

VIBRANT CULTURE IN PLYMOUTH

Appendix A: Briefing Report

**1.0 Introduction**

Plymouth was designated a priority area in the South West Area Plan 2012-18 for Arts Council England as it had historically been an area of low investment/low engagement.

The challenge was to increase engagement and investment in the city with a clear plan for greater partnership working to develop a joined-up vision and strategy for cultural development in the city. Plymouth City Council had a clear ambition to use culture as a catalyst for growth and to reposition the City in the eyes of residents, visitors and investors. By championing the role of culture in the regeneration of the city by supporting the cultural infrastructure and strengthening the cultural offer in communities that had previously been poorly served, Plymouth would garner multiple economic and social benefits including increased community cohesion. The cultural sector would play a major role in turning international aspiration into reality, supporting Plymouth's ambition to become one of Europe's most vibrant waterfront cities and using the anniversary of Mayflower 400 to raise the international profile of Plymouth.

The plan focused on priority areas, each with clear ambitions to ensure that; increased audiences would engage better with the existing cultural provision; new cultural provision would be developed that would reflect the strengths and make-up of the city; creative talent in the city would be better connected and therefore have increased opportunities to flourish. The strong identities of communities in the city would be reflected through work with artists.

The key initial strategic partnership was established between Arts Council and Plymouth City Council. Plymouth City Council has had a cross-party approach to supporting and advocating for cultural investment for over five years, and continues to do so. Plymouth City Council duplicated this model and also developed a strategic partnership with institutional funding bodies – HLF, Arts Council, Visit Britain – and sought a principle of co-investment, by marbling culture through all strategies and spatial plans and aligning culture to economic development within the local authority.

2.0 Impact

The results of this joint, strategic approach are positive and evident to see. Plymouth City Council has invested £40m capital across projects including the Box, Ocean Studios, Theatre Royal, Market Hall, Elizabethan House, Mount Edgumbe and even a new IMAX cinema.

The Box is a £40m flagship transformational project to engage residents in their City's history, to provide access to new cultural experiences, to drive visitors, to inspire young people and support the wider sector. ACE have invested £4.175million capital funding in The Box. Other notable capital investments by ACE include £5m for Theatre Royal Plymouth to transform front of house and provide a city-centre workshop space for Creative Learning and community. Plymouth City Council have also invested in Ocean Studios in Royal William Yard to provide much-needed artists' studios for the city. There has also been an investment of £1m through ACE from the Treasury to support Plymouth's Market Hall. Due to open in 2018 the Market Hall will be a new kind of digital hub. Situated in Devonport, Plymouth city's transformational docklands, the Market Hall will be a world class centre for digital, research, enterprise and culture.

Similarly, Mayflower 400 was identified as a priority area in the South West Area Plan 2018-20 for Arts Council England. This has resulted in PCC/ACE joint investment in a number of substantial projects for the Mayflower 400 Commemorations £700K investment from ACE into a flagship programme of high profile commissions, 'The Art of the Possible'. Plymouth Culture (NPO) in partnership with Plymouth City Council, Mayflower and ACE have been awarded £425,000 of treasury funding (via ACE) to cultural projects which will mark Mayflower400. In addition to supporting this programme ACE have invested in a Cultural Producer to support Plymouth's delivery of the Mayflower400 Culture Fund.

3.0 National Portfolio Organisations (NPO's)

Arts Council and Plymouth City Council have developed a strong partnership built on trust and a shared vision. By designating Plymouth, a priority area in the South West Area Plan 2012-18 for Arts Council England, a focused and strategic approach was developed to strengthen the cultural offer with the ambition to increase levels of investment and engagement in culture. Plymouth Culture Board (funded jointly by Arts Council England and Plymouth City Council) was established in 2013 to support Plymouth's progression towards a truly international city, with a place-shaping vision for the city to celebrate the past by embracing the present and future. The organisation transitioned into Plymouth Culture which is now the strategic development organisation that exists to support and enable the growth of culture across the city by working closely with and through organisations, individuals and stakeholders.

The expertise that Plymouth Culture brought into the city has worked towards creating high profile platforms to showcase all forms of contemporary and historic arts, culture and heritage through a high quality and sustainable programme of exhibitions and events to ensure an increase in participation in culture especially in deprived communities; develop a resilient cultural sector; nurture the development of artists and broker strategic partnerships, international dialogue, exchange and programming.

It is this strategic approach, through Plymouth Culture, that the conditions for growth and investment were created. As a result six additional organisations received NPO funding in the 2018-2022 round, including Plymouth Culture, KARST, Ocean Studios, The Box, Plymouth Music Zone and Take A Part, joining the existing four NPOs Theatre Royal Plymouth, Real Ideas Organisation (Bridge), Literature Works and Barbican Theatre. In the 2018-22 round the now 10 organisations share a total of £16m over four years. This is an increase of 39%, the most significant increase in investment by ACE in any part of England.

This NPO cluster represents a cultural leadership group actively shaping the offer and strategic alignment of culture across the city. Each organisation in this portfolio brings a specific expertise, contributing to the cultural ecology of Plymouth:

- KARST - is the largest contemporary art space in Plymouth, showcasing international, national and regional artists and curators. They host 5 exhibitions per year attracting up to 600 visitors per exhibition. The work of this organisation is recognised nationally and has resulted in £270,000 ACE capital funding and £70,000 trusts and foundations grants to enable KARST to be a BAS9 host venue in 2021.
- Barbican Theatre - has specialised in outreach theatre-in-education work for over 40 years as well as talent development for new and emerging local artists. The theatre offers 10 workshops each week for young people and received a £75,000 NPO uplift to deliver FUSE:Diverse Dance in 2018-22.

- Plymouth Music Zone - have worked extensively with children, young people and vulnerable adults to engage and inspire them through the power of music. They offer 33 opportunities each week for young people to engage with and deliver a staggering 2402 workshops per year. The work results in 80 performances a year reaching diverse audiences and communities. The organisations work has recently been acknowledged through the Heart of the Arts Award 2020 for best arts initiative.
- Take A Part - are national leaders in community based place making and socially engaged practice. They create new audiences for contemporary art and creative practice in places where there has been little engagement and investment. For example, they have placed co-created or community commissioned art work in the National Marine Aquarium (330,000 footfall) and the Teats Hill Amphitheatre (180,000 footfall), exposing new audiences to contemporary art. Their model has been sought out and replicated internationally and they curate the UK's only biennial symposium dedicated to socially engaged practice.
- Theatre Royal Plymouth - is well known for outstanding theatre performances and sold 374,044 tickets in 2018-19 across 92 productions. The organisation is equally invested in creating opportunities for engagement for those currently less engaged in cultural activity. This includes working with up to 50 schools per year, and offering 35 sessions per week to young people through the young theatre company. They promote access to the arts and career opportunities by delivering 50 tours per year to show what the theatre and TR2 have to offer. The contribution of the theatre to the cultural fabric of the city was made more visible through the arrival of Messenger, an inspirational piece of public art to complete the regeneration project. This reached across the world with 590 pieces of media coverage with a global audience reach of 63.52m.
- Real Ideas Organisation (RIO) - as a Bridge organisation work across the South West with schools and young people to support engagement with and access to arts, culture and digital opportunities. They deliver over 200 workshops and events per year with over 500 young people taking part in Future Make and 912 young people joining the Game Changer programme.

(This is not an exhaustive list and reference to the work of Literature Works, Plymouth Culture and The Box can be found within the later sections of this report).

4.0 Investment

The strategic partnership with ACE has been a catalyst for cultural development across the city. The joint investment by PCC and ACE has created interest and confidence amongst other funders.

In addition to ACE funding The Box has leveraged £15.8m Heritage Lottery Funding (HLF), one of the largest awards made in 2017, £2m Coastal Communities and £100k The Contemporary Art Society award, the largest national award given, to purchase new art works.

The Box is not the only cultural project benefiting from strategic investment. KARST was awarded £270,000 in ACE capital funding to transform the contemporary visual arts gallery, ahead of the arrival of the British Art Show 9 (BAS9), enabling the gallery to become one of four host venues. This has recently been matched by £70k from trusts and foundations to make the project possible. The return of BAS in 2021 is an indication of the confidence in the city and a national interest in the city's transformation over the past 10 years since hosting BAS7 in 2010.

The alignment of culture with other sectors has been an intentional and highly productive strategy. Extending the cultural offer to include the creative industries has secured £3.5m of investment from DCMS through the Creative Development Fund (CDF). The project, iMayflower, aims to support Plymouth to develop culture-led economic growth and productivity strategies by investing in digital creative industries.

The Creative Industries is growing nationally, often at a rate faster than other sectors, and saw 3.4% growth in 2017 compared to 2016. This picture is reflected in Plymouth with the Creative Industries worth £128m in 2017 accounting for 21.6% increase in GVA since 2011. The sector saw a 36.5% growth in full-time equivalent jobs between 2011 and 2017, providing 3,366 FTE jobs in 2017 (Source: AMORE Economic Model & Database, May 2019). This growth, should it continue at this rate, will exceed the overall projected growth of 3% per year across the entire LEP area. Given that research shows jobs in this sector are less likely to be affected by automation and that digital and creative thinking skills are highly sought after by employers, we are right to focus attention in this area and build the sectors capacity.

The Market Hall, Devonport, is an example of a project operating in this cross section between creativity, art, heritage, digital and culture. The physical space will offer an immersive experience as well as creating support infrastructure for start-ups and career route-ways for young people based around the future skills agenda. As such it has attracted co-investment from Treasury, PCC, HCA and MHCLG to the sum of £7.4m. Of particular note is the 15m diameter flat floor 210 degree immersive dome, the first of its kind in Europe, and the start of the first immersive tech hub in Plymouth, offering the city a genuine USP.

Culture continues to be marbled through cross sector, cross city projects to great effect. The recent announcement of the High Street Heritage Action Zone funding aligns urban planning and high street revival with community engagement activity and a culture programme. It is likely that Plymouth will once again be a flagship project within this programme.

5.0 Audience Engagement

Whilst growth in cultural organisations and sector investment is a significant achievement and a mark of the city's cultural health, it is not the only metric to consider. One of the key drivers for PCC's investment in culture was, and continues to be, the desire to engage new audiences, reaching every corner of our Plymouth communities to support inclusivity and community cohesion.

Whilst we know this remains a challenge, several initiatives have focused specific attention on building audiences and reaching communities through arts and culture. The Illuminate Festival is an example of a large scale cultural event that has seen audiences grow over recent years. The 2019 edition saw an audience of 50,000 attend over three days, experiencing 53 installations by 134 artists. This year a quiet hour was offered for those with multi-sensory issues and was enjoyed by 110 people. The event achieved a total social media reach of 417,383.

The Mayflower community sparks programme is specifically designed to enable communities to develop their ideas in response to the mayflower themes and get involved in the commemoration year. By working with communities to highlight the opportunity, develop the ideas and submit an application the fund has been able to support 59 Projects, distributing over £150k. The programme builds on the vital sparks fund and is a model which can be deployed to other initiatives to support communities to engage with and devise their own cultural projects that are authentic and relevant.

The Box has already embarked on an exemplary programme of community engagement in order to shape content and build new audiences. It has always been of the highest priority to ensure that The Box is a cultural asset for the people of Plymouth that truly reflects their stories, their histories and their collections. As such, the Heritage Lottery Funded, Box on Tour programme, impacted on 114,500 individuals, with over 53,000 people visiting the 'Plymouth: From destruction to Construction' at House of Fraser temporary exhibition.

The Box community programme is specifically designed to target a range of key communities and audience groups in Plymouth. Comprised of four projects, including Maker Memories, Plymouth After Dark, Your Recipes Your Heritage and Always Welcome.

Maker Memories is a partnership project exploring a small corner of SE Cornwall that has existed as a military camp, a holiday camp for local families and more recently an arts and cultural hub. Oral history recordings, films and photographs have been brought together and will go into Photo Album as one of the community response displays.

Over 16,000 people visited or took part in the Maker Memories project. The work produced was seen by an online audience of over 230,000

“The Maker project has brought many people together who would not otherwise have met, and strengthened a sense of belonging”

Participant Feedback

Plymouth After Dark is a five year project explores the city when the lights go down, through people, places, stories and objects. This will result in an exhibition at The Box in 2021/2022. The project includes oral history recordings, active collection of objects that reflect Plymouth’s fascinating and varied nightlife and explores the roles that support workers play in facilitating our nights out.

The project has worked with families, schools exploring young people’s alcohol use as well as a number of vulnerable groups including sex workers, migrants and people with experience of substance abuse. To date, nearly 1,400 people have participated in activities and events as part of Plymouth After Dark.

Your Recipes, Your Heritage explores our eating habits and fashions over just the past century, using food as a medium for engagement. This partnership project with the meals on wheels service, CaterEd, delved into the personal recipe books of the people of Plymouth to create new and exciting heritage themed menus. The project tackles social isolation and creates valuable opportunities for people of all ages to come together to share both meals and stories.

‘Always Welcome’ builds on The Box’s work with people with dementia by offering an open, inclusive drop in sessions targeting people who are experiencing, loneliness and ill health.

Although each project is very different the principals are the same, engage communities around issues, thematics and topics that matter to them and use Plymouths unique heritage assets to explore these and create artistic responses that can be shared with the wider community to extend conversation. It is this embedded, long term approach that will build sustainable audiences for The Box and support the ambitious target of attracting 250,000 visitors per annum.

6.0 Young People

The 2018 Plymouth Survey shows that those aged 16-24 were significantly more likely to disagree with the statements ‘i am proud of Plymouths place in history’ and ‘Plymouth has a lot to offer’. Whilst the responses do not solely reference arts and culture, nor are they uncommon amongst this age range, this is a priority area for the city.

We want to see young people engaged in cultural opportunities because we know, through evidence, that it supports their mental health, improves educational attainment and fosters community cohesion. The NPO’s are acutely aware of the need to extend their audience reach and support authentic, sustainable community engagement. In 2018/19 the NPO’s delivered 1031 cultural

experiences, including performances, exhibitions, festivals and screenings, reaching over 630,000 people. Of these 226 were designed specifically for children and young people and reached an audience of over 52,000 (2018-19 Annual Data Survey Official Stats ACE).

The work of the Plymouth Cultural Education Partnership is developing a collaborative approach to creating opportunities for young people to engage in cultural opportunities. Established in 2015 the partnership now comprises 20 partner organisations and is committed to:

1. Placing children and young people at the centre of Plymouth's cultural vision.
2. Providing equality of access to cultural activities for children and young people in the city.
3. Increasing pathways into the creative industries for children and young people in Plymouth.
4. Galvanising cross sector collaboration to optimise cultural opportunities for children and young people.
5. Advocacy for cultural education for children and young people on a local, regional and national level.

To date the partnership has secured £1m of funding through the Youth Performance Programme, overseen by ACE, for a new-play making programme for young people called With Flying Colours. The project will work with over 3,000 young people, focusing on areas of high deprivation and low cultural engagement. The project is working with schools to co-design the performances with young people which will be performed in pop-up locations and community settings including libraries. As with the example of The Box engagement programme, this is authentic co-creation, engaging young people and communities in cultural activity through themes that are relevant to them and in locations which are accessible.

The Box have developed a brand new offer for schools including a new series of facilitated school sessions for all ages between EYFS-KS5 including for pupils with SEND. The sessions focus on the National Curriculum, providing structured sessions for learning across a variety of subject areas such as art, history, geography and STEM subjects.

The schools programme has been developed in consultation with the Teachers Ambassadors network which comprises 53 Teacher Ambassadors from around 30 schools across Plymouth and the surrounding areas.

When The Box opens we estimate that we will provide approximately 228 facilitated school visits per year reaching over 6,500 school children, in addition to providing 15 – 20 free online resources for schools and 22 school loans boxes available to hire.

Plymouth Culture has begun a small project to map the current audience reach of arts organisations, identify audience segments and associated cultural preferences and identify long term engagement strategies. Whilst in its early stages, this work shows that communities least likely to engage in culture, categorised by the audience agency as Kaleidoscope Creativity and Facebook Families, are located within the North of the City, Devonport and pockets of the City Centre. Whilst these audiences are less likely to see art as important to their lives, they will often engage in community festivals and music, which in both categories can be considered a gateway cultural offer. In fact Nationally these segments account for up to 20% of ticket income for music events/performances. (Please see Appendix B for outline data relating to cultural segment, geographic location and cultural preference). (Source: Audience Finder Ticketing Data 2018-19)

7.0 Music report update

We recognise the importance of the music sector to the cultural ecology of the city and in developing its reputation as a cultural destination. In recent years, however, the music sector has felt somewhat disconnected from the wider cultural ambitions of the city and several music venue closures have added to the sectors fragility.

Cllr Tudor Evans has spearheaded an initiative to develop the music sector by, firstly, commissioning a report to understand the challenges and opportunities surrounding Plymouths grassroots music venues (GMV) and, secondly, taking forward an action plan based on the reports recommendations. (Please see Appendix C for full Music Report and Appendix D for Music Report action plan)

Despite the venue closures the remaining grass roots music venues continue to deliver a diverse programme of live music events. In the last 12 months 294,216 people attended one of 2829 live music events in Plymouth. These events featured 8770 performances and provided employment opportunities for 31,117 musicians. Collectively, these events boosted the local cultural economy by £4,083,555. These events produce benefits to the wider night-time economy; for every £10 spent at a grassroots music venue, £17 is spent elsewhere in the nighttime economy. This equates to a spend of £6,942,043 elsewhere in the economy by visitors to grassroots music venues. Impressively, these engagement and economic outputs have been achieved by a venue circuit that is currently operating at an average annual capacity of only 53%.

The music report clearly demonstrates the resilience of the venues but we acknowledge their vulnerability and the untapped potential of the sector for the city. Current events are not operating at capacity and present an opportunity to draw in increased and new audiences. We know from the audience finder data that music is often a gateway cultural offer for less engaged audiences and is an important component in reaching different communities, ages and socio-economic groups. Based on the recommendations of the music report, we accept the need to shore up the grassroots venues and embark on building audiences for live music, both within and beyond the city, so that Plymouth can reclaim its status as a regional hub for live music. Work in this regard includes (please see Music Report Action Plan for full list of actions taken and planned):

- PCC has and will continue to proactively support and signpost grassroots music venues who are eligible to take advantage of the governments recent announcement to halve business rates for GMVs;
- PCC will adopt the principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 relating to the Agents of Change principles which will give music venues additional protection when new developments are proposed;
- The Grass Roots Music Alliance Plymouth has been formed and is already driving collaborative activity within the sector and providing a representative voice to liaise with Plymouth Culture;
- PCC have committed to developing the music promotion space within the Whats on Plymouth website so that it is free of charge, accessible and mirrors the creative aesthetic of the music sector.

We recognise that grassroots music venues are one element of the music sector jigsaw. In order to create a vibrant music scene in Plymouth we accept the need for additional venues and commit to begin the search for two suitable locations/venues to house a mid-size (500) and academy size (1500) music venue. We will explore the viability of repurposing existing, disused buildings as well as new opportunities that may present themselves. This work will be done in collaboration with the grassroots music sector to ensure there is no detrimental effect and we have faith in Plymouths ability to build new audiences for live music.

8.0 Culture Strategy

Plymouth has, undoubtedly, evolved as a cultural destination over the last 10 years. In order to continue to strategically position culture as a driving force for regeneration, economic and social prosperity, a refreshed culture strategy is needed.

The current arts and culture strategy 'Vital Spark' was produced in 2009 and was intended to cover a period until 2020. The city has changed significantly in this time frame and a refreshed strategy is now necessary in order to outline the city's ambition and define the role of arts and culture in driving forward transformational change.

The strategy will be a key document in galvanising the sector and identifying investment priorities for the next 10 years. The city has already seen significant growth and development, with culture being a catalyst for much of this. 2020 will be an important milestone, with the year long Mayflower 400 commemoration programme shining a spotlight on Plymouth to a National and International audience.

Using Mayflower 400 as a springboard, the strategy will be aspirational whilst building on our proven track record; it will set a vision for the future which acknowledges the city's heritage and propels us into a new era where culture is at the heart of the city's place-making agenda. Plymouth is a city of outstanding culture for all and we will use the momentum of the strategy to make this visible to the world.

The Visitor Plan has identified brilliant culture and heritage as a key theme. The culture strategy will ensure alignment to this sector and plan, recognising music and the wider night-time economy as a priority in building a vibrant cultural offer.

To ensure that the strategy is written and owned by the city, we have mandated Plymouth Culture to lead the development of the culture strategy. The aim is to align cultural activity with other city agendas and as such the strategy development will engage with a wide range of cross sector stakeholders. We are seeking to amplify the cultural assets of the city rather than developing an unsustainable event or anniversary driven strategy. The purpose is about making culture in Plymouth visible, accessible and investable so that we can grow audiences for culture, achieve positive social impact and drive economic investment.

It is through the shared narrative of a culture strategy that we will continue to build the profile of culture in Plymouth, identifying ourselves as one of Europe's most vibrant waterfront cities.

APPENDIX B - Audience Segmentation Data

Facebook Families

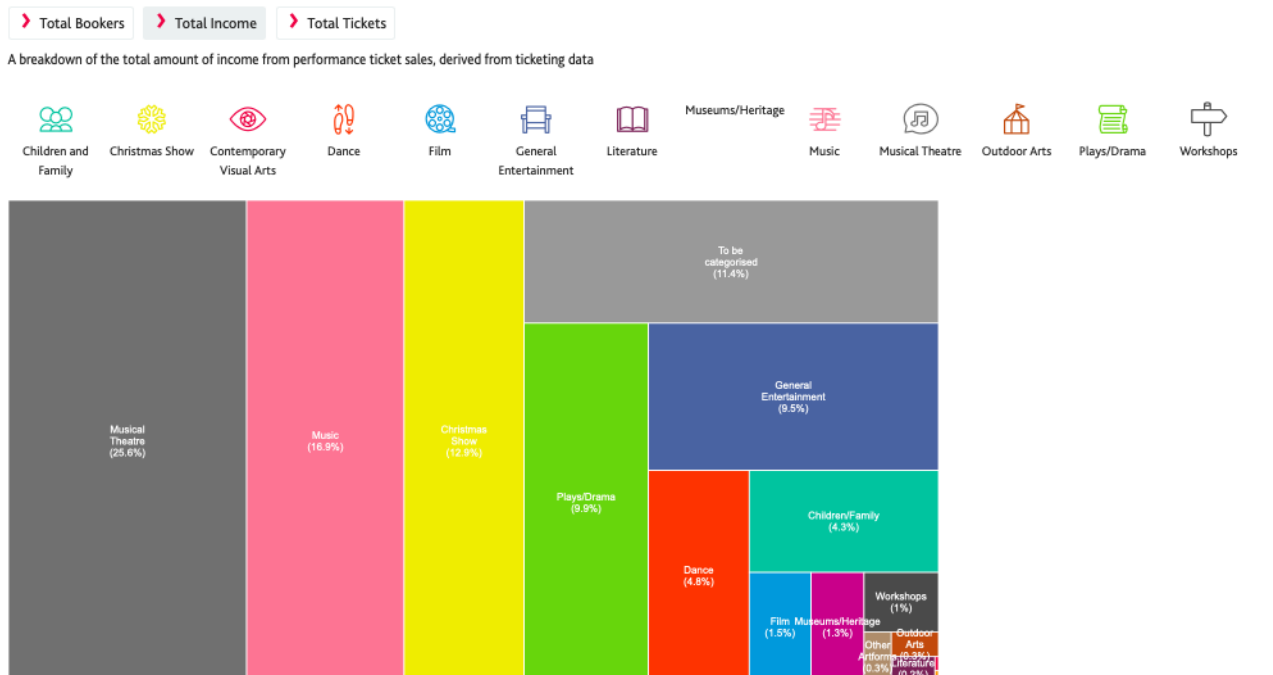
- A younger, cash-strapped group living in suburban and semi-urban areas of high unemployment
- Least likely to think themselves as arty, arts and culture generally play a very small role in the lives
- Less than a third believe that the arts is important
- Often go out as a family: cinema, live music, eating out and pantomime being most popular

Cultural interests

Culture doesn't play a central role in lives of this group and they are the segment least likely to say "I am an arty person". Despite low overall engagement, they are occasionally doing some activities which meet the needs of their families and within their budgets and locality. Guaranteed family enjoyment and fun will take precedence over consciously engaging with the arts, museums or heritage.

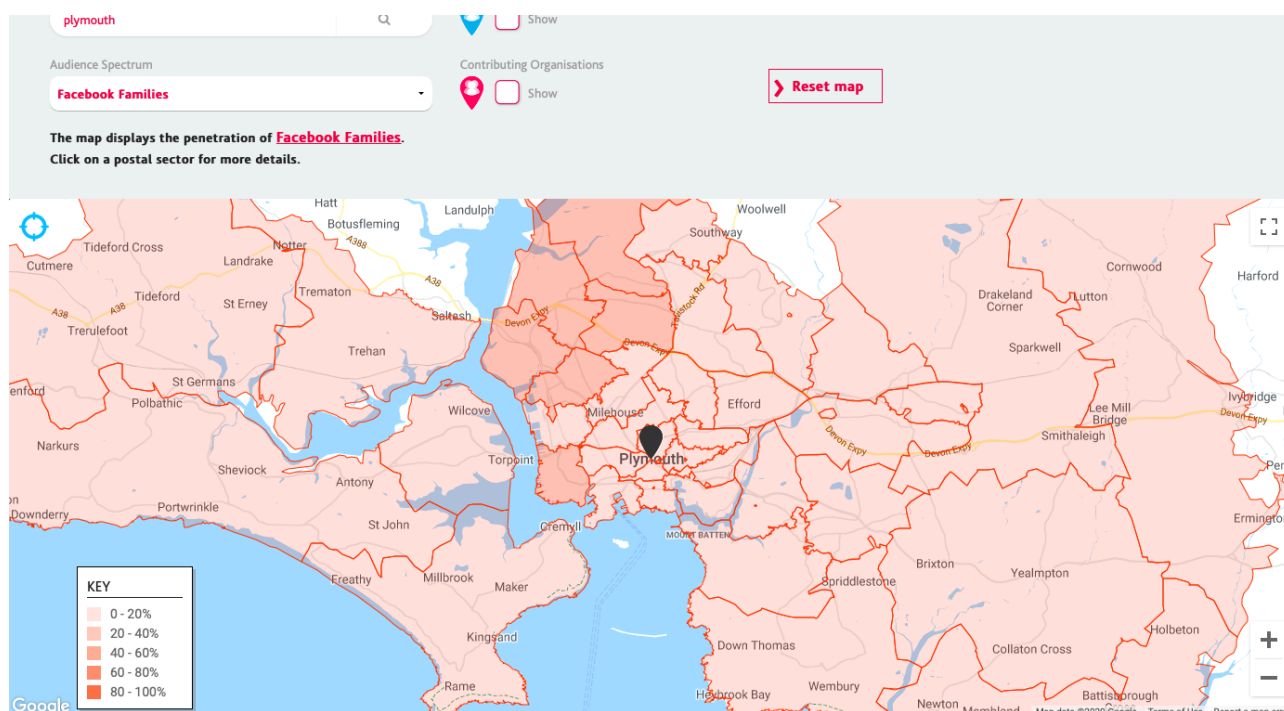
Most likely to be interested and engage in the popular and mainstream, they are also more likely than the average to see work that is culturally specific. Their choices are particularly family-oriented such as cinema, pantomime, live music, musicals, carnival, circus and plays/drama. Occasionally, maybe once or twice a year, a museum could be an easier option, or a trip to a local heritage site, if it is free.

FACEBOOK FAMILIES BY ARTFORM



Sources: Audience Finder Ticketing Data 2018-19

Cultural Preferences



Geographical location

Kaleidoscope Creativity

- A group characterised by low levels of cultural engagement
- Often living in and around city areas where plenty of opportunities are within easy reach
- Mix of ages, living circumstances, resources and cultural backgrounds
- For many low incomes and unemployment can present barriers to accessing some cultural provision
- Two thirds annually engage with more popular and accessible culture, some of this in the local community and outside the mainstream
- Free, local events like outdoor arts, festivals and carnivals may appeal, and so might popular offerings like musicals and music events

Cultural interests

Kaleidoscope Creativity have a comparatively strong leaning towards culturally specific festivals and dance events, and especially those of African or South East Asian style or origin. A significant proportion also enjoy carnivals. However, despite having very good access to other arts and cultural events and opportunities from the western mainstream they are amongst those least likely to attend, and this is most true of classical or contemporary events.

Artforms such as film and live music are popular, whilst musical tastes are wide ranging, from soul, hip-hop and R&B to more culturally specific music, reflecting the diversity of backgrounds from which they're drawn. About a quarter will attend such popular events annually, which is much lower than average.

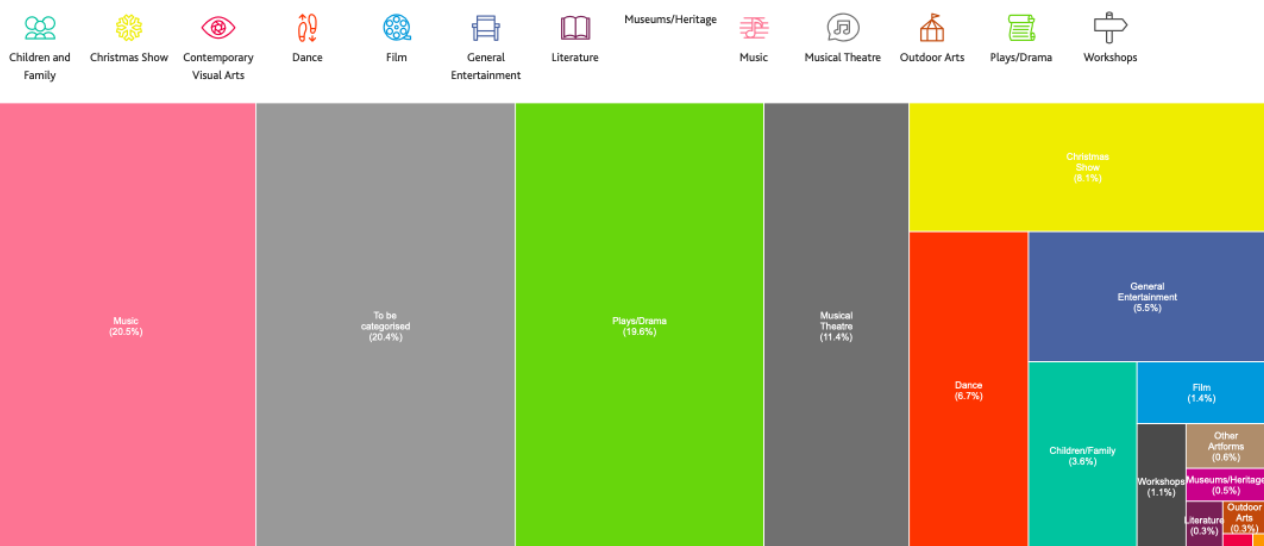
They are more positively disposed to arts events than to museum or heritage offerings. Very few have membership of the National Trust or English Heritage. This supports the indication that they don't tend to go to traditional cultural hubs or centres and are more likely to engage in the arts when it is outside these traditional places in a community setting. Such a rejection of conventional provision is perhaps reflected by an above average number feeling that the arts is not for the likes of them; whilst at the same time an above average proportion see themselves as "arty people".

Cultural Preferences

KALEIDOSCOPE CREATIVITY BY ARTFORM

Total Bookers
 Total Income
 Total Tickets

A breakdown of the total amount of income from performance ticket sales, derived from ticketing data



Sources: Audience Finder Ticketing Data 2018-19

Geographic Location

