

# Coventry Great Place Programme

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Programme  
Evaluation  
2017-2021

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# Coventry Great Place Project Summary

Coventry's three year 'place-making' project (extended to four years due to the Covid-19 pandemic) has explored themes of diversity, architecture, identity and belonging, underpinned by high quality research and consultation. Supported by a new 'Place Partnership', the programme has been delivered by local and national organisations and has covered a wide range of projects, building capacity in preparation for the city to host UK City of Culture 2021.

It's aims were:

- For Arts & heritage sectors to build sustainable partnerships with other sectors – to see culture reflected in local plans and strategies
- To make the area a better place to live, work and visit – greater pride, social impact, educational outcomes
- For more diverse audiences to be inspired by arts and culture
- To boost the local economy – tourism, creative industries, local business benefits
- To have more resilient organisations – greater capacity

# Audience & Participant Numbers



In-person public-facing events	227
Audiences for in-person public-facing events	38,078
Activities	540
Total participants	2,122
Public-facing digital events 2020-2021	29
Audiences for digital events 2020-2021	43,540



# Our Governance

- Led and managed by Coventry City of Culture Trust - the accountable body
- Steering group – key partners / funders and reps cultural sector
- Programme Manager – Jacqui Ibbotson
- Some projects had clear lead producers
- Others led by trust or new partnerships developed
- Partnership agreement and monitoring framework to report back to HLF and ACE



# Place Partnership



# Partner Investment

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**£1.489,200 HLF and ACE**

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**£50,000 Coventry City Council**

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**£50,000 Coventry University**

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**£50,000 University of Warwick**

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**£25,000 BID & LEP**

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**£100,000 Coventry City of Culture Trust**

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**£10,000 London Midland**

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**£800 Historic England**

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**£1,775,000 Total Budget**



# Programme - 4 strands

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**Embed culture in place - local and regional policy – tourism, LEP, research**

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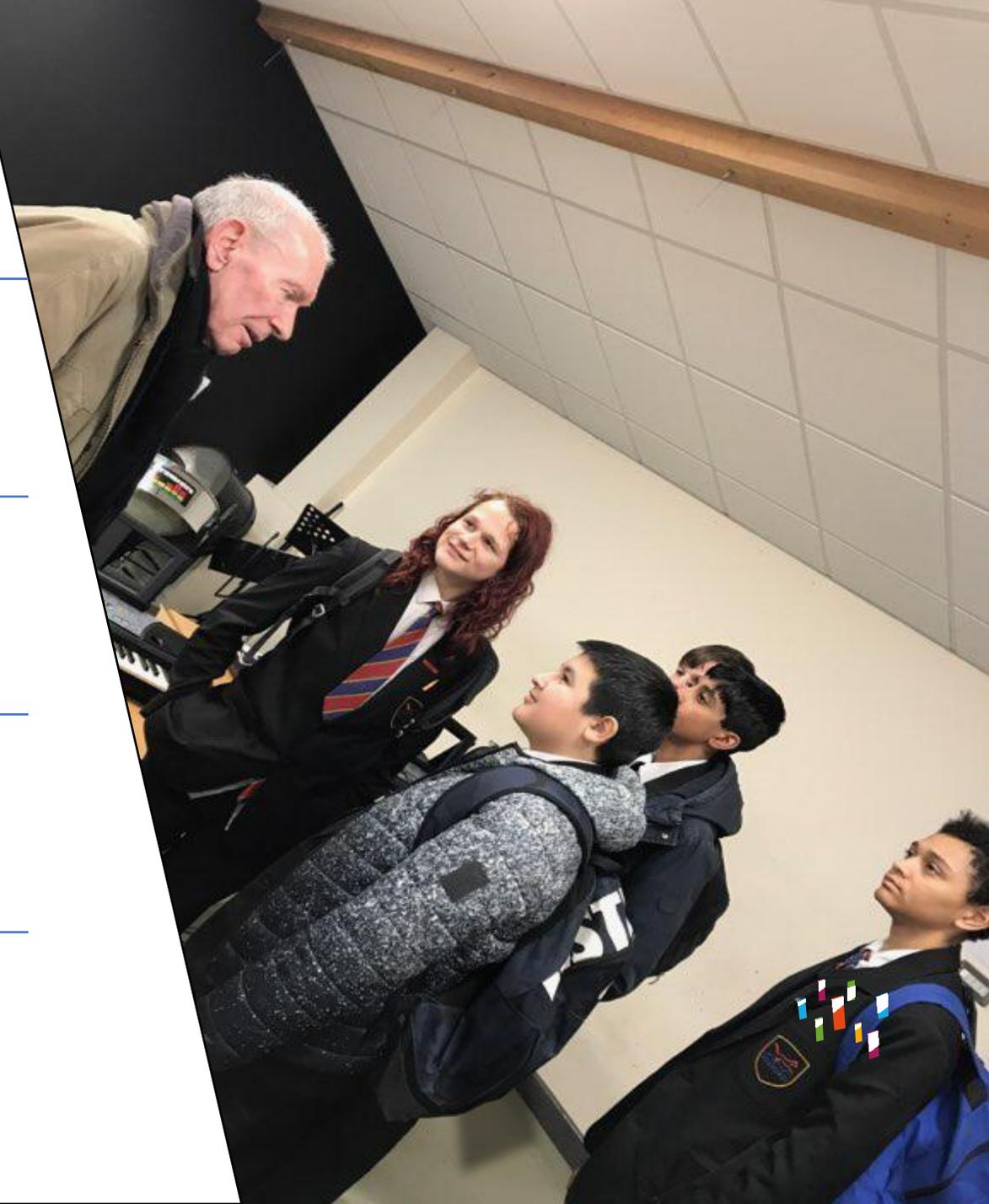
**Heritage of diversity – diversity of place**

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**Art architecture and place – heritage awareness**

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**City animation - The city is the festival**



# Over 30 main projects (£10K - £90K)

## Research, Development & Training

- Creative Industries Research
- Historic Coventry Cultural Asset Transfers
- Destination Management Plan
- City Web Audit
- Arts & Health Festivals 2019 & 20 & Try It! Programme 2021
- Vanishing Land Punchdrunk Teacher CPD Sessions
- Libraries Capacity Building Story Project
- Volunteer City Host Training 2021

## The Heritage of Diversity

- Masterji Photographic Collection published
- Tale of Two Streets
- Coventry Welcomes & Change the Word
- Culture On the Move Irish Project
- Humans at Work
- Foleshill Mile 2019
- Hear My Voice 2020-21

## Art, Architecture & Place

- Coventry Eve Telegraph Building project
- Majestic Medieval Women of Coventry
- Horrible Histories Film Shoot & Walk with Me – 4 x Walking Trails
- Home - aerial performance for Heritage Open Days
- Coventry Atlas Digital Archive & Website
- Coventry Modern culminating in Metropolis Exhibition Sep 19 - Dec 21

## City Animation

- Shop Front Festival I (2018) & II (Show Windows 2021)
- Sunrise, Meet Me in the Ruins & Projections at the Cathedral
- 40th Anniversary 2 Tone Season & Sonic Bike Opera by Imagineer
- The Allesley Silas (R & D and production)
- Place Animation Mini- Projects Sep 19 - Sept 21
- Creative Europe School of Participation July 2021

# And more mini projects (up to £10K)

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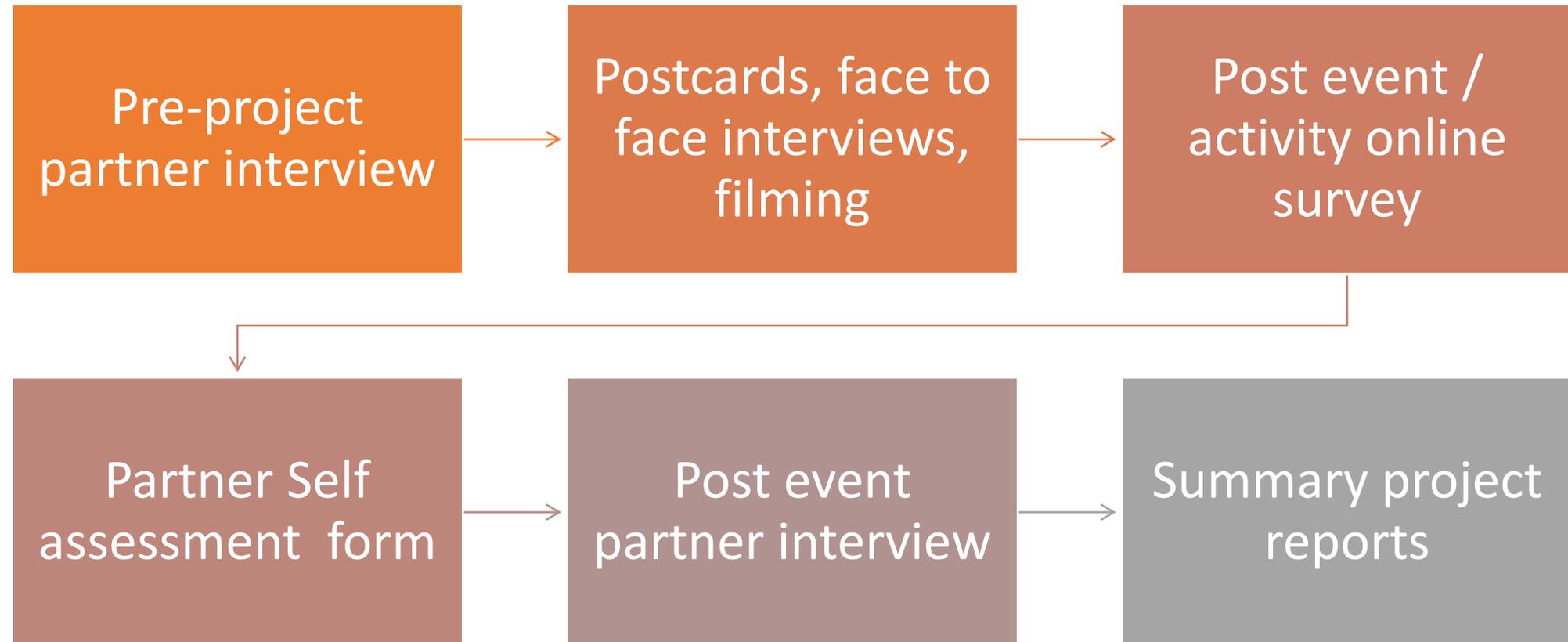
- 'This is Then' Digital Art & Music event
- Art in the Orchard
- Canley Arts Heritage Trail
- Coundon's Hot Talent
- West Indian Club lockdown project
- Hear My Voice
- Pilot Craft Shop
- Tile Hill People & Places
- Digital Coventry History Game
- 2 Tone Magazine
- The Italian Job plaque ceremony
- Coventry Swimming Baths Oral Histories
- 2 Tone Taxi
- The Wizard of Cov

# Programme objectives

- **Greater collaboration and networking** across public, private and cultural sectors, placing our Universities at the heart of place making
- **Building capacity** in the **business and community sectors** to work in partnership with heritage and arts organisations
- **Artist commissions** that enable businesses to culturally engage their workforce and local residents in place-making and telling Coventry's story
- An **increase in civic pride, ownership and sense of wellbeing** in the city
- An integrated **destination management plan**, place branding and web/social media strategy to address gaps in national and local resident awareness about Coventry as a place
- **Sustainability and capacity building** in the arts and heritage sectors
- The **creation of themed festivals** and events which bridge arts and heritage and animate the city
- A step change in the level of **private sector investment** into Coventry's culture

# Evaluation Methodology

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Over 1750 surveys...

including 1240 postcards!

We want to find out more about your Coventry City of Culture 2021 experience, and it would be great if you could spend 5 minutes completing this feedback card...

# GIVE US YOUR THOUGHTS

EVENT

DATE



#ThisisCoventry



1) PLEASE RATE THE QUALITY OF THE EVENT

Very Good  Good  Neither  Poor  Very Poor  N/A

2) I HAD A GOOD TIME!

Strongly agree  Agree  Neither  Disagree  Strongly disagree

3) DID THE EVENT HAVE AN IMPACT ON YOUR PERCEPTION OF COVENTRY?

Yes, it has improved  No, it is the same  Yes, it has worsened

4) TODAY'S EVENT INCREASES MY PRIDE IN COVENTRY AS AN AREA

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neither  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

5) WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS BEST DESCRIBES HOW YOU THINK OF YOUR GENDER IDENTITY (TICK ONE ONLY)

Male  Female  In another way\*  Prefer not to say

\*How would you describe your gender? \_\_\_\_\_

6) WHAT AGE ARE YOU? \_\_\_\_\_

7) WHAT IS YOUR POSTCODE? IF YOU LIVE OVERSEAS, WHAT IS YOUR COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE? \_\_\_\_\_

8. ARE YOUR DAY-TO-DAY ACTIVITIES LIMITED BECAUSE OF A HEALTH PROBLEM OR DISABILITY WHICH HAS LASTED, OR IS EXPECTED TO LAST, AT LEAST 12 MONTHS? (TICK ONE ONLY)

Yes, limited a lot  Yes, limited a little  No  Prefer not to say

9) WHAT IS YOUR ETHNIC GROUP? (TICK ONE ONLY)

**White**

English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British  Irish  
 Gypsy or Irish Traveller  Other White background

**Mixed**

White and Black Caribbean  White and Black African  
 White and Asian  Other Mixed / multiple ethnic background

**Asian or Asian British**

Indian  Pakistani  Bangladeshi  Chinese  
 Other Asian background

**Black or Black British**

African  Caribbean  
 Other / Black / African / Caribbean background

**Other**

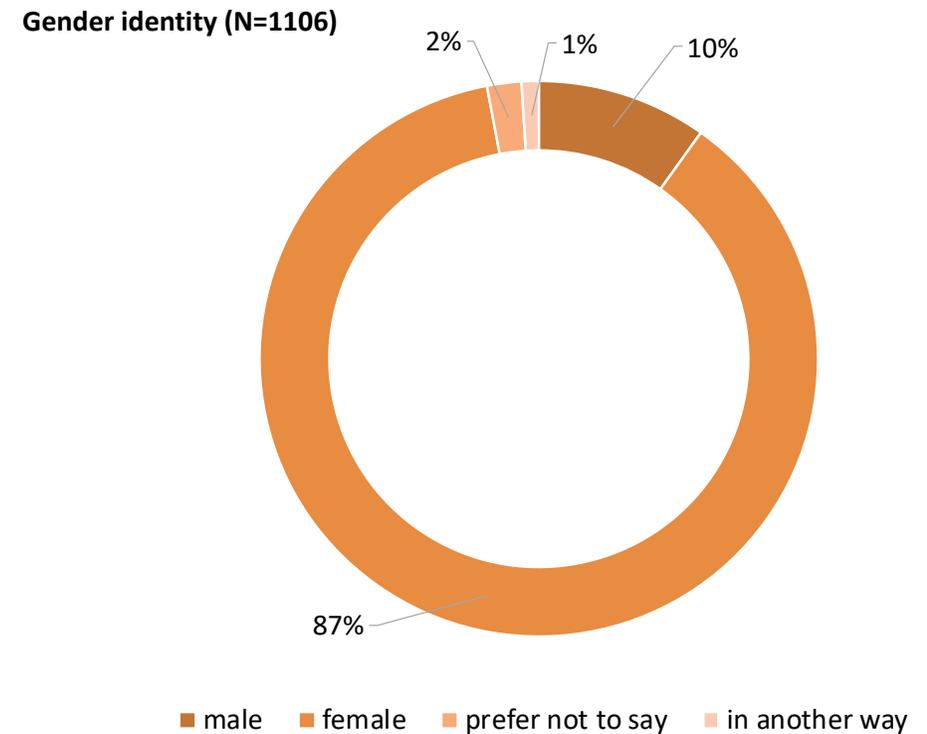
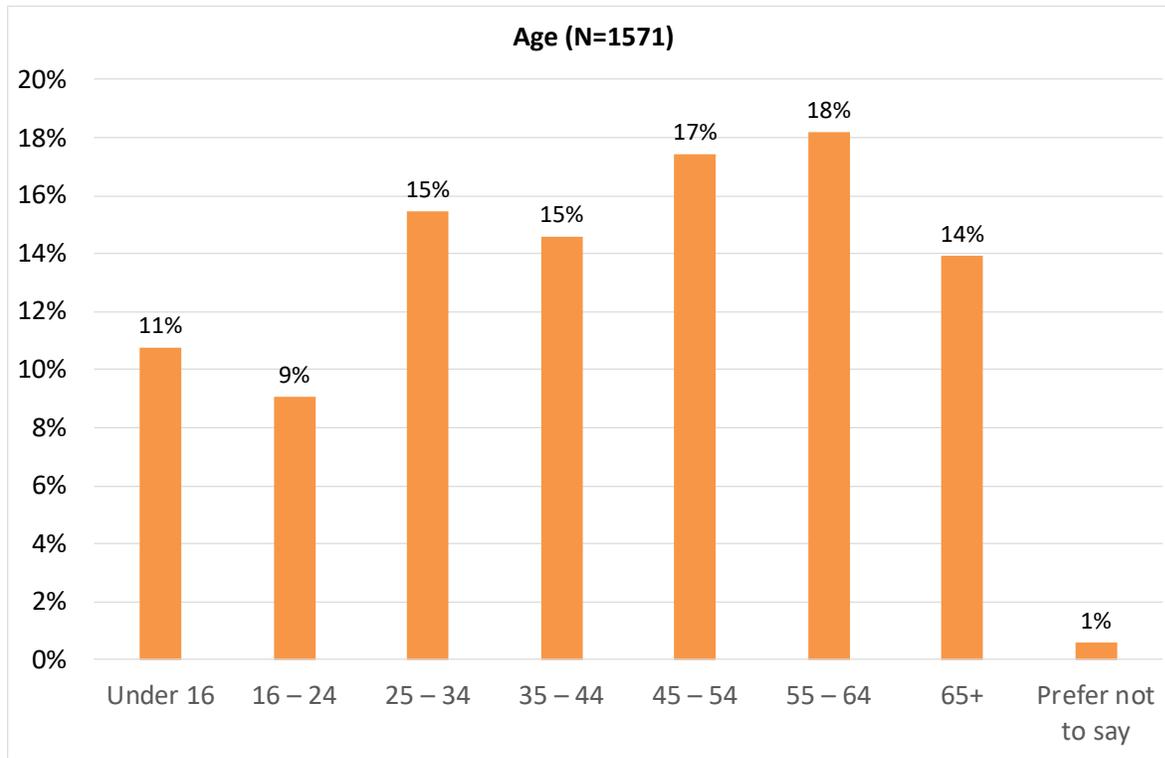
Arab  Other  Prefer not to say

What other? \_\_\_\_\_

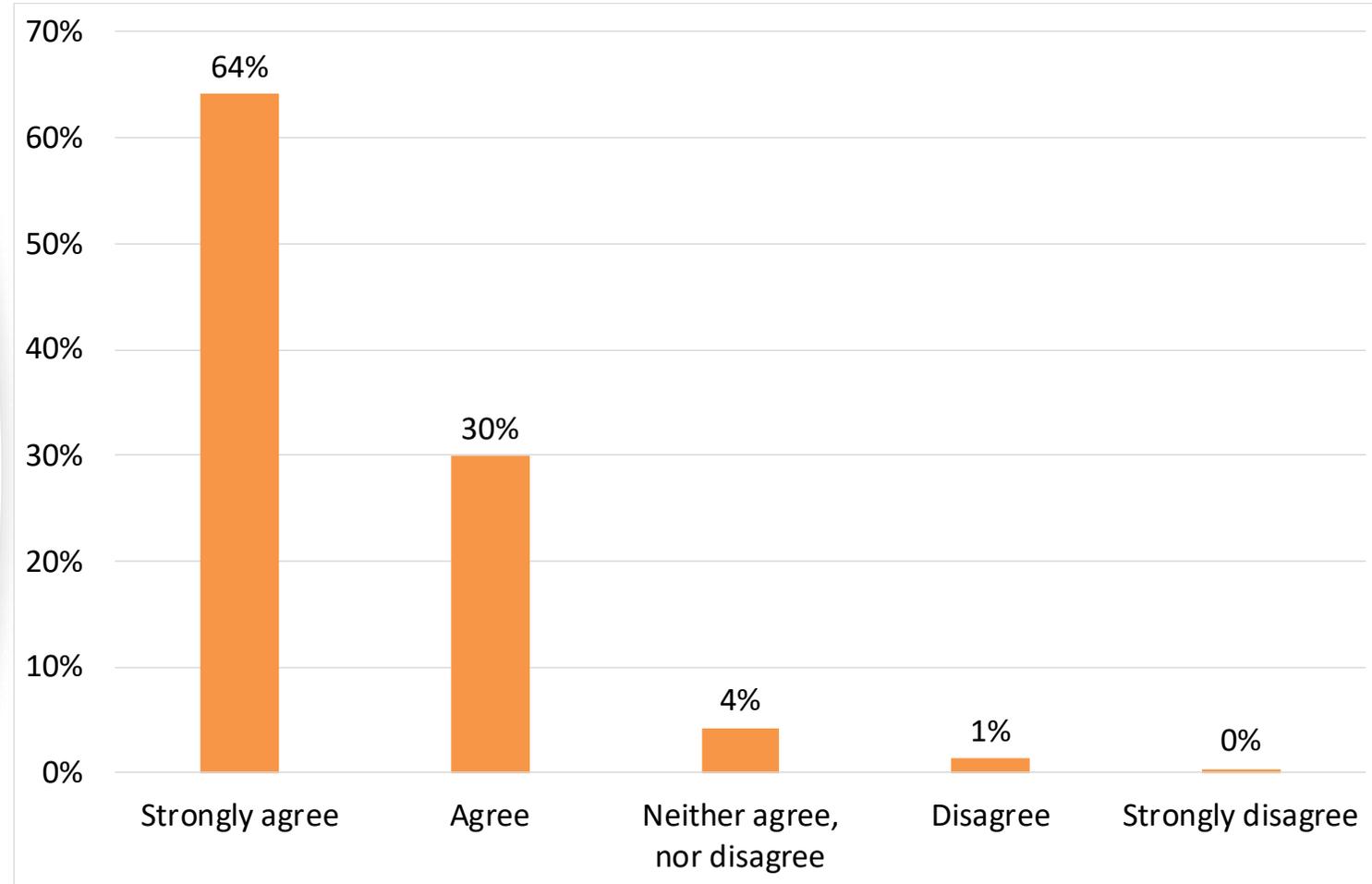
#ThisisCoventry @Coventry2021

If you would like further information about this research, please contact [info@earthenlamp.com](mailto:info@earthenlamp.com) CONFIDENTIALITY: The information will be held on computer and will only be used for research and statistical analysis purposes by Coventry City of Culture Trust, and/or third party research consultants employed by them.

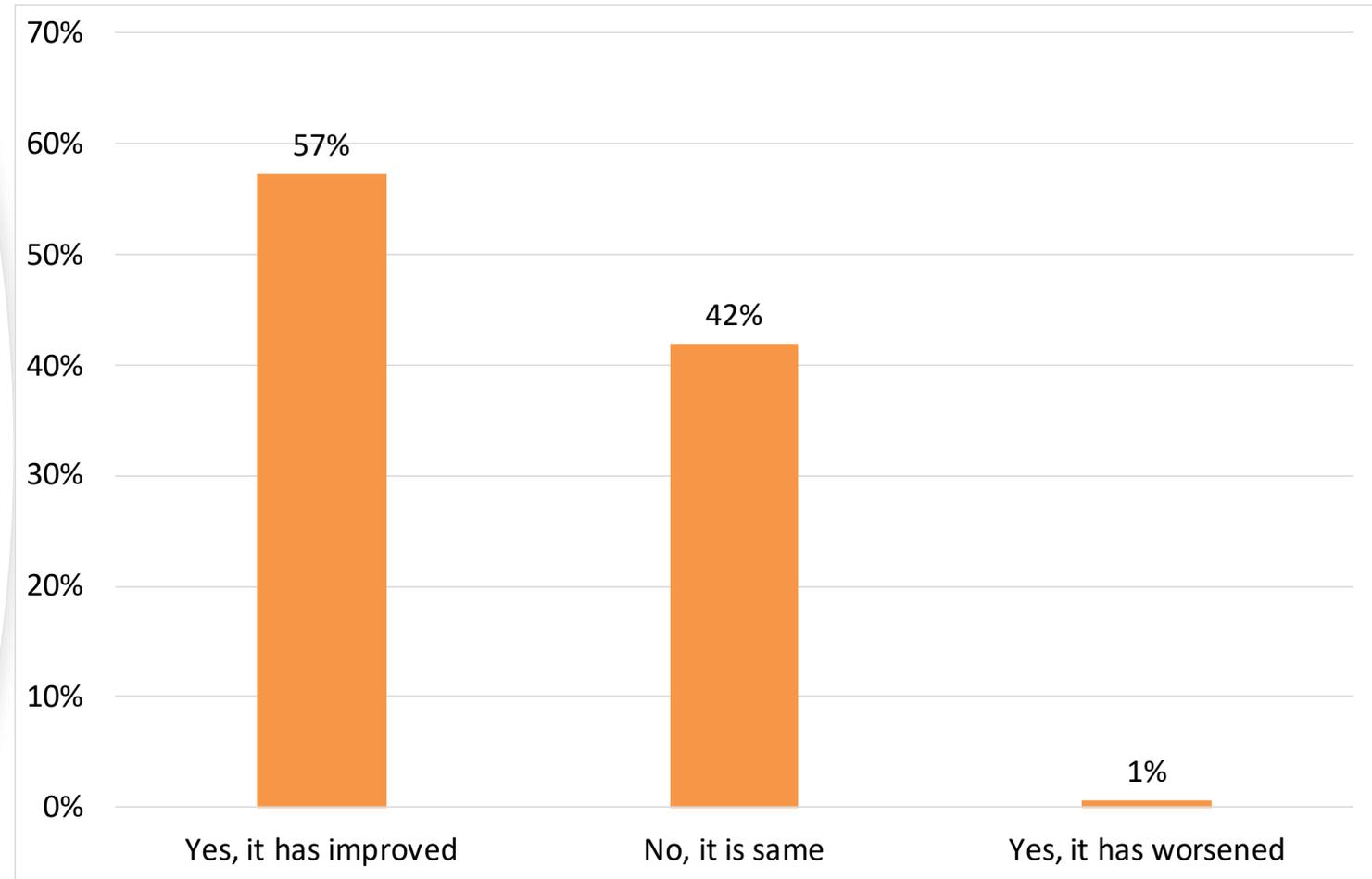
# Feedback Analysis: Demographic info



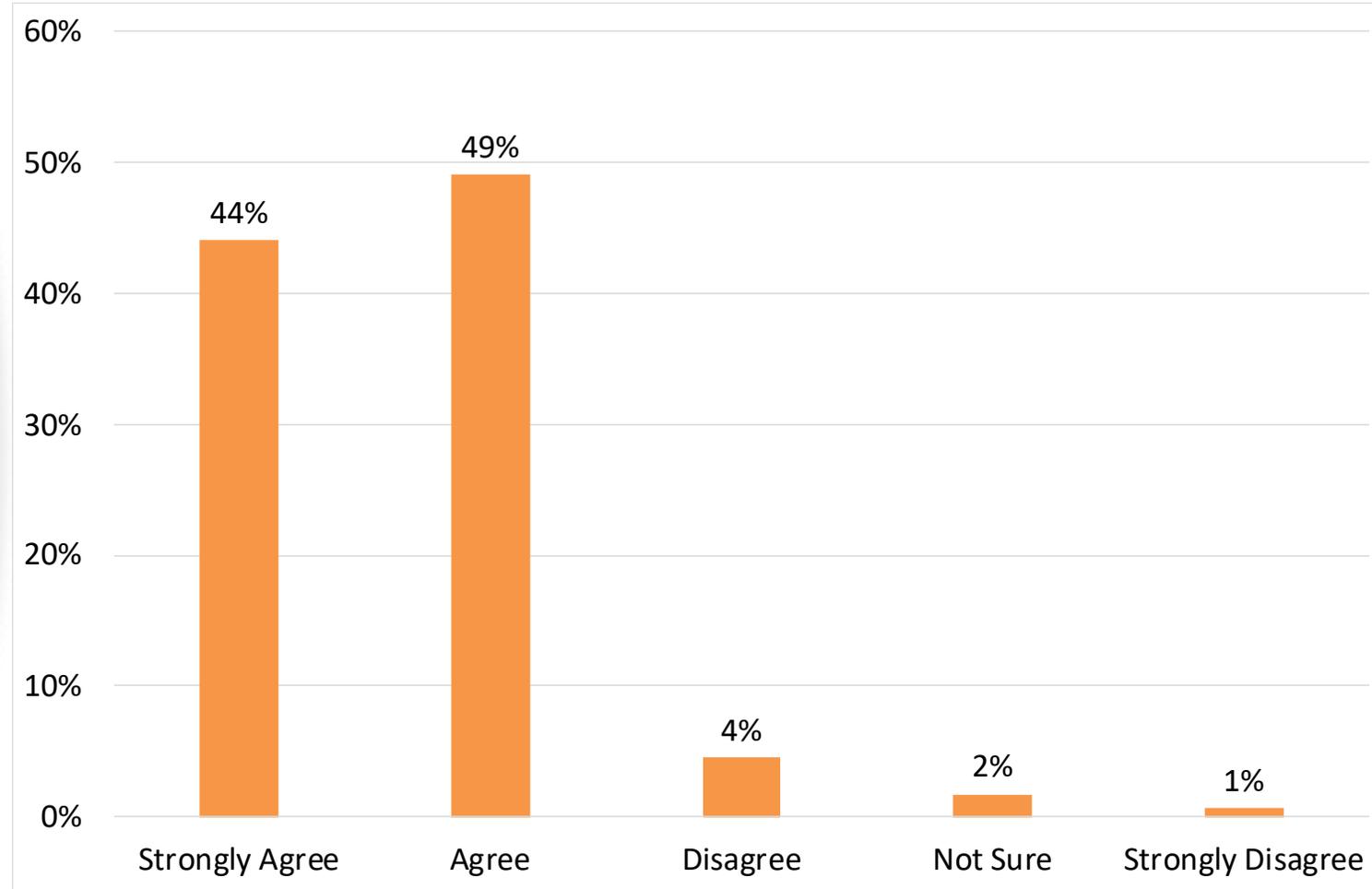
“I had a good time!”  
(N=1340)



Did the event have an impact on your perception of Coventry?  
(N=1325)



“Today’s event increases my pride in Coventry as an area.”  
(N=1092)



# Achievements

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- Engagement of Diverse Communities
- Audience Development for Heritage and the Arts
- Notably Successful projects that will leave a legacy
- We kept going through lockdown
- Capacity Building:



## ENGAGEMENT OF DIVERSE COMMUNITIES:

The demographic of Coventry is very multicultural with one third of its population being non-white British born. It was important from the outset not only to engage its diverse community but to explore the heritage of the arrival into the city of people of many different nations. The projects delivered under the theme 'The Heritage of Diversity' were quite remarkable and the key to their success lay in the design of the projects which included the following actions:

- We put a call out for project ideas at the beginning and co-created the projects, matching artists with specific cultural communities for example Hear My Voice with Stamp Productions;
- We recruited Christabel Amoakoh to manage 'Coventry Welcomes' in 2018 and Nobulali Dangazele to manage 'Humans at Work' in 2019, both exceptional project managers who were able to open the doors to communities previously inaccessible to a white British programme manager;
- We highlighted the artistic excellence of a previously hidden Indian photographer, Masterji ensuring that Photo Miners worked closely with his daughter Tarla Patel who went on to organise her own Masterji exhibition talk and exhibition in other cities;
- We put a spotlight on the Foleshill Road, the area of Coventry where the most different languages are spoken and where the Mosques and Temples are located, by creating 'The Foleshill Mile' a map and trail co-created with community champions and by engaging emerging street photographers to talk to the businesses in this area and photograph them in the Tale of Two Streets project.
- In the Culture on the Move project, Imagineer Productions invited schools and groups from the more established Irish community in Coventry to share their experiences with new arrivals such as the Syrian families to find common ground and to foster belonging.

## **WE DEVELOPED NEW AUDIENCES FOR ARTS & HERITAGE:**

Exploring new ideas under the theme 'Art, Architecture & Place – Medieval to Modern' resulted in some of the most notable projects in the programme, many providing the greatest legacy to the programme:

- Coventry Evening Telegraph Building site specific performances by Belgrade Theatre & Mercurial Dance
- Royal Women of Influence Exhibition by Medieval Coventry
- Horrible Histories films by Lion TV
- HOME outdoor spectacular for Heritage Open Days
- Coventry Atlas Digital archive and website
- Walk with Me by Talking Birds (actor-led walking tours of hidden parts of the city)
- Coventry Modern architecture project by Coventry University

All of these projects attracted a mix of Arts and Heritage audiences and each sector benefited hugely from the development of their audiences as a result. For example we introduced the first tour of a Temple to Coventry's popular annual Heritage Open Days programme and as a highlight in 2019, presented a spectacular outdoor presentation, HOME, attracting attention to a new University building.

HOME was an innovative multi-artform performance by Highly Sprung collaborating with contemporary circus company Upswing. The performance explored the changing architecture of Coventry to better understand the influence of its people on the city. It used imagery from Coventry's existing architecture, both modern and medieval, and took inspiration from archival resources comprised of architectural plans for the city old and new, medieval, pre- and post-war, and those devised for the future. Approximately 500 people saw the performance live and over 10,000 online.

## **REACHING MILLIONS OF PEOPLE THROUGH ANIMATING PUBLIC SPACES:**

There were multiple projects delivered to animate public spaces as part of the extensive and varied Great Place Programme including Shop Front Festival in 2018 and Show Windows 2020-21. Shop Front Festival was a festival of arts and heritage performances, exhibitions and activities in City Centre shops produced by Shop Front Theatre/Theatre Absolute. This included outdoor and indoor performances and participatory activities across Coventry's city centre.

- 60+ events and activities were presented across four dedicated shop venues and 14 other sites across the city. This included free and ticketed experiences in indoor and outdoor locations.
- The activities included 58 local arts and cultural professionals
- 33 creative facilitators took part in the festival
- 48 UK and international artists were engaged by the festival
- 73 students took part in the festival as placement students, performers and designers
- The festival included 120 community participants
- 26 volunteer hosts took part in the festival across the two days
- 38 businesses took part in Shop Front Festival, and this included local independents, national and international businesses
- A total of 16,841 attendances were generated by the festival and this included 12,295 attendances at outdoor events
- Over the festival, footfall in Coventry city centre increased by 20,000 when compared to the previous weekend and this represents 5.4% increase above national average for the same period.

## **WE KEPT GOING THROUGH LOCKDOWN:**

From March 2020 through to June 2021 it was a challenge to run arts and heritage projects during the lockdown period of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, we transferred 4 events to a digital delivery including the following with great success:

- Culture on the Move, Irish and migration project by Imagineer Productions:

[https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch\\_permalink&v=2880472265550806](https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=2880472265550806)

- Coundon's Hot Talent placemaking community engagement project by Coventry Arts Collective:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xgesSTRP\\_k0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xgesSTRP_k0)

- Home, presented by Highly Sprung was promoted as an online event by the BID during lockdown and enjoyed more than 10,000 views

- The Midnight Run, Poetry workshop with Inua Ellams (Part of Coventry Modern programme) and

- The Vanishing Land, Primary School Teacher CPD sessions by Punchdrunk Enrichment.

In addition, one of the 3 Horrible History films made by Lion TV (Ira Aldridge Song) was acquired by the BBC and was broadcast on CBBC as part of a Black History Month episode to millions of viewers. Since it has recently appeared on YouTube, it has had 7,119 views. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gYEATYbVtE4>

In person activities such as 'Art in a Box' delivered to 75 households by Coventry Peace Orchard provided some relief for some disadvantaged families.

For the many people whose only pastime available was to go on long walks, Coventry's 'Show Windows' was incredibly well received and appreciated by Coventry's residents.

## **HIGHLIGHTING THE POWER OF ARTS & HERITAGE IN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT, CAPITAL BUILDING AND HEALTH PROGRAMMES:**

**CAPACITY BUILDING:** It is very unusual for a funded programme to include the flexibility to commission research and to engage expert consultants where needed and this is where the Great Place Scheme really made a difference. When it turned out that Coventry had won the bid to be UK City of Culture in 2021, several small arts and heritage organisations needed to step up quickly to express their capital and organisational development needs to the City Council, Local Enterprise Partnership, Business Improvement District and national funders and they could not have done this without the support of expert consultants. As a result of this work, four busy arts companies are now housed in the amazing, refurbished Daimler Powerhouse, a piece of Coventry's industrial heritage preserved and put to good use, Historic Coventry Trust achieved the asset transfer of 22 historic sites including Drapers' Hall and Charterhouse and the larger organisations including Coventry Cathedral, Culture Coventry and Belgrade Theatre have all enjoyed extension and refurbishment projects. The pride and optimism in the city as a result of this 'sprucing up' is palpable and massively contributes to the rise in tourism to the city.

Commissioning a Destination Management Plan (NGI Solutions) was also essential for the City and the novel partnership model that was recommended has worked very well in practice, bringing together the tourism agencies, Universities, West Midlands Growth Agency, Councils and BID to the table to work together for the benefit of the City where they might have worked in competition over the City of Culture opportunity presented.

The Arts & Health projects have been very successful. Partnering with Coventry and Warwickshire Councils, Health Exchange and Age UK to deliver symposia and the Try It! programme have highlighted the benefits of Arts to the health sector and embedded a new practice which will have a lasting legacy.

# Challenges

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- Keeping going through lockdown!
- Capacity building but not 'running' projects/events to ensure local organisations can continue after the project closes
- Competition for Marketing & Comms with so much activity in the City





# Appendices

Full Project descriptions by Jacqui Ibbotson

Gallery of images from projects

Breakdown of audience & participant numbers

Evaluation reports by Earthen Lamp



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