

# ENCOUNTER FESTIVAL

2023

## EVALUATION REPORT



ENCOUNTER  
FESTIVAL

# THANK YOU!

## Encounter Festival would like to thank...

All of the artists, performers, volunteers, Preston's Creatives, funders, Council works team...and all those that made Encounter Festival 2023 a huge success!

## Thank you to...

Preston Photographic Society who provided the pictures of the event.

## And thank you to...

All contributors to this report for their time and valued input to the evaluation: Visitors, Artists and performers, Support services, Partners and event contributors.

## Encounter Festival Funders:

Encounter Festival's funders help the Encounter Festival event take centre stage and are here to support thousands of performers, arts organisations and venues, enabling them to realise their creative potential. Encounter Festival is proud to be working in partnership with the below funders.

# Key Attendance Statistics

## Overall attendance

2023



**50,000 people**

*attended the festival*

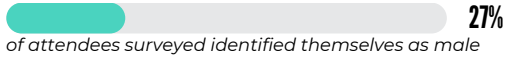


**2000 artists**

*and performers took part in the programme of events*

## Sex of visitors

2023



## Age of visitors

2023



## Profile of visitors

2023



**4 out of 5 visitors**

*surveyed in 2023 attended the festival with someone else*



**1 out of 5 visitors**

*surveyed in 2023 attended the festival on their own*



**14%**

**of people surveyed**

*identified themselves as having a disability*



**62%** *of people surveyed are currently employed*



**99%**

**of people surveyed**

*are currently residing in the United Kingdom*



**38%** *of people surveyed have a PR1 postcode*

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# Introduction



**Encounter Festival is an authentic voice for Lancashire and the North West, celebrating the breadth of the County's diverse cultural offer with high quality and high profile arts. Initially taking place every other year at the end of September, Encounter Festival sees the city of Preston buzzing with life and alight with creativity, and since 2021 has moved to an annual event. The past Encounters have seen an array of spectacular performances, inspiring arts and impressive music, bringing spectators to their feet.**

The Encounter Festival brings together the city of Preston, the Lancashire County and those further afield. The bustling streets and opportunities to get involved create a memorable and vibrant weekend, with local artists and performers sharing their talent with the crowds.



Preston City Council staged its first Encounter Festival in 2015 as a pilot. The weekend event showcased the work of artists from across the Lancashire County and community activities, drawing in 20,000 attendees. Recognising the potential of the event to grow and impact the communities, artists and arts organisations of Lancashire, as well as attract visitors into the County:

- Following the pilot, the first full scale Encounter Festival was hosted in 2016
- Brief Encounter event was held in September 2017 to maintain the momentum, keep the spirit alive and launch next year's festival
- Second full scale festival in September 2018
- Brief Encounter September 2019
- The first post pandemic Encounter held over a number of days September-October 2021
- Full Encounter Festival held in September 2022
- Full Encounter Festival held in September 2023



Evaluations of Lancashire Encounter have provided significant insight regarding the success and impact of the event, encompassing the views of visitors, partners and artists.

Providing insight into the performance of the wide range of Lancashire Encounter activities and scope, the evaluations also support the development of future events and focus for Preston City Council provision.

The scope of the evaluation activity for 2023 comprised the following range of information sources:



The focus for the evaluation for 2023 has changed compared to the previous years' evaluations, with the main scope this year being on establishing visitor profile detail.

Where data is available from previous years for comparison with 2023, this has been provided for 2015, 2016, 2018, 2021 and 2022. Testing for significant differences has been calculated based on the difference between whole percentage responses using a confidence level of +/-90%. These calculations have been undertaken where one or both percentages being compared is 5% or higher. Any change referenced within the report therefore relates to a "significant change" rather than any insignificant difference in percentage responses.

Visitor survey data has been provided based on the nearest whole percentage point, except for data lower than 0.5% which has been provided to 1 decimal place. For the purposes of analysis, where data has been combined, this is based on recalculating the raw data based on absolutes rather than summing the percentages. Data may not always appear therefore to exactly sum.

Due to the change of focus of the evaluation scope for 2023 and the scope of previous evaluations in illustrating the success of the delivery of the range of activities, the key findings from the 2022 evaluation have been included at Annex 2.



# Executive Summary

## Conclusion

**2023 saw the 8th Encounter Festival which had started as a pilot 8 years previously in 2015. Except for 2020, which was adversely affected by the pandemic, the Encounter Festival has taken place every year since the pilot launch.**

2023 was also the first year in which the event had not been impacted on by external events since the last pre-pandemic event held in 2019, enabling the delivery of the traditional 3 days of activity.

Encounter Festival 2023 delivered a highly successful event, hosting a wide range of performances, workshops and activities showcased within an action packed programme of arts, culture and creativity.

The momentum and experience gathered from the previous events, the lack of external influences impacting on delivery, fair weather and the opportunity to run the full programme of activities all contributed to the success of the Encounter Festival 2023.

It is felt that the event has now “come of age” with this view supported by the visitor numbers achieved at this year’s event. Having typically generated in the region of 30,000 visitors each year, 2023 has seen a significant increase to around 50,000 visitors. The significant aspiration following the 2022 event to generate an audience total in the region of 50,000 has therefore been achieved.

It is felt that the solid foundation of organisation, delivery and participation achieved in 2023 provides a key springboard from which future events can develop and grow.

2023 also saw the third year of the Executive Producer leading on the event, providing a consistent resource for development and delivery, along with the first situation where they had the opportunity to deliver the event without any external influence. This enabled the run up and delivery to operate fully to plan and provided the time for the Executive Producer to fully address the finer details of the event.

The stage of development of the festival will enable organisers to consolidate further in the delivery for 2024. It is felt that there has been stronger articulation for what the audience can expect and what the event is; a cultural offer for the city.

The rebranding from Lancashire Encounter to the Encounter Festival aims to develop the focus on Preston rather than the wider Lancashire county; providing a stronger consideration for the development of the festival; taking a deep rather than a broad approach.



## Future developments

**The Encounter Festival showcases Preston as a destination that can support such a significant event. It generates experience and supports skill development for all involved in its delivery, it generates awareness amongst local people and visitors of such an event which is hosted locally, it fosters community involvement and contributes to its own future development.**

The feeling that the Encounter Festival has “come of age” provides the opportunity to consolidate and focus on the two key areas of focus of artistic development and community engagement. The Executive Producer plans to take a proactive approach to developing these two areas for 2024.

Next year provides a key opportunity to build on the foundation of community involvement which has been developed over the years of the Encounter Festival. There is the potential to further engage with the community, raising awareness amongst a larger and wider audience and bringing more local ownership to the event which will further support its delivery, momentum and aspirations.



The development for community involvement is both in the delivery of the event and through the audience itself. Any future increase in visitor numbers however, now reaching around 50,000, needs to be effectively planned and managed due to the physical restrictions of the event. It is felt that the Torchlight Procession provides the best current potential to support increased visitor numbers.

For artistic development, the focus will be both on developing Preston's offer and looking to Lancashire to integrate new ideas and contacts with the intention to bring together, develop and support locally and to introduce new insight from further afield.



The need to move to a more sustainable event has been identified. Work undertaken by The Creative Principle at the event in 2023 has supported the exploration of ways in which the Encounter Festival can become more sustainable in considering the need for storage, the items that get destroyed and the opportunity for more recycling and improving sustainability.

The work of The Creative Principle could support the development of the Torchlight Parade through community involvement activity and support with the practical design and building of the floats and costumes and directly supporting the development of a more sustainable approach.



The movement to a festival with less of a negative environmental impact is being considered. Whilst 2023 has seen a reduction in the use of plastic bottles, there is the recognition that more proactive activity can be undertaken.



2023 has highlighted the need to consider for a range of potential external factors that can adversely impact on the event and its delivery. The forecast extreme weather, for example, did not occur but would have had significant impacts on the event. This has generated awareness to integrate plans to deal with events such as bad weather, public transport strikes and increasing costs.

The success of the pop up shop and workshops run by The Creative Principle has illustrated the potential for such outlets in the future and for events to be run in the unused space prior to the 2024 Encounter Festival.

In addition to the direct service provided and engagement with the public, such provision provides a useful mechanism for generating awareness of the festival in its run up. The focus of this provision fully supports the community engagement ethos of the festival.

2022 had seen the introduction of event support from the BME Network which had worked effectively and was to be built on in 2023. With the change of personnel however, this was not possible and some of the administrative activities had to be undertaken by other event staff. Developments in streamlining the administrative role and ensuring systems are in place to support the range of processes and timescales could contribute to the administrative activities for 2024.

Future considerations at the delivery level include:

Whether there is the potential to introduce an on-going rolling programme of pop up shops to make use of the empty shop spaces and to provide local businesses with the opportunity to showcase their products and activities was raised. The work of The Creative Principle highlighted the demand for community activity amongst local people.

The continued involvement of DanceSyndrome will support both their own aim to be a leader in creative dance in the North West and the aim of Encounter Festival to support social connectivity. Whether there is the potential to invite participants in the parade to the balcony reception is a consideration. Whilst the physical practicalities would need to be considered, it was thought that this would provide a wonderful visual spectacle whilst also including procession participants in these celebrations.

The reintroduction of a central stage in Winckley Square and its contribution to providing a focus and central point for activity and events in the area could be considered.

The relevance of the online marketing and social media could be further supported by the introduction of more traditional marketing methods and awareness raising activity, such as banners and posters.

Having a definite event date for 2023 at the end of the 2022 event provided a firm foundation for the development of this year's activity and marketing, and it is aimed for the same weekend in September to be retained to continue to build upon this repetition.

Whilst the level of diversity achieved in the audience is notable from attending the event, the actual detail is not quantified. Generating a way to record the level and type of diversity, along with the motivations for attending, would provide useful information for future planning.

To conclude, there is significant momentum, experience and commitment to take the Encounter Festival forwards to 2024; to consolidate its strengths, embed the visitor figure of 50,000, to further develop community ownership and artistic talent and to present the event as a significant, well-established, well-regarded and anticipated event featuring as a key calendar event for the city of Preston.

### Event support

**Having originated from The Guild, The Encounter Festival began with Preston City Council, and the Council have maintained a key and active role. Being a Preston City event, this role involves support with the planning, scale and delivery of the festival, ensuring it meets the needs of the Encounter Festival organisation, the visitors, the artists and the City Council.**

The Harris, being part of Preston City Council, work closely with the Encounter Festival, ensuring the event is as good as it can be. Providing momentum, building on each event and generating awareness, Encounter Festival supports the delivery of The Guild, ensuring it is not beginning from a cold start. The skills and training involved in delivering The Encounter Festival directly support the planning and delivery of The Guild. Specifically the skills and knowledge generated and maintained in the delivery of the Torchlight Procession directly support The Guild as processions form one of its fundamental elements.

Ongoing involvement with the community through the Encounter Festivals has developed awareness, momentum and skill sets which all support both the delivery of the event and the visitor awareness and involvement.

Preston City Council staff provide marketing and communications support, including the design and updating of the website. This marketing of the Encounter Festival also supports the Guild, both in generating awareness of the city centre event and in the skills and development of the marketing material and communications activities.

The Council's Events and Facilities Officer is involved with the logistics of supporting the artists, with other staff volunteering and helping with activities, such as stewarding and liaising with artists.

The Encounter Festival enables City Council staff to develop the experience and skills which will support the delivery of the next Guild. The commitment and interest in the event supports the continued role of Preston City Council as a key stakeholder.



2023 saw the continued support from the BME Network in the administrative activities, a change in personnel however meant that some administrative tasks had to be undertaken by other event personnel.

2023 saw the introduction of the opportunity for the public to be part of the celebration by pledging for the Torchlight Procession. Funds raised by the public were matched by Preston City Council and Lancashire County Council, providing further resource for its development.

### ***Inclusion and appeal***

**The level of diversity within the audience is a key achievement. Whilst notable when attending the event, the level of diversity is currently difficult to quantify.**

The move to a higher inclusion of older visitors, which was identified in 2022, has been maintained in 2023. 2023 saw just under one third of visitors aged under 35 years and the same proportion aged 55 years plus. Just over two fifths of visitors were aged 35-54 years old.

There has been an increase this year in the proportion of visitors surveyed who identify as having a disability, with over one tenth in 2023 identifying this.

The move experienced in 2022 to a more even balance of gender representation has moved back to a higher representation of visitors surveyed who identify their gender as female.

For the first year, the inclusion scope covered sexual orientation. The vast majority of visitors described their orientation as Heterosexual/Straight, and there was representation of visitors who described themselves as Gay Woman/Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay Man and Queer. All of the visitors surveyed stated their gender identity was the same as that assigned to them at birth.

The representation of visitors who identify themselves as being of a White, an Asian, a Black, a Mixed or an Other ethnicity has remained similar to the previous years' evaluations. With nine tenths of visitors identifying their ethnicity as being of a White ethnicity, one tenth of visitors identified themselves as being of an Asian ethnicity, a Black ethnicity, a Mixed ethnicity or an Other ethnicity.

For the first time in 2023, economic activity was asked covering full-time education, long-term unemployment, retirement and employment. The range of visitors is illustrated with representation of all groups. With just over three fifths of visitors being employed, a broad range of occupations were covered, illustrating a wide appeal of the event.

Consistent with previous years, all but 1% of visitors lived in the UK. As with 2022, there has been an increase in the proportion of visitors from the PR1 postcode compared to previous years' events, although there has also been some move back to a higher proportion of visitors from outside of the PR postcode, accounting for nearly one fifth of visitors surveyed in 2023.

There has been an increase in 2023 from 2021 and 2022 in the proportion of visitors attending the Encounter Festival with someone else, with just over four fifths of visitors attending with someone else this year.

The average number of people per visitor group of 3.9 in 2023 is higher than the average visitor group size of 3.4 in 2022 and 3.0 in 2021. The mode number of visitors per group is 3 compared to 1 person in 2022. The median number of 3 in 2023 is the same as for 2022. The party size of visitors in 2023 ranged from 1 to 101 people.

The 2023 evaluation explored frequency of visitors' involvement in arts and culture experiences. For just over one fifth of visitors, The Encounter Festival had provided them with the first time they had attended an arts and culture experience. At the other end of the level of activity is that just over one third of visitors attend or take part in arts and culture experiences four or more times a year.



### *The programme of activity*

**A total of 24 performances ran during the event, running from the evening of Friday 15th September through to the afternoon of Sunday 17th September. Covering unique, engaging and innovative activities, the performances included acts such as The Lighter Jams, Look Mum, No Hands, DanceSyndrome, Preston Beats Drum Circle and FLOOD.**

Recognised as the highlight of the event, the Torchlight Procession was held on the Saturday night providing a spectacle of music, dance and creativity and comprising hundreds of participants and having built on previous years' activity.

The Creative Principle was a new event introduced in 2023. Comprising a pop up shop located in the Bus Station from 16th August for 4 weeks, a total of 36 popular, mainly free, craft workshops were held.

As well as providing visitors with a new, interesting and rewarding experience, the event also provided The Creative Principle with the opportunity to engage with the community, explore ways of making the festival more sustainable in the future, generate awareness of the festival and to establish the potential for their own move to a permanent site of provision.

Developed to support inclusive community dance training, the Encounter Festival provided DanceSyndrome with a significant opportunity to engage with the community and showcase their work and unique co-production model through workshop, performance and involvement in the Torchlight Procession. 2023 was the third year of DanceSyndrome's involvement, with the introduction of the MetTent providing an effective workshop area. DanceSyndrome contributes strongly to the community engagement aim of the Encounter Festival, using the medium of dance to engage and connect with communities.



## Marketing

**Whilst the festival gained more followers, the engagements and impressions achieved had decreased, indicating a need to maintain a consistent content strategy and to monitor audience responses to improve on these metrics.**

There is the potential to continue to diversify the content types, including videos, photos and interactive posts to maintain engagement with the audience. Further refinement in the posting schedule, based on engagement patterns, could help to maximise reach and impact.

The variation in the types of adverts worked well and this could be expanded with additional resource for 2024. The inclusion of further traditional marketing materials, such as banners and posters, is also an area for consideration.

Additional collaborative and partnership working with local organisations and influencers could further widen the reach and impact of the marketing activity.

It is identified that further insight would be beneficial regarding traffic sources, audience demographics, behaviour analysis and audience feedback.

# Encounter Festival 2023

## Context

**2023 was the first time since the Covid-19 outbreak in 2020 that Lancashire Encounter had been able to run both a full programme of events over the traditional 3 days of activity in September and to do so without any external event impacting on the festival. The sad death of HRH Queen Elizabeth on 8th September 2022 had occurred 8 days before the start of the 2022 Lancashire Encounter on 16th September.**

It is felt that 2023 is the year which the Encounter Festival has come of age. Being run to its full programme, supported by fair weather and attracting in the region of 50,000 visitors, it is felt that this year has provided a firm foundation on which future festivals can develop and grow.

Over the weekend, the Encounter Festival put on a host of fantastic performances, engaging workshops and fun for all. From fabulous dance classes and a mix of talented performances on the Community and Traditions Stage to captivating activity sessions. The event truly brought together the city's brilliant diverse community, through an action packed programme of arts, culture and creativity.

The weekend of 15th-17th September saw the return of the Encounter Festival being a resounding success. The three day arts and cultural extravaganza transformed the heart of Preston into a vibrant hub of creativity, unity and celebration, through a diverse lineup of performances, workshops and activities. A total of 24 performances were delivered over the Friday, Saturday and Sunday of the festival.

The festival once again exceeded all expectations, leaving attendees with great memories and a deep appreciation for the power of art and community.

## The 2023 programme



### Friday 15th September

Friday evening saw the acoustic duo The Lighter Jams kick off the weekend with a selection of popular soul, pop, rock and reggae covers. Bringing a fresh edge to the evening they delivered an entertaining live show, which filled the room with energy and brought the audience to their feet.

### Saturday 16th September

A total of 15 performances were delivered over the Saturday of events running from 11am into the evening:

TIME	PERFORMANCE	LOCATION	
11am & 12 noon	Baby Boo	MET, UCLan Square	T F
12 noon & 2.40pm	Look Mum, No Hands	Bus Station	T F
12 noon – 3pm	Magical Story Jars	Bus Station	T F
12.45pm & 1.55pm	Dandyism	Flag Market	T F
1pm – 3pm	Scratch Band	The Ferret	T F
1pm – 7.30pm	Community & Traditions Stage	Outside Guildhall (Lancaster Rd)	T F
1.10pm – 1.50pm	Timeless	Bus Station	T F
1.30pm – 2.15pm	Dance Syndrome	MET, UCLan Square	T Ⓡ
2pm & 6.30pm	Feeling Haunted	St Peter's Church	T F
2.30pm – 3.15pm	Jazz Swing Dance Workshop	MET, UCLan Square	T Ⓡ
2.30pm & 3.30pm	Salsa Northwest	Flag Market	T F
3.30pm – 4.15pm	Swati Dance Company Workshop	MET, UCLan Square	T Ⓡ
3.30pm – 4.30pm	Timeless	Bus Station	T F
7.15pm start	Torchlight Procession	Moor Park – Guild Hall	T F

Saturday brought an array of captivating art and cultural activity across the city centre, including an impressive 7m high rotating hourglass. Located at Preston Bus Station, spectators and travellers in and out of the city witnessed an innovative fusion of daring acrobatics and beautifully choreographed dance, which explored the fragile relationship between civilisation and nature and the precarious balance that could at any point tip into chaos.



### Look Mum, No Hands!

The bus station was also chosen as the backdrop for Look Mum, No Hands!, which engaged viewers from start to finish with their powerful and emotional tale of friendship, growing up and testing their own boundaries. Through unexpected choreography and amazing acrobatics, they delivered a visually stunning and touching performance.



### The Torchlight Procession

A spectacle of music, dance and creativity, welcomed hundreds of participants from community groups, local bands, dancers, and troupes. Their vibrant performances ignited the streets of Preston, captivating audiences and fostering a sense of unity and pride. Led by Mr Wilson's Second Liners, a brilliant brass band, and followed by some of Preston's finest procession groups, the procession brought an electric extravaganza of illumination, music and dance through the city centre.

### Sunday 17th September

Starting at 11am, Sunday saw the delivery of 8 performances running into the afternoon:

## SUNDAY 17 SEPTEMBER

TIME	PERFORMANCE	LOCATION	
11am, 12.40pm & 4pm	A La Puppet Carte	Winckley Square	T F
11.35am, 1.20pm & 3.35pm	Dhamak Collective	Winckley Square	T F
12 noon – 3pm	Magical Story Jars	Winckley Square	T F
12 noon – 3.30pm	Baby Boo & games	Winckley Square	T F
12 noon & 3pm	FLOOD	Winckley Square	T F
12.45pm & 2pm	Parade - The Giant Wheel	Fishergate – Winckley St (outside Boots)	T F
1.45pm & 4.30pm	Do What Ya Mamma Told Yah!	Winckley Square	T F
2pm – 3.30pm	Open Mic	The Orchard	T F



### PARADE! The Giant Wheel

The Giant Wheel saw spectators and passers-by witness a huge 15-foot tall Giant Wheel, driven by circus and street performers, take to Fishergate High Street in a moving performance inspired by the beauty, power and impact of people coming together from different walks of life.



### FLOOD

On Winckley Square, FLOOD delivered an immersive spectacle to their audience. Through circus, music, acrobatics and personalised sound umbrellas, viewers were whisked away on an epic adventure to the deepest depths of the ocean to understand how coastline and communities have become 'seasick'.

## Opportunity to pledge

Newly introduced for 2023 was the opportunity to Pledge for the Encounter Festival's Torchlight Procession to be part of the celebration of community spirit, artistic expression, and cultural diversity.

The aim of the opportunity to pledge was:

Amplifying the impact of a procession featuring 300 community group participants, illuminating Preston City Centre by torchlight

Empowering over 100 bands and dancers to showcase their talent and enchant the audience

Collaborating with community members to create and display large puppets, adding an awe-inspiring element to the parade

Fostering a safe and inclusive environment, offering a family-friendly event that strengthens community bonds

Ensuring continued free access to Encounter Festival events for all attendees

Providing paid work opportunities for local artists and performers, contributing to the growth of the local creative economy.

The pledges from the public were matched by Preston City Council and Lancashire County Council, which made a significant difference in realising the Torchlight Procession's potential and creating lasting memories for thousands of people. With the belief in the power of art and cultural experiences to inspire, connect and uplift communities, and support through pledging helped with this achievement.

Councillor Peter Kelly, Cabinet member for culture and leisure services at Preston City Council, said:

“

*At Preston City Council, we are proud to support the Encounter Festival and its celebrated Torchlight Procession. This event is a testament to the rich cultural heritage and vibrant community spirit that Preston has to offer. The procession brings together people from all walks of life, creating a sense of unity and celebration.*

*We encourage everyone to get involved and show their support by pledging to match funding. Your contributions will help us deliver an unforgettable experience for residents and visitors alike. Together, we can continue to showcase Preston as a city that values and celebrates its diverse cultural offerings.*

*We encourage you to pledge your support for the Torchlight Procession at the Encounter Festival. By doubling the impact of our collective efforts, we can strengthen community ties, celebrate diversity, and showcase the rich artistic talent within and around Preston.*

”

# Visitor Feedback

## Introduction

The visitor evaluation in 2023 focused strongly on establishing details relating to visitor profile. The opportunity for comparison with previous years' evaluation is therefore limited to relevant questions which have been asked previously.

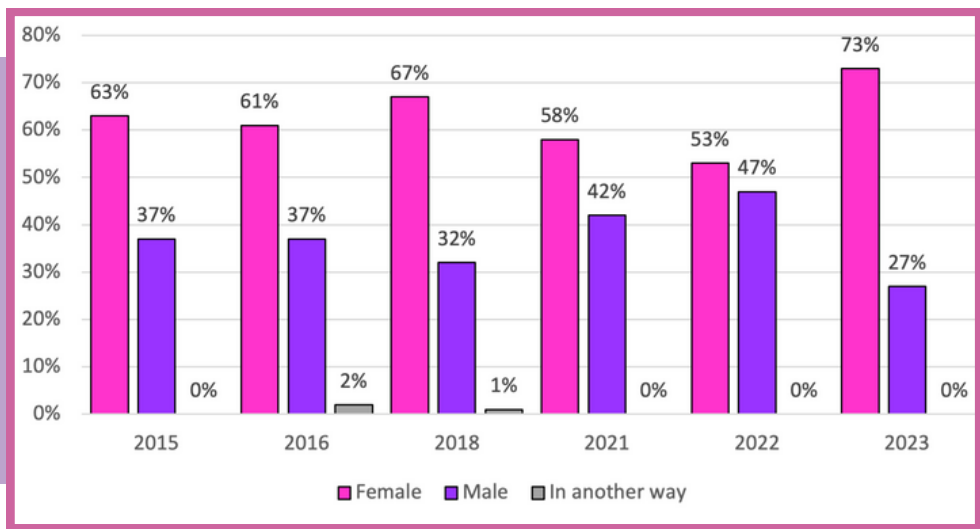
The evaluation for previous years has provided significant insight into the levels of satisfaction and impact which the range of activities of the event has generated. To provide insight to these areas, previous key findings relating to motivation, participation and satisfaction have been detailed in Annex 2.

## Engagement

### Visitor sex and gender identity

Nearly three quarters of visitors interviewed in 2023 were female (73%) with just over one quarter (27%) being male.

Chart 1: Sex of visitors

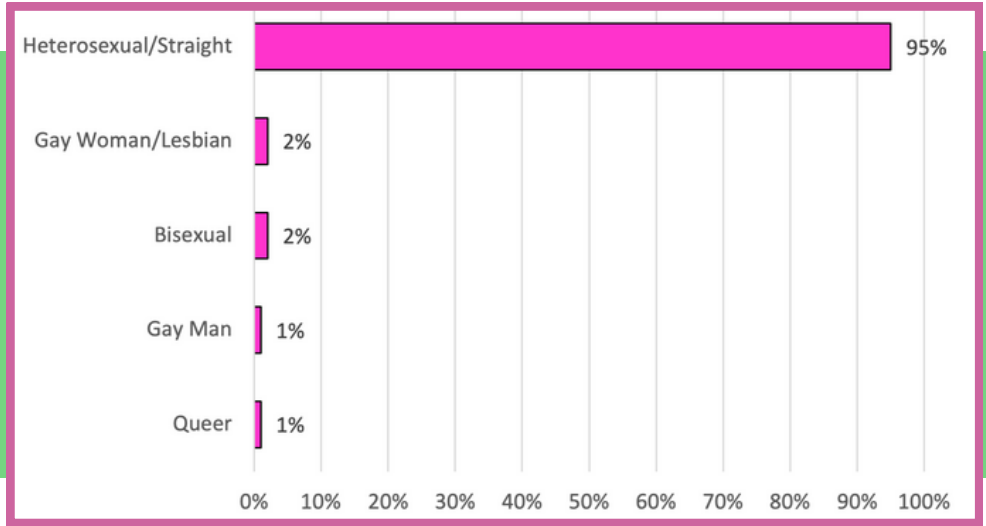


Samples bases = single response for each year, all visitors who provided a response; 2015 = 125 visitors, 2016 = 359 visitors, 2018 = 337 visitors, 2021 = 149 visitors, 2022 = 166 visitors, 2023 = 199 visitors; 2021, 2022, 2023 Analysis: Arts Council England; NB – Question pre-2023 was asked regarding “What is your Gender Identity” in 2023 the question was “What is your sex”

There has been a move in the balance of the sex of visitors interviewed. There has been an increase in the proportion of visitors describing themselves as female in 2023. This follows a previous increase in the proportion of visitors identifying themselves as male, from 32% in 2018 to 47% in 2022, and a decline in the proportion of visitors identifying themselves as female, from 67% in 2018 to 53% in 2022.

All 133 visitors (100%) who provided a response stated that their gender identity is the same as that which had been assigned to them at birth. 95% of visitors in 2023 described their sexual orientation as Heterosexual/Straight. 2% of visitors described their sexual orientation as Gay Woman/Lesbian, 2% as Bisexual, 1% as Gay Man and 1% of visitors described their sexual orientation as Queer.

**Chart 2: Sexual orientation of visitors**



Samples base = 2023, single response, all visitors who provided a response, 192; 2023 Analysis: Arts Council England

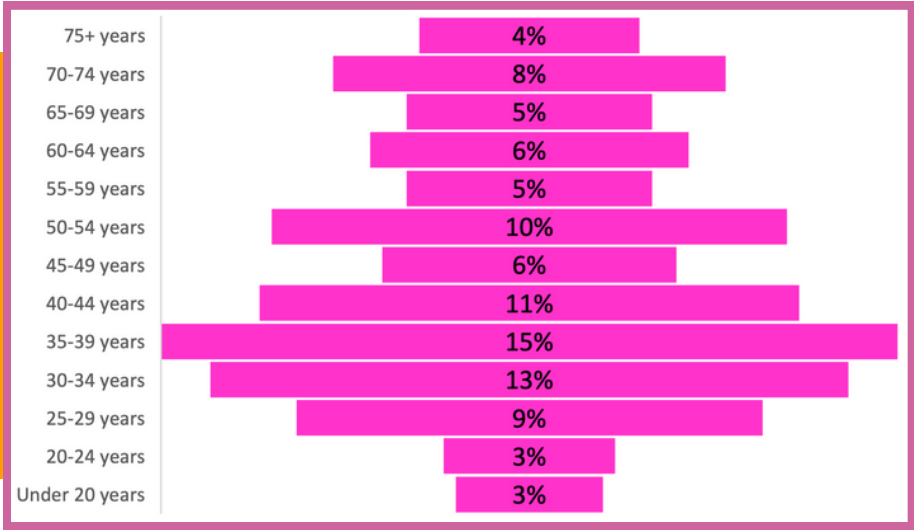
**Age**

Over one quarter of visitors in 2023 (29%) were aged under 35 years of age. Just over two fifths of visitors (42%) were aged 35-54 years old and over one quarter of visitors (29%) were aged over 54 years of age. Year on year analysis as detailed in Chart 4 illustrates the move to a higher inclusion of older visitors, those aged 55 years plus, from 18% of visitors in 2015 to 29% of visitors in 2022 has been maintained in 2023, 29%. The proportion of visitors under the age of 35 years has continued to decline, from 43% in 2015 to 39% in 2022 and to 29% in 2023. The proportion of visitors aged 35-54 years old, 42%, has returned to the level experienced in 2015, 39%.



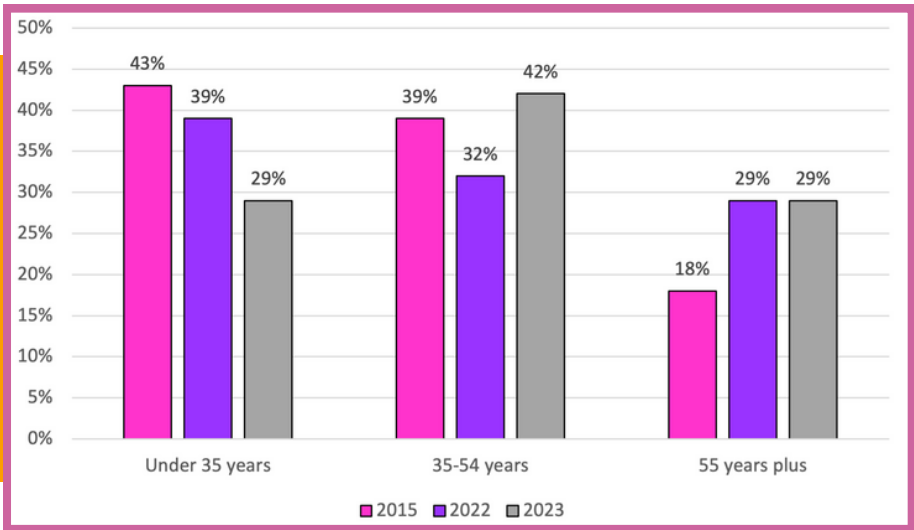


**Chart 3: Age of visitors, 2023**



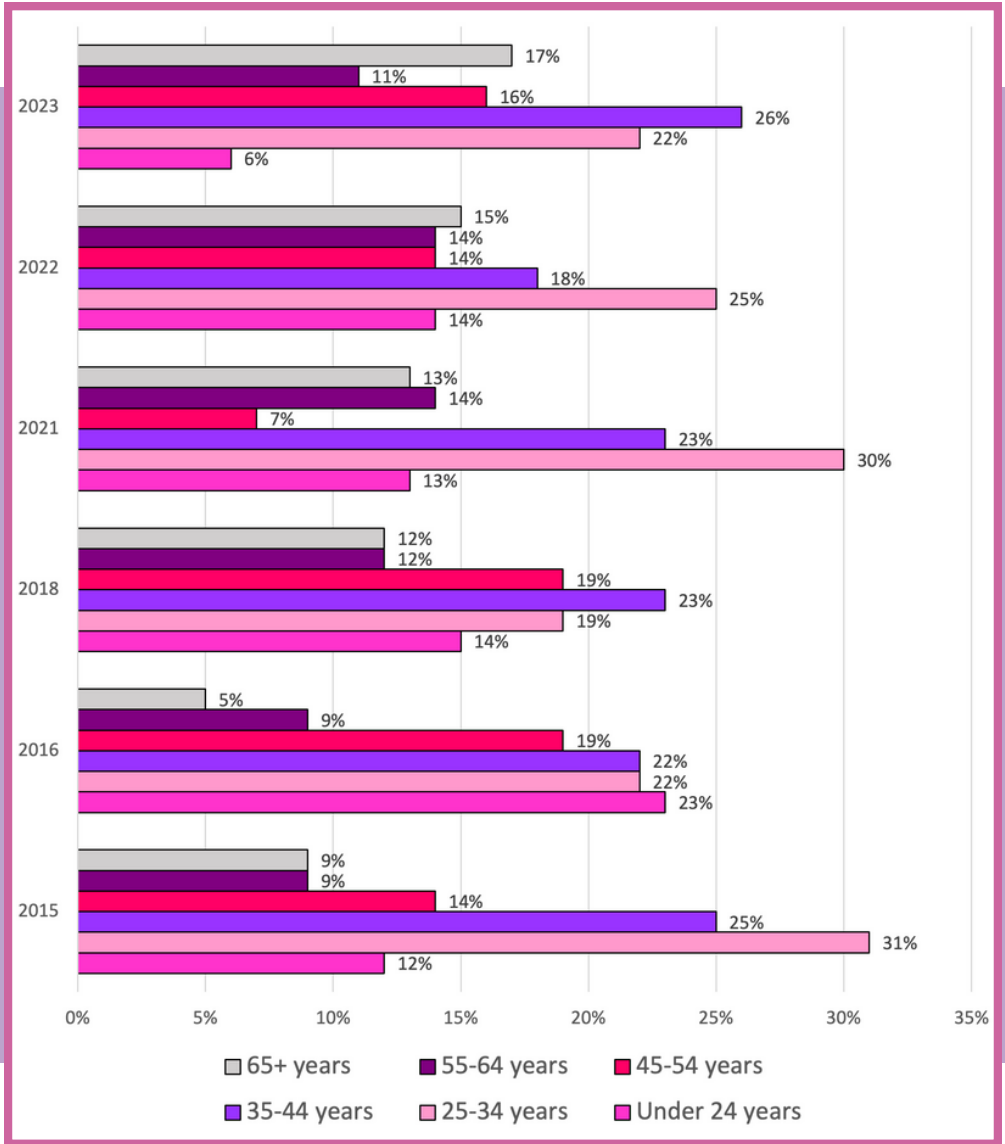
Samples base = single response, all visitors who provided a response; 2023 = 201 visitors; 2023 Analysis: Arts Council England

**Chart 4: Comparison of age group of visitors for 2015, 2022 and 2023**



Sample bases = single response for each year, all visitors who provided a response  
 Data for 2022 and 2023 have been based on combined percentages to match groupings for analysis purposes  
 2015 = 127 visitors, 2022 = 166 visitors, 2023 = 201 visitors  
 2022, 2023 Analysis: Arts Council England

Chart 5: Age group of visitors, comparison over the years



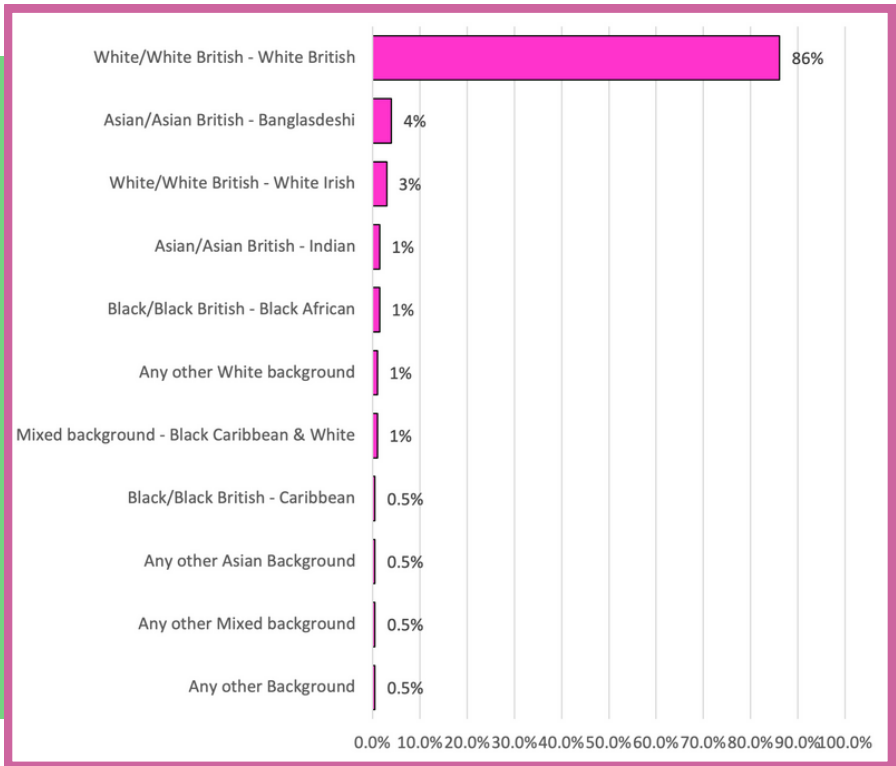
Sample bases = single response for each year, all visitors who provided a response  
 Data for 2018, 2022 and 2023 have been based on combined percentages to match groupings for analysis purposes  
 2015 = 127 visitors, 2016 = 359 visitors, 2018 = 338 visitors, 2021 = 150 visitors, 2022 = 166 visitors, 2023 = 201 visitors  
 2021, 2022, 2023 Analysis: Arts Council England



### Ethnicity

Nine tenths of visitors (90%) identify their ethnicity as being of a White ethnicity, 6% of an Asian ethnicity, 2% of a Black ethnicity, 1% of a Mixed ethnicity and 0.5% of an Other ethnicity. Chart 7 illustrates a fairly steady level of representation of ethnic identity amongst visitors over the years of the event.

Chart 6: Ethnic identity of visitors, 2023

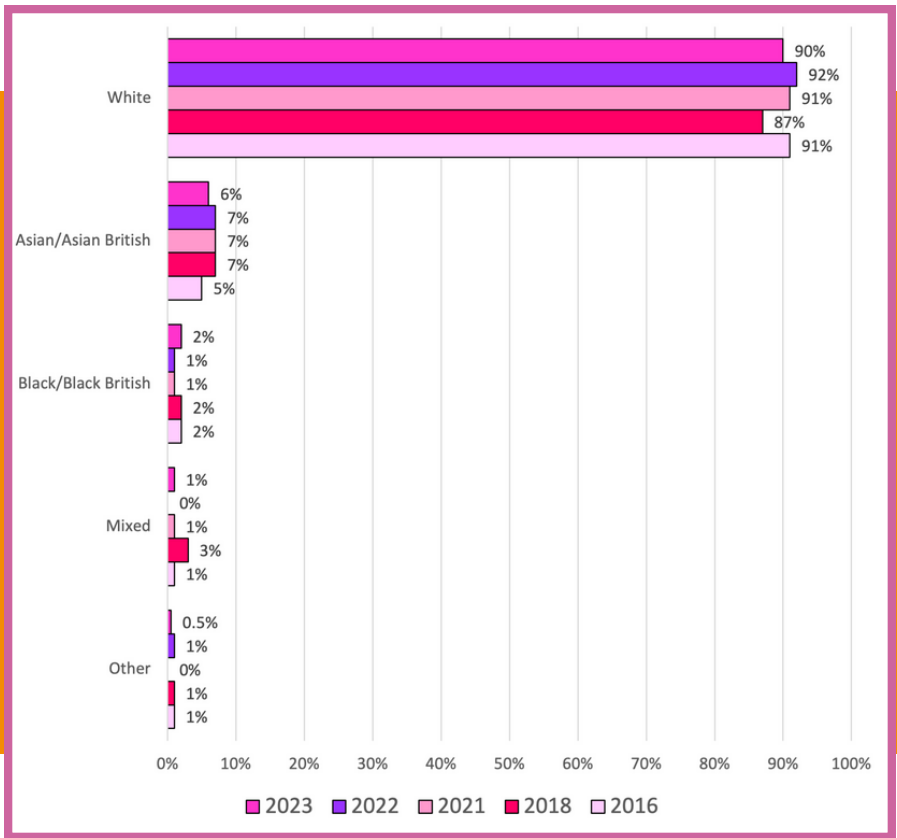


Sample bases = single response for each year, all visitors who provided a response  
Samples base = single response, all visitors  
2023 = 202 visitors  
Data for 2018 and 2023 have been based on combined percentages to match groupings for analysis purposes  
2016 = 363 visitors, 2018 = 337 visitors, 2021 = 150 visitors, 2022 = 165 visitors  
2021, 2022, 2023 Analysis: Arts Council England





Chart 7: Ethnic identity grouping of visitors, comparison over the years



Sample bases = single response for each year, all visitors who provided a response

Samples base = single response, all visitors

2023 = 202 visitors

Data for 2018 and 2023 have been based on combined percentages to match groupings for analysis purposes

2016 = 363 visitors, 2018 = 337 visitors, 2021 = 150 visitors, 2022 = 165 visitors

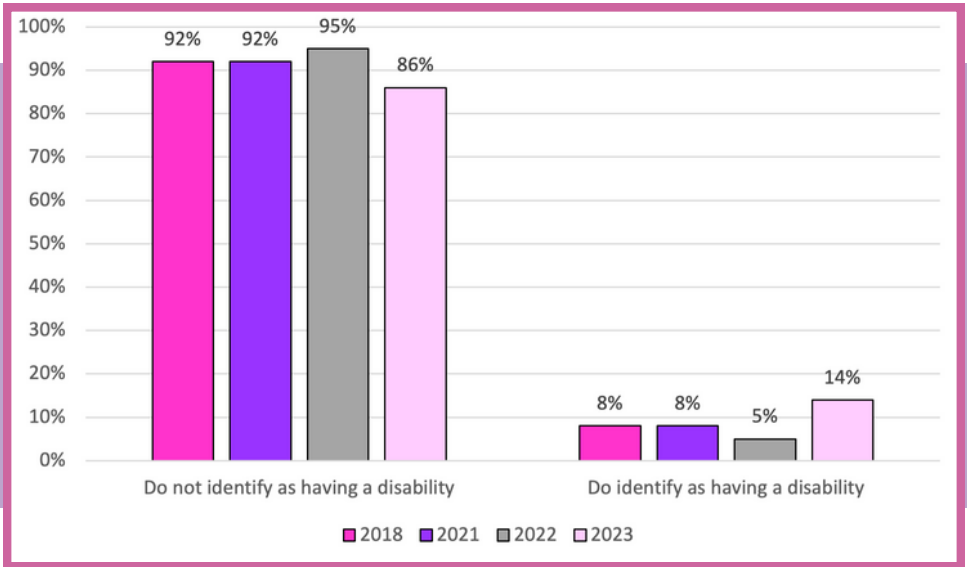
2021, 2022, 2023 Analysis: Arts Council England

### Disability identity

Visitors were asked whether they identify themselves as a D/deaf and/or Disabled person, or as having a long term health condition.

14% of visitors in 2023 identified themselves as a D/deaf and/or disabled person. This is significantly higher than the proportion of visitors identifying themselves as this in previous year's survey data.

**Chart 8: Whether visitors identify with having a disability**



Sample bases = single response for each year, all visitors who provided a response  
Data for 2018 has been based on combined percentages to match groupings for analysis purposes (wording was: Are your day to day activities limited because of a health problem or disability – yes limited a lot, yes limited a little and no not limited)

2018 = 331 visitors, 2021 = 151 visitors, 2022 = 166 visitors, 2023 = 195 visitors

2021, 2022, 2023 Analysis: Arts Council England



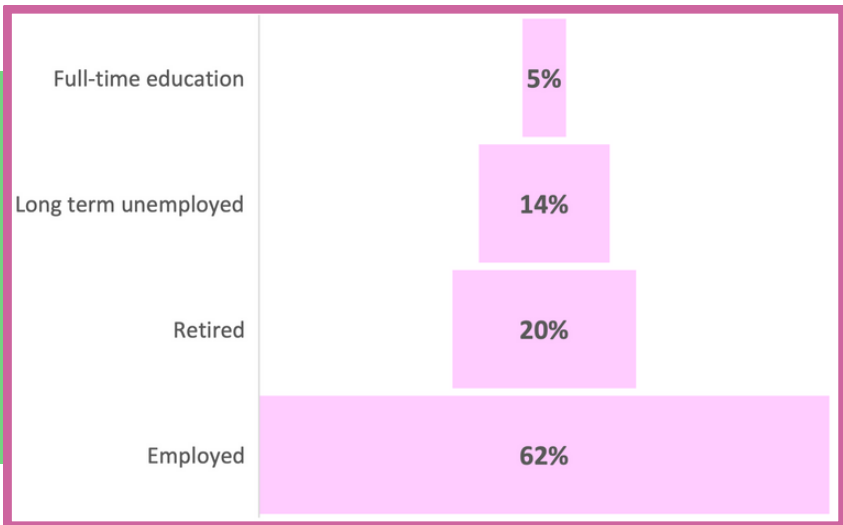
**Economic activity**

Visitors to the Encounter Festival in 2023 were asked what describes their current or most recent occupation. Just over three fifths of visitors (62%) are employed, one fifth (20%) are retired, 14% are long term unemployed and 5% are in full-time education.

38 visitors provided occupation grouping detail for their occupation or most recent occupation as detailed:



112 visitors provided further detail of their occupation or most recent occupation, with a total of 94 different occupations specified. These responses are detailed in Annex 1.

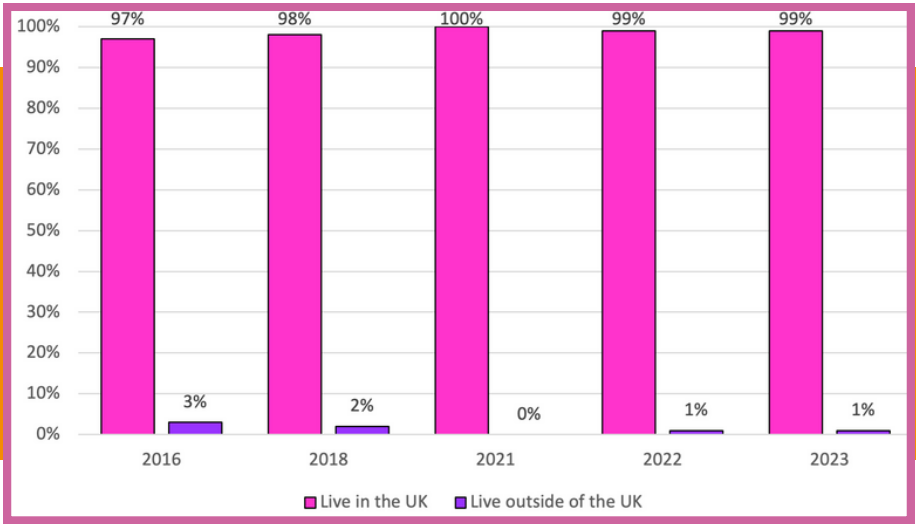


Sample bases = single response, all visitors who provided a response; 2023 = 194 visitors; 2023 Analysis: Arts Council England

**Visitors from outside of the UK**

99% of visitors to Lancashire Encounter in 2023 reside within the UK and 1% reside outside of the UK. This representation from visitors from outside of the UK to Lancashire Encounter is in line with the overall representation of previous years' visitors.

**Chart 10: Residency of visitors within and outside of the UK**



Sample bases = single response for each year, all visitors who provided a response  
 2016 = 335 visitors, 2018 = 340 visitors, 2021 = 151 visitors, 2022 = 180 visitors, 2023 = 192 visitors  
 2021, 2022, 2023 Analysis: Arts Council England

**Place of residency**

Just over three fifths of visitors in 2023 (65%) live in Preston (defined as living in the postcodes of PR1, PR2 and PR3), with 38% living in PR1, 20% living in PR2 and 7% living in PR3.

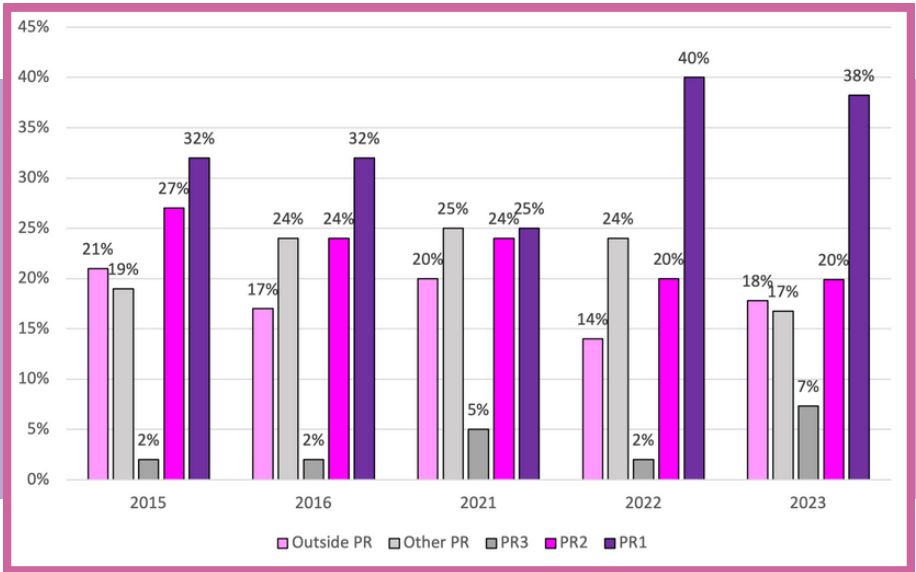
35% of visitors live outside of Preston, with 17% living in a PR postcode higher than PR3 and 18% living in a postcode outside of the PR postcodes.

As for 2022, there has been an increase in the proportion of visitors living in PR1 compared to previous years, from 25% in 2021 to 40% in 2022 and 38% in 2023. There has been some move back to the proportion of visitors from outside of the PR postcode, from 20% in 2021 to 14% in 2022 and to 18% in 2023.

The first part postcode detail of visitors is provided in Annex 1.



Chart 11: First part of home postcode of visitor



Sample bases = single response for each year, all visitors who provided a response  
 2015 = 124 visitors, 2016 = 335 visitors, 2021 = 150 visitors, 2022 = 179 Visitors, 2023 = 191 visitors  
 NB – Data used for the above analysis is all of the provided postcodes (in comparison, data used for The Arts Council Audience Report in 2022 is based on the sample of 148 postcodes which could be used for postal sector analysis)

## Attendance

### Profile of visitor group

Just over four fifths of visitors in 2023 (83%) attended with someone else, with nearly one fifth of visitors (17%) attending on their own.



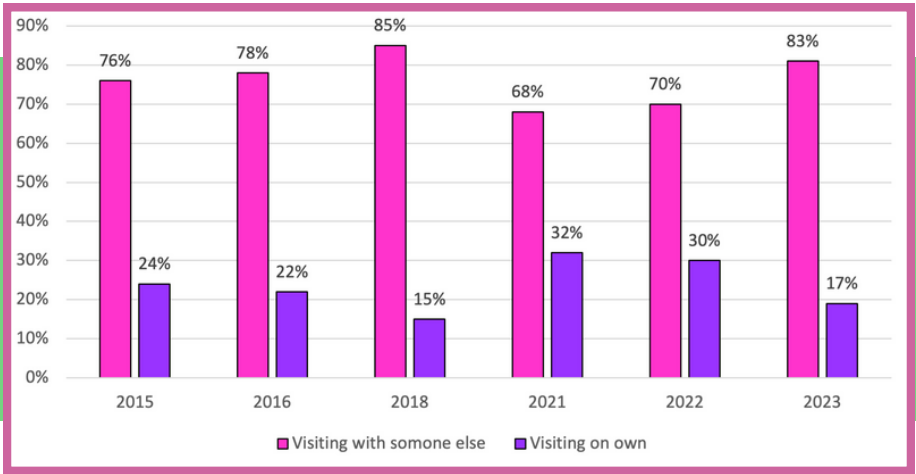
This compares with 70% of visitors in 2022 who attended with someone else, 68% of visitors in 2021 who attended with someone else, 85% of visitors in 2018, 78% of visitors in 2016 and 76% of visitors who attended within someone else in 2015.



Visitors in 2023 are more likely to have visited with someone else than visitors in both 2021 and 2022.



Chart 1: Profile of visitor group



Sample bases = single response for each year, all visitors who provided a response; 2015 = 123, 2016 = 359 visitors, 2018 = 340 visitors, 2021 = 148 visitors, 2022 = 180 visitors, 2023 = 201 visitors; 2021, 2022, 2023 Analysis: Arts Council England

Of the 167 visitors in 2023 attending with someone else:

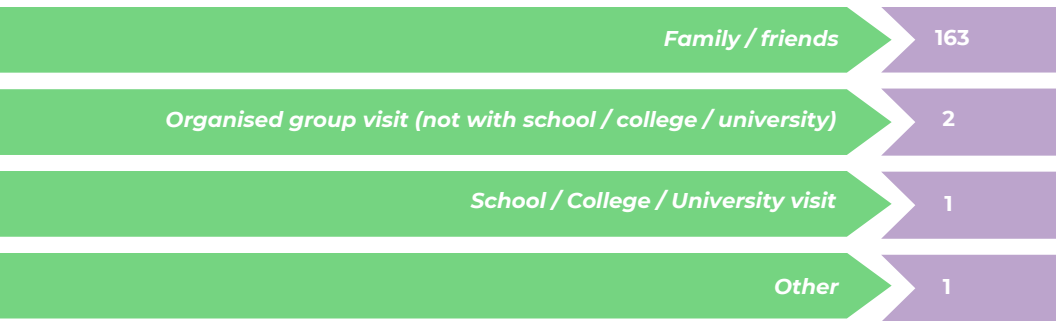


Table 1: Accompanying visitor numbers

Number of accompanying visitors within profiles	Adults	Total
Others 16+	480	
0 - 4 years old		39
5 - 11 years old		0
12 - 15 years old		64
<b>Total</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>103</b>

Sample base = single response, all visitors who provided a response; 2023, 199 visitors; 2023 Analysis: Arts Council England





Including themselves, the total of 199 visitors who provided a response, generated a total sum of 782 visitors. This generates an average party size of 3.9. This compares with an average party size per visitor party of 3.4 in 2022 and an average party size of 3.0 in 2021.

The mode number of people in a party in 2023 is 3 which compares to the mode number of 1 in 2022. The median number in 2023 is 3, the same as the median number in 2022 of 3.



The party size in 2023 ranged from 1 person to 101 people and in 2022 this ranged from 1 person to 26 people.

**Frequency of participation in arts and culture experiences**

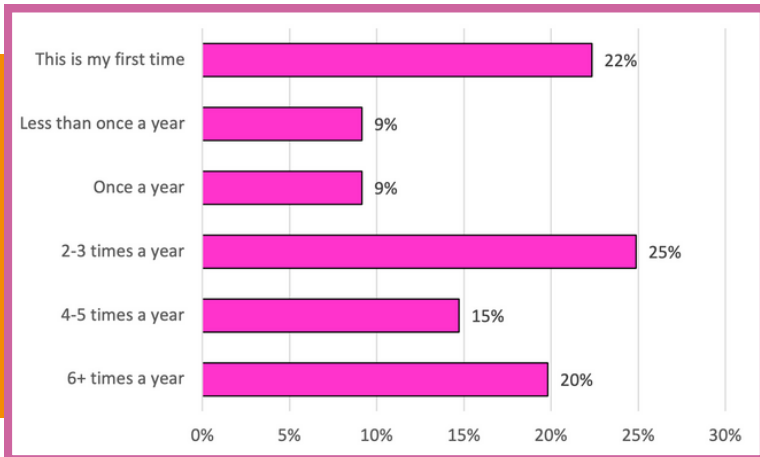
Visitors in 2023 were asked how often they attend or participate in arts and culture experiences. By

this, it was explained, are online or in-person activities produced by arts organisations, museums and/or libraries, such as exhibitions, performances, literature events, gigs, festivals, creative participation, etc.

Nearly three fifths of visitors (59%) attend or participate in at least two arts and cultures experiences a year, with 25% participating 2-3 times a year, 15% attending or participating 4-5 times a year and 20% of visitors participating 6 or more times per year.

Just over two fifths of visitors (41%) attend or participate once a year or less frequently. For 22% of visitors, this was their first attendance or participation, 9% attend or participate less than once a year and 9% of visitors attend or participate in arts and cultural experiences once a year.

**Chart 2: Frequency of participation in arts and culture experiences**

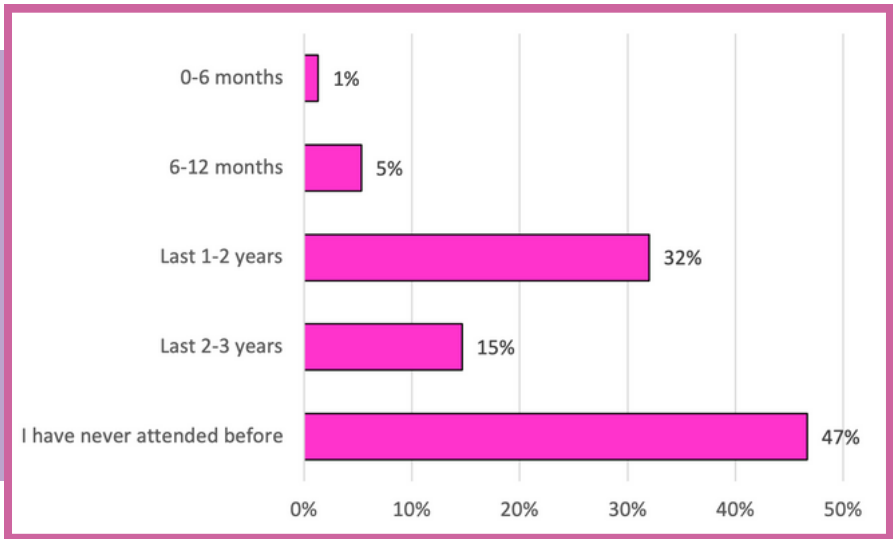


Sample base = single response, all visitors who provided a response; 2023, 197 visitors; 2023 Analysis: Arts Council England



Data is also available for 76 visitors who were asked when they last attended an NTO event. Just over half of these visitors (53%) had attended an NTO event previously, with virtually two fifths (38%) having done so within the past 2 years.

**Chart 3: Time since visitor last attended an NTO event**

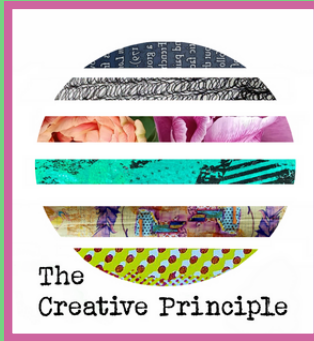


Sample base = single response, all visitors who provided a response; 2023, 76 visitors; 2023 Analysis: Arts Council England



# Case Studies

## Elizabeth Emmens-Wilson, Co-founder of The Creative Principle



### Context

The Creative Principle was formed by Sarah Aspden, Elizabeth Emmens-Wilson and Norma Foulds just prior to the pandemic at the Christmas Fair in The Harris. With the aim to influence manufacturing processes and to encourage sustainable and responsible use of resources, the co-founders are looking to establish a permanent site where they can promote recycling in creativity and provide practical guidance on a range of activities and applications.



*We started, the three of us, in 2018/19 and organised a Christmas Fair in the Harris and we started a community group, so we had a constitution and a bank account and we thought, Yes, this is going to be ace, and then the pandemic hit...*

*As a group of 3 we work really well together, and it's been my dream for a long time. I would really like to have a scrap stall of my own, really like to make use of businesses' waste and pair up businesses with artists who are going to use their waste. If people are going to throw things away and if we know what we can do with them we can give them to someone who needs them and if we don't know what anyone can do with it then we can test the materials to see what we can make with them.*



The Creative Principle had been unable to secure backing to support their aim to establish a permanent site for their stall. They were however introduced to Esther Ferry-Kennington who invited their participation in the Encounter Festival.



*The Encounter Festival, two of us did a course, Creative Lancashire, and we pitched this idea of having a scrap stall in Preston, but didn't get backing, and we went to loads of meetings and got talking to someone who put us in touch with Esther and it all seemed to click. Esther is really positive, really supportive and said we could do this as part of the Encounter Festival to get some public engagement going.*



The Creative Principle were therefore responsible for one of the new initiatives for the festival in 2023. This comprised a pop-up shop unit located in the Bus Station which ran from 16th August for the four weeks to the weekend of the festival. Launched by the Mayor of Preston, Councillor Yakub Patel, it was open each week from Thursday through to Sunday.

The Creative Scrap Store acted as a hub for workshops, creative activities and engagement around the arts and sustainable crafts. As well as running workshops, the space was used to sell products made by other local creatives using recycled materials.

Combining mainly free of charge workshops and along with some costed sessions, a total of 36 workshops were held, including such activities as:



Card making



Crocheting



Die cutting



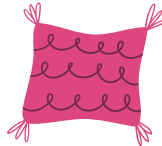
Embroidery



Gift bag creating



Foiling



Quilted cushion making



Puppet making



Paper flower making



Upcycling ceramics



Vegan soap making

## Creative Scrap Store Workshop Programme

DATE	TIME	WORKSHOP	COST
Wed 16 Aug	5pm – 7 pm	Magic Matchbox Making	FREE
Thu 17 Aug	10.30am – 12 noon	Get into Journaling	£25
Thu 17 Aug	1.30pm – 3pm	Summer Card Making	FREE
Fri 18 Aug	10.30am – 12 noon	Crochet Granny Squares	FREE
Fri 18 Aug	1.30pm – 3pm	Vegan Soap Making with Stef from Slippery Cauldron soap!	£30
Sat 19 Aug	10.30am – 12 noon	Printing with Found Packaging	£15
Sat 19 Aug	1.30pm – 3pm	Make your own Festival Crown	FREE
Sun 20 Aug	10.30am – 12.30pm	Do You know Darning?	FREE
Sun 20 Aug	1.30pm – 3pm	Porcelain Pinch Pots	£30
Thu 24 Aug	10.30am – 12 noon	Monoprinting with Oil Pastels	FREE
Thu 24 Aug	1.30pm – 3pm	Embroider a Reclaimed Bauble	£20
Thu 24 Aug	1pm & 4pm	Rag Tag Readshow (Family theatre show)	FREE
Fri 25 Aug	10.30am – 12 noon	Concertina Sketchbook and Collage	£10
Fri 25 Aug	1.30pm – 3pm	Make your own Festival Crown	FREE
Sat 26 Aug	10.30am – 12 noon	Envelope Making	FREE
Sat 26 Aug	1.30pm – 3pm	Upcycling Ceramics with Lustres	£30
Sun 27 Aug	10.30am – 12 noon	Gelli Printing	£35
Sun 27 Aug	1.30pm – 3pm	Gift Bags from Newspapers	FREE
Thu 31 Aug	10.30am – 12 noon	Do You know Darning?	FREE
Fri 1 Sep	1.30pm – 3pm	Envelope Making	FREE
Sat 2 Sep	10.30am – 12 noon	Embroidered Needle Case	FREE
Sun 3 Sep	1.30pm – 3pm	Concertina Sketchbook	FREE
Thu 7 Sep	10.30am – 12 noon	Explore Die Cutting and Foiling	£20
Thu 7 Sep	1.30pm – 3pm	Gift Bags with reclaimed Materials	FREE
Fri 8 Sep	10.30am – 12 noon	Refashion your Old Clothing	£10
Fri 8 Sep	1.30pm – 3pm	Make a Quilted Cushion Cover from an Old T-Shirt	FREE
Sat 9 Sep	10.30am – 12 noon	Create a Botanical Porcelain Tile	£30
Sat 9 Sep	1.30pm – 3pm	Crochet Granny Squares	FREE
Sun 10 Sep	10.30am – 12 noon	Create your Own Gift Boxes from Cereal Boxes	FREE
Sun 10 Sep	1.30pm – 3pm	Gelli Printing	£35
Fri 15 Sep	10.30am – 12 noon	Vegan Soap Making with Stef from Slippery Cauldron soap!	£30
Fri 15 Sep	1.30pm – 3pm	Make your Own Herb Bags	FREE
Sat 16 Sep	10.30am – 12 noon	Kids Paper Puppet Making	FREE
Sat 16 Sep	1.30pm – 3pm	Make your Own Festival Glasses	FREE
Sun 17 Sep	10.30am – 12 noon	Make your Own Paper Flowers	FREE
Sun 17 Sep	1.30pm – 3pm	Create your Own Sketchbook	FREE

Involvement with the Encounter Festival provided The Creative Principle with the opportunity to:

*Engage with the community*

*Promote their message and activities*

*Encourage direct community involvement*

*Explore ways for the Encounter Festival to become more sustainable in the future*

*Explore the viability of a permanent stall location*





“

*The big displays and the big torchlight parade, the big stuff just gets binned or put into storage and so the whole idea is to try and get it to be more sustainable and more recyclable. We didn't get time to do it this year, but hopefully next year we will, it just seems to have worked really nicely together.*

*This year, just getting a bit of feedback about whether our idea would work, whether people would be engaged with it and whether people were interested in buying things that had been handmade from rubbish and getting to know people in the Preston area. We couldn't open up a scrap stall in Blackburn as there already is one, so getting a bit of feedback from the people in Preston, what they thought of it and also a good opportunity, I love the bus station, it was nice being in there and just getting some feedback from the people.*

”

### Review of 2023 – what worked well

It was the first year which The Creative Process had been involved with the Encounter Festival and overall the process ran very well, with deadlines being met and the unit opening on time.



“

*It was quite smooth, quite organised and once we'd got the keys that was fine. Everything else seemed to run really smoothly. We had deadlines for Esther to meet with things we were going to do, she gave us deadlines and we got the stuff to her, it was just getting that all together. The week before we opened was particularly manic but it was really good fun.*

”



### Review of 2023 – what could be improved

The only issue experienced was a need to be able to get the keys with sufficient time to set up the unit internally – to ensure the keys were available in advance of the opening time to allow for the set up and organisation within the unit. It was felt that there is some public misconception about a pop-up shop – that its aim is not to be a permanent shop. Some members of the public thought the shop was shutting down when in fact it was “popping down”.

“  
*It was fine, when it came to getting the keys for the space, we're opening on the 16th and were told we would be given the keys on 16th, but we're opening on the 16th, whether they thought we could just open the door on the 16th and that would be it. So we needed time to set up and get organised. Everything else ran quite smoothly, it was just a case of getting the keys.*

*We needed to borrow some furniture and they did let us from the Guildhall so that was quite good.*

*It's really nice to have a shop, but it's not financially viable on its own to have a shop, so the workshops made it a little more viable, but the rent that they want, it's not feasible. Some people don't understand the concept of a pop up shop, it's not closing down, you're only open for a short period of time.*

”

### Changes in 2023

It was The Creative Principle's first involvement with the Encounter Festival in 2023.



## Contribution of The Creative Principle to the Encounter Festival

A key contribution of The Creative Principle was their ability to generate awareness of the Encounter Festival through engaging with the community, having posters in the pop-up shop and handing out leaflets. Everyone who came to the shop were told about the festival.

“

*Spreading the word (about Encounter Festival), I'd not really heard much about it but it was really good.*

*I think we gave a lot of leaflets out to a lot of people and we also told people about it and people were interested and they were looking at the posters in the window and the programme. Everyone who came in the shop we told them about the Encounter Festival and what was happening and gave them the leaflets, so I think a lot more people knew about it because of the pop up and the marketing we were doing while we were there.*

”

The direct engagement with the community through the activities of The Creative Principle directly supports the community engagement focus of the Encounter Festival. Many of the workshops were full to capacity and community engagement and involvement were evident from the participation and also repeat visits from members of the community.

“

*A lot of the workshops we filled up, quite a lot of the free workshops were all sold out and some of the paid ones sold out which was really good as well. We did one, a combination of sketchbook and collage and people were spilling out into the bus station, everyone had an A1 piece of paper that they were folding and cutting, it was lovely because people were asking what was going on and we said; "We're a shop and we're spilling out".*

*A lot of people that came to one workshop booked for more so we had return customers which was really nice.*

”

## Contribution of the Encounter Festival to The Creative Principle

A key impact of participating with the festival is the insight generated that running The Creative Principle at a permanent site is a possibility; that there is interest from the public for what the organisation has to offer. As a result, moving forwards, The Creative Principle are seeking a permanent site in Preston.

“

*It means we now know that it is possible to run this as a full time thing, we want to get a permanent space and do like a proper scrap store and have some studios and space in there, so we're looking for somewhere and are going to put a bid in. It's given us the confidence to know that it is possible and that people are interested and we've got a mailing list now. We've made some really good contacts, so it was really worthwhile.*

”

## Moving forwards - Involvement



The Creative Principle are very keen to be involved with the Encounter Festival again in 2024 and have significant plans to build on their experience and contribution from 2023.

A key element of their plans is to develop involvement with community groups to produce more floats for the parade; to make the parade bigger and to have more community involvement. The Creative Principle are looking to work directly with community groups and to help practically with the design and building of the floats and costumes using their experience and techniques.



“  
*Yes, we've got big plans for next year. We really love the idea of the floats and I think it's a shame there weren't so many floats this year so I think we're going to try and maybe do some more floats with community groups and help them with their big costumes and the staging, I think that would be amazing.*

*A lot of the community groups, if they've got limited budgets, then if we can help them with the materials and the building of these things, then they're more likely to go for it and that would be really exciting.*

”  
As it is planned for The Creative Principle to have their own permanent site next year there won't be the need for them to run the pop up shop again. It is felt however that the pop up shop concept is a very strong approach – one where both the area will benefit from the productive use of empty spaces and one that will support those running the pop-up shops.



“  
*Hopefully by then we will have a permanent shop so we won't need a pop up but to encourage other people to have a pop up, trial another pop up and get some of the empty spaces filled with things 'cause it's better than having empty spaces.*

”



“

*Definitely involved (from the permanent shop) Esther was lovely, she was really supportive and she's a nice friendly uplifting kind of person, so working with her was really good, really good fun and really helpful and she helped us and we'll help her.*

”

The potential to support the event in becoming more sustainable, using their experience and techniques to help with improving the sustainability of costumes and floats, is an aim.

“

*We're looking to make it more sustainable (floats and costumes) so less plastic and more stuff that can be recycled or dismantled. The big bear, it was beautiful and the big elephant, but they need to be stored, this is the trouble, and a lot of it was plastic, so with recycling, think about what it is made of.*

”

### **Moving forwards - Ideas**

It is noted that the quality of the photographs of the event is very high. The potential to have all members of the parade taking part in the Mayor's Reception on the balcony is a suggestion for the future. Holding the reception after the parade would give all participants the opportunity to be part of this event, of having all of the costumes at the reception would add to the visual spectacle. Whilst the scaffolding around The Harris impacted on the view of the fireworks, this was recognised as a temporary situation.

“

*The official photographs on the day, the photos are absolutely amazing.*

*We got invited by the Mayor to stand on the balcony and wave and I think it was a shame that the people in the parade didn't get a chance to come up on the balcony after. I think they should have had the reception after the parade so that the people in the parade could have joined the reception – that would have been amazing. That would be lovely. I thought the Mayor's Reception it would be lovely if everyone involved could have come up and had a drink and a sandwich after the parade that would have been really nice.*

*It was a shame that The Harris, I know it's scaffolded off which did block the view of the fireworks, but I know it will be different next year as it will be complete.*

”

It is felt that there is the potential to make use of the empty shop spaces in having a rolling programme of pop-up shops and allowing business startups to use the space. This would benefit local businesses, provide a service to the community and make constructive use of empty space which is accessible to local people.

“

*I think the empty shops, the empty spaces, for the Council, to have a rolling programme of pop up shops to keep people in there. I know they've got a lot of voluntary organisations but if they had a rolling programme of people who want to start a business and want to trial it, I think that would be really good for the bus station, it would get people in, it's a good space and you've got parking and parking is quite reasonable, so it would be a good space for people to trial stuff and I think it's a shame that they're not doing that.*

”

### **Moving fowards - Community involvement**

The involvement with the community over the duration of the pop-up shop illustrated the benefit of providing a community service; one where the local community could drop in, have a chat and revisit; providing a “drop in” opportunity for one off and regular visits.

“

*One thing we did notice, the people coming in the shop to the workshops, there is a lot of loneliness in Preston, a lot of people kept coming back in and showing us what they were making. People kept coming back in and having conversations about what they were making.*

*They were enjoying making things but they were also enjoying talking about it and kept coming back and showing us what they had made and showing us what they were interested in and coming back to try other things which was really good. Most of the people who came to a workshop came to more than one workshop.*

*The starting of making a little community is quite interesting. One of the people who did the journalling workshop said they'd love to do a journalling session once a month, before we've got a venue, that's not suitable, but that kind of thing would be amazing. A lot of people journal in different ways, so like a knit and natter, making the most of the community you have.*

”

### **Sources**

*Interview with: Elizabeth Emmens-Wilson, Co-founder, The Creative Principle*

*[Article: 'The Creative Scrap Store promotes sustainable creativity'](#)*

*[Article: 'Visiting Bus Station pop-up scrap store for Encounter Festival'](#)*

*[Creative Scrap Store leaflet](#)*

*[Encounter Festival website](#)*

*Sophie Tickle, Artistic Director & Becky Rich, Dance Leader at DanceSyndrome*



**Context**

DanceSyndrome is a multi-award winning inclusive dance charity based in Lancashire with a special focus on including everyone, regardless of ability. They provide weekly inclusive dance workshops for people with and without disabilities, as well as leadership training in line with their unique co-delivery model where people with and without disabilities work together to offer high quality provision.



*We run a community programme all across Lancashire where our co-delivery model in which a Dance Leader with a disability and a professional Dance Artist work together to co-design and deliver workshops, is put into practice.*



**Our Vision is Simple**

To empower people with learning disabilities through inclusive dance.

**Our Charitable Objective is:**

To advance education in the art of dance for the public benefit, in particular (but not exclusively) for people with learning disabilities.

**Our Mission**

To be a sustainable & environmentally responsible leading community role model that provides high quality inclusive dance leadership, participation, performance and training opportunities for both people with learning disabilities and non-disabled individuals and our company of dancers.



**Our core values are embedded within our mission statement:**

- Inclusion & equality
- Collaboration
- Artistic excellence

DanceSyndrome strive to provide opportunities for people with disabilities to not only be included, but to become more visible citizens, have their voices heard on important issues, to follow their dreams and to succeed in their ambitions. Their work inspires and empowers both dancers and audiences to believe that opportunities are endless for people who refuse to be defined by disability.

*“DanceSyndrome is a charity that exists due to a lack of dance opportunities, and we’re going from strength to strength and doing workshops during the weeks and we did one for Encounter and that has been an absolute success.”*

DanceSyndrome was established by the founder and Creative Director, Jen Blackwell, who has Down’s syndrome, and wanted to follow her dream of being a dancer and dance leader. Having been to mainstream school and realising how much she loved to dance, Jen decided that she wanted to become a community dance worker. After leaving school however, Jen found herself in the frustrating position of not being able to fulfil her ambition as there was no suitable dance training for a person with a learning disability.

After 10 years of unsuccessfully searching for appropriate and inclusive training it became clear that many others were in the same situation. With change needed, Jen and her parents formed DanceSyndrome in 2009 and it was registered as a charity in 2013.

*“Our company was founded by a lady who has Down’s syndrome and she found she had no opportunity to lead community dance. So we exist to fill this gap and train people with disabilities to become Dance Leaders and gain an accredited Level 1 or Level 2 qualification.”*

The Encounter Festival provides DanceSyndrome with a significant opportunity to showcase their work through workshop and performance.

*“Lancashire Encounter celebrates culture and art from all across Lancashire. When we first took part a couple of years ago we just found that it was a really brilliant opportunity to showcase the wonderful work of our dance teams and Dance Leaders and to engage with new audiences. Taking part in the parade this year too was extra special.”*



Whilst the outdoor performance opportunity wasn't appropriate, DanceSyndrome were able to illustrate their work and engage with the community through the workshop and being part of the parade.

“  
*We were looking to perform one of our shows which didn't come off because performing outdoors didn't quite work for us but we got to be part of the parade and showcase some performance skills this way instead.*  
”

**Review of 2023 – what worked well**

The opportunity to be involved through both the workshop and in partnering with the Worldwide Samba Drummers in the parade provided two significant opportunities for involvement. Involvement in the procession provided an exciting and relevant experience to be a part of.



“  
*We put in an application form for a workshop and a performance. We went down the workshop route which was brilliant and then we were also partnered with Worldwide Samba Drummers. Their leader contacted DanceSyndrome and asked if we would be willing to partner with them and be part of the parade as dancers to support their drumming. So, it was really cool that we had two hats - we could partner with them and also run our own workshop.*  
  
*We were thrilled to be accepted and started planning out logistics. As we'd been part of previous festivals there was imagery of DanceSyndrome at the festival that already existed and could be used which was great.*  
”

**Review of 2023 – what could be improved**

Having been involved with the Encounter Festival previously, it was felt that this prior experience made the whole process run well for 2023 and that communication effectively supported any of DanceSyndrome's requirements in the run up to the event.

“  
*I think in knowing the organisation and working with them in previous years, we felt very comfortable with the process and the organisers. We were able to reach out to them if there was anything we needed in the lead up to the event.*  
”

### Changes in 2023

2023 was the third year in which DanceSyndrome had been involved with the Encounter Festival. No specific changes over the years had been noted; it is felt that the event provides a significant and important opportunity for DanceSyndrome to showcase their work and to work with the community.

“

*We were involved last year and the year before, each of the 3 years. Not really any difference, I loved it, I absolutely loved it, it's fantastic to join in the love of dance. I love community work, it's very important, and it's a real chance to come together. It's very important as it helps me to reach out now to more communities, the most important thing is communities. There was no difference over the years.*

”

One development that had been noted is the introduction of the MetTent which had been built upon in 2023. It was felt that this space provides a relevant and effective workshop area.

“

*I think having the Met Tent, the community space worked really well, and I think last year was the first time that it was used and it was built on again this year and having that kind of open workshop space was great.*

*The workshop was also co-delivered by one of our other leaders, and having a PA system meant that we were able to amplify her talking device so it filled the space, as sometimes sound can be lost so having that capability was really beneficial for our delivery and allowing her voice to really be heard.*

”

### Contribution of DanceSyndrome to the Encounter Festival

Engagement with the community, providing the opportunity for dance and enjoyment through workshop is DanceSyndrome's key contribution to the Encounter Festival. Directly supporting the community engagement aim of the Encounter Festival itself, DanceSyndrome interacts with the community, providing the opportunity for direct involvement. The visitors enjoyed themselves, had fun and experienced a great time.

“

*I absolutely loved it. I love it in the community when everyone comes out of the workshop and the communities join together and being together and for us to teach dance. I love it when it brings everyone in together and everyone enjoys the love of dance which is very vital to what we do, it is vital. We love everyone together and it does benefit communities and the people as well as to have it in one place, it was absolutely the best day ever. It gave us the chance to get to make new friends in the community and to see the joy in their faces, that was an absolute joy.*

”

“

*Their reaction to it, they have a great time with us. For the community to have fun, have such a great time. I love the communities, to get to know everyone and we were able to increase our awareness, it's all about community.*

”

DanceSyndrome also raised awareness of disabilities and the ability, capability and talent of people with disabilities.

“

*DanceSyndrome are very strong on inclusivity, showcasing the combined effort of the dance artists and dance leaders. People might not know about certain disabilities and their capabilities. Inclusivity, it is about inclusion, and showcases how very talented we are and when we're bringing that to Encounters it celebrates our talent, it celebrates the talent of the great community we share that with everyone – it's absolutely fantastic.*

”

### Contribution of the Encounter Festival to DanceSyndrome

The Encounter Festival supports DanceSyndrome in their social connectiveness aim, allowing them to use the medium of dance to engage and connect with communities. It provides an additional forum for them to generate awareness and reach new audiences and communities.

The Encounter Festival provides DanceSyndrome with an ideal opportunity to showcase their work and their unique co-production model and to highlight the abilities and capabilities of the members of DanceSyndrome.



“

*As an organisation, we feel that our co-production is one of our unique qualities and we felt we could showcase that.*

*As a charity, it benefits everyone, it does benefit the community, it means we can reach out to them even further and other communities as well.*

*Increasing awareness of what DanceSyndrome is about and I'm very keen on awareness. I'm so passionate about what I do, we're a dancing family. How much confidence I've got now. It does show the wider community and it's very vital as I love the joy in the faces, it shows the awareness of what it can do to someone like me. I'm able to reach out to so many and it's comforting to know it's their time to shine now and by Lancashire Encounters, that really shows we are able to share that awareness on that platform. We're able now to share that awareness.*



”



### Moving forwards - Involvement

DanceSyndrome want to be involved in the Encounter Festival in 2024. The event provides a significant opportunity to engage with the community, promote their work and message and to showcase their model. It provides a high quality event for DanceSyndrome to be a part of and the opportunity to perform to a large audience.

“

*Absolutely yes, without a doubt, it's absolutely incredible. It shows with the greatest respect I have. Lancashire Encounter it's absolutely fantastic.*

*It's a real opportunity for the organisation, for our leaders to be able to lead by example and showcase what we do in our co-leadership model. It also offers the opportunity for us to perform in a really special, high-quality event to such a huge audience, where everyone has the opportunity to perform in front of so many people and have that experience, that's massive.*

”

### Moving forwards - Ideas

DanceSyndrome aims to be a leader in creative dance practice in the North West and the continued strong visibility provided by their involvement with the Encounter Festival will support this aim.

“

*Obviously awareness is building of who we are and as part of our current strategy, we really want to be a leader in the North West in creative dance practice and being positioned amongst other brilliant organisations who are Lancashire wide is one way to be really visible in a really positive way.*

”

Continued involvement with the Encounter Festival will support DanceSyndrome and bring joy to the local community.

“

*For me, I enjoyed it that much, for me I would love it to continue as I love my fellow leaders and by bringing the joy and happiness can mean so much to everyone. It showcases us in the county, it shows to everyone and the awareness, I absolutely love it.*

”

### Moving forwards - Community involvement

The Encounter Festival directly and strongly supports the focus of DanceSyndrome of social connectivity; generating awareness amongst new communities, showcasing their work and directly engaging with people.

“

*Social connectiveness is such an important part of what we do, through dance you can really connect with other people and how important that is across the communities to be able to have the chance to do that on a different platform and with a new audience, we were really grateful for that opportunity.*

”

## Sources

*Interview with: Sophie Tickle, Artistic Director & Becky Rich, Dance Leader, DanceSyndrome*

[DanceSyndrome website](#)

[Encounter Festival website](#)



## **Dawn Worthington, Programmes and Learning Officer, Preston City Council**

### Context

The Encounter Festival began with Preston City Council and the Council have maintained a key and active role. The event is a Preston City event and the Council's role includes supporting the planning, scale and delivery. The responsibility involves ensuring the festival meets the needs of the Encounter Festival organisation, the needs of the visitors and the needs of the artists, as well as the needs of the City Council.



Dawn Worthington, Programmes and Learning Officer of Preston City Council has a key involvement in working with Esther Ferry-Kennington, Executive Producer for the Encounter Festival. A key focus is in providing relevant and effective support; ensuring the event is the best it can be. 2023 is the second year in which Dawn has been involved with the Encounter Festival.





*The Harris is part of Preston City Council, in terms of Encounter I'm one of the main people who works with Esther with regards to making the plans and working the event.*

*It is an event that came from Preston City Council, so it is a City Council event, so it's making sure that it's to the scale of ambition, that it's being organised properly, that we're supporting it in an appropriate way as well as making sure it's hitting our needs, making sure that we're equally supporting Esther's needs and those of the acts and the various people involved in it.*

*It's about making sure it's as good as it can be and doing what we want, something that's on people's calendars and we're getting the message out there, encouraging people to participate as much as possible.*



The Encounter Festival originated from The Guild; an event which happens every 20 years. The purpose of the Encounter Festival was to maintain and build momentum over the years in between The Guild – to avoid a “cold start” for the next Guild (which will be in 9 years’ time). The development of the Encounter Festival provides the opportunity to benefit from the momentum generated in terms of awareness and visitor attendance.

Benefit is also gained through the development of the skills set to support the delivery of the event. In particular, the skills to deliver the procession are key, as processions are a fundamental element of The Guild. The ongoing development also supports community involvement and engagement – a key contribution to The Guild.



*Initially it came out of Preston Guild which happens every 20 years, so the idea came up that it would be a good thing to have a festival that means that there isn't that need to build from scratch when Preston Guild comes around. In Preston Guild there are a lot of processions and the fact we have a procession within Encounter means that there is that expertise not only in the Council in terms of running them but also within community groups that they are used to putting on procession groups, it's a skills set that exists within the city.*



*We would like for the procession to be something that we can continue and build on so there are some things that you think are working well about it but we could do with having some more artists and performers who specialise in those sorts of events. Then also having the rest of the programme around it and having that expectation that these sorts of things happen in Preston and having local artists involved, having local people used to getting these performances in Preston – the expectation.*

*You don't have to wait 20 years for something to happen.*



### Review of 2023 – what worked well

The experience from previous years' festivals supported the planning, time management and implementation of the 2023 Encounter Festival. The experience generated from previous festivals has also supported the marketing activity for the 2023 event.



*Last year was the first Encounter Festival I've attended so with that experience this year we've come at it with a longer term planning process which has worked really well so it didn't feel like we were getting close to the festival and having to rush. A lot of that seemed to be bedding in this time and there's been some people working on the marketing side and they've done it before so we're building that familiarity and knowing what works and how we can tweak things, so that's been good.*

*In terms of leading up to the festival this year, we've had to do the recruitment and the booking and those contracts and thinking realistically about the timing of the contracts and those sorts of things to make sure we don't end up with downtime when we need to do things like the reporting and so on. We did have the chance to look at those sorts of things as well.*



### Review of 2023 – what could be improved

The change in personnel with responsibility for the Encounter Festival at the BME Network meant that Esther needed to spend unplanned time in undertaking administrative tasks, with some of the tasks not completed as scheduled.

How best to streamline the administrative role and ensure the systems are in place to support the range of processes needed and timescales to be met to support the development and delivery of the festival is a factor for consideration.



“

*This year there were issues with the admin that Esther ended up doing a number of tasks that were meant to be carried out by the BME Network that's because they switched from someone who had worked on it the previous year and understood everything, the familiarity with everything helped us, then BME took them off working on the Encounter admin and gave it to somebody else who hadn't got that experience and so some of things weren't done in the time that they needed to be done.*

*That's one of things we want to look at in terms of how that admin can be streamlined and made better as one of the things that happens with festivals it's getting people booked into the diaries but then there's all the paperwork that has to go out and all the stuff you have to get back and the information you need to give people for the festival itself, so there's a lot of admin that can take a lot of time at the point when really you don't have any.*

”

### Changes in 2023

The experience of the process previously supported the effectiveness in the organisation and delivery of the marketing activity.

“

*This time round it felt better and people knew what to expect in terms of getting things to the designers and getting stuff out there; it seemed more organised. I think it is that experience that's helping us with the planning process.*

”

The lack of a central stage in Winckley Square in 2023 was a difference. While there was activity going on, the lay out of the area did not always support the feeling that activity was happening. The central stage in 2022 provided a focus for activity.

“

*This year I was involved in stewarding the procession which I hadn't done before so that was a very positive experience, seeing the reaction to that.*

*A difference on the Sunday was largely they didn't have a large central staging in Winckley Square, so it sort of felt like there wasn't so much activity – there was, it was just how things are laid out in that area, can make it feel like, depending on which way you're looking, that there's something happening and there's not.*

”

The use of the Giant Wheel generated awareness and interest from a wider physical area than the Encounter Festival itself. It provided a focal point and appeal to an audience not directly involved with the event itself. Being mobile and non-static provided the opportunity to take the festival into a wider arena and involve people who otherwise may not have been engaged.

“

*Also the weather, it was dry but overcast. What was good was that the parade, which was the Giant Wheel on Fishergate, that was amazing and to have something like that that lots of people on the main shopping street could watch and there were loads of people following it and stopping and watching, that was a good thing.*

*Both the Saturday and Sunday sometimes you are really close to the main shopping street where lots and lots of people are but people don't even realise that something is actually happening, so this was taking something to where a number of people were; where people were looking out of shops, going to the door, looking out of cafes and windows which was a really nice thing; like; 'Wow, what's this?' – we invaded the shopping space.*

”

### Contribution of Preston City Council to the Encounter Festival

A key contribution to the Encounter Festival is in the form of the resource of Preston City Council staff. Marketing and communications staff are involved in related activities, including the design and updating of the website.

The Council's Events and Facilities Officer is involved with the logistics elements of supporting the artists. Casual staff and volunteers also help out with such activities as stewarding and liaising with the artists; a number of staff are involved.



“

*There are a number of (Council) staff involved; our Marketing Team and also the Council's Comms Department are involved in making sure the website and so on are all updated and designed by a member of the Council's Design Team. We have our Events and Facilities Officer heavily involved in all of the logistics side, talking to the artists and making sure that what they're asking for is possible and people helping with the tech side.*



*My colleague works with the event, people who come and volunteer or work as casual staff at the events so they help to steward and act as artists liaisons. There's quite a lot of staff involvements, it could be improved in terms of recognition amongst staff about what's going on, what's happening, when it's happening, are they going to come, but when you start adding it up there are a number of Preston City Council staff who are involved in some way or other.*

”



## Contribution of the Encounter Festival to Preston City Council

A key contribution which the Encounter Festival makes to Preston City Council aligns with the original aim of the festival; to provide momentum and a foundation for development to support the next Guild. The festival provides the opportunity for staff to be involved in organising, marketing and supporting an event – developing and building on the skills and experience that will be directly relevant to the planning, organising and delivery of the next Guild.

The momentum of providing a regular event in Preston is a further contribution; generating awareness and expectation amongst the local population and visitors.

Showcasing Preston as a destination that supports such an event, along with the experience and value of the festival to local people and visitors, are further contributions.

“

*It's that idea of building the skills and expectation in time for the next Guild which will be in 9 years' time. Also it's about footfall and people's perceptions of Preston, that some things are happening here that are worth visiting for, worth making a special trip or if you're in town you don't actually have to go further afield to experience these things as they are coming to Preston.*

*Just giving people the experience of seeing these things could actually make a positive impact on adults, young people, children – you just don't know, it could spark an interest that people didn't know they had.*

”

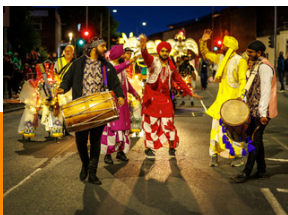
## Moving forwards - Involvement

There is commitment from Preston City Council to the Encounter Festival going forwards. As the initiator of the event and with a key interest in the event from a strategic perspective, the Council's role as a key stakeholder is strong.

“

*Yes, there is a commitment to that. We are doing some forward planning we've talked about other things we want to get out of Encounter going forward, some of the things we want to address and, even if Encounter were to go for national portfolio funding the City Council would still have involvement as a major stakeholder – it is that thing of tying it in with The Guild and that benefit.*

”





### Moving forwards - Ideas

Whilst online marketing is key and relevant, it is felt that the event would benefit from further traditional marketing and awareness raising activity.

“

*We've done quite a lot of online marketing and although that makes sense and it works for some people, we still get an awful lot of people who say they didn't know it was happening and maybe going back to old school print in terms of having banners or posters, things that are around. You'll always get people who say they didn't know it was happening.*

”

Developing the event's sustainability is an area identified where the festival has opportunity to reduce its environmental impact.

“

*We're also interested in environmental impact and moving towards a festival that has less of a negative environmental impact, when it comes round to The Guild so we're not having all diesel trucks and stuff driving through the City Centre, we want to build that expertise and find ways where we can have a cleaner procession without any of that. Anything from not creating plastic waste or how people get here and all sorts of things we want to look at.*

”

### Moving forwards - Community involvement

There is the potential to engage further with local community groups with the benefit of raising awareness of the festival amongst a wider and larger audience through word of mouth and participation, leading to stronger local ownership and the benefits this brings in terms of involvement, support and momentum.

“

*I think there are things we could potentially do to tap into more local community groups, again this links back to some of the work we're doing in The Harris but also making people feel a part of it would hopefully raise that recognition of what Encounter is and the expectation that it is going to happen but also people go and tell their friends and their family and that helps spread the word so actually that is probably better than any form of marketing that we could do, if somebody says; 'Are you going to watch such and such in the procession, are you going to see their performance?' they'll feel more invested in it and it becomes a Preston thing, so I think there is that sort of element we can have a look at. I think it's started to happen with the procession (local ownership) and not only the numbers of people who were watching the procession but the groups who are in the procession, but I think there's still some way to go.*

”

## Sources

*Interview with: Dawn Worthington, Programmes and Learning Officer, Preston City Council*

[Preston Council website](#)

[Encounter Festival website](#)

## **Esther Ferry-Kennington, Executive Producer, Encounter Festival**

### Context



The primary objective of the Encounter Festival Executive Producer is to deliver Encounter's vision while promoting a culture that upholds the highest standards of performance, inclusivity and transparency. This includes fostering an environment that nurtures artists, supports the professional development of the festival team and positions Encounter as a must-see cultural destination.

2023 saw the re-appointment of Esther Ferry-Kennington as the Executive Producer for the Encounter Festival.

The role involves chairing the Festival Steering Group and providing external support and guidance. Esther also lead the artistic programming and production, designing and delivering captivating experiences such as the annual community Torchlight Procession.



“

*I'm so pleased to be given the opportunity to build on the programme and relationships developed so far for Preston through Encounter Festival. I hope our torchlight procession goes from strength to strength as we get closer to the next Guild in 2032, bringing together all of Preston's communities for one almighty celebration!*

”

### Progress to 2023

2023 was the third year of Esther leading on the delivery of the Encounter Festival and the first of these three years where the event had not been impacted upon by external events. The Covid pandemic had impacted on the 2021 festival and the sad death of Queen Elizabeth II 8 days before the 2022 event had impacted on the support activities in the run up to the festival. 2023 also experienced fair weather.

2023 therefore provided the first situation for Esther where the festival run up and delivery could be operated fully to plan. This enabled the opportunity to undertake all support and production activities in the run up to the event, pay attention to smaller details and for the festival to run without the influence of external factors.



*This is the third year me leading on delivery, the first year we were within Covid restrictions and last year we lost the Queen 8 days before the festival, so that really lost us a good number of marketing and production days and then this year we didn't have any of that stuff and we had good weather.*

*So for the first time I've had a proper run at the production and we got to that last stage of production of literally managing to put names on dressing rooms and such details that I've just not managed to get to before as something massive has occurred and so that level of detail hasn't been got to.*



Having a definite event date for 2023 at the end of the 2022 festival provided a firm foundation for the development of this year's activity and marketing, with the repetition of the event at the same weekend in the year supporting awareness generation.



*In terms of marketing we came out of last year's festival with a date which is massively helpful, that helps and we have a date for next year – we've got the 3rd weekend in September so it becomes a formula that we can start to talk to people about.*

*The repetitive of it being every year has had a real impact on the audience, that's paid off.*



## Review of 2023 – what worked well

The momentum generated over the years of the festival has created an awareness of the Encounter Festival, its purpose, scope and activities – what the audience can expect. The event has been rebranded from “Lancashire Encounter” to “Encounter Festival” to develop the focus more on Preston rather than the wider Lancashire geography. This provides a stronger concentration of consideration for the development and delivery of the festival; taking a deep rather than a broad approach.



*In terms of the programme as a whole we're getting a feeling of what it is so people know what to expect from Encounter Festival. What I think we are getting better at is articulating what it is, a cultural offer for the City. We changed the brand from Lancashire Encounter to Encounter Festival and made it much more focused on funding because funding For Lancashire from Arts Council was very much focused on Blackburn and Blackpool and we felt like the investment that was going to Preston had to be invested here in Preston, so that will be the focus.*

*Over the next coming years as well, it makes it a lot easier offer to say, "It's Preston's Encounter Festival" it's a very specific thing and we're not going broad, we're going deep and that's actually easier to do. I think that helps massively with momentum being able to be specific around what it is.*



The diversity of the audience is a key achievement, although it is difficult to quantify this diversity using standard measures and statistics. From walking around the festival, the attraction of people from a wide range of ethnicities, people with disabilities and people from different backgrounds is visibly evident. Being able to quantify this data, along with softer behavioural data, would provide useful insights for future planning.



*Certainly as I walk around the festival and we take all those numbers and we take all those interviews but what doesn't come across is how diverse those audiences are and I wonder about how we can better articulate evidence, as it's obviously anecdotal, but every audience for every show had people of colour, I think there were homeless people in a couple of them, loads of people of colour, lots of wheelchair users throughout both days, so I do need to think how to better evidence that diversity of audiences and that also affects how we market it, how do we get that across to a broader section of people.*



“

*Obviously, also anecdotally but I still think we get 50% of the audience that have come to see a show, 25% who happen across it and stay and watch and 25% of people that happen across it and pause but don't stay and watch. It's understanding all those things, they're useful to me in the planning.*

”

### Review of 2023 – what could be improved

The administration of Encounter Festival had developed significantly in 2022 with the contribution from the Lancashire BME Network. In 2023, unexpected changes to personnel lead to a loss of momentum in this delivery and resulted in the loss of a show which had to be replaced. The administration position will be reviewed, with consideration of the level of detail needed for its effective delivery. The review of the administration role will also impact on the level of detail and support for production systems and materials.

“

*In terms of administration I felt that last year we'd come a long way, and this year we worked with the Lancashire BME Network. There was a change of staff which left a gap in the detail of contracting and schedules that impacted and we lost a show on the basis of that.*

*We do need to openly recruit for that administration role again this year – go back to the beginning again and ensure that level of detail is there for the production timeline. We managed to replace the show very quickly but it has meant that we have to change that administrative approach again.*

*I think that will have a positive impact on the detail of production as well. I think I know what I want to see regarding the level of detail for the kind of artists packs and production packs I want to see and to have that out in the last couple of days. I know people don't check their Teams File or look at it properly, so to attach that to the email as part of the full pack – more detail for everyone in those last couple of days so everyone's got it to hand and have it printed out that you can give it out. But don't give out draft copies, just the final set with the final detail, and we got really close to that. It was good that we got that far.*

”

### Moving forwards - The Guild

Encounter Festival provides an important role in the lead up to The Guild; the next Guild being in nine years' time. The knowledge generated through the production of the festival, and in particular the procession, provides a key foundation and resource of learning, knowledge and experience. The festival provides the opportunity to learn how to integrate the procession, the experience to grow the size of the procession and the time to develop the involvement of community groups.

Processions are a key focus of The Guild and this element of the Encounter Festival provides a mechanism for ongoing learning and development. The regularity of the festival also supports awareness and understanding, providing a momentum on which The Guild can naturally integrate.

“

*All of that knowledge helps us plan the marketing but the biggest thing of course is the procession. We're counting down to The Guild now, it's 8 more Encounter Festivals then it's The Guild if we do it every year. The 2021 Parade was a bit separate, last year I think it was 250 participants and this year we had 400, so that's a big step up.*

*And for quite a few of those it was difficult to pull that together, so many come and do it again, some people would have been there but community groups can be a challenge to get people together, it felt bigger but it felt easier to do, that's good and I think that will grow and grow and that's a key central point and Preston really understands the procession and so the marketing is easier. A real bit of momentum.*

”

### **Moving forwards - Community development**

The development of systems being in place, operational and effective for the core areas of administration and marketing will provide Esther with time to further develop community engagement. The foundations for the festival are in place and this provides the opportunity to extend links and activity within the community as well as ensure the programme of events differs and develops year on year. The framework for the festival is in place and the focus can now move to further developing community involvement both regarding the festival's delivery and the audience.



“

*The next bit for me in my role is the community engagement part. As the administration and marketing are happening without my input, which is how it should be, then I've only got started but I did have a few conversations this year which will pay off more so next year about community engagement with the Youth Forum and the Foxton Centre and the Emmaus charity shop in Preston and the charity is to do with homeless people.*



*So that is the next exciting bit for me, the programme it has to change every year but it has to have a framework which works, a footprint that works, starting to better understand the systems. The production side of things, the comms therefore, the bit that grows next is how to get the community engaged in parts of the programme and mainly in the procession but also as audiences, so they're part of the procession but in the day they come and watch the show.*

”



### Moving forwards - Artist development

The focus will be both on developing Preston's offer and in looking to Lancashire to integrate new ideas and contacts. With the focus moving towards Preston rather than wider to Lancashire, there is the intention to integrate, develop and support both locally and to introduce new insight from the wider geography. Again, with the foundations of the festival in place, this provides Esther with time to dedicate to this element of artist development.

“

*How do we increasingly make work in Preston that's relevant to Encounter. We always do a bit of both and the exciting thing to do is present work from further afield that brings new ideas and new contacts but fit it alongside high quality work that is made in Preston and the balance of that needs to be a bit more towards Preston than Lancashire.*

*This year it feels like now I've got time to go out and work on that and look at commissions that work with Lancashire artists and that we can offer a space for them to develop new ideas and get training, hone their own business models, their own ideas, I can support them with fundraising and so on. So the two big things on the agenda for me next year is community engagement and artist development.*

”

### Moving forwards - Build on the momentum

There is significant potential to build on the momentum and foundation of the festival. It is felt the next stage is to support the festival so that it becomes an event which is owned by the community; the festival is embedded and has its own personality – something that the community can own and integrate with – its own persona.

“

*Community actualisation that people come together and share the self-actualisation is connected to the next person and the next person and together you create community self-actualisation, that is exactly the next stage of it for me. How do we embed something that communities understand for themselves so if it comes away from Preston City Council or if I'm not there to run it or someone else takes over it has a momentum of its own because the community groups know what they want and get out of it more so. We talk about audiences, talk about participation in a bigger way.*

”

Additional momentum has been generated in the workplace. People moving back into offices post Covid has generated the opportunity for relationships to develop, knowledge of different areas of work to be generated and the consideration of areas of connection and integration.



“

*One of the things that has happened this year, since around Christmas I've been going into The Harris's offices once a week, working there, it's taken a long time post Covid for us all to shuffle back into what we might have been doing. When I started the job in November 2019 I was going in once a week and being there I started to know who the staff are, who the community engagement lead is for Harris, the programme connections leader, so there's a lot of different projects that can amplify, that can connect with the community.*

*That's a really exciting part of how we embed Encounter better with what is happening in the City and in particular what is happening in the City in the Harris Quarter and for Preston City Council and that has started to happen this year. It's felt a big benefit.*

”

### The outcome of Encounter Festival 2023

A major success of Encounter Festival 2023 is the significant leap in audience numbers towards the 50,000 mark. Initial plans for visitor numbers, made before Esther was in position, have not been achieved. With numbers having settled around the 30,000 – 35,000 level for a few years, it is a marked increase in 2023 to see the target of 50,000 visitors in clear sight.

The increase in visitor numbers has led to consideration of the realistic number of visitors which can be accommodated. The space around workshops and programme events are limited in space, thereby restricting audience numbers. It is felt that the procession provides the main opportunity for increasing numbers – both through participation and audience numbers.

“

*We've been toying with that audience number of around the 35,000 for the 3 years. In 2021, when the festival was spread over the weekends we were only just really hitting that last year it was I think 33,000 we had and this year we did get towards that 50,000 mark and we've been talking about that for years.*

*When I inherited the business plan it was talking about 2 years ago around 40,000 and by now up to around 70,000 but now we actually need to analyse where those extra chunks of audience would come from as there's still a lot of capacity for audience in the Procession but actually for the programme there's not that much, you could get another 5000 around it but you're not going to get to 70,000 without additional bits of programme and I'm not sure we're there yet.*

”



### Plans for 2024 - Visitor numbers

For 2024, the aim is to embed the 50,000 visitor figure; to ensure this number of visitors is effectively supported. This can then provide the foundation on which to grow future numbers within a considered and planned approach that can support higher numbers effectively. The growth from 50,000 to 70,000 visitor numbers needs to be planned and considered. The focus for 2024 is community and artist development.

“

*Next year we can embed that 50,000 grow it a bit more around the shows and the structure of the programme we've got and then come the next kind of additional then what, but we've been talking about that number for years and there it is, we actually did it this time. There was no global significant distractions and the weather was good – those two things came together. The procession is the big number, that's probably two thirds of that number but actually we had numbers of 1000 around some of the shows.*

*It's what is the next block that we could add to the programme to take it to another 20,000, we've got to think about it very carefully, but we're there now and we've got to start thinking about that. It's repetition of delivery, hopefully people will remember that it's September, that's what happens.*

*Next year its community and artwork being threaded through the audience structure we achieved this year, getting it more embedded in the City, The Harris and the City Council and next year it's back to; 'Right what's the next big audience push going to be?'*

”

### Plans for 2024 - Working with uncertainty and new influences

There is the need to consider festival related yet external factors which can impact on the event. Such issues as increasing costs, train strikes and weather can have a huge impact on the event. Whilst these are factors which the festival has no control over, they are factors that need to be considered and appropriate responses or alternative provision implemented to counter such activity.

“

*We need to continue to be cautious of costs as they're going to continue to go up, we didn't end up with train strikes this year but did the year before. Accommodation was a bit messy and we need to carry on to work with that.*

*The extreme weather, if the weather had been a couple of days before we would have lost everything on Sunday, those kind of contingencies we need to understand a bit better and probably contracting and in terms of cancellation policies, more realistic because the likelihood of losing shows due to extreme weather one way or another. We got really lucky with the weather.*

”

Experience with one company highlighted the need to be aware of factors that previously may not have had an impact on the festival's development. Focusing on the development of sustainable working, the company which had initially put a bid in for the work was unable to deliver for the Encounter Festival in 2023 due to their decision to move towards a sustainable model. This has raised the awareness of the need to consider commissions, commissioning and addressing vulnerabilities in the process.

The environmental impact of the festival is a key consideration going forwards. Development was made this year in the reduction of plastic water bottles, and there is the conscious awareness of how to move the event to become more sustainable.

“

*We had a commission we were supposed to work with – how do we acknowledge such a scale of things that are happening in the world around us. They have just put the company on pause until they can work out how to do their work sustainably. They said they would work with us when we went for the bid, by the time we got the bid they said they weren't doing any work until they'd worked it out.*

*We did better this year with not having bottled water all around the event but we've got some more work to do around the event and sustainability generally. But losing a company that way was quite challenging and I think that is an indicator of the vulnerability of relationships and so on and next year, like now, I'd like to be further into a conversation about a relevant commission before we get the Arts Council in. I really want it to be Preston focused.*

”

## Sources

**Interview with: Esther Ferry-Kennington, Executive Producer, Encounter Festival**

**[Encounter Festival website](#)**



# Marketing and promotion

## Insights for Encounter Festival 2024 Marketing

By incorporating the learnings into the marketing strategy, Encounter Festival can continue to grow its online presence and engage its audience effectively in future campaigns.

**1** **Maintain Consistency:** While the festival gained more followers, engagement and impressions decreased. Maintaining a consistent content strategy and monitoring audience responses can help improve these metrics.

**2** **Diversify Content:** Continue to diversify content types, including videos, photos, and interactive posts, to keep the audience engaged.

**3** **Ad Performance Metrics:** The variation of ad types performed well, scope to expand on these efforts will depend on budget for 2024 and evaluation data collected from festival participants.

**4** **Traffic Source Analysis:** Gain insights into the sources of traffic to tailor promotional efforts effectively from data collected from festival participants.

**5** **Audience:** Analyse audience demographics and behaviour with an aim to expand audience groups with a more targeted content delivery.

**6** **Engagement Optimisation:** Further refine the posting schedule based on engagement patterns to maximise reach and impact.

**7** **Feedback Loop:** Encourage audience feedback and utilise it to enhance future campaigns.

**8** **Collaborations:** Leverage collaborations with local organisations and influencers to extend the festival's reach.

## Analysis of Encounter Festival 2023 Campaign Performance

### Social Media Traffic During the Campaign:



**The Facebook page** gained 10.3% more fans during the campaign period, reaching a total of 1,878 fans. However, engagement and impressions saw a decrease of 35.8% and 30.1%, respectively. Total engagement stood at 2,278 interactions.



**Instagram** showed consistent performance with reach and engagement on individual posts varying but not showing a significant trend.



**Twitter** saw a positive increase in impressions for most posts, indicating key users favour this platform over other social media channels.

#### Best Posting Times:

The best times to post on Facebook for maximum engagement were found to be 11am on Mondays, 6pm on Fridays, 2pm, 7pm, and 8pm on Saturdays.

#### Best Post Types for Engagement:

The total number of posts published is 115 compared to Apr. 9, 2022 – Dec. 31, 2022, representing a variation of +45.6%. After analysing these posts, both video and image based social posts performed the best.

#### Audience Demographics:

The average audience group are from the United Kingdom, 35-44 years old, Female.

#### Brand Awareness:

Brand awareness on Facebook decreased by 0.8%, which could be attributed to changes in audience demographics or content strategy. This should be monitored and addressed.

#### Ads Placed:

The ad campaigns demonstrated effective reach, cost efficiency, and budget management. These are positive outcomes that suggest the advertising efforts were successful in reaching and engaging the target audience.

Social Media Ads:

**High Reach:** With a reach of 71,968, the ad effectively reached a large audience. This suggests that the ad had good visibility and exposure.

**Cost Efficiency:** The cost per result of £0.69 is relatively low. This means we achieved the set campaign goals at a reasonable cost.

**Budget Management:** With a campaign spend of £50.00, we were able to reach a substantial audience through Lancashire.

**The Lancashire Evening Post:** unite display adverts with targeting enabled for Lancashire, Manchester and Liverpool areas.

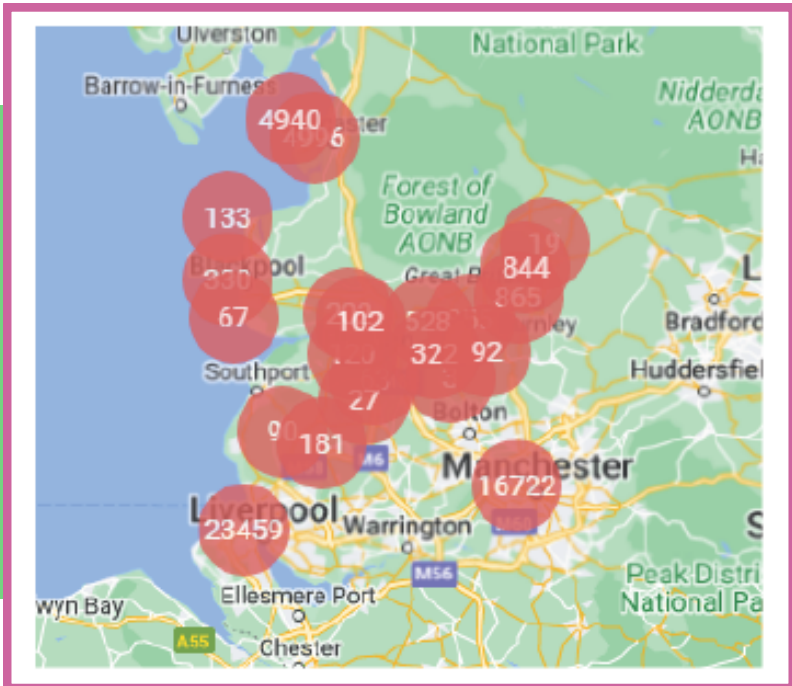
**Campaign Objectives:** The campaign's primary objective is to increase brand awareness.

**Campaign Period:** The campaign started on August 18, 2023, and ended on September 14, 2023.

**Impressions:** The campaign generated 60,202 impressions, indicating that the ad is reaching a significant audience.

**Click-Through Rate (CTR):** The CTR is at 0.05%.

Location data





### Website evaluation: Encounter Festival

6.8K total users of the Encounter Festival website from Jan 1st, 2023 - Sept 26th, 2023, which drew in increased visitors through regular posting of content articles and programme updates.

**Traffic sources:** Direct (2,839), Organic Search through Google (1,744), Organic Social (1,178), Referral links from other site (847).

**Users:** there was a huge spike in website visits on the 16th September by +275.5% of 945 users which could be due to both social media activity and the printed programme having the website address listed.



### Visit Preston x Encounter Festival Webpages:

Total views across all 10 Encounter Festival pages (4,332), Users (2,438), Avg. engagement time (48s).

The highest performing webpage was the event listing page which appeared on the Visit Preston 'What's On Calendar' closely followed by the Torchlight Procession article listed on the Visit Preston Blog which revealed frequent website updates and event visibility are key drivers in keeping users engaged.



### Promotional activities:

Encounter Festival utilised a mix of digital billboard promotions, postcards, magazine adverts, lamppost banners, press releases, social media campaigns, artist profiling, and collaborations with local organisations. This diverse approach likely contributed to the festival's visibility.

### Source:

Encounter Festival Social Media Report Detailed at Annex 3



# Facebook, Instagram and Twitter Analysis

## Facebook analysis

There was a total of 38 Facebook posts between 29.01.23 and 18.09.23.

### Reach:

The total reach from all posts was **88,595**, with an average reach of **2331** per post. The reach ranged from **365 to 29603** per post. The post with the highest reach was posted 7.49pm on 16th September 2023.

### Engagement:

The engagement rate per impression ranged from **0.2 to 14.1** with an average engagement rate per impression of **3.0**. The engagement rate per reach ranged from **0.3 to 14.5** with an average engagement rate per reach of **3.1**. The post with the highest engagement rates was posted on 12.38pm on 17th September 2023.

### Clicks:

The total number of clicks from all 38 posts was **1103** clicks generating an average of 29 clicks per post. The number of clicks per post ranged from **0 to 307**. The post with the highest number of clicks was posted at 8.04am on 16th September 2023.

## Instagram analysis

There was a total of 35 Instagram posts between 29.01.23 and 17.09.23.

### Reach:

The total reach from all posts was **15785**, providing an average reach per post of **451**. The reach ranged from **225 to 987** per post. The post with the highest reach was posted 6.04pm on 13th September 2023.

### Comments:

There was a total of **6 comments** from 30 relevant posts, an average of **0.2 comments per post**. The number of comments ranged from **0 to 3 comments** per post. The post with the highest number of comments was made 7.03pm on 22nd February 2023.

### Likes:

There was a total **424** likes generated by the 30 relevant posts, generating an average of **14.1** likes per post. The number of likes per post ranged from 2 to 60 likes per post. The post with the highest like was posted 7.02pm on 29th January 2023.

## Twitter analysis

There was a total of 35 Twitter posts between 29.01.23 and 17.09.23 .

### Retweets:

There was a total of **158** retweets, generating an average of **4.5** retweets per post. The number of retweets ranged from **0 to 15**. The post with the highest number of retweets was posted on 12.01pm on 10th August 2023.

### Likes:

There was a total of **222** likes, generating an average of **6.3** likes per post. The number of likes ranged from **0 to 18**. The post with the highest number of likes was posted 11.54am on 13th April 2023.

### Impressions:

There was a total of **42853** impressions, generating an average of **1224** impressions per post. The number of impressions ranged from **401 to 3581**. The post with the highest number of impressions was posted on 12.01pm on 10th August 2023 (the same post as for the highest number of retweets).

Source data: Encounter Festival Analytics, Excel Spreadsheet, Preston City Council

## Press Links

There was a total of 28 press links generated between 3.07.23 and 13.09.23. These included 9 articles in the Lancashire Evening Post and 8 postings on Blog Preston.

### The Lancashire Evening Post:

- ▶ [Bus station scrap store ignites Prestonian's creative side](#)
- ▶ [Giant robots and super-sized puppets to join Preston's torchlight parade](#)
- ▶ [Lancashire Encounter Festival 2023: cultural celebration will offer 'something for everyone', organisers pledge](#)
- ▶ [Lancashire Encounter festival 2023: 17 pictures from Preston's annual cultural event with dancers and street performers including Timeless](#)
- ▶ [Preston's Encounter Festival 2023 declared a resounding success as 50,000 people enjoy three-day extravaganza](#)
- ▶ [Scrap Store offers local businesses free help](#)
- ▶ [Torchlight procession through Preston this weekend featuring fireworks, dance music, the Caribbean Carnival and Preston City Mela](#)

- ▶ [Torchlight Procession: 15 dazzling images from evening parade including Caribbean Carnival and Preston City Mela](#)
- ▶ [Encounter Festival Torchlight Procession: Crowdfunding campaign launched to make popular Preston procession bigger and better than ever](#)

### **Blog Preston:**

- ▶ [Encounter Festival: Torchlight procession route and Preston road closures](#)
- ▶ [In pictures: Encounter Festival 2023 across Preston city centre](#)
- ▶ [Lancashire Encounter Festival confirms 2023 line-up](#)
- ▶ [Lancashire Encounter Festival confirms details of Community and Traditions stage outside Guild Hall](#)
- ▶ [Pop-up creative scrap store coming to Preston Bus Station](#)
- ▶ [The Lighter Jams bring energetic acoustic show to the MET at UCLan](#)
- ▶ [Torchlight procession through Preston city centre seeks extra backing](#)
- ▶ [Visiting Preston Bus Station pop-up scrap store for the Encounter Festival](#)

### **Preston City Council:**

- ▶ [Embark on a Cultural Journey at Encounter Festival 2023](#)
- ▶ [Encounter Festival 2023 declared a resounding success](#)
- ▶ [Encounter Festival 2023: The Creative Scrap Store Promotes Sustainable Creativity](#)
- ▶ [Support the Torchlight Procession at the Encounter Festival 2023](#)

### **Other features:**

- ▶ [BBC Radio Lancashire Interview x Encounter Festival, Graham Liver, 5.07.23](#)
- ▶ [Encounter website article: Creative Scrap Store Dates Announced, 10.07.23](#)
- ▶ [Encounter website article: Torchlight Procession to illuminate the streets of Preston, 12.09.23](#)
- ▶ [Lancs Live article: Preston's Encounter Festival 2023 with torchlight parade, fireworks finale and more](#)
- ▶ [Marketing Lancashire email feature, 30.08.23](#)
- ▶ [Preston BID feature](#)
- ▶ [Prestonian feature, 8.08.23](#)

# Annex 1: Report Lists

## List 1: Occupational detail provided by visitors

Occupational detail	Number of visitors
Nurse	4
Teaching Assistant	4
Admin	3
Civil Servant	3
Cleaner	3
Accountant	2
Doctor	2
HGV Driver	2
Shop Assistant	2
Support Worker	2
Teacher	2
Accounts	1
Admin Manager	1
Admin Support	1
Admin Worker	1
Artist / Illustrator	1
Arts Admin	1
Assistant Accountant	1

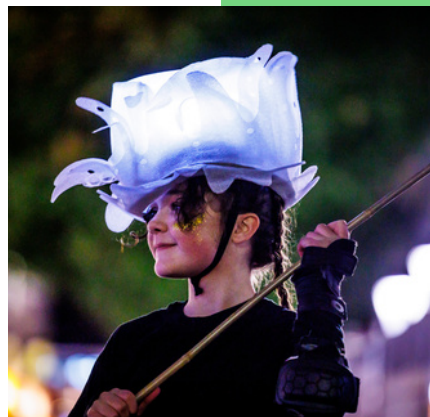
Occupational detail	Number of visitors
Banker	1
Bar Worker	1
Beautician	1
Bookkeeper	1
Builder	1
Butcher	1
Cafe Assistant	1
Call Handler	1
Care Assistant	1
Carer	1
Cook	1
Customer Service	1
Customer Service Advisor	1
Dinner Lady	1
Domestic	1
Drama Teacher	1
Economist	1
Electrical Engineer	1

Occupational detail	Number of visitors
Estate Agent	1
Exec Assistant	1
Freelance Photographer	1
Freelance Dancer & Care Worker	1
Full time parent	1
Gas Fitter	1
Graphic Designer	1
Head Teacher	1
Health Visitor	1
HMRC	1
Hospitality Industry	1
Housekeeper	1
Housewife	1
Internet Service Provider	1
IT Analysis	1
IT Consultant	1
IT Engineer	1
Lecturer	1
Local Gov Officer	1
Looking after family	1

Occupational detail	Number of visitors
Manageress	1
Marketing	1
Mechanic	1
Medical Lab Assistant	1
Mental Health Nurse	1
Missionary Priest	1
Nursery Nurse	1
Occupational Therapist	1
Paint Sprayer (Motor Industry)	1
Plasterer	1
Plumber	1
Police Officer	1
Porter	1
Postman	1
Pre-School Lead	1
Primary Teacher	1
Professional Footballer	1
Retail Assistant	1
Retail Manager	1
S/E Consultancy	1



Occupational detail	Number of visitors
Sales	1
Self Employed	1
Senior Manager (Sales - Passenger Lifts)	1
Senior Pharmacy Assistant	1
Senior Probation Officer	1
Shop Owner	1
Social Worker	1
Special Needs Teacher	1
Store Manager	1
Student	1
Taxi Driver	1
Teacher of visually impaired children	1
Technician	1
Theatre Producer	1
University Lecturer	1
University Student	1
Web Designer	1
Welfare	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>112 visitors</b>



List 2: Postcode of visitors

Postcode	Number of visitors
PR1	73
PR2	38
PR4	18
PR3	14
PR5	11
BB12	5
BB7	3
FY8	3
PR6	3
BB4	2
FY2	2
FY3	2
WN8	2
BB10	1
BB11	1
BL4	1
BL6	1
CA1	1
FY1	1

Postcode	Number of visitors
FY4	1
FY6	1
G32	1
IM9	1
L40	1
M12	1
M20	1
SK3	1
WA11	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>191</b>



# Annex 2: Highlights of 2022 Evaluation

## Introduction

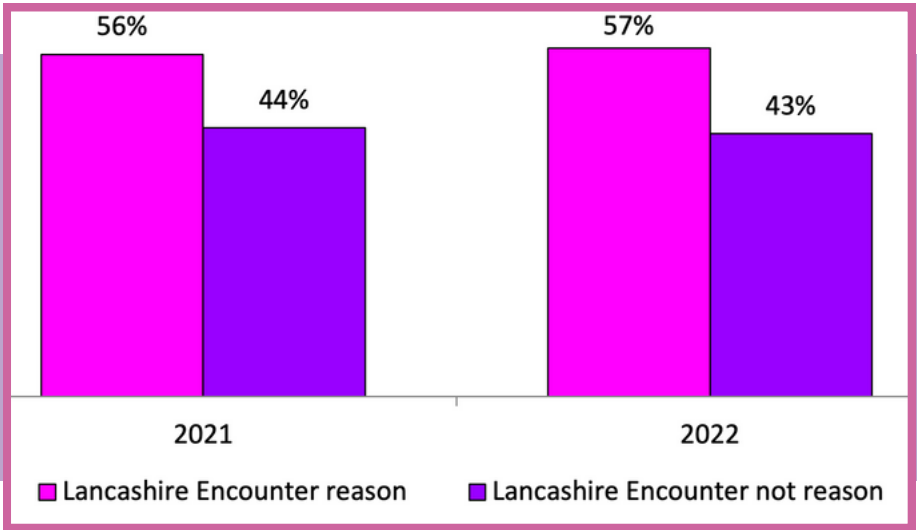
The 2023 evaluation was very different to previous years' evaluations in that its focus was very much on profile information. Where the data was available from previous years for comparison, the comparison with the 2023 data is detailed within the Main Report.

As there was less coverage of such areas as visitor motivation, activity and satisfaction in the 2023 evaluation, data is included from the 2022 evaluation and compared against previous years' data to provide context and background relating information that had not been covered in 2023.

## Influence of Lancashire Encounter on visit to Preston

Nearly three fifths of visitors (57%) who stated either way stated that they had planned their trip to Preston particularly to attend Lancashire Encounter and 43% had not done so.

**Chart 1: Did you plan your trip to Preston particularly to attend Lancashire Encounter?**



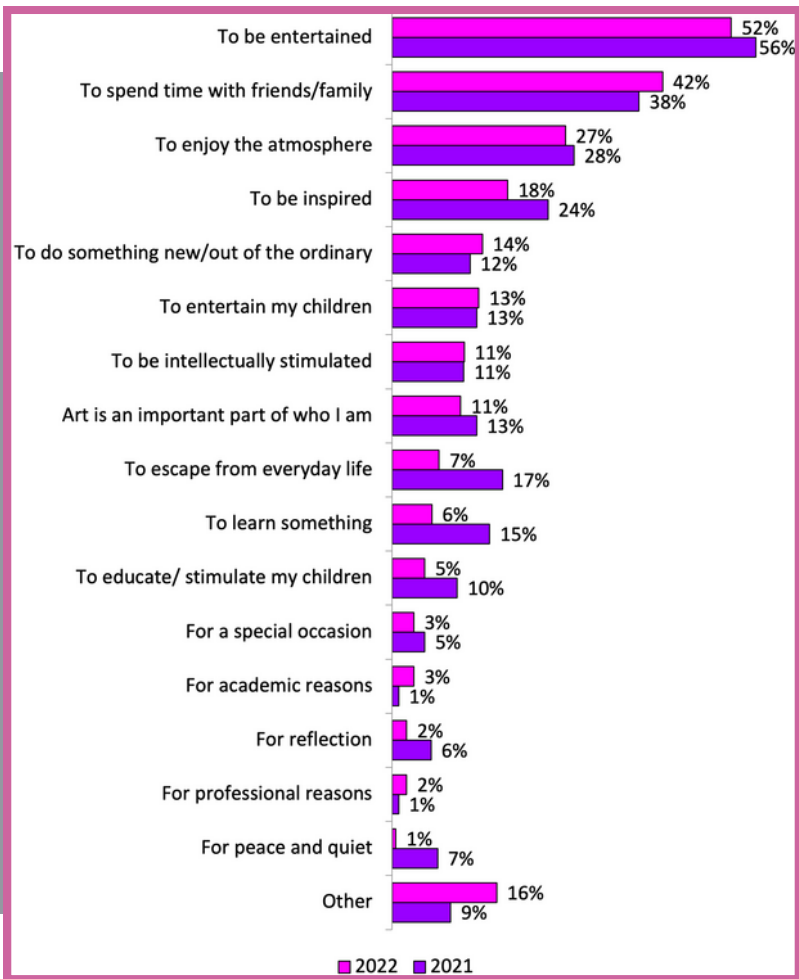
Sample bases = single response for each year, all visitors who provided a response  
 2021 = 147 visitors, 2022 = 155 visitors, NB: Question wording/options different in 2022. The 25 "NA (I live here)" responses have been removed from the 2022 sample to allow for this comparison.

## Reasons for visiting Lancashire Encounter

The two main reasons for visiting Lancashire Encounter in 2022 are to be entertained (52%) and to spend time with friends and family (42%), similar to the proportions for 2021. 27% of visitors attended in 2022 in order to enjoy the atmosphere, similar to 2021 of 28%. Visitors in 2022 are less likely to be visiting to escape from everyday life, 7% of visitors in 2022 compared with 17% in 2021. Visitors in 2022 are also less likely to be visiting to learn something, 6% of visitors in 2022 compared with 15% in 2021. They are less likely to be visiting in order to educate/stimulate their children, 5% in 2022 compared with 10% in 2022.

Visitors in 2022 are also less likely to have visited for reflection, 2% in 2022 compared with 6% in 2021 and to have visited for peace and quiet, 1% of visitors in 2022 and 7% of visitors in 2021.

Chart 2: All reasons for visiting Lancashire Encounter

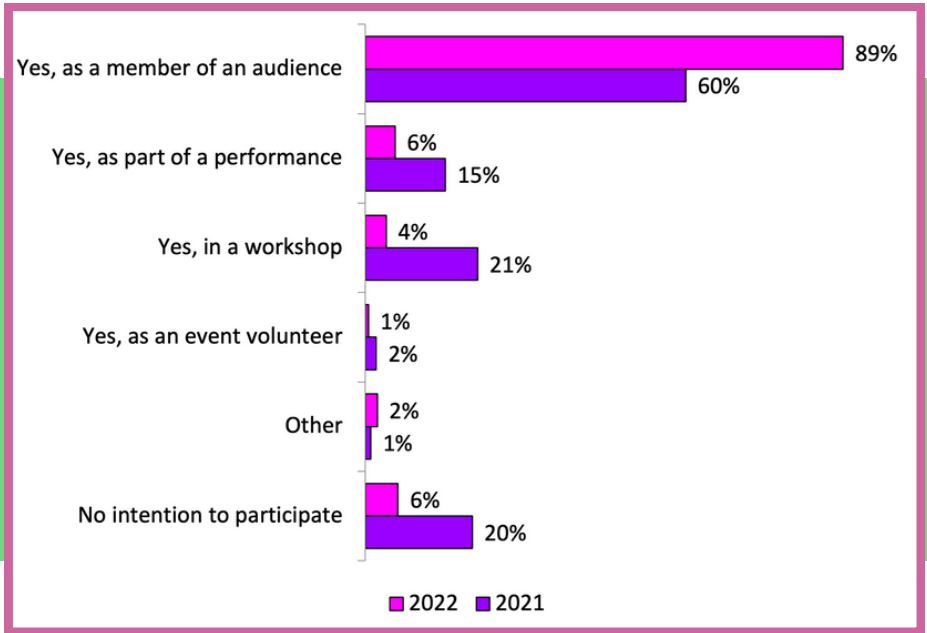


Sample bases = multiple response, all visitors who provided a response, 2021 = 151 visitors, 2022 = 180 visitors

## Participation at Lancashire Encounter

94% of visitors in 2022 participated either beforehand or at the event today, or intended to do so. As a member of the audience is significantly the main form of involvement, with 89% of visitors stating this type of participation. 6% participated as part of a performance and 4% in a workshop.

**Chart 3: Type of participation at Lancashire Encounter**



Sample bases = multiple response, all visitors who provided a response, 2021 = 151 visitors, 2022 = 180 visitors, NB: Question wording in 2021: Have you, or do you intend to participate in the event(s), Question wording in 2022: Have you participated in [event], either beforehand or at the event today, or do you intend to do so?

The proportion of visitors participating in 2022 of 94% is higher than the 80% of visitors participating in 2021. The 89% of visitors participating as a member of the audience in 2022 is higher than the 60% of visitors doing so in 2021. Visitors in 2022 are less likely to have participated as part of a performance, 6% in 2022 compared with 15% of visitors in 2021. Visitors in 2022 are also less likely to have participated in a workshop, 4% of visitors in 2022 compared with 21% of visitors in 2021. (NB: The question wording was different in 2021 and 2022 as detailed in Chart 1.)

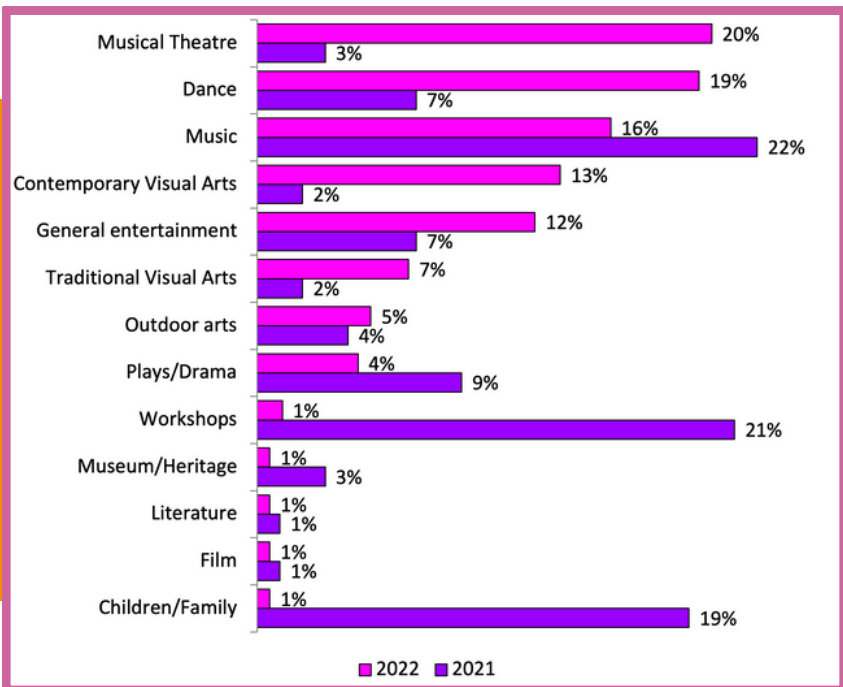
### Best description of performance/events

Visitors were asked how they would best describe the performance/events which they saw at Lancashire Encounter. 20% of visitors in 2022 described the event as musical theatre, 19% as dance, 16% as music, 13% as contemporary visual arts and 12% as general entertainment. There are a number of changes when comparing the description of performance/events seen in 2022 and 2021.



In 2022, visitors are more likely to have best described the events they had seen as, musical theatre, dance, contemporary visual arts and traditional visual arts. Visitors in 2022 are less likely to have best described the performance/events they had seen as; workshops, children/family events and plays/drama.

**Chart 4: Visitors' best description of performance/events**



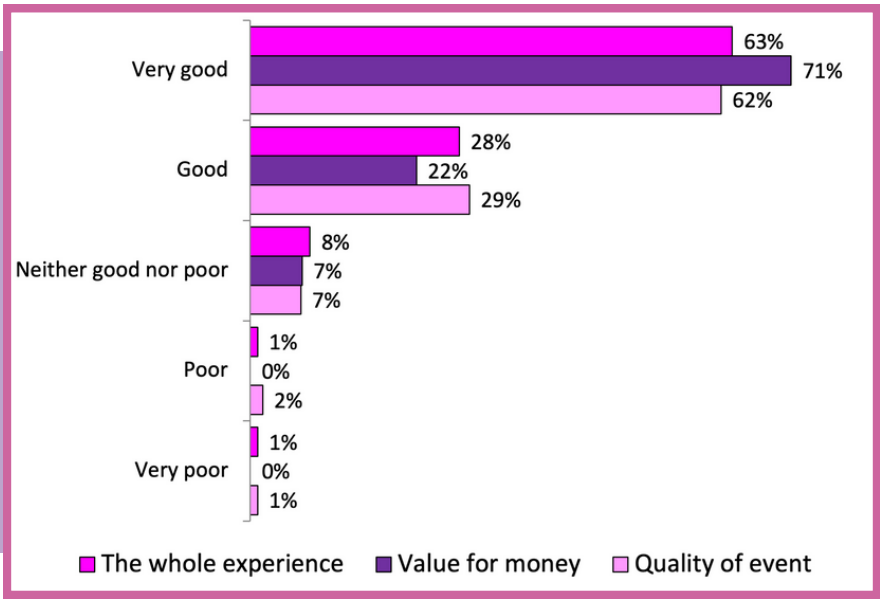
Sample bases = single response for each year, all visitors who provided a response, 2021 = 151 visitors, 2022 = 180 visitors



## Satisfaction

Visitors were asked to rate three elements of Lancashire Encounter; quality of the event, value for money of tickets and the whole experience.

**Chart 5: Satisfaction with Lancashire Encounter**



Sample bases = single response for each aspect rated, All visitors who provided a response and could provide a rating of; very good, good, neither good nor poor, poor or very poor  
 2022 sample base = 180 quality of event, 2022 sample base = 73 for value for money (where applicable. The 107 DK/NA responses are removed), 2022 sample base = 178 for the whole experience

### The whole experience

90% of visitors provided a good or higher rating (63% rated very good and 28% rated good) for the whole experience. Just 1% of visitors provided a rating of poor and 1% provided a rating of very poor. Allocating a mean rating on a scale of 1-5, the mean rating for the whole experience is 4.5.

### Value for money of tickets

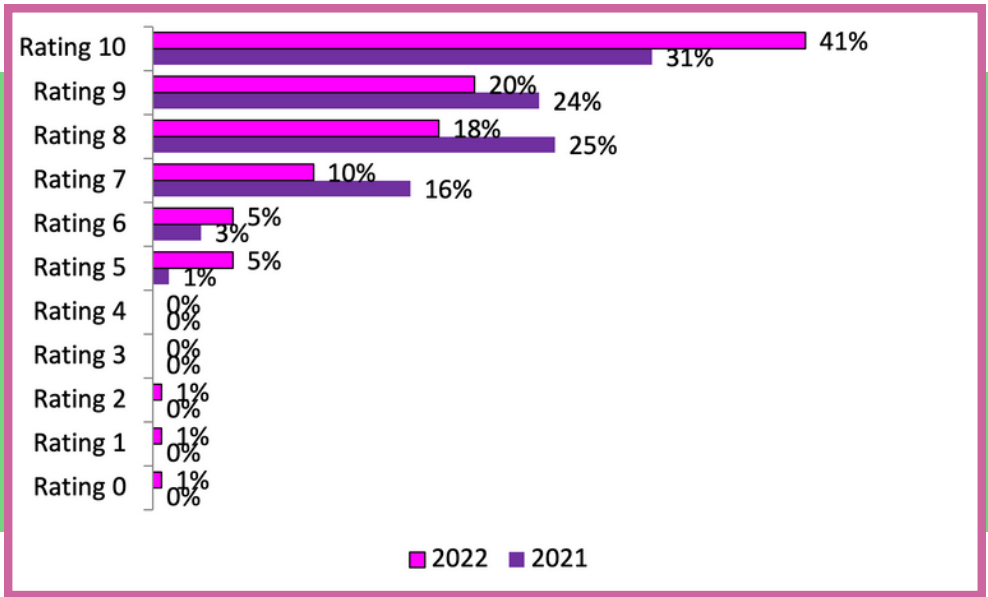
93% of relevant visitors provided a good or higher rating (71% rated very good and 22% rated good) for value for money for tickets. No visitors (0%) provided a rating of poor or very poor. Allocating a mean rating on a scale of 1-5, the mean rating for value for money of tickets is 4.6.

### Quality of event

91% of visitors provided a rating of good or higher (62% very good and 29% good) for quality of the event. 2% of visitors provided a rating of poor and 1% provided a rating of very poor. Allocating a mean rating on a scale of 1-5, the mean rating for the quality of event is 4.5.

## Recommendation

Chart 6: Recommendation of Lancashire Encounter



Sample bases = single response for each year, all visitors who provided a response, 2021 = 151 visitors, 2022 = 180 visitors

In 2022, 41% of visitors provided the highest rating of 10 regarding recommendation of Lancashire Encounter and 20% of visitors provided a rating of 9. 18% of visitors in 2022 provided a rating of 8 and 10% of visitors provided a rating of 7. Nearly eight tenths of visitors in 2022, 78%, provided a rating of 8, 9 or 10. The mean rating on a scale of 0-10 for 2022 is 8.5.

The 41% of visitors who provided a rating of 10 in 2022 is higher than the 31% of visitors who provided a rating of 10 in 2021.

The 5% of visitors who provided a rating of 5 in 2022 is also higher than the 1% of visitors who provided a rating of 5 in 2021.



# Annex 3: Marketing Support Materials

## Encounter Festival Social Media Report



### Audience insights





Measuring performance by analysing the Facebook Page activity

January 1, 2023 – September 24, 2023



### Overview

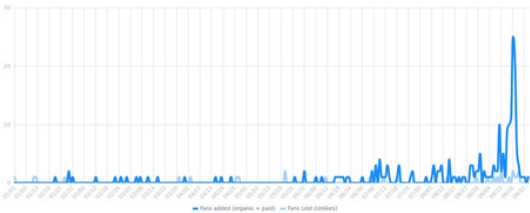
Key performance metrics for the selected period.

 Fans <b>1,878</b> +10.3%	 Engagement <b>2,278</b> -35.8%	 Impressions <b>95,657</b> -30.1%	 Brand awareness <b>251</b> -0.8%
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### Audience growth

Number of fans gained and lost for the selected period.

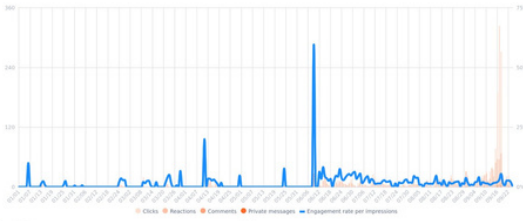


New Organic Fans: 209 New Paid Fans: 0 Fans Lost (Unlikes): 33 <b>New Fans (Net): 176</b>	<p>The total audience is</p> <h2 style="font-size: 1.5em;">1,878 fans</h2> <p>representing a variation of <b>+10.3%</b>                  compared to Apr. 9 2022 – Dec. 31 2022</p>
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## Engagement

Number of fans interactions (reactions, comments, shares, clicks and private messages) with your Facebook page for the selected period.

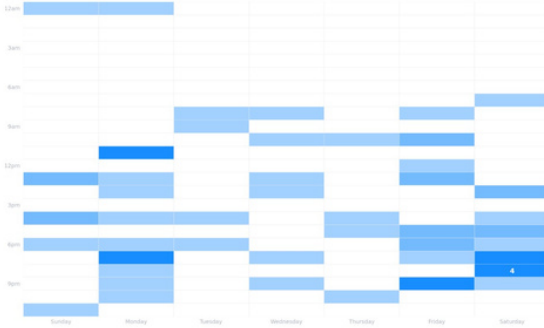


Reactions	1K
Clicks	1K
Comments	51
Private messages	13
Shares	166
<b>Total Engagement</b>	<b>2.3K</b>
<b>Engagement rate per impressions</b>	<b>2.4%</b>

The total engagement is **2,278 interactions** representing a variation of -35.8% compared to Apr. 9 2022 – Dec. 31 2022

## Users' activity

Average day and hour users interacted the most with the page's content. Based on inbox activities (comments, private messages and post).



## Impressions

Number of times your page's content has been viewed during the selected period. This includes paid, organic and viral impressions.

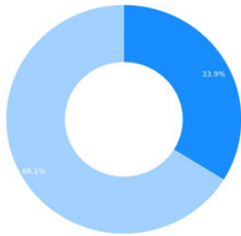


Paid impressions	0
Organic impressions	68K
Viral impressions	28K
<b>Total impressions</b>	<b>96K</b>

The total impressions are **95,657** representing a variation of -30.1% compared to Apr. 9 2022 – Dec. 31 2022

### Brand awareness score

Number of mentions of your page and shares of your content for the selected period.



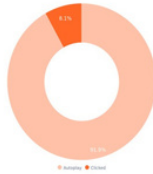
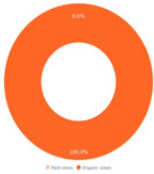
Mentions	85
Shares	166
<b>Brand awareness</b>	<b>251</b>

The brand awareness score is **251** representing a variation of **-0.8%** compared to Apr. 9 2022 – Dec. 31 2022



### Video views

Number of time your page's videos has been viewed during the selected period.



Organic views / Paid views	2.9K / 0
Clicked / Autoplay	236 / 2.7K

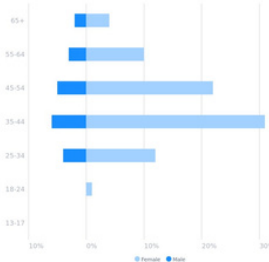
Total views of videos are **2,911** representing a variation of **No data** compared to Apr. 9 2022 – Dec. 31 2022



### Demographics

Demographic information about your audience: age, gender, location and language.

Your average fan is a **35-44 years old Female** from **United Kingdom**



## Demographics



Demographic information about your audience: age, gender, location and language.

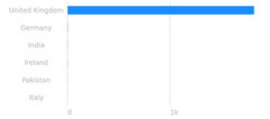


## Demographics

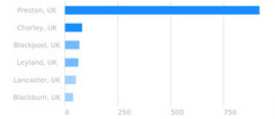


Demographic information about your audience: age, gender, location and language.

### By country



### By city

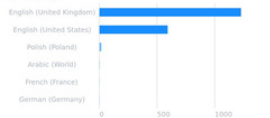


## Demographics



Demographic information about your audience: age, gender, location and language.

### By language










### Content summary

Evaluate the lifetime performance of published content on your Facebook Page


January 1, 2023 – September 24, 2023

### Overview

Lifetime metrics of content published during the selected period.

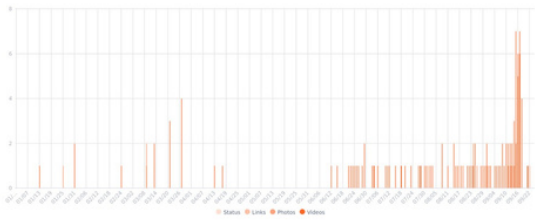
 Posts published <b>115</b> +45.6%	 Posts reach <b>48,033</b> -5.4%	 Engaged users <b>1,871</b> -38.7%
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### Scores

Page name	Fans	Talking about this	Fan posts	Page posts	Interactions	Engagement
 <b>Encounter Festival</b>	1.9K 8.7k/day	78 4.2% of fans	0 0/day	115 6.6/day	1.2K 19.8/post	68.3 8.6% post

### Publishing

Number of posts published during the selected period - with breakdown by type.

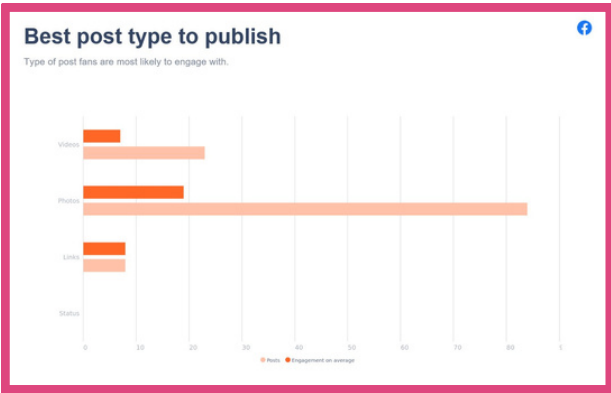


Status	0
Links	8
Photos	84
Videos	23
<b>Total posts published</b>	<b>115</b>

The total number of posts published is **115** representing a variation of **+45.6%** compared to Apr. 9 2022 – Dec. 31 2022







### Community management

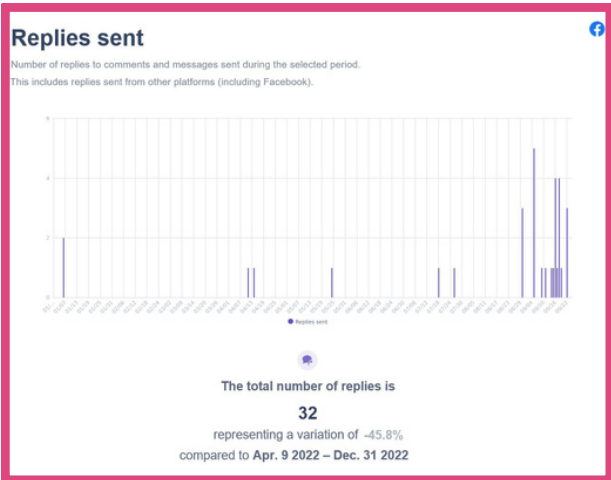
Understand the amount of work invested in your team's community management actions

January 1, 2023 – September 24, 2023

### Overview

Key metrics of community management actions during the selected period.

<p>Replies</p> <p>32</p> <p>-45.8%</p>	<p>Reviewed</p> <p>52</p> <p>-48.0%</p>	<p>Deleted / Hidden</p> <p>0</p> <p>No data</p>	<p>AVG response time</p> <p>31h 41min</p>
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## Encounter Festival 2023 Programme

**2023**

**ENCOUNTER FESTIVAL**

**Lots of FREE events**

**15th – 17th September**

HM Government | Lancashire County Council | ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND | WITHOUT WALLS Touring Network Partnership

**lancsencounter.co.uk**

## Welcome to Encounter Festival 2023!

Encounter Festival will once again come to Preston in September with a weekend packed with fun, thoughtful performances.

We've got free **outdoor theatre shows** on the Bus Station, games, and tunes at The Flag Market Festival Hub, local heroes on our Community and Traditions Stage outside the Guild Hall and as always, our signature Torchlight Procession will bring **music and dancing** through the streets and into the city centre. On Sunday, we'll be at Winckley Square for a family day of **fun and food** and the beautiful show "**Parade**" will roll along Fishergate to lead the way. Also, look out for our Creative Scrap Store on the Bus Station, where you can try your hand at all sorts of **creative workshops** using found and scrap materials, and our Encounter Voices Choir bringing you their performance of "**The Last Rose**".



Encounter Festival is a partner in **WITHOUT WALLS**, a consortium of festivals and arts organisations bringing fantastic outdoor arts to people in towns and cities across England. Find out more on [withoutwalls.uk.com](http://withoutwalls.uk.com).

**How to book ticketed activities**  
All tickets are available online at: [eventbrite.com](http://eventbrite.com)

= Paid ticket required

= Tickets are free

For more information please see our website: [lancsencounter.co.uk](http://lancsencounter.co.uk)



### Keep in touch...



**LancsEncounter**

Sign up to Preston's What's On Guide [whatson.com](http://whatson.com) to keep up to date with all the latest events in the city.

**Our Festival Hub on the Flag Market will have music from our resident DJs, giant games and activities, free for all the family. You'll be able to make your mark with our huge chalk drawing area and just chill out with the programme while you decide what you want to see next!**

### Flag Market Festival Hub

#### DANDYISM

Dandyism is centuries old, and for the original African dandies, it represented post-colonial freedom as they appropriated the flamboyance of the 18th Century English & French gentlemen in defiance against slavery. By the 1960s it had become a phenomenon, a celebration of style and cool as well as a concern for humanism, gender and identity in our increasingly divided society. This dance show explores the Dandy's fashion and style with flamboyance and undefined energy.



**Saturday 16th**

**12.45pm – 1.05pm**  
**1.55pm – 2.10pm**

#### SALSA NORTHWEST

Join Phil Kalia and Salaa Northwest to try out different styles of Salsa dancing. Open to everyone, this will be a fun and welcoming session to participate and move to the music!



**Saturday 16th**

**2.30pm – 3pm**  
**3.30pm – 4pm**

### Bus Station Plaza

Here we present some of the finest theatre shows the UK has to offer in the setting of Preston's iconic Bus Station.

#### LOOK MUM, NO HANDS!

Look Mum, No Hands! is a tender tale of friendship and growing up. It explores a coming-of-age story about two friends testing their own boundaries. Together they explore freedom, taking risks and independence. They see how those things change, depending on who you are.



**Sat 16th**

**12 noon – 12.40pm**  
**2.40pm – 3.20pm**



#### TIMELESS

Timeless is an innovative fusion of daring acrobatics and beautifully articulated, communicative dance, drawing in audiences through stories which fire the imagination. The work is a daredevil yet sensitive representation of the ambiguous nature of time and the threat to humanity posed by climate change. Performing inside and around a 7m high rotating hourglass, the performers explore the fragile relationship between civilisation and nature, and the precarious balance that could at any point tip into chaos.

**Sat 16th**

**1.10pm – 1.50pm**  
**3.50pm – 4.30pm**



#### MAGICAL STORY JARS

A drop in activity designed to inspire kids to have fun playing with ideas and create their own stories. Our Story Mixing Station is unique, colourful and fun! It ignites imaginations by providing a choice of character, setting and plot story cards from Magical Story Jars along with a treasure trove of intriguing objects to help kids to write their very own short stories, book covers or comics using the story cards. Character colouring in sheets can also be made available for toddlers. Kids get to sprinkle their creations with magic dust and take them home.

**Sat 16th (Bus Station)**

**Sun 17th (Winckley Square)**  
**12 noon – 3pm (drop-in)**



On **Sunday** you can spend the day in Preston's beautiful **Winckley Square**. There will be food stalls from **Tomato Potato** and **Coffee Saddle** or bring your own picnic. Enjoy a busy schedule of shows and music, make your own story jar (see page 4), get your face painted or henna your hands.

**Winckley Square Family Picnic**



**A LA PUPPET CARTE**

A pair of pop up puppet stages built onto the back of electric trikes. Each show is full of surprises, fun and heart-warming stories.

**Sun 17th**  
**11am - 11.30am**  
**12.40pm - 1.10pm**  
**4pm - 4.30pm**



**DHAMAK COLLECTIVE**

Dhamak uses its expert skills and knowledge to arrange traditional Brass Bands with South Asian percussion.

**Sun 17th**  
**11.35am - 11.55am**  
**1.20pm - 1.40pm**  
**3.35pm - 3.55pm**



**FLOOD**

A waterway acrobatic adventure set to an immersive sound installation which depicts a conversation between UK coastal communities and the world's ocean.

**Sun 17th**  
**12 noon - 12.30pm**  
**3pm - 3.30pm**



**DO WHAT YA MAMA TOLD YA!**

Join Just More Productions on a joyous journey of plate spinning, food juggling and fire blazing.

**Sun 17th**  
**1.45pm - 2.15pm**  
**4.30pm - 5pm**



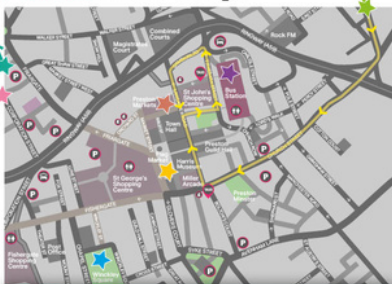
**PARADE - The Giant Wheel**

Look out for this moving performance inspired by the beauty, power and impact of people coming together from different walks of life. A 15-foot tall Giant Wheel driven by 5 performers will transport audiences along a procession from Fishergate (outside Boots) to Winckley Street.

**Sun 17th**  
**12.45pm - 1.15pm // 2pm - 2.30pm**



**Event Area Map**



**KEY**

- MET
- Winckley Square
- The Orchard
- St Peter's Church
- Bus Station
- Moor Park
- Flag Market
- Parade Route (from Moor Park to the Bus Station)
- Car Parks
- Cash Machines
- Accommodation
- Toilets
- Taxi Ranks



**Torchlight Procession and Finale**

Starting from Moor Park our parade will be led by **Mr Wilson's Second Lines**, a wonderful brass band who will get us moving with upbeat dance tracks. This is followed by a fabulous array of Preston's finest procession groups including **Caribbean Carnival** and **Preston City Mela**, **Cacophony Arkestra**, **Bay Beat**, **Jazz Swing Dance**, **Worldwide Samba Drummers**, **Sparkle Dance School**, **Dance Syndrome** and beautiful large scale puppets from **Handmade Parade**.

While you await the procession at Lancaster Road and the Guild Hall, you will be entertained by **John "Gilly" Gilmore** of BBC Radio Lancashire, who will be welcoming live music to keep you entertained alongside some fun walkabout theatre acts.

**When and where to see the procession:**

**Sat 17th**  
**7.15pm // Leaves Moor Park and along Deepdale Road**  
**7.40pm // Arrives at Church Street**  
**8pm - 8.30pm // Lancaster Road and Guild Hall**

**9.15pm // Finale** - a wonderful fireworks display to finish our Saturday programme. Head to the Flag Market for the best view!



**FEELING HAUNTED**

Psycho Garbage Theatre bring you this spectacular comedy sure to bring you laughs, surprises, and maybe even a few scares! **Feeling Haunted** is a new on-stage mockumentary that shows a lost episode of the hit (cancelled) TV show of the same name.

**Sat 16th // 2pm & 6.30pm**



St Peter's Church

**MET - Music, Dance Workshops and Participation**

**Friday at MET is all about music!**

**THE LIGHTER JAMS**

An off-shoot from popular reggae band Jeramiah Ferrari, Ryan and Chris pride themselves on bringing the most energetic and entertaining live show possible. Playing soul, pop, rock and reggae covers, they perform with tonnes of passion, bags of charisma, and are sure to bring a fresh edge to our Friday night.

**Fri 15th**  
**Doors 7.30pm. Music from 8pm**



**Saturday at MET is all about joining in!**

**WORKSHOPS**



**BABY BOO**

Baby Boo creates a special atmosphere with lighting, sound, colours and film projections. You may even encounter an actual live musician on one of our special sessions. Our wide variety of carefully chosen materials create interactive opportunities that enhance and encourage brain development and experiential learning. It's also fun! At Baby Boo we believe that babies and children should be given time and space to explore and play in their own way.

**Sat 16th**  
**11am - 11.45am**  
**12 noon - 12.45pm**

**DANCE SYNDROME**  
 1.30pm - 2.15pm

**JAZZ SWING DANCE**  
 2.30pm - 3.15pm

**SWATI DANCE COMPANY**  
 3.30pm - 4.15pm

**PRESTON BEATS DRUM CIRCLE**  
 4.30pm - 5.30pm

See our website to book workshops.

## Community and Traditions Stage

### Sited outside the Guild Hall entrance all day Saturday

This stage will welcome traditional Lancashire Cloggers fused with Appalachian flat foot from Sparkling Clogs, fabulous local choirs Red Rosettes and Preston People's Choir. With Sweet Danon Company bringing Indian Classical Dance and Uroq Qawal with their wonderful Qawaali Singing.

Encounter Voices have once again been working hard in the run up to the festival with workshops throughout the county creating The Last Rose, a performance inspired by the newly digitised Harkness Collection presented by Lancashire Archives and The Harris. Lou Kaye will lead this joyful performance at 3pm.

Our stage will be hosted by Huseena Hanif, BBC Radio Lancashire broadcaster and leader of the wonderful Nasheed Choir who will also perform.

Into the evening we'll be warming up with BBC Radio Lancashire's John 'Gilly' Gilmore while we await the arrival of our stunning Torchlight Procession.

**Sat 16th**  
**11am - 7.30pm**



### OPEN MIC AT THE ORCHARD

On Sunday afternoon we have the return of the Open Mic with Preston's finest local acts doing spicily original material in 15 minute slots at The Orchard at Preston Market.

**Sun 17th**  
**2pm - 3.30pm**



The Orchard

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The Creative Principle

## Creative Scrap Store

16th August - 17th September

Preston Bus Station - Unit 6 (next to the café)

In 2023 Encounter Festival will host a Creative Scrap Store in a Bus Station shop unit for 5 weeks from 16 August through to the festival weekend in September.

It will be open Thursday - Sunday each week delivering a range of workshops and making activities alongside discussions regarding sustainable arts practice and materials.

The Scrap Store will be led by The Creative Principle, a collective of artists based in Preston and the surrounding area who will deliver workshops and events in the space.

The Creative Principle's long-term goals are to influence the ways in which manufacturing looks at and disposes of its waste materials.



### Artist Shop

Artist in Residence

The Creative Principle have also been working with Joseph Doubtfire. Joseph will be working with charity shops in Preston to:

- ✓ find creative uses for donated objects
- ✓ making new visual work with discarded materials
- ✓ sharing personal stories through objects

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## Creative Scrap Store Workshop Programme

DATE	TIME	WORKSHOP	COST
Wed 14 Aug	5pm - 7pm	Magic Matchbox Making	FREE
Thu 17 Aug	10.30am - 12 noon	Get Into Jernamaking	£25
Thu 17 Aug	1.30pm - 3pm	Summer Card Making	FREE
Fri 18 Aug	10.30am - 12 noon	Crochet Granny Squares	FREE
Fri 18 Aug	1.30pm - 3pm	Vegan Soap Making with Stuff from Slippery Caution soap!	£30
Sat 19 Aug	10.30am - 12 noon	Printing with Found Packaging	£15
Sat 19 Aug	1.30pm - 3pm	Make your own Festival Crown	FREE
Sun 20 Aug	10.30am - 12.30pm	Do You Know Darning?	FREE
Sun 20 Aug	1.30pm - 3pm	Porcelain Pinch Pots	£30
Thu 24 Aug	10.30am - 12 noon	Monoprinting with Oil Pastels	FREE
Thu 24 Aug	1.30pm - 3pm	Embroider a Reclaimed Bag	£20
Thu 24 Aug	1pm & 4pm	Rag Tag Readshow (Family theatre show)	FREE
Fri 25 Aug	10.30am - 12 noon	Concertina Sketchbook and Collage	£10
Fri 25 Aug	1.30pm - 3pm	Make your own Festival Crown	FREE
Sat 26 Aug	10.30am - 12 noon	Envelope Making	FREE
Sat 26 Aug	1.30pm - 3pm	Upcycling Ceramics with Lustres	£30
Sun 27 Aug	10.30am - 12 noon	Card Printing	£35
Sun 27 Aug	1.30pm - 3pm	Gift Bags from Newspapers	FREE
Thu 31 Aug	10.30am - 12 noon	Do You Know Darning?	FREE
Fri 1 Sep	1.30pm - 3pm	Envelope Making	FREE
Sat 2 Sep	10.30am - 12 noon	Embroidered Needle Case	FREE
Sun 3 Sep	1.30pm - 3pm	Concertina Sketchbook	FREE
Thu 7 Sep	10.30am - 12 noon	Explore Die Cutting and Felling	£20
Thu 7 Sep	1.30pm - 3pm	Gift Bags with reclaimed Materials	FREE
Fri 8 Sep	10.30am - 12 noon	Refashion your Old Clothing	£10
Fri 8 Sep	1.30pm - 3pm	Make a Quilted Cushion Cover from an Old T-shirt	FREE
Sat 9 Sep	10.30am - 12 noon	Create a Botanical Porcelain Tile	£30
Sat 9 Sep	1.30pm - 3pm	Crochet Granny Squares	FREE
Sun 10 Sep	10.30am - 12 noon	Create your Own Gift Boxes from Cereal Boxes	FREE
Sun 10 Sep	1.30pm - 3pm	Calli Printing	£35
Fri 15 Sep	10.30am - 12 noon	Vegan Soap Making with Stuff from Slippery Caution soap!	£30
Fri 15 Sep	1.30pm - 3pm	Make your Own Herb Bags	FREE
Sat 16 Sep	10.30am - 12 noon	Kids Paper Puppet Making	FREE
Sat 16 Sep	1.30pm - 3pm	Make your Own Festival Glasses	FREE
Sun 17 Sep	10.30am - 12 noon	Make your Own Paper Flowers	FREE
Sun 17 Sep	1.30pm - 3pm	Create your Own Sketchbook	FREE

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Festival at a Glance

### FRIDAY 15 SEPTEMBER

TIME	PERFORMANCE	LOCATION
7.30pm - 10pm	The Lighter Jams	MET, UCLan Square

### SATURDAY 16 SEPTEMBER

TIME	PERFORMANCE	LOCATION
11am & 12 noon	Baby Boo	MET, UCLan Square
12 noon & 2.40pm	Look Mum, No Hands	Bus Station
12 noon - 3pm	Magical Story Jars	Bus Station
12.45pm & 1.55pm	Dandyism	Flag Market
1pm - 3pm	Scratch Band	The Ferret
1pm - 7.30pm	Community & Traditions Stago	Outside Guildhall (Lancaster Rd)
1.10pm - 1.50pm	Timeless	Bus Station
1.30pm - 2.15pm	Dance Syndrome	MET, UCLan Square
2pm & 6.30pm	Foelag Haunted	St Peter's Church
2.30pm - 3.15pm	Jazz Swing Dance Workshop	MET, UCLan Square
2.30pm & 3.30pm	Salsa Northwest	Flag Market
3.30pm - 4.15pm	Swati Dance Company Workshop	MET, UCLan Square
3.30pm - 4.30pm	Timeless	Bus Station
7.15pm start	Torchlight Procession	Moar Park - Guild Hall

### SUNDAY 17 SEPTEMBER

TIME	PERFORMANCE	LOCATION
11am, 12.40pm & 4pm	A La Puppet Carte	Wincley Square
11.35am, 1.20pm & 3.35pm	Dhanak Collective	Wincley Square
12 noon - 3pm	Magical Story Jars	Wincley Square
12 noon - 3.30pm	Baby Boo & games	Wincley Square
12 noon & 3pm	FLOOD	Wincley Square
12.45pm & 2pm	Parade - The Giant Wheel	Fishergate - Wincley St (outside Boots)
1.45pm & 4.30pm	Do What Ya Mamma Told Ya!	Wincley Square
2pm - 3.30pm	Open Mic	The Orchard





**ENCOUNTER FESTIVAL  
RETURNS  
21 - 22 SEPTEMBER 2024!**



# ENCOUNTER FESTIVAL

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