



# 2023 Evaluation Report



# How to use this document

How much time do you have to read?

*I have  
very little  
time!*

Feel free to just read over the Executive Summary which will provide you with an overview of the entire document.

*10 - 15  
minutes*

Read the Executive Summary, Key Figures, Audience Impact and Experience Measures, and the Learnings and Recommendations.

*25 - 30  
minutes*

Make yourself a cup of tea and start with the Executive Summary, you should be able to read and digest the report in its entirety.

Keep an eye out for....



This signpost points out data or comments which form the basis of a recommendation. As you spot these throughout the document, you can click through to the recommendations section to gain further insight.



To avoid having long explanations or links throughout the text, red asterisks are used to direct you to the associated footnotes at the bottom of each page.

https:

Links to external sites which provide more insight into certain parts of this report (e.g. Office of National Statistics data).

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# Executive Summary

Outskirts Research was commissioned by POW Thanet (POW) to evaluate its 2023 festival programme which was held in Thanet, Kent. The evaluation sought to measure the impact of the annual programme on festival audiences and artists, performers, and practitioners.

The evaluation also assessed strengths and weaknesses of the programme delivery and design through analysis of feedback from the POW team and volunteers. Using a mixed methods approach, surveys and interviews were used to gather data from five key audience segments.

Notable findings of this evaluation were:

- In terms of audience impact, the festival successfully conveyed the annual themes of 'joy and celebration' to festival audiences along with providing opportunities for audiences to feel included in the arts and more connected with their local community
- The festival was less successful at raising awareness of important issues regarding gender equality, challenging individual attitudes, and providing opportunities for audiences to learn and be curious
- POW was successful at exceeding 50% of its Audience Development Targets. However, calculations of figures for core and fringe events could be revised to increase accuracy for future monitoring and reporting
- There was an increase in operational maturity for the POW team with the inclusion of the CEO and Producer role which resulted in better decision making, internal communication and overall organisation of the programme

The key learnings and recommendations of this evaluation are:

- Artists, performers and practitioners participating in fringe events have unmet expectations in terms of promotion and additional support from the POW team. Assess what is viable in terms of support for fringe events and then provide greater clarification around what the POW team can actually provide
- Continue to invest in monitoring and evaluation. Focus on improving the accuracy of figures used for monitoring and evaluation, revising Audience Development Targets, and providing other options for the community to participate in evaluation activities

- Consider scaling back the annual programme, and consider how well the event content aligns with the organisation's overall aim of promoting gender equality. Conduct a review to streamline festival programming to focus on high quality, well attended events that promote gender equality. Also assess what different formats the festival can be delivered in to improve cited capacity issues for the POW team
- Promotion for the festival was impacted by capacity issues, among other factors. Review role requirements for marketing and promotional activities and ensure team member(s) who are responsible have the right level of capacity and availability during key stages of the festival

*“Absolute pleasure to have been part of this year's festival. Initially I wasn't convinced by the 'Joy and Celebration' theme - but I am very happy to stand corrected - it worked really well, the festival - all of it - did seem to have a truly joyful and celebratory feel that was really positive”*

**Artist, Core Festival Events**

# Methodology

This evaluation was commissioned in November 2022 to assess the POW 2023 Festival. The evaluation was structured based on an understanding of the following festival aims, research questions and goals:

## ***Festival Aim***

To celebrate creativity that champions gender equality across Thanet using the theme of joy and celebration.

## ***Research Questions***

- To what extent has POW's 2023 festival championed gender equality through the arts in Thanet?
- What impact(s) does the festival have on its audiences and the wider community?
- What impact(s) does the festival have on artists, performers and practitioners in Thanet?
- What have been the unexpected outcomes from the programme and its delivery?
- What were the challenges and lessons learned from programme design and delivery?
- What are the recommendations to consider for the development of POW?
- How might this learning be shared with the wider arts, cultural and health sectors?

## ***Research Goals***

- Understand the feelings and attitudes of key audience segments towards POW's 2023 festival
- Pinpoint what elements of the festival were successful at championing gender equality
- Identify key recommendations to support the development of POW
- Assess the programme delivery for strengths and weaknesses

In collaboration with POW's CEO, a mixed methods approach was agreed upon. Key audience segments for this evaluation were also identified:

- Festival audiences (digital, core and fringe events)
- Artists, performers, and practitioners
- POW team
- Volunteers
- Specific audiences: audiences attending 'The Indescribable Joy of Finally Knowing Who I Am' exhibition

Evidence in this report was gathered and synthesised from the following evaluation activities:

- Attendance and observation during digital events, core festival and fringe festival events
- Analysis of audience reach data collected from Eventbrite ticketing sales, physical counting and informed estimates provided by POW team
- Virtual poll data gathered during the start and finish of four Digital Festival events held on Zoom. In total, it received 31 responses however 15 were partially completed, resulting in 16 valid responses
- Two surveys gathering audience feedback during the International Women’s Day Opening Celebration (8th March) and Ellington Park Family Festival (11th March).
  - The surveys received 28 and 22 valid responses, respectively. Due to the low response rate, general themes which align with other findings have been integrated into this report
  - Each survey contained 20 questions which gathered a mix of quantitative and qualitative data
  - QR codes for the survey were available on posters at venues and lanyards worn by volunteers at the events
  - A paper version of the survey was also available upon request
- A detailed audience survey gathering feedback for all festival events. The survey contained 78 questions which gathered a mix of qualitative and quantitative data including demographics. The survey was accessible from 8th March until 14th April 2023. The survey was accessible via links on the POW website, social media, and mailing lists as well as available as a printed version. In total, it received 114 valid responses
- Qualitative interviews conducted during ‘The Indescribable Joy of Finally Knowing Who I Am’ exhibition with audience members who identified as neurodivergent or as having a long-term health condition. A printed and online version of the interview questions were available at the venue and follow-up interviews were also conducted. In total, it received ten valid responses
- An online survey gathering feedback from artists, performers and practitioners across all festival events. The survey contained 28 questions which gathered a mix of qualitative and quantitative data and was available via links on the POW website and also via email. In total, it received 35 valid responses
- An online survey for volunteers which contained 24 questions and gathered a mix of qualitative and quantitative data. Respondents were individually emailed a link to complete the survey. In total, it received 11 responses
- A questionnaire gathered qualitative feedback from the POW team to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the festival. A survey containing 12 multiple choice questions also gathered baseline data for a new set of team values. All nine members of the team responded to the questionnaire and survey

There were several challenges and limitations in terms of the data made available:



- Data regarding audience reach was tracked internally by the POW team and figures for certain events are based on estimates and assumptions in terms of footfall. Adjustments have been made to provide more realistic figures
- Some exhibitions were held at venues showing other unrelated works (e.g. Turner Contemporary) and data provided was based on overall attendance at these venues
- There were several technical issues when using polls at the digital events, which meant some audiences were not able to answer all of the questions and this has limited the amount of available data
- As the survey samples were self-selected and not random, we are unable to guarantee that it is representative of all POW audiences. Additionally, as most of the surveys were conducted online (e.g. smartphone, or computer), this meant the sample was skewed towards participants who had access and were able to use this form of technology

Note: Quotes provided throughout the report are anonymous for privacy reasons and to enable a level of openness about individual experiences.





*Photo credit: Cemanthe McKenzie*



*Photo credit: Shannen Lythgoe*

# Key Figures

**12,610** people attended the Core Festival events

**6,853** people attended Fringe Festival events

**300** artists, performers and practitioners took part in performances, talks and exhibitions during the festival

**85** events took place across Thanet and online, including 22 performances, 15 workshops, 11 exhibitions and 6 community engagement events

**85** people attended the Digital Festival events

**48** local venues held performances, events and exhibitions

**45** volunteers worked 80 shifts totalling over 4,000 hours which equates to over £42,000\* of in-kind support

\*Hourly rate was based on the current national living wage (£10.42):  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/minimum-wage-rates-for-2023>

# Audience Impact Ratings

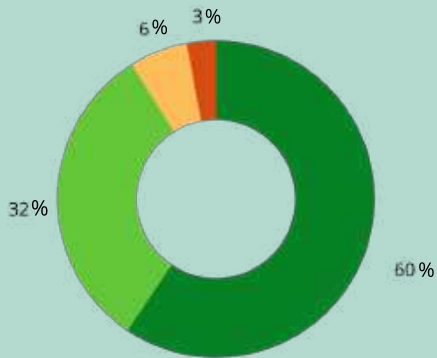
In order to measure the impact of this year's festival, the audience survey collected data measuring attitudes around how well the themes of joy and celebration, feminism and access to the arts were promoted through festival events (see results on pages 9 - 10).

The findings demonstrate that the festival successfully conveyed the themes of joy and celebration. Over 90% of survey respondents indicated they either strongly agreed or agreed that this year's festival made them **feel joyous** and **inspired**. Just under 90% also strongly agreed or agreed that they were **introduced to new artists**, whose work they had not seen before.

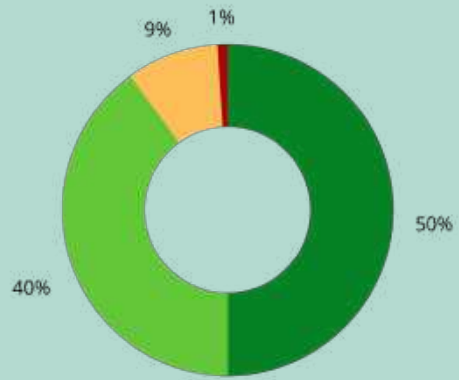
The findings also indicate that the festival was successful at providing opportunities for audiences to access the arts and to feel more connected to the local community. More than 80% of audiences either strongly agreed or agreed that the festival allowed them to **celebrate International Women's Day**, made them **feel more connected with their community** and **more included in the arts**.

Areas where the festival was less impactful included raising awareness about important issues regarding gender equality, challenging individual attitudes and providing opportunities for audiences to learn and be curious. Just over 60% of audiences either strongly agreed or agreed that the festival made them want to **find out more about a topic, taught them something new, or highlighted important issues about social justice**. Less than 60% of audiences strongly agreed or agreed that the festival gave them **a new perspective on feminism** or **raised awareness about issues affecting women and girls**. Finally, less than 50% of audiences strongly agreed or agreed that the festival **challenged their attitudes or ideas**.

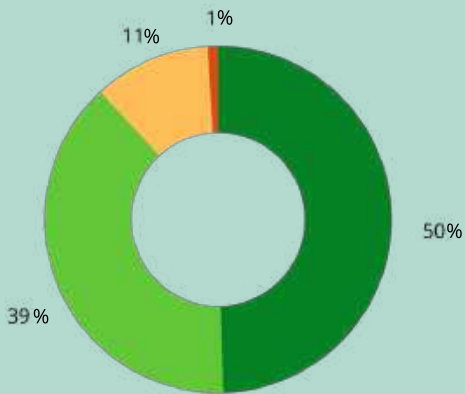




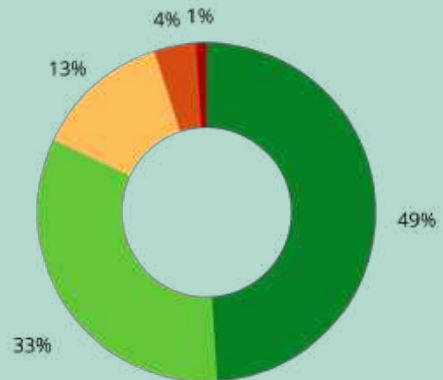
Made you feel joyous



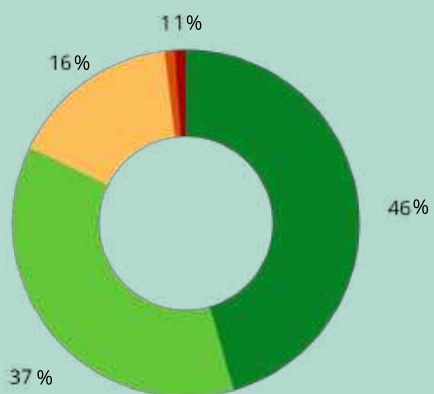
Made you feel inspired



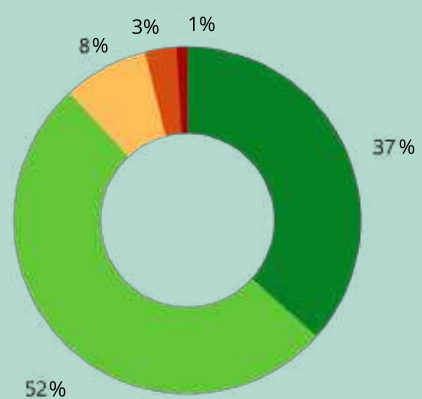
Introduced you to new artists



Enabled you to celebrate International Women's Day

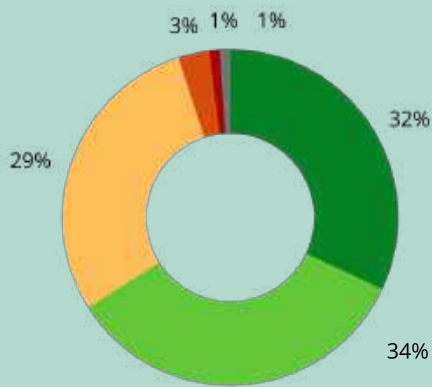


Made you feel connected to your community

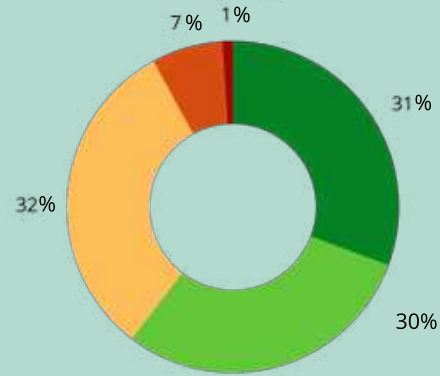


Made you feel more included in the arts

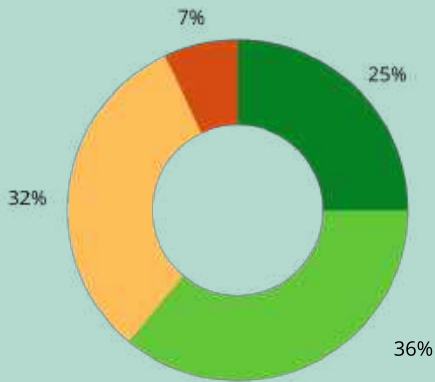
KEY: Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree Prefer not to say



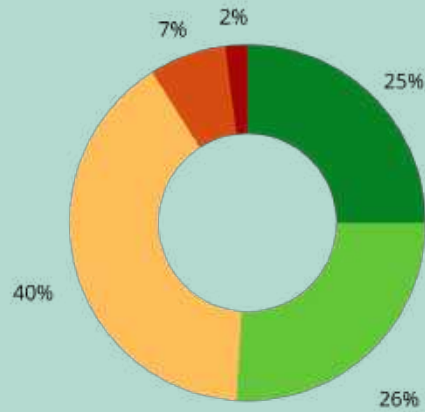
Made you want to find out more about a topic



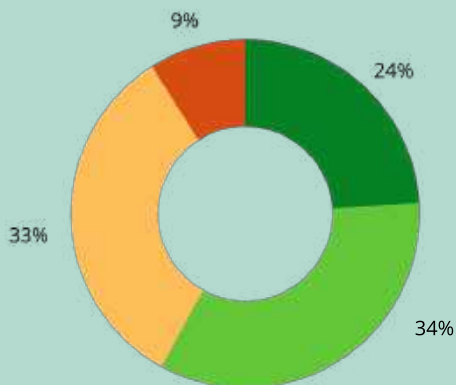
Taught you something new



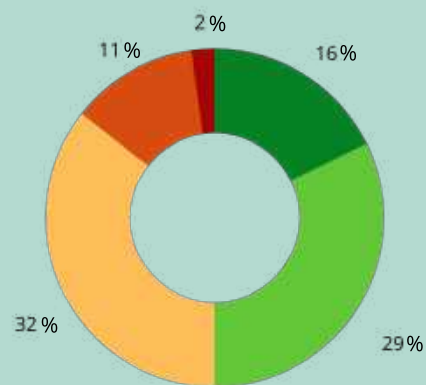
Highlighted important issues about social justice



Gave you a new perspective on feminism



Raised your awareness about issues affecting women and girls



Challenged your attitudes and ideas

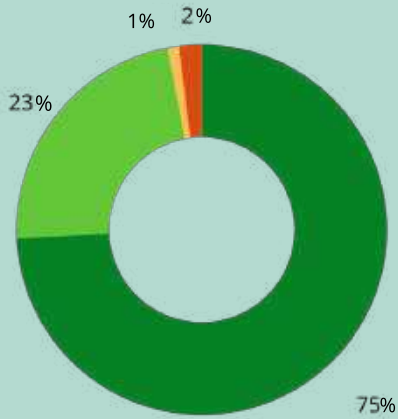
KEY: Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree Prefer not to say

# Audience Experience Ratings

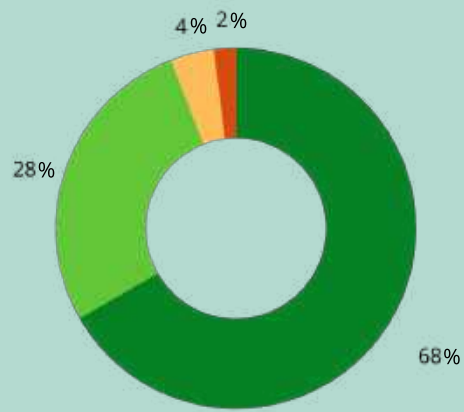
In order to assess audience experiences of this year's festival, the audience survey captured data around attitudes towards event accessibility, booking tickets and the atmosphere at events (see results on pages 12 - 13).

Overall, audiences were **glad to take part in this year's festival**, and 98% of festival audiences either strongly agreed or agreed with this sentiment. Over 90% of festival audiences either strongly agreed or agreed that the festival events were **welcoming, inclusive** and **enjoyable**. More than 80% of festival audiences strongly agreed or agreed that the events were **inspiring** and that the events celebrated a **diverse range of artists, performers, and practitioners**.

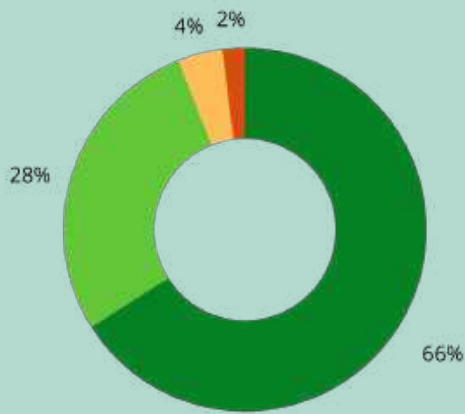
Over 90% of festival audiences strongly agreed or agreed that it was **easy to book tickets** and to **attend events**. Over 80% of festival audiences felt that the organisers care about being **environmentally friendly**. However, fewer than 75% felt that the **events were accessible for everyone**.



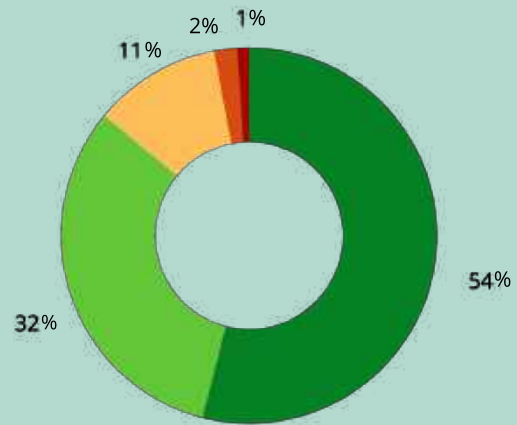
I'm glad I attended the festival this year



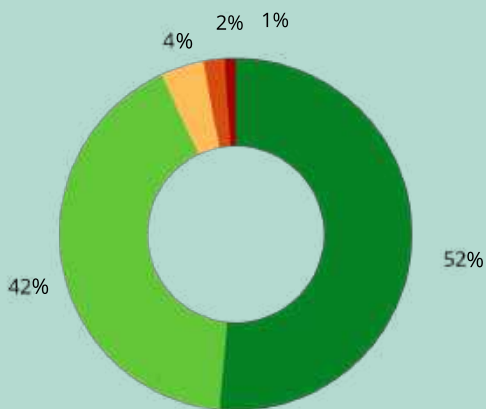
The events I attended felt welcoming



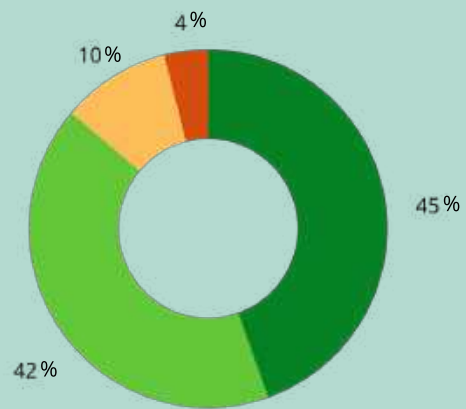
The events I attended were enjoyable



The events I attended were inspiring

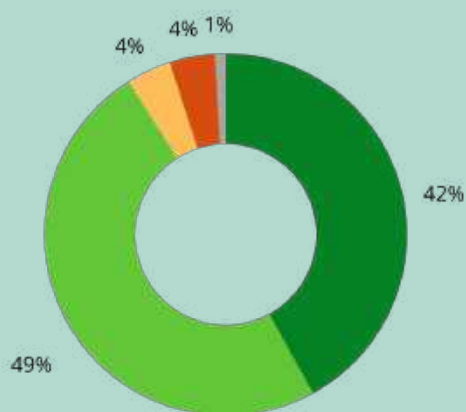


The events I attended felt inclusive

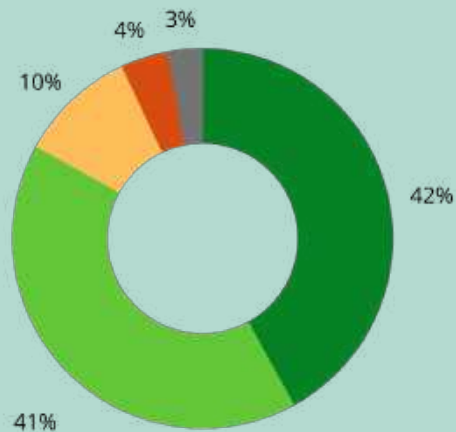


The events celebrated a diverse range of artists, performers and practitioners

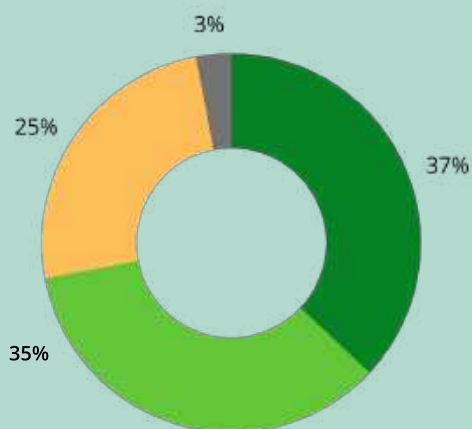
KEY: Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree Prefer not to say



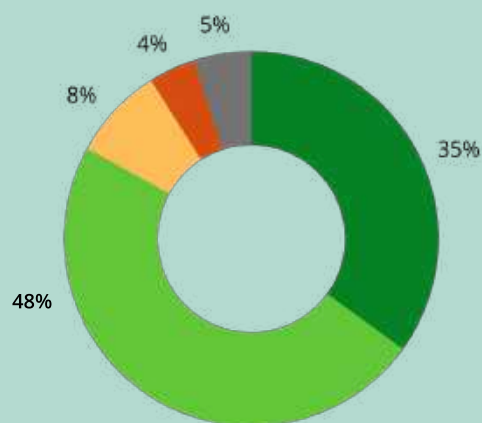
It was easy to get to the events I attended



It was easy to book tickets for events I attended



The events I attended were accessible for everyone



The organisers care about being environmentally friendly

KEY: Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree Prefer not to say



# Audience Development Targets

Since 2020, POW has tracked audience development targets as a means of actively increasing audience reach whilst also ensuring the festival engages with a diverse audience that is representative of Thanet. Targets are based on historical data and information which the POW team has collected from local authorities and national sources (e.g. [Office of National Statistics](#)). Actual figures are based on data from Eventbrite (sample of 1,168 tickets) along with audience survey data and estimates provided by the POW team.

In terms of total audience reach, this year's target was exceeded (target: 17,000, actual: 19,548). Targets for core events (target: 12,000, actual: 12,610) and fringe events (target: 5,000, actual: 6,853) were also exceeded.

Development targets based on location were also exceeded for several key segments, including the overall audiences based in Thanet as well audiences based in Margate. Targets were also reached for audiences based in Broadstairs and international audiences. Segments requiring further development in terms of location include audiences based in Ramsgate, audiences from other areas of Thanet and audiences from the rest of Kent (see Table 1).

For audiences who identified as LGBTQ+ and non-binary or transgender, development targets were exceeded. This year, sexual orientation was measured using a question derived from the [2021 Census](#), which included more options than previous years and may have contributed to the growth in this audience segment. The target for female audiences was also exceeded however this may have had a negative impact on other gender-based targets, notably, the male audience target which was not met (see Table 2).

Development targets for audiences which indicated they had a disability or long term medical condition or who were unemployed were exceeded. Segments requiring further development include audiences who identify as British but do not identify as white, people under the age of 26, students and those who do not have a degree (see Table 3).

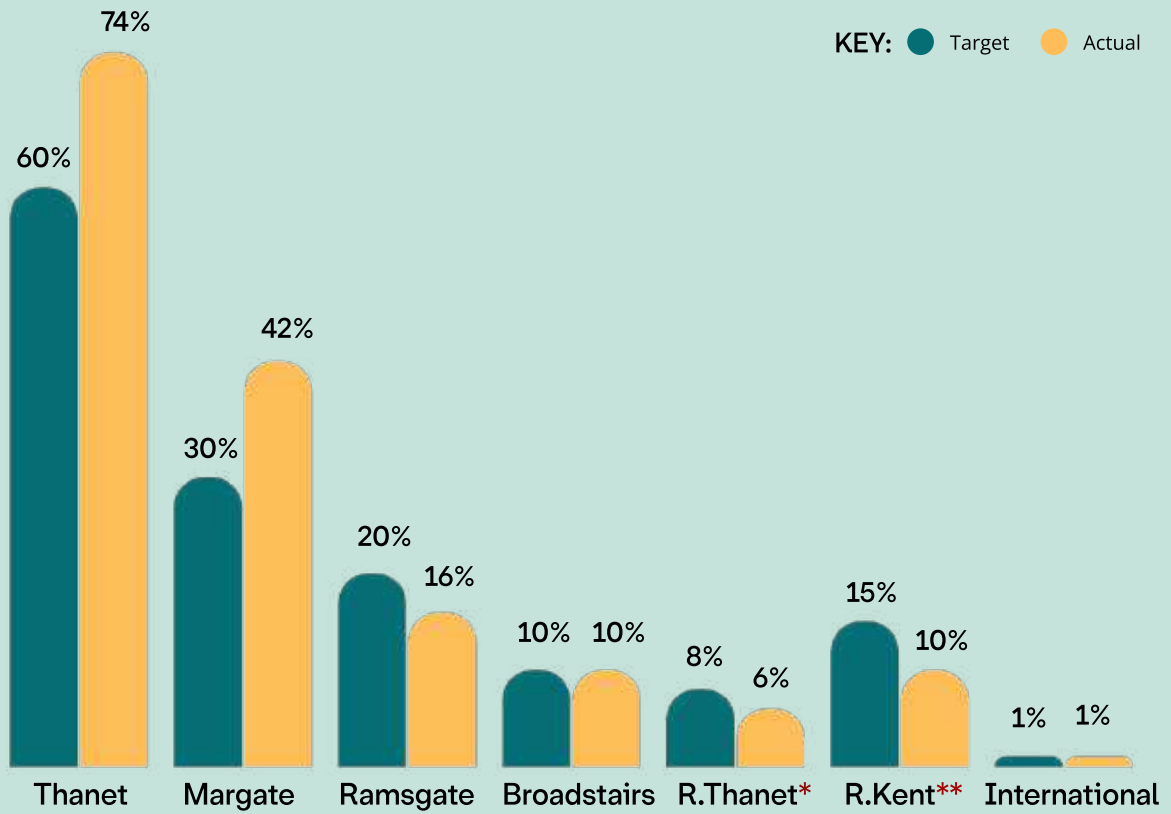


Table 1: Targets and actual figures for audience location

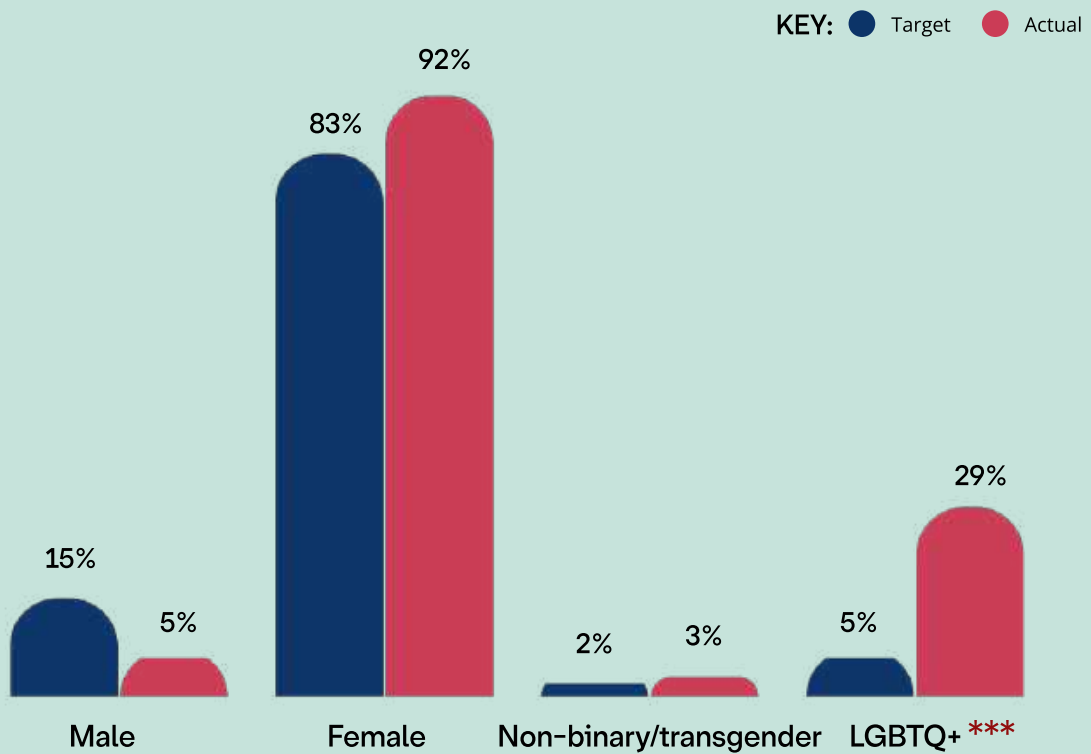
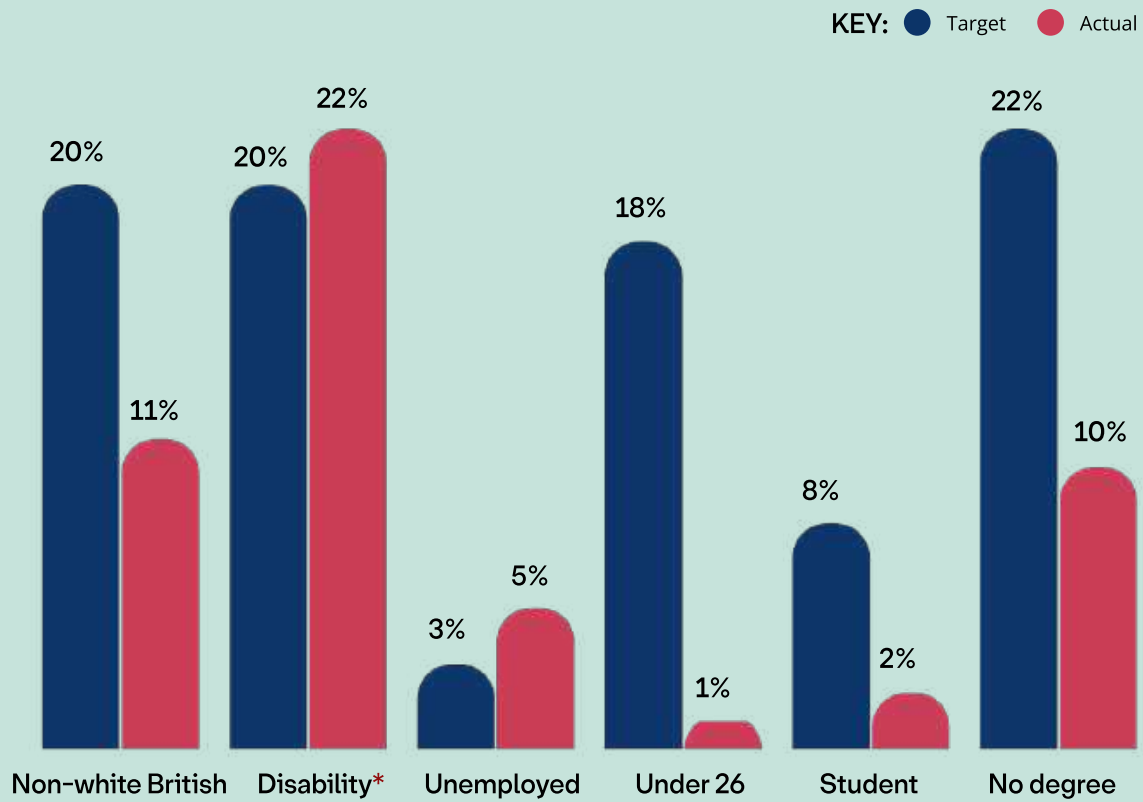


Table 2: Targets and actual figures for gender identity and sexual orientation

\*Rest of Thanet aside from Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs (e.g. St Peter's, Cliffsend)

\*\*Rest of Kent aside from audiences based in Thanet

\*\*\*LGBTQ+ encompasses audiences who did not identify as heterosexual/straight



*Table 3: Targets and actual figures for other key audience segments*

\*Disability encompasses audiences who stated they had a disability or long term health condition

# Festival Audience Feedback

In terms of cultural engagement, the audience survey\* results indicate that 96% of all respondents engaged with the arts in the last 12 months (not including this festival). 23% engaged in a creative activity on a weekly basis, 46% on a monthly basis, 18% once every three months and 12% once every six months. Common barriers which prevented people from engaging in the arts in the past have included the financial cost and being pregnant or having young children.

## **Digital Events**

Feedback collected during digital events was limited due to technical issues. However, the following findings emerged from an analysis of feedback and attendance data:

- The sessions which revolved around a standalone topic (e.g. Neurodiversity, autism and the arts) were the most popular in terms of tickets sold and subsequent attendance levels
- Sessions held over the weekend also tended to have higher attendance levels
- Based on ticketing data, 87% of all tickets sold to international participants were for digital events (including audiences from Austria, India, and the US)
- Out of the attendees who provided complete responses, 100% stated they would like to attend more digital events in the future

*“Great to listen, learn and be inspired. Appreciate people sharing their experience[s].”*

**Digital Festival Participant**

## **Core Festival and Fringe Festival Events**

This year, the audience survey found that 92% of all respondents attended core festival events, whilst 32% of respondents attended fringe events. Of the core events, respondents were most likely to attend the Ellington Park Family Festival (45%) and the POW Headline Concert (34%). Of the fringe events, respondents were most likely to attend the Domestic Dusters and Profanity Embroidery Group Collaborative exhibition (24%), or Flesh at Margate Arts Club (16%).

\*The survey gathered data from audiences attending digital, core, and fringe events and received 114 responses

Nearly two-thirds of all respondents (65%) had attended a POW Festival in the past. The most common reasons for attending this year's festival were to connect with the local community (63%), experience something new (58%), and to do something creative (54%).

*“LOVED it! It was fabulous to see so many women, kids and families enjoying the day. From all walks of life having a JOY filled moment. Artists etc were fantastic - gutted we missed some of the parade but what we did see was a beautiful rainbow.”*

### **Core Festival Participant**



In terms of marketing and promotion, the most common way of finding out about this year's festival was Instagram (51%), word of mouth (43%) and through recommendation (26%). Only 26% of all respondents strongly agreed the festival was well promoted, 51% agreed, 18% were neutral, 4% disagreed and 1% preferred not to say. When asked for ideas on how to improve the promotion of the festival, the following themes arose:

- Start promotional activities and release tickets earlier;
- Increase offline promotion within local communities, using posters and flyers in stores, bus stops, libraries and in schools;
- Increase online promotion through collaboration with other local businesses and community groups

*“More promotion in the wider community [as] I think it was easy to miss if you don't already follow POW on social media.”*

### **Core Festival Participant**

Festival audiences were most likely to attend events with friends (71%), immediate family (46%) or by themselves (29%). Walking and driving were equally the most popular methods of travel to all events (58%). Out of those that drove, 66% travelled with others (e.g. friends and family), whilst 20% drove alone and a further 14% did both. 83% of survey respondents stated they spent money on items such as food and drink whilst attending the festival. The average spend reported was £26 per person.

Survey data showed that 13% of all respondents were visiting Thanet when they attended this year's festival. 7% of all respondents paid for accommodation (e.g. a hotel or AirBnB), and spent £102 per night, on average, whilst 3% of respondents used free accommodation (e.g. stayed with friends or family). The average length of stay reported by respondents was two nights.

When asked for general feedback and areas for improvement, the following themes emerged:



- There was a recurrent issue of not being able to attend everything. For some this was because events are sold out, whilst for others it was due to lack of time. Additionally, there were requests to have more events outside of traditional working hours (9am-5pm) and to spread events throughout the year.
- There were noticeable discrepancies in terms of people's experiences of certain events. For example:
  - Some participants were disappointed by the sound quality at the POW Headline Concert. This may have something to do with the size of the venue as this was not everyone's experience.
  - The programming for the International Women's Day event had mixed responses as some felt it should have focused on women's issues and achievements and that the young musicians were not relevant to this focus area, whereas others found the young musicians inspiring.
- Some respondents reported that the functionality of the events page on the POW website could be improved including the search function and use of filters to hide past events and events which are sold out
- The market at the Ellington Park Family Festival could have been more accessible (to enable wheelchair access) and involve more stallholders, particularly with food options
- There was an expectation that POW team members have a presence at all Fringe events, and this is further supported by feedback from artists, performers, and practitioners who ran fringe events

*"Just a really magical experience. After a difficult time in life, it's left me feeling energised, joyful and ready to fight the patriarchy once more!"*

**Core Festival Participant**

## **The Indescribable Joy of Finally Knowing Who I Am Group Exhibition**

Analysis of qualitative feedback and general observations highlighted the following:

- The majority of respondents and artists involved agreed the exhibition space was very accessible and well suited for this type of exhibition
- Suggestions for further improvements included providing a large map with the layout of the exhibition which highlighted appropriate places to take breaks and an area with soft surfaces (e.g. bean bags, pillows) and sensory play items. Additionally audio descriptions were also suggested as a means of improving the accessibility of the artwork itself
- Ideas for future exhibitions included involving artists from across a wider spectrum of neurodiversity as well involving artists with severe learning disabilities
- People really appreciated and enjoyed the interactive elements of the exhibition, particularly families with children
- A majority of respondents stated they would like to attend future events where neurodivergent people could come together in a safe space

*“It felt beautiful to see a similar experience through another's eyes and how they interpret that. I felt the different brush strokes and it made me smile to see symbols [that] I connect with. I felt validated, especially when I've only connected with art in a gallery once before”*

**Exhibition Audience Member**

# Artists, Performers, and Practitioners Feedback

According to the survey results,\* over half (51%) of the responding artists, performers, and practitioners had previously participated in a POW Festival. This year, 71% of respondents took part in the core festival events, 14% in digital events, and 23% in fringe festival events. 11% took part in more than one section of the festival (e.g. both digital and core events).

When asked how they found out about taking part in this year's festival, respondents were most likely to have been approached by one of the organisers (51%), responded to the open call (29%), or knew due to previous involvement (14%). Key reasons for taking part included having an alignment with POW's purpose and values and viewing it as a great opportunity to raise awareness of an issue or showcase their work:

*"I am glad I did it, to support the POW ethos and also it personally showed me I can do things like this if I believe in myself."*

**Artist, Core Festival Programme**

Only 20% of all respondents strongly agreed the festival events were well promoted this year. A further 51% agreed, 20% were unsure, whilst 6% disagreed, and 3% preferred not to say. When asked what organisers could do to improve the promotion of the festival, the consistent theme was that promotion needed to happen earlier and with more widely distributed printed material such as posters, leaflets, flyers, and brochures:

*"Perhaps aim to get posters, leaflets, flyers and the printed festival brochure out into community venues earlier?"*

**Artist, Core Festival Programme**

In terms of festival experience ratings, 91% would recommend this opportunity to another artist, performer, or practitioner, whilst 77% strongly agreed they were glad they chose to take part this year. Additionally, 69% rated the overall experience as very good and that they were very likely to be involved in a future POW festival.

In terms of interactions with the POW team, 71% strongly agreed that they were respected by organisers, whilst 57% strongly agreed they felt supported by organisers. However, fewer than 50% rated the accessibility, facilities and setup of their event as very good and this is the same pattern for core and fringe events. Further assessment of why respondents felt this way would be advisable to support future improvements.

\*The survey gathered data from artists, performers and practitioners who took part in digital, core, and fringe events and received 35 responses so generalisations cannot be made regarding all artists, performers and practitioners that took part



One issue which was made apparent through these survey results and feedback received by the POW team was the discrepancy in terms of pay, particularly for artists. Moving forward, a fair and transparent pay structure would be advantageous.

*“It doesn’t sit well with many people and has been a topic of conversation around the town, that the pay is random and potentially favoured. To keep the quality of artists that you had this year, equal and better pay needs to be sustained and the budget needs to be spread equally.”*

**Artist, Core Festival Events**

When asked for general feedback and areas for improvement, the following themes emerged:



- The level of support provided by the POW team this year was greatly appreciated and respondents noticed big improvements from previous years;
- However, a request was also made to reduce the amount of programming, in future, to ensure the POW team do not spread themselves too thin;
- Promotion of all festival events in the lead-up and for the duration of the festival could be improved;
- Those involved in the fringe festival also felt that their events deserved just as much promotion as the core events;
- Respondents felt there was confusion about when the festival ended as the programme promoted two closing events (Closing celebrations at Tom Thumb and the Flesh fringe event);
- Respondents also commented Thanet is limited in terms of inclusive and accessible venues, which was also reflected in their ratings around event accessibility



*Photo credit: Cemanthe McKenzie*



*Photo credit: Shannen Lythgoe*

# Engagement Projects\*

## ***Cheer Quilt***

POW worked with local artist Zoe Murphy to deliver five quilting workshops to local community groups including POW Volunteers, Wychdene Care Home, United Mothers, Newington's Chill Club, POW Community Champions, with a total of 150 participants. Quilting is a feminist act, designed to get women talking, sharing and taking time to be creative and share what brings them joy.

POW ran drop-in workshops at Margate Caves attended by 65 members of the public and at the Ellington Park Family Festival attended by 150 members of the public.

30 quilts were created and paraded at the Ellington Park Family Festival by 60 participants.

The quilts were then donated as cot and play blankets to local outreach group Mama to Mama and the Special Baby Care Unit at QEQM Hospital.

Zoe created a blog, ran additional workshops with Margate WI, sold DIY kits, and led a "Quilt Squad" of local enthusiasts who taught participants and brought together all of the elements to make the final quilts. She is still quilting!

## ***Community Champions***

POW contacted 24 local organisations and conducted 10 face-to-face and online meetings to recruit Community Champions - representatives from Thanet community groups and organisations who face barriers to accessing the arts. The main barriers preventing participation was not having the staff available. Some groups wanted activities for their service users instead of being part of a network (United Mothers) and some organisations didn't respond to invitations by phone or email so in the future, we may need more targeted engagement, relevant to their specific needs.

POW did successfully recruited 8 participants, representative of 8 different local community groups: senior nurse Kent and Medway Partnership Trust (KMPT), Artist in Residence at Palm Bay School, Creative producer/dramaturg at East Kent College, Porchlight, Natasha Hart - Project Manager at SEK Enterprises (which runs Margate and Ramsgate food banks), Cliftonville Cultural Centre, 101 Social Club, Arts 4 All (art school for people with Learning Disabilities).

\*This part of the report was written and provided by the POW team

They were trained in quilt making and given the resources to go back to their groups/service users and make a group quilt to be brought to the POW Festival Community Parade.

Outcomes:

- 5 facilitated workshops with the champions including a quilt making workshop (champions were paid for their time to attend the workshops)
- 3 champions went on to deliver quilting workshops with their own organisations/groups (101, KMPT and Porchlight), and 3 champions brought their groups to attend the community parade (KMPT, arts 4 all, cultural centre)
- All champions attended at least one other POW event
- All champions reported they felt the workshops gave them a better understanding of POW and their local community services

*"It makes such a difference to be paid, have drinks and nice food, it makes me feel valued and I value this time more because of it"*

**Community Champion**

Recommendations:

- Use a rotating venue at each partner organisations to reduce travel
- Payment for staff time and refreshments was a positive enabler
- Ideally have a longer-term programme to make it easier for the organisations to run workshops with their service users
- Consider the possibility of hybrid events for those who don't have the ability to travel.

*"It's been such a joy to be part of the festival and get to know other people"*

**Community Champion**

### **Broadstairs College**

POW mentored three young women from Broadstairs College aged 19-24 for eight months. This included 22 sessions led by POW's Engagement Coordinator, focusing on confidence building, skills for the workplace and how to build creative connections. The mentees created a presentation on gender equality for their peers, wrote blog posts for POW website, created content for POW social media, created 4 digital maps for the Youth Art Trail and brokered introductions with local creative businesses to host the Youth Art Trail. They received workshops led by industry professionals in curation, social media and PR and Health & Safety.

POW worked with Broadstairs College Level 2 & 3 students in art and design, performance and music departments, to create an exhibition and performances for the Festival.

Outcomes:

- Three students mentored by POW for 8 months to help them create content, presentations and festival exhibitions; two are now in paid work in the cultural sector
- 45 students received five workshops led by industry professionals in social media, event management, ceramics, metalwork and filmmaking
- 45 students had their art or mixed media work exhibited at Arts in Ramsgate, performed at Ellington Park Family Festival or the IWD Opening Celebration, or contributed artworks to the Youth Art Trail. This included original song compositions and artworks.
- 230 visitors to the exhibition including an opening party
- 150 audience for the drama performance at Ellington Park
- 109 audience for the music performance at IWD Opening Ceremony
- Mentees made a video for next cohort of mentees
- Arts in Ramsgate was such a popular venue, Broadstairs College are going to have their end of year show there

Recommendations:

- Students need a clearer brief from POW to respond to gender equality in their outputs and workshop leaders to have a clearer brief in communicating how gender equality intersects with the Festival theme
- POW need information ahead of time about students disabilities/ neurodivergence and access needs
- Students need more support with computer literacy

### **Youth Art Trail**

Young people were encouraged to create artwork for Thanet high street businesses. POW gathered public art submissions for those aged 16-26 years for Margate and Ramsgate displays, while the Broadstairs arm of the trail was delivered in partnership with The Zone/ Pavilion Youth Group who platformed the artworks of young people under 16 years.

Outcomes:

- 30 young people contributed art work
- 18 local venues in Broadstairs, Ramsgate and Margate hosted the artwork for 6 days
- Estimated reach of 4,080

## ***Inspiring Women, Inspiring Windows***

Artist Karen Vost delivered five in-school workshops for local Key Stage 2 pupils around International Women's Day, gender equality and discussing inspirational women in their lives. Children were then taught how to make collages of women they found inspiring using photographic images of famous inspirational women. These collages were then curated and displayed at the Turner Contemporary for 10 days. With free admission, this drew a large footfall.

Outcomes:

- 5 primary schools recruited
- 5 in-school workshops delivered by artist Karen Vost to a total of 150 pupils
- 1 drop-in workshop delivered by artist Karen Vost to 109 members of the public at Turner Contemporary
- 70 artworks created
- Public exhibition seen by 6,853 visitors (this is based on 20% of 18,878 - Turner Contemporary's daily footfall for this period)

# POW Team Feedback

## **Team Values**

This year, the POW team created a new set of values which were measured using a brief questionnaire. The questions included statements such as, "Working together, our team makes a positive impact on the wider community". The resulting output is shown below:



The results indicate that overall, the team felt they performed well across each of the values. Results for individual items for each value suggest that the team felt most confident around their ability to make empowered decisions and collaborate as a team. However, in terms of equity, the team also felt less confident that the work is having its desired reach.

## **Pre-festival activity**

Notable strengths in the lead-up to the festival included regular production meetings, the integration of Slack for internal communications and having a clear chain of command. Increased lead times (ie. kicking off the project at the beginning of December), a designated office space, and the use of call sheets and planning spreadsheets were also noted as wins.



A major issue was the delayed release of promotional materials which had a significant impact on the promotion leading up to the festival. Unexpected leave for key team member(s) may have been an underlying factor which suggests that contingency planning will be valuable in the future (see Internal Team).

Key themes the team would like to address to improve the lead-up to the festival include:

- Getting a head start: finalise promotional materials and start working on community projects and engaging with artists, creatives and practitioners in early December

- Increasing brand awareness: ensure promotional materials are available early to use when engaging with artists, creatives, and practitioners as well as potential sponsors. Increase the use of posters, signage, and stickers in the local community
- Introducing rate cards: to avoid disparity and negative feedback regarding fees when engaging with artists, performers, and practitioners
- Producing the engagement programme: engagement programming should be treated just like artistic programming in terms of production

### ***Festival activity***

Events which the team were most proud of included the Ellington Park Family Festival, the Festival Headline Concert at St. Luke's Church, and the 'The indescribable joy of finally knowing who I am' exhibition at Pie Factory.

An issue to carefully review is the inclusion of potentially triggering content. Trigger warnings for sensitive or challenging content should be in place, processes implemented, and the team must be equipped with the appropriate skills and capacity to provide adequate support whenever required.

Key themes the team would like to address to improve future festivals include:

- Adjust workshop ticketing: free tickets resulted in high drop-out rates. Consider charging a small fee which may be refundable when people turn up
- Improve bar and food offerings at key events: engage with local providers and have food stalls at key events and arrange for dedicated bar staff
- Outdoor events: create contingency planning for events that may be adversely impacted by rain and storms (e.g. Windmill Community Gardens)
- Revise the Digital Festival: assess whether a different format is more appropriate (e.g. a single day) and ensure the content is standalone instead of promoting core festival content to help increase engagement
- Team wellbeing: aim to limit activities which lead to team members feeling fatigued before the festival has commenced. Manage energy levels and provide adequate sustenance throughout the festival

### ***Team Structure***

The structure of the POW team had some notable changes this year, including the introduction of a CEO and a Producer role. The impact of these changes was resoundingly positive for the team, particularly in terms of improved decision-making. Four young people were also given work experience, either supporting the Production Manager, doing graphic design or as a social media coordinator. The majority of the team felt clear about their roles and responsibilities and felt supported by their colleagues. Overall, there was a great sense of camaraderie, and good communication during the festival.



However, there were also apparent issues with capacity. The workload was cited as unrealistic for nearly all members of the team which for some resulted in either “cutting corners” or the workload interfering with other responsibilities. Interdepartmental communication prior to the festival was also cited as an area for improvement. Some team members were unable to attend regular meetings due to other commitments, or were unavailable due to illness, resulting in a collective sense of frustration.

Key themes the team would like focus on in order to further develop as a team include:

- Do less with greater intention across all segments of the programme. Consider removing events which are low value and focus on delivering engaging and high-value content
- Clarify role requirements and ensure that candidates meet those requirements, including availability needs such as number of hours per week, and specific day and/or time requirements
- Consider redesigning roles to make them more accessible, for example, through job-sharing, where a role is shared by multiple individuals who can ensure seamless transitions with adequate handover periods
- Improve collaboration by dedicating time at the start of the annual programme to learning about each other’s communication and working styles in order to define how best to work as a team at each stage of the programme; have regular collaboration health “check-ins” and make any necessary adjustments



# Volunteer Feedback

As the survey for volunteers had a low response rate, generalisations about all volunteers should be avoided.

Key findings from available data include:

- The volunteering experience at POW is valuable, with nearly three-quarters of all respondents indicating they had volunteered at a POW Festival before;
- Key reasons for wanting to volunteer include meeting new people, being part of a community and supporting an organisation which they believe in;
- However, improvements could be made as less than half of all respondents strongly agreed that volunteering was a worthwhile experience this year;
- The promotion of volunteering opportunities could be improved as less than one-third of all respondents strongly agreed that it was well-promoted;
- There could have been greater clarity around the roles and responsibilities for volunteers with only one-quarter of respondents strongly agreeing that they were clear;
- Feedback in terms of improvements included providing volunteers with more information about the festival programme, improving the process for door lists, and provide a webpage or online document with information about events and venues which volunteers can access (to reduce number of emails being sent);
- Respondents also felt that the programming could be scaled back in order to maintain quality.



*“I felt that the core group of POW organisers are very strong and well-connected to the local community. I feel they should maybe scale down a bit next year. Less is best, especially if it's done well. Quality rather than quantity always hits the mark.”*

**Volunteer, Core Festival Programme**

# Marketing

This year, online promotion of the POW Festival involved building engagement on Instagram and YouTube, sending online newsletters, and through press features. Offline promotion included 3,000 festival brochures which were distributed throughout the local community. As previously mentioned, the offline promotion for this year’s festival was impacted by delays in releasing the printed promotional materials.

Marketing targets which were achieved this year included the number of YouTube subscribers, open rate for the online newsletter, number of press features, and total website visits during February and March. Press features included BBC Radio Kent (reach: 206,000), KMTV (reach: 236,800) and Visit Thanet.

Marketing targets which were not achieved included social media reach and number of followers. One reason cited for this result was that there wasn’t a major headliner for this year’s festival (the actual audience reach figure during 2022 was 72,700). The target for YouTube views was also not met, and the marketing team indicated that this was a result of having less video content to promote compared to previous festivals.

An overview of the marketing targets is shown below:

Marketing Activity	Target	Actual
Social Media Reach - March	85,000	26,600
Social Media Followers - March	15,000	12,400
YouTube Subscribers	200	216
YouTube Views - March	1,500	540
Online Newsletter - Open Rate	35.01%	39.9%
Website Traffic - February + March	12,000	13,000
Website Page Visits - February + March	32,000	29,000
Press features	40	47

# Learnings and Recommendations

## ***Fringe Festival***

Artists, performers and practitioners involved in fringe festival events have requested an increase in promotion and support from the POW team. However, understanding whether the POW team has capacity and is financially able to offer this level of support requires careful consideration. There also appears to be a misconception about the size and capacity of the organisation which has possibly resulted in unrealistic expectations.

**Recommendation:** assess what is viable in terms of support and then provide greater clarification around what the POW team can provide moving forward (also see Programming).

## ***Monitoring and Evaluation***

Continuing to invest in the monitoring and evaluation of the festival programme will support the growth and impact of the organisation, year on year.

Recommendations include:

- Improve the accuracy of tracking of relevant figures, including audiences at larger venues and exhibitions to ensure future audience reach targets are realistic
- Increase offline promotion of audience surveys through community networks and schedule drop-in's around the local community where people can be provided with printed versions of the survey to complete
- Review and revise Audience Development Targets to increase effectiveness and ensure targets are realistic
- Continue to invest and explore use of qualitative evaluation methods (ie. interviews) with certain audience segments to increase richness of data

## ***Programming***

Feedback from different segments of this evaluation indicates that the level of programming could be scaled back in order to improve the overall quality of events. The breadth of events involved in this year's programme was impressive, however there were a number of events which were poorly attended or had to be cancelled.

Scaling back and focusing on events which are both impactful and popular could also help to address capacity issues cited by the POW team.

There are also two key areas in terms of content that deserve attention. Although the key themes of joy and celebration were felt by audiences, content which promoted issues around gender equality was less apparent. Additionally, feedback by the marketing team suggests that not having a big headline name has a direct impact on outcomes for online promotion. Taking some time to reflect on what POW aims to deliver and how to align event content would be valuable.

Recommendations include:

- Conduct a review to assess which types of events have proven to be low-value or an unnecessary drain on team resources
- Identify which events have proven, year on year, to provide great experiences for not only audiences but also the creatives and the delivery team which produce these events
- Assess what other formats the festival could take shape in, e.g. only running evening events during the week, or scheduling a select number of events over a longer period of time, whilst continuing to centre International Women's Day
- Reflect on whether the festival programme requires big headline acts and adjust marketing and audience development targets accordingly
- Review how criteria for event programming can have greater alignment with POW's overall aim (promoting gender equality)

### **Promotion**

Several factors appear to have negatively impacted the promotion of this year's festival. Notably, the delay in releasing printed materials and a significant decrease in engagement for social media audiences, compared to previous years. Promotion of the festival is a critical function and requires team member(s) who have the relevant level of capacity and availability during key stages of the festival. Whilst not having a headline act may have contributed to this year's results, issues around capacity for team member(s) fulfilling the role this year was also a factor.

Recommendations include:

- Review role requirements for marketing and promotion activities and assess whether the role can be filled by an individual or through job-sharing
- Moving forward, ensure team member(s) who are responsible for marketing and promotion can adequately fulfil the role requirements
- Have contingency planning in place if key team members are not able to meet key deadlines for marketing activities

For all enquiries regarding this evaluation,  
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