

Culture Plan Update
Appendix A: Briefing Report



1.0 Introduction

The Culture Plan (Appendix 1) was adopted by PCC in March 2021 and published in May 2021. The Plan is the culmination of extensive consultation with stakeholders and part of a robust process to co-design the ten year strategy for Culture.

The co-design process was conducted between April 2020 - January 2021 with the support of external facilitators, Arts Development Company Dorset, and included:

- 40 one-to-one interviews with stakeholders
- 3 facilitated workshops
- 3 consultation workshops
- 5 focus groups (conducted with the support of partner organisations Barbican Theatre Plymouth, Funky Llama Steering Group, Beyond Face, students from Plymouth Marjon University and the Free-lance Taskforce)

To support the development of the Culture Plan, Plymouth Culture commissioned the Audience Agency to collate and analyse data relating to cultural audiences, Plymouth residents and the cultural sector. This was designed to better understand the economic and social impact of the sector across the city and begin the process to using data to drive decision making within the sector. It is this work that forms the basis of this report and will be discussed in further detail.

2.0 Culture Plan Priorities

The Culture Plan has at its core a focus on people, place and planet. As a direct response to the Arts Council Let's Create Strategy and in alignment with the Plymouth Plan, Plymouth residents are at the forefront of the Culture Plan. This is reflected throughout the document and is not simply about growing audiences but is about genuine engagement leading to co-creation.

The Vision

Plymouth is a magnet city, attracting artists, creatives and social activists. Our city's appeal is characterised by our commitment to people and planet and evidenced by our unique cultural offer that reflects, includes and values our diverse communities.

Key Driver

We will use culture and creativity to nurture community engagement, building happy, healthy, empowered and connected communities.

Ambition Statements

We will make cultural encounters part of the everyday for everyone.

We will develop an exemplary model of co-creation where our audiences are active participants, making our cultural offer authentic and relevant.

We will embed equality at every level of the sector to actively support diversity of voice and celebrate the creativity in everyone.

3.0 Data - Cultural Audiences

The research commissioned by Plymouth Culture, in support of the Culture Plan development, provides an overview of engagement levels as well as audience segmentation to indicate potential audiences and likely engagement (See Appendix 2).

In summary, the report describes the cultural engagement of the population of Plymouth as more youthful than in comparator cities, in line with the general demographic of the city, and of a social demographic that shows a mix of more moderate engagement with culture, typical of the South West region, with an injection of more culturally-engaged 'Experience Seekers' typical of a university city.

The more detailed analysis in the report shows the gender balance amongst Plymouth residents is the same as across England as a whole; but amongst those engaging with culture at Plymouth orgs, females are over-represented.

Overall, Plymouth skews slightly younger than England as a whole, with a larger proportion of 16-24s and a smaller proportion of those aged 25-64. This is amplified in the age profile of culturally active Plymouth residents, which has a significant over-representation of 16- 24 year olds. This is not a picture that has previously been reflected in the Plymouth Survey when young people have been asked about the pride they have in Plymouth's history or if they feel there is a lot to do in the city; which has previously been equated to engagement in culture.

Plymouth is less ethnically diverse than England as a whole, but the profile of those engaging with culture in Plymouth is more diverse than we would see if all ethnic groups took part in proportion to their size in the population. All ethnic groups other than White British are over-represented amongst Plymouth-resident cultural attenders, in particular those who identify as Asian or Asian British.

Plymouth has slightly higher levels of disability amongst the population than found across England as a whole. This is not the case amongst cultural attenders, where we see an under-representation of those whose daily activities are limited by a long-term illness or disability.

This data report is useful to gain an overview of whether or not the audiences of cultural organisations are proportionally representative of the population of Plymouth. However, as is outlined in the report, this data was drawn from only five cultural organisations at the time, who return data through Audience Finder and is therefore limited (Plymouth Arts Cinema, Theatre Royal Plymouth, Barbican Theatre Plymouth, KARST and Real Ideas).

To provide a wider understanding of the audience profile, that goes beyond characteristics and considers preferences and behaviours, the report also considered Plymouth residents and audiences in terms of the Audience Spectrum. It concluded that:

- Plymouth has an over-representation of less-engaged Audience Spectrum segments. 21% of adults fall into one of the 'Highly engaged' Audience Spectrum segments, 42% a Medium Engagement segment, 37% a Lower Engagement segment. This compares with 25%, 41% and 33% of adults in England as a whole.
- According to the TGI (Target Group Index) survey, adults in Plymouth are less likely than those elsewhere in England to attend almost all areas of arts and culture – most notably Opera, Museums, Jazz, Classical music, Ballet, and Theatre.
- The profile overall for Plymouth cultural organisations broadly reflects the Plymouth population, but there are some notable differences:
 - The highly engaged Experience Seekers are over-represented (27% of Plymouth residents at Plymouth organisations vs. 16% in the population)
 - The medium engaged Trips & Treats group slightly under-represented (18% vs. 21% of all Plymouth residents)
 - The less engaged Facebook Families segment is more under-represented (7% of the Plymouth-resident audience vs. 14% of the population)
 - The three largest Audience Spectrum segments are Experience Seekers, Trips & Treats and Dormitory Dependables (13%).

4.0 Social Impact and Community Engagement

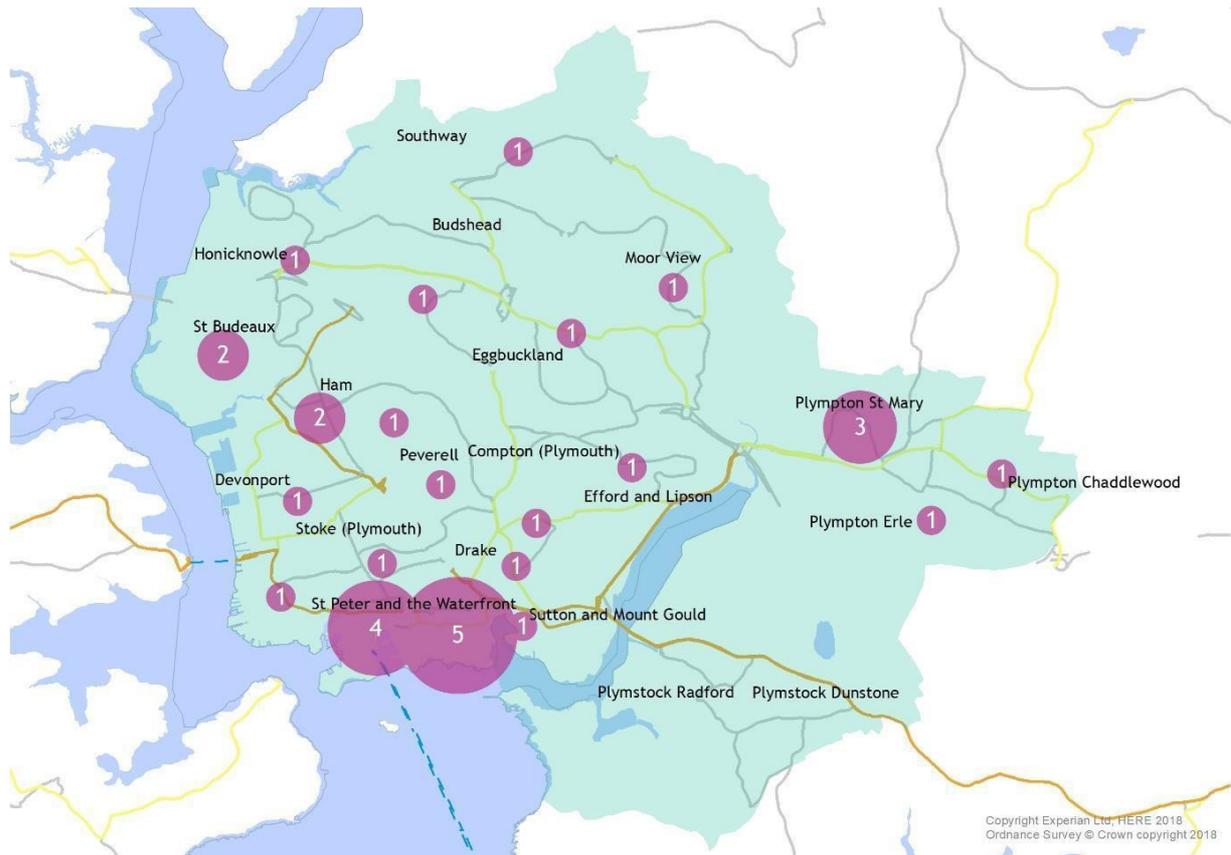
One of the key drivers for PCC's investment in culture continues to be the desire to engage new audiences, reaching every corner of our Plymouth communities to support inclusivity and community cohesion.

The data report started to show some early mapping of engagement cold spots across the city. For example we know that in general terms 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. (Source: Audience Finder Ticketing Data 2018-19)

It is important, therefore, to recognise that attendance at the city's ticketed or paid for or venue based cultural programmes is not the only measure of cultural engagement across the city. In fact, communities all over Plymouth have access to, and are engaging with, an extensive range of cultural opportunities. This was strongly reflected within the Social Impact report produced by The Audience Agency to accompany the Culture Plan (See Appendix 3).

Social impact is clearly high on the agenda for most cultural organisations in the city, and there is an understanding of the responsibility of cultural organisations to engage and connect the less culturally active in 'usual' times, that has developed into considerable 'duty of care' activity during the pandemic. As the map shows, even just this small selection of cultural organisations have an extensive reach across Plymouth:

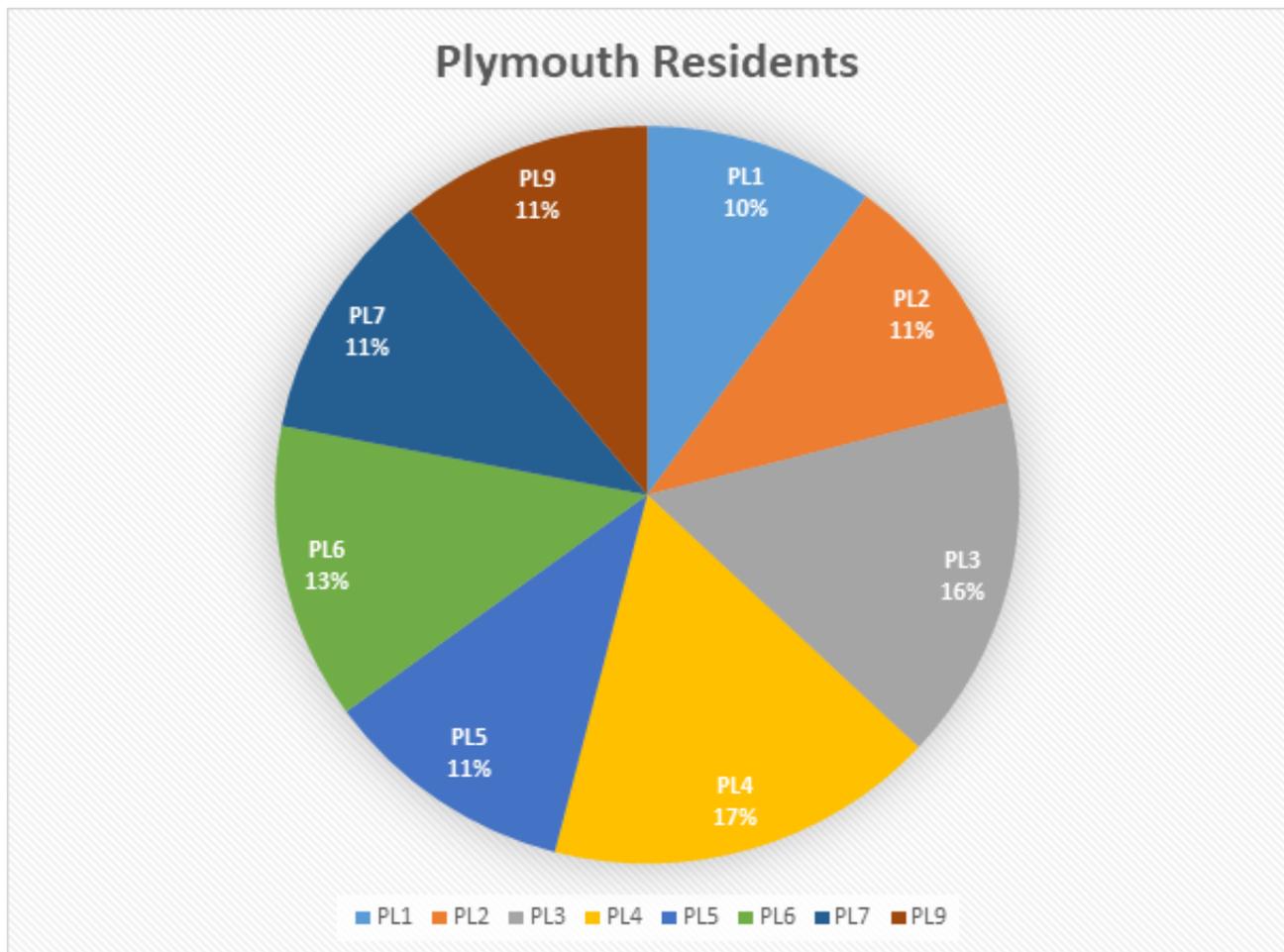
Number of organisations interviewed who are focusing work in each postal sector



As the Social Impact report shows we have many examples of outstanding community engagement within the cultural sector that we could discuss. In addition to those listed in the report it is worth considering The Box, Mayflower 400 Sparks and Illuminate.

4.1 The Box

When it opened in September 2020 The Box welcomed 33k visits up until December 2020, 77% of which were by Plymouth residents. Continued Covid related closures meant that the venue did not open again until 18th May 2021 but since then has received 100k visits; 37k visits to the Mayflower400: Legend & Legacy exhibition with 27.19k of these from Plymouth residents. A similar pattern is emerging for the recently opened Songlines exhibition which has seen 7k visits, 3.6k from Plymouth residents. In terms of the geographical spread of the Plymouth visitors this is relatively even across all Plymouth postcodes:

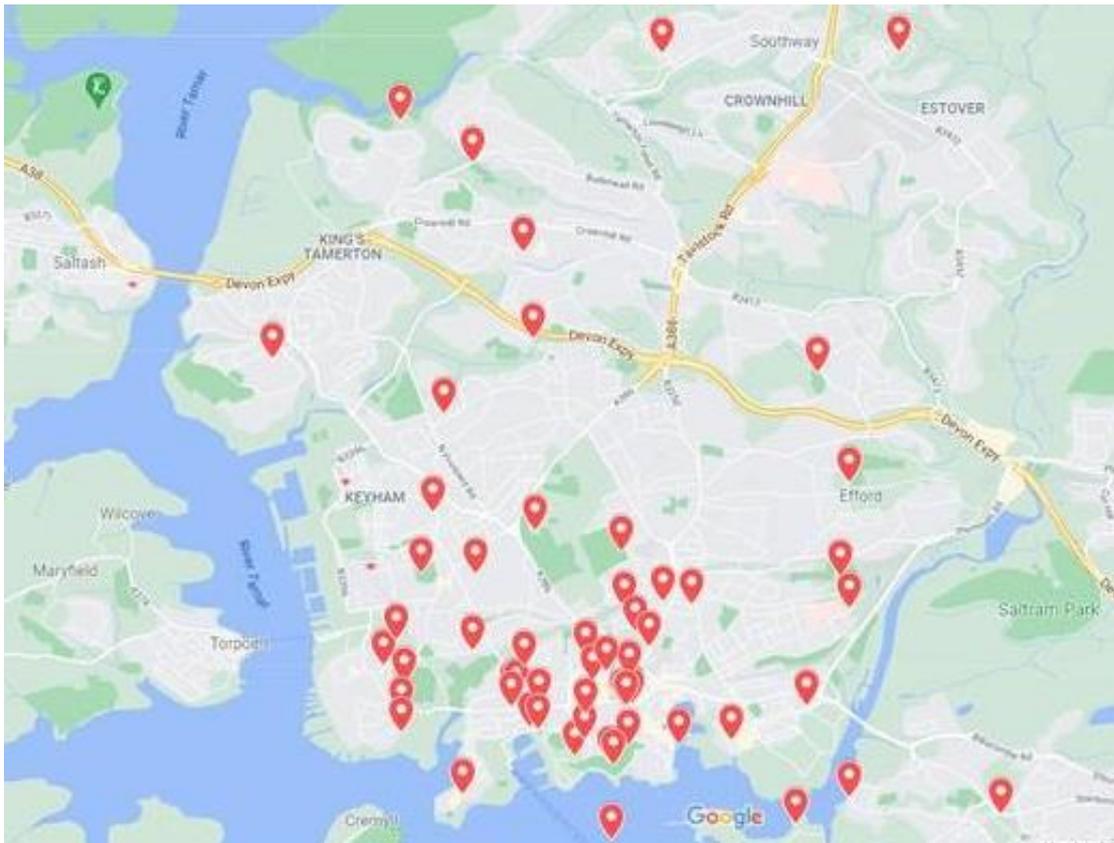


In addition to the visitor numbers The Box's learning and engagement team has delivered 66 sessions to over 2,050 children and young people via schools visits since April 2021. A further 103 sessions, events or activities have also been delivered reaching 27,000 people both on and off-site. The majority of the teams work has been delivered to children, young people and families (especially during school holidays) however a number of sessions targeted people of low socio-economic status, older people, LGBTQ+ people and people who needed additional health and wellbeing support.

4.2 The Mayflower 400 Community Sparks

The Mayflower 400 Community Sparks programme provided financial support to grass-roots community, arts and cultural organisations/groups for projects that celebrate heritage, enrich local communities, and align with the Mayflower themes of imagination, humanity, freedom and future. A total of 60 projects were commissioned; whilst the vast majority were able to go ahead, unfortunately ten were cancelled due to the pandemic. In terms of impact, the Community Sparks projects engaged with over 48,000 people including residents from every Plymouth postcode area, covering all ages, and a diverse range of ethnicities, genders and sexualities. The programme builds on the vital sparks fund and is a model which can be deployed to other initiatives, such as the recent Heritage Sparks Fund, to support communities to engage with and devise their own cultural projects that are authentic and relevant to them.

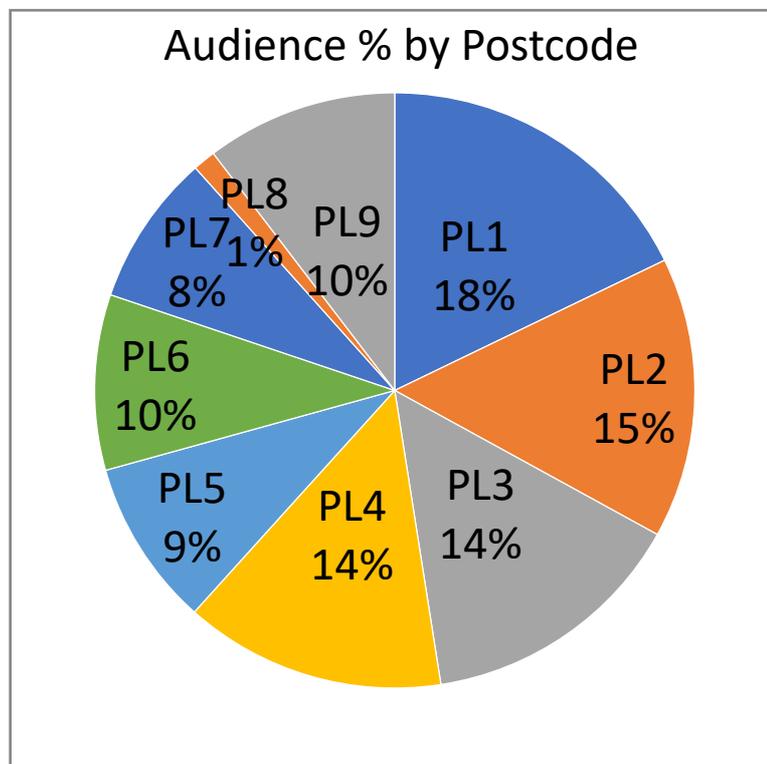
The map below illustrates where in Plymouth each of the projects were delivered:



4.3 Illuminate

Illuminate light festival took place from 15th - 28th November 2021. Although staged differently this year the event has been incredibly successful with total audiences of over 26k and attendances of over 25k to the live events programme. Of these audiences more than 84% are from Plymouth with a relatively even split across all postcodes with the exception of PL8:

Although each project mentioned above is very different the principals are the same, engage communities around issues, thematic and topics that matter to them and use Plymouth's unique heritage as-



sets 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 cultural offer in the city.

5.0 Further Developments

As has been acknowledged, this data is useful and starts to provide a picture of cultural delivery and engagement across the city. However, it has its limitations as it is based on a sample of only five cultural organisations and census information from 2011. In order to further our understanding of audience engagement and geographical reach Plymouth Culture and The Box are leading a piece of work to commission a further research and impact study. This will build on the data presented here but consider the data of more cultural organisations and overlay this with other city data such as the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) to better understand engagement, barriers and opportunities.

This newly commissioned research is to be conducted ahead of the British Art Show 9 (BAS9) so that we can use this exhibition as a pivotal moment to not only expand but diversify our cultural audiences. The data will help to design and target engagement activity so that it is authentic and creates a sustained shift in the way the cultural sector reaches and engages audiences. The BAS9 partners are developing an engagement framework to ensure that every aspect of the audiences journey is relevant and accessible, from community delivery, to marketing, to interpretation; and that this approach is embedded beyond BAS9.

6.0 Culture Plan

This approach to using data to drive decision making and build a more participatory model of engagement is central to the Culture Plan. To further support the work to embed this approach Plymouth Culture has established a cross city, cross sector Cultural Partnership to steer the implementation of the Culture Plan. One of the key areas of work for this steering group will be to support and champion the development and roll out of this participatory engagement model, leading to more diverse, engaged and sustained audiences for culture across the city.

Whilst we know there is a lot of work to do, our priority work programme for 2022/23 will include:

- Realising the full potential of BAS9 as a city wide initiative designed to engage new audiences through community focused arts projects. (Culture Plan work programme - 'Culture is alive').
- Commissioning, analysing and sharing cultural data to help tell the story of the true impact of culture and to target future resources and activities. (Culture Plan work programme - 'Data story telling').
- Testing new locations for culture in outdoor and unusual locations to improve access and ensure our cultural offer makes the most of our natural and built environments (Culture Plan work programme - 'Our city is our venue').
- Aligning the cultural engagement activity with the National Marine Park Horizon programme for an effective community engagement strategy. (Culture Plan work programme - 'Our city is our venue').
- Building this data, knowledge and learning into the applications from National Portfolio Organisations (NPO) to the next round of Arts Council England (ACE) funding. This work is strategically aligned to the four Investment Principles set out by ACE and will demonstrate that Plymouth has a progressive and relevant cultural offer.