non London audiences, by over a third of each; 'self actualisation' and 'reflection and relaxation' were also given by around one in ten of both.

- However, non London audiences were more likely to be motivated by 'entertainment' rather than 'professional' reasons.

Participating Organisations

Apple and Snakes
ARC Stockton Arts Centre
Arena Theatre
Artrix
Artsadmin
Artsreach
Assembly Hall theatre
Attenborough Centre for Creative Arts
Band on the Wall
Barbican Theatre Plymouth
Bath Tourism
Battersea Arts Centre
Bernie Grant Arts Centre
Birmingham Hippodrome
Birmingham Literature Festival
Birmingham Rep
Blakehay Theatre
Bloomsbury Theatre
Bradford Literature Festival
Bradford Theatres
Brewery Arts Centre
Bridge Theatre London
Bridport Arts Centre
Brighton Dome and Festival Ltd
Bristol Old Vic And Theatre Royal
Trust Ltd
Buxton Opera House
Cadogan Hall
Cafe Oto
Cambridge Junction
Cambridge Literary Festival
Cambridge Live Trust
Cast
Cheltenham Festivals
Chelthenam Lit Fest
Chethams School of Music
Chichester Festival Theatre

Children's Discovery Centre, East London
Chorley Little Theatre
Colchester Arts Centre
Colston Hall
Commonword/Cultureword
Contact
Courtyard Herefordshire
Creative Foundation
Curve Theatre
Customs House
Dancecity
De La Warr Pavilion
De Montfort Hall
Deda
Delapre Abbey
Derby Live
Dulwich Picture Gallery
Durham Book Festival
East Riding Theatre
English Folk Dance and Song Society
English Pen
Exeter Northcott Theatre
Exeter Phoenix
Farnham Maltings
Felixstowe Book Festival
Gala Durham
Greenbelt
Guildhall & Stamford Arts Centre
Halifax Culture Hub
Hampshire Cultural Trust
Harrogate Festival
Harrogate Theatre
Hertford Theatre
Highlights North
HighTide Festival Theatre
HOME
HQ Beck Theatre

HQ Crewe Lyceum
HQ G Live
HQ Southend Theatres
HQ Swindon Theatres
HQ White Rock Theatre
HQ Wycombe Swan
Ilkley Literature Festival
Institute of Contemporary Arts
Jacksons Lane
Kenneth More Theatre
Kiln Theatre
Kings Place
Kirklees Libraries
Lawrence Batley Theatre
Ledbury Poetry Fest
Leeds City
Lincoln Arts Trust
Lincoln Performing Arts Centre
Lowry
Luton Culture
Lyric Hammersmith
MAC Birmingham
Manchester Literature Festival
Marlowe Theatre
Mercury Theatre
Millfield Arts Centre
Minack Theatre
Modern Poetry in Translation
National Centre for Writing
National Theatre
New Theatre Royal
New Wolsey Theatre
New Writing North
New Writing South
Newhampton Arts
Northern Stage
Norwich Arts Centre

Nottingham Lakeside Arts
Nottingham Playhouse
Nuffield Theatre
Old Fire Station
Opera North
Orange Tree Theatre
Oxford Playhouse
Palace Theatre Redditch
Pegasus Theatre
Pitlochry Festival Theatre
Poet in the City
Polka Theatre
Pound Arts
Quad
Queens Hall Arts Centre
Redbridge Drama Centre
Rich Mix
Rose Theatre Kingston
Roses Theatre Tewkesbury
Roundhouse
Royal Court Liverpool
Royal Exchange
Royal Liverpool Philharmonic
Saffron Hall
Sage Gateshead
Seven Stories
Snape Maltings
Soho Theatre
South Hill Park Arts Centre
Spread the Word
St Georges Bristol
Stephen Joseph Theatre
Story Museum
Storyhouse
Taliesin Arts Centre
The Albany
The Apex

The Atkinson
The Bluecoat
The Broadway Barking
The Maltings Theatre & Cinema
The Met
The Print Room
The Reader
The Ropewalk
The Spring
The Stables
The Story Museum
The Word
Theatre by the Lake
Theatre Orchard
Theatre Royal Winchester
Three Choirs
Ticketing Network East Midlands
Tobacco Factory Theatres
Town Hall Symphony Hall
Trinity Laban
Turner Sims
Wales Millennium Centre
Warwick Arts Centre
Watermans Art Centre
Watershed
Watford Palace Theatre
Wiltshire Creative
Wiltshire Music
Worthing Theatres
Writers Centre Norwich
Writing East Midlands
Writing on the Wall
Writing West Midlands
York Theatre Royal

Context and Methodology

Background and Methodology

The Audience Agency collaborates with the organisations in the Live Literature sector using Audience Finder to better understand audiences for Live Literature Events and support the sector to make the case for the impacts of its work. The data included in this report was collected throughout the 2015-19 benchmark years from c.100,000 visitors to 117 venues across England.

Comparisons made in the report are between the stated sample, England population data as per the 2011 census and the benchmark year 2017- 2018 Audience Finder dataset of other artforms (Audience Finder benchmark), which represents 800+ organisations and 30% of households in England. Anecdotal comparisons have also been made with The Audience Agency's other sector specific reporting published from 2018 onwards.

Audience Finder

Audience Finder is a national audience development and data aggregation programme, enabling cultural organisations to share, compare and apply insight. It is developed and managed by The Audience Agency for and with the cultural sector and is funded by the National Lottery through Arts Council England. Audience Finder provides tools for collecting and analysing data in a standardised way which builds a clear picture of audiences locally and nationally. The results help organisations to find new audience opportunities using a range of tools, features and support. These include user-friendly reporting dashboards, online mapping and insight tools and the opportunity to work in collaborative, data-sharing groups.

Audience Spectrum

Audience Spectrum segments the whole UK population by their attitudes towards culture, and by what they like to see and do. There are 10 different Audience Spectrum profiles that you can use to understand who lives in your local area, what your current audiences are like, and what you could do to build new ones. Audience Spectrum is the most accurate tool the sector has ever had to help target audiences and include a wider public. Analysis and customer tagging with Audience Spectrum work at both household and postcode levels, to help cultural organisations understand audience profile and reach, enabling really accurate targeting of activity and communications.

Get in touch to find out more

More about Literature Events audiences

To discover more about research into audiences for literature events, or if you would like to contribute, contact:
Literature@theaudienceagency.org
Policy Research Director, The Audience Agency

Disclaimer

The information contained within this report is not intended to be used as the sole basis for any business decision and is based upon data that is provided by third parties, the accuracy and/or completeness of which it would not be possible and/or economically viable for The Audience Agency to guarantee.

The Audience Agency's services also involve models and techniques based on statistical analysis, probability and predictive behaviour. Accordingly, The Audience Agency is not able to accept any liability for any inaccuracy, incompleteness or other error in this report.

General Enquiries

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