

Identity, Confidence, Connection

**Rethinking audience engagement for arts &
culture in the West Midlands**

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by
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– Culture Central –



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Forewords

Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands

Creativity is the driving force of our region. It is reflected in our rich heritage, our diverse cultures, and our entrepreneurial spirit. Our world-class arts & cultural sector is at the core of this, moving us forward, shaping our identity and nurturing the next generation of creative talent. Art & culture help to strengthen our society, bringing communities together, inspiring our young people, and making places more attractive for residents, visitors, and investors.



Covid-19 pandemic has, however, had a devastating impact on the sector. In many cases its reliance on human interaction, seasonal operating hours and flexible employment has left it particularly vulnerable. This research, initiated by our excellent Cultural Leadership Board, provides us with the evidence base to enable the sector's recovery. The research has allowed us to comprehensively map our cultural assets across the region, giving us a full picture of the sector's strengths and weaknesses.

It also exposes the challenging relationship between access to cultural assets and factors like health, wellbeing, and skills development – something I am determined to address in my second term as Mayor. But crucially, it shows how the sector's creative energy can drive the recovery of the region as a whole. I look forward to working alongside partners to act on these findings and grow our arts and cultural sector over the coming years.



Martin Green CBE, Chief Creative Officer, Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games

Creative cities are great cities: Fact! Large scale creative festivals are good for cities, be it European City of Culture in Glasgow or Liverpool, UK City of Culture in Hull, and currently Coventry. On a bigger scale still, the Cultural programmes of London 2012 and the 2014 Glasgow Games brought millions of people together over and above traditional audiences for sport. The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games will also be milestone moment for city and region.

It all starts with understanding audiences and the unique research within these pages will ensure the Birmingham 2022 Festival will act as a catalyst for real change, in a way that has not been possible before. Our aspiration is that the festival becomes a transformational moment for the sector strengthened by a plan to create a new 10-year cultural strategy that is region-wide. This will be another first that will test the commitment, generosity and vision of our councils, funders agencies, arts organisations, and arts professionals.

We want to use 2022 to ignite a revolution in the perception and status of Birmingham and the West Midlands as a creative place, changing national and international perceptions, increasing tourism, investment, ambitions and pride in place - inspiring creativity and change, long after the last medal is won.

Symon Easton, Head of Cultural Development & Tourism, Birmingham City Council

Birmingham City Council is proud to have supported this important research. It will help inform our future direction in regard to the planned 'Our Future City Plan' and new Cultural Strategy through the Birmingham Cultural Compact.





Martin Sutherland, CEO of Coventry City of Culture Trust and Chair of the WMCA Cultural Leadership Board

As the Chair of the WMCA Cultural Leadership Board I am proud that during an extremely difficult year, we have found strength in collaboration and been able to produce this comprehensive report. It will provide us with the evidence base to continue the work of the board, and I am optimistic that this new report can help make the case for positive new developments across the region.

This report gives us the clearest picture we have ever had on the cultural sector in the West Midlands. At the heart of this is the way we can improve access to culture to our residents and visitors alike. Coventry City of Culture Trust has already done a lot of work around cultural engagement, to better understand the gaps and inequalities in provision. It is good to see some of this learning incorporated into this report, and we will be using the data and findings to complement our work.

It is also great that the report highlights the tremendous social value that arts & culture can deliver. While it may be more difficult to measure, it makes a significant contribution to our communities & society and is a central aspect of our work in Coventry.

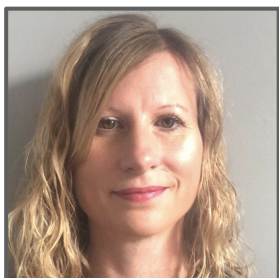
This research has for the first time analysed our existing cultural infrastructure at region, putting a spotlight on what already exists and providing clarity where there are gaps in provision. It is vital that we continue to expand opportunities around our cultural ecosystem and the infrastructure supporting it.

Peter Knott, Midlands Area Director for Arts Council England

This cultural mapping provides detailed insight into the region’s cultural assets and explores opportunities for place-based work - including major events like Coventry City of Culture and Birmingham Commonwealth Games. This brings benefits to creative individuals, organisations and communities across the WMCA.



We want everyone to benefit from inspiring and entertaining art and culture - from visiting museums or enjoying a show with family and friends, to developing creative talents at home via a Zoom workshop. Investing in creativity can have a powerful effect on improving wellbeing, transforming the places where we work, live and study, developing communities and unlocking the economic potential for towns and cities throughout the country.



Erica Love, Director – Culture Central

These pieces of research give us a significant insight into the lived experiences of communities within the West Midlands. This data is an invaluable resource for anyone who is interested in the ways in which culture and creativity play a part of our regional identity. At Culture Central, we are excited about the potential that this research provides, and the opportunity that we have to put the insights from this data into practice, working as a collective to ensure that we can all create opportunities through culture for the places and people of the West Midlands.



Anita Bhalla OBE, Board Member and Creative Lead, Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP

LEPs play a vital role in investing in people, places and businesses to drive forwards inclusive economic growth and increase quality of life. Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) has committed more than £30m in culture over the last four years, recognising the crucial role this sector can play in transforming our places, improving the well-being of our people and broadening opportunity for our communities.

We have established ‘Cultural Action Zones’, which are making a difference to our local centres and speeding up covid recovery on our high streets. Our £3m investment into a new Creative Content Hub for Birmingham is bringing more television and high-end film production to the region. We have also been developing new support programmes, for creative freelancers, creative businesses, and piloting new flexi-apprenticeships so that microbusinesses can access apprentices for the first time. Our unique Triple Helix structure of bringing local government, businesses and educational organisations together enables us to make targeted investments in a sustainable way.

None of these investments would be possible without evidence to back them up, from research to grassroots relationships with our creative businesses and communities. The high-quality data that this research has unearthed will guide and underpin our current and future policymaking. It will also play a critical role in our ability to advocate for the cultural sector nationally. GBSLEP views the cultural sector as a catalyst for economic recovery that will enable the levelling up of people, places and businesses in the West Midlands.

Fiona Allan, Chair of the West Midlands Regional Board for Tourism, West Midlands Growth Company

The West Midlands is home to a hugely vibrant, varied and compelling cultural scene, which contributed significantly to the £13.1 billion that tourists spent in the region in 2019. Whether it’s theatres or museums, music arenas or heritage attractions, the region’s cultural venues and festivals are the lifeblood of our tourism offer. They anchor the West Midlands’ sense of place and purpose. They inspire visitors to come and explore, then choose to return, time and again.



As we start to welcome back more people to safely enjoy the West Midlands’ internationally renowned cultural brands, this region has a once-in-a-generation opportunity to bounce back and lead the UK’s economic recovery and resurgence post-pandemic.

Major events such as Coventry UK City of Culture and the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, together with its Cultural Festival, can be a focal point for national celebration and international interest. They can provide a catalyst for increased awareness of the West Midlands’ cultural tourism credentials.

Coordinated by the West Midlands Growth Company with regional and national partners, the Business and Tourism Programme will seek to maximise the benefits that the Commonwealth Games will bring. It will create a long-term legacy by boosting perceptions of Birmingham, the West Midlands and the UK as a world-class destination for tourism and culture.

As momentum and excitement builds ahead of a transformative 12 months in the arts spotlight, we support this analysis into the West Midlands’ cultural sector, and encourage people to use these findings as we collaboratively shape our visitor offer.

Background

Arts & culture have a really important role in our society, both in terms of economic impact, as well as bringing together communities, delivering social value and supporting our health and wellbeing.

In 2020, regional partners to commissioned two pieces of research that would provide more information about the cultural sector within the WMCA area.

The West Midlands cultural sector research project was a partnership between:

- West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) & WMCA Cultural Leadership Board
- Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games
- Coventry City of Culture Trust
- Birmingham City Council
- Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership
- West Midlands Growth Company
- Culture Central

The project received funding from Arts Council England and The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

The purpose was to undertake both quantitative and qualitative analysis of the cultural sector in the West Midlands to provide an evidence base for future development of the sector, as well as maximise opportunities around major events and other place-based approaches. The aim was to provide a pre-Covid baseline, although the reports will also touch on the impacts of the pandemic.

The geographical focus of the project was on the three WMCA Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) areas; Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP, Black Country Consortium and Coventry & Warwickshire LEP. The Local Authorities included are listed on page 11.

The project included two overlapping strands of work:

1. **The Audiences & Engagement Strand** which included mapping & analysis of available population data and cultural engagement data. The aim was to analyse how people are engaging with arts & culture in the region, as well as provide some suggestions on how we could better encourage and capture this going forward.
2. **The Infrastructure & Economic and Social Impact Strand** included analysis of cultural sector employment, FE/HE education data relating to arts subjects, the regional impact of cultural tourism, levels of public & private investment into culture, as further analysis of four cultural clusters (North Birmingham, Digbeth in Birmingham, Leamington Spa and Dudley). The report summarises these finding to provide a baseline for the economic value, together with a framework for social value. Another key output of this strand is a digital Cultural Infrastructure Map which is available for anyone to use on the WMCA website.

This report covers the Audiences & Engagement Strand.

Identity, Confidence, Connection – Executive Summary

“This mega-event is our stage; when Birmingham and the West Midlands welcomes the Games in 2022 it will be given the rarest of opportunities, a long overdue moment in the spotlight to show its true character to the world. We cannot waste a moment of it.

Using every creative fibre available to us, we must express and reflect the people, places and character that make Birmingham and the West Midlands unique. We must unearth and celebrate the common ground we share across the Commonwealth.”

Birmingham 2022 Cultural Programme Business Case: August 2020

Indigo was commissioned in Sept 2020 to conduct an audience analysis, mapping and strategy project for the West Midlands by the regional partners.

The purpose of the work, as outlined in the ‘Scope of works’ document included:

- Providing a detailed audience research and mapping study
- Providing the intelligence and detail needed for audience planning for the 2022 Cultural programme, aiming to reach 1.75m attenders from the West Midlands (70% of the total audience)
- Providing a forward-looking strategy for culture in the region
- Accelerating audience and sector recovery in response to Covid-19

Key Findings

According to all the available sources of data on cultural engagement, the West Midlands has a **lower level of cultural engagement** than the national average, strongly correlated with educational achievement levels and socio-demographic profiles.

There are clear and marked **socio-economic differences** between areas where more of the population have benefitted from access to culture and those that have not – and this means that West Midlands residents have and make different choices around arts and culture – many of which are not reflected in the current definitions and ways of measuring engagement.

Some areas have developed an **active local creative scene**, despite lower levels of cultural infrastructure or historically less engagement in formal culture, which can often go unnoticed by the more established cultural sector. A fresh approach to place-based culture provides an opportunity to shine a light on those activities.

Other areas have a highly culturally engaged population – **who choose to attend elsewhere**, rather than looking to the West Midlands as their home for arts and culture.

The data created as part of this project gives, for those involved in producing, commissioning or presenting arts and culture in the West Midlands, the opportunity to

understand much more fully the profile of specific areas, and to seek to develop appropriate programmes and creative interventions that serve the needs of those areas directly.

Key Recommendations

In order to achieve a cultural programme that ‘expresses and reflects the people, places and character’ of the West Midlands, and rebuild after Covid-19, our consultations suggested that it should centre around the **three themes** of:

- **Identity** – for every person to see themselves reflected in the programme and to celebrate the identity of the West Midlands through its creative offer
- **Confidence** – to re-build confidence post-Covid; to encourage people to try something new; and to showcase the creative confidence of the West Midlands
- **Connection** – for people to reconnect with each other after the trauma of Covid; to connect with their own roots and culture, and that of others; and with our shared humanity across the world

We frame our view of and ambitions around engagement through a lens of ‘choice’: the choice people and communities *have* and the choices they *make*. We want everyone in the West Midlands to have a choice and we want them to value and actively *choose* arts and culture as an essential part of their lives

Adopting this approach, we have developed an action plan for building creative engagement for the cultural programme, focusing on the three key elements of **Identity, Confidence and Connection**. Our framework is a re-evaluation of the ways in which audiences for culture are viewed in the West Midlands and a roadmap for cultural engagement, reflecting the realities and complexities of this vibrant, innovative and inspiring region.

Looking beyond the Commonwealth Games, and to underpin a new 10-year cultural development strategy, we have suggested **four ‘provocations’** to which the sector needs to respond:

1. Reframing how we **define** and **measure** arts and cultural engagement – and where it happens
2. Considering we develop creative responses to the **differing needs** of the communities across the West Midlands
3. Ensuring that the opportunity of the Commonwealth Games re-positions the West Midlands as a **cultural destination of choice**
4. To re-evaluate how **investment** is made in terms of cultural infrastructure and creative output

1. Introduction and context

The opportunity to have a ‘single source’ of data relating to the cultural engagement of the population has long been an aspiration of those working in culture in the West Midlands, in order to take an evidence-based approach to planning cultural activities that best fit the needs of the population.

This work focuses specifically on the **population** of the West Midlands and how they engage – according to the data sources that exist - with culture in our region. It has not addressed tourism or visitors from outside the region. It should be read in conjunction with a corresponding piece of economic and infrastructure mapping work commissioned by WMCA and undertaken by Hatch, We Made That and Tom Fleming Creative Consultancy.

This report is structured in **two parts** as follows:

Part 1: Mapping the West Midlands population in relation cultural engagement

The focus of Part 1 is to create **an overview of cultural engagement** in the region, using, comparing and contextualizing existing sources of data; using these to identify key questions or gaps; and providing a clear overview, with recommendations and implications for Part 2.

The geographical scope of the project is to include and compare **3 distinct areas**:

Area 1: Birmingham

Area 2: WMCA: West Midlands Combined Authority Constituent Member areas (Birmingham, Solihull, Walsall, Wolverhampton, Dudley, Sandwell & Coventry)

Area 3: Wider WMCA area: The Broader West Midlands area as defined by the 3 LEAs (Stratford upon Avon, Warwick, Rugby, Nuneaton & Bedworth, North Warwickshire, Tamworth, Lichfield, East Staffordshire, Cannock Chase, Wyre Forest, Bromsgrove, Redditch).

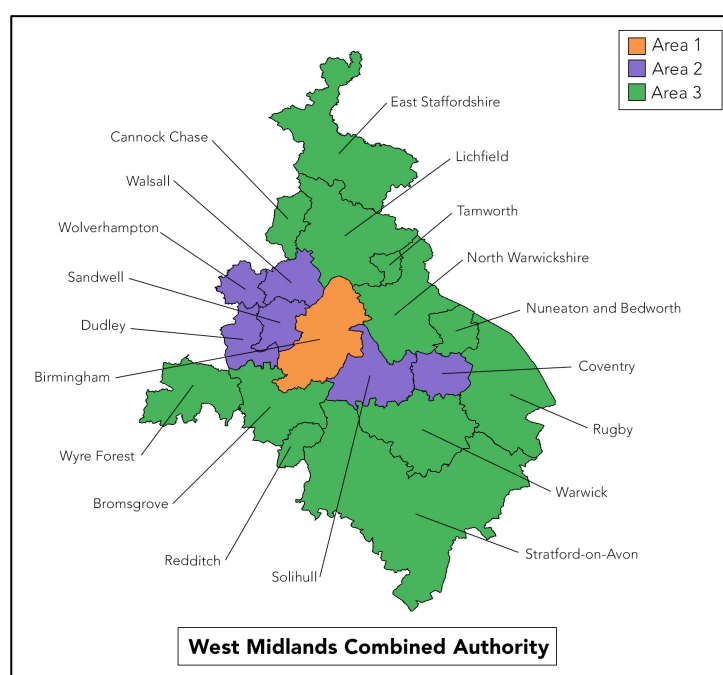


Figure 1: Geographical scope

We have worked in association with Baker Richards, who have provided the data aggregation and analysis to inform this study. Our analysis comprises of **three layers**, looked at in turn:

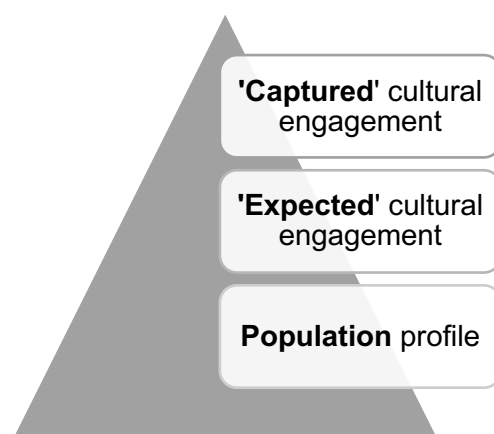


Figure 2: Cultural Engagement Pyramid (Indigo)

Population profile of the region

- How is the West Midlands distinctive and different from England as a whole?
- What opportunities or challenges does this suggest for culture?

'Expected' levels of cultural engagement

Given this profile, what would we 'expect' to see in terms of cultural engagement with publicly invested Arts and Culture from the data that exists?

What do we mean by 'expected'?

Using the various geo-demographic tools currently available, in conjunction with England-wide cultural participation surveys (where people are asked what they attend and participate in) it is possible to estimate the number of people in any given area who could be expected to engage in culture. (A discussion of the merits of this approach is considered in Chapter 2.)

'Captured' Cultural engagement amongst West Midlands residents

- From creating an aggregated pool of 'captured data' (mostly ticket purchases) what levels of engagement with publicly invested arts and culture in the region can we evidence?
- How do these compare (by area) with the 'expected' levels of engagement identified in above and what conclusions can we draw from that?

What do we mean by 'captured'?

We have aggregated ticketing data from a range of sources to try and build as comprehensive a picture as possible of actual attendance at cultural events and activities across the West Midlands by its population. (See Chapter 6 for a more detailed explanation of how this was achieved and the limitations of this approach.)

Part 2: Creating and Audience Development Strategy

The focus of Part 2 is to:

- Create an audience development strategy for existing, returning and new audiences, considering both a Birmingham and West Midlands wide focus, using the data analysis and mapping undertaken in Part 1 to draw recommendations
- To provide a set of questions/provocations for the sector to engage with through a dissemination process
- To provide the foundation of a legacy action plan for 2022-2025

A number of workshops, consultations and interviews with the sector were conducted by Mel Larsen and Pam Jarvis to inform this approach.

2. A note on defining and measuring culture

The definition of culture determined by the scope of this project is drawn from the DCMS sub-sectors for culture and those outlined by Arts Council England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund and are listed in Appendix 1.

It is worth noting that Arts Council England in their ‘Let’s Create’ Strategy¹ added the caveat that “we use culture to mean all those areas of activity associated with the artforms and organisations that Arts Council England supports”.

However, we know that many people do not feel that these forms of culture, or cultural spaces reflect their own cultural identity – and therefore choose to express their own creativity in alternative ways, and in other spaces and places.

“Culture is a set of values, conventions, and social practices shared by a group of people that is made up ‘nonmaterial culture’ including the language, customs, rituals, values and beliefs that define a society; and ‘material’ culture including all of the society’s physical objects, like entertainment, food, art, music, fashion and celebrations.

Only when we take the time to study nonmaterial culture and truly understand the language, customs, values, beliefs and behaviours of a community of people, then we better understand why they create the art, music, food, entertainment and fashion that they do.”

Ammo Talwar MBE, Punch Records

¹ <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/letscreate>

Measuring people's engagement with 'arts and culture' as thus defined is therefore fraught with challenges for a number of reasons:

- The surveys and tools that have traditionally been commissioned by for example Arts Council England to measure cultural engagement, such as those used in this study, are by definition skewed towards the forms of culture that are funded, or are part of the cultural 'establishment'
- The basis on which cultural engagement is measured does not therefore currently take into account less 'traditional' forms of culture, and in particular cultural activity that does not take place in cultural places and spaces
- Placing a measurement on 'how much' of something a person, community or area does inevitably invites data-led judgements, which results in low, medium and high segmentation of expected and actual participation, resulting in unhelpful labels such as 'hard to reach', 'cold spot' or 'cultural desert'

"Ideas about what counts as arts and culture and cultural participation are evolving. As a sector we do not yet have the scope or scale of research methods to provide more accurate assessments and understandings of total cultural participation."

Jonathan Neelands, Professor of Creative Education, Warwick Business School

For the purposes of this project, therefore, we have tested the efficacy of the current tools to measure engagement with (largely) publicly invested arts and culture and have suggested a 'best fit' estimate until more suitable tools and estimates are developed that more accurately reflect a wider definition of culture.

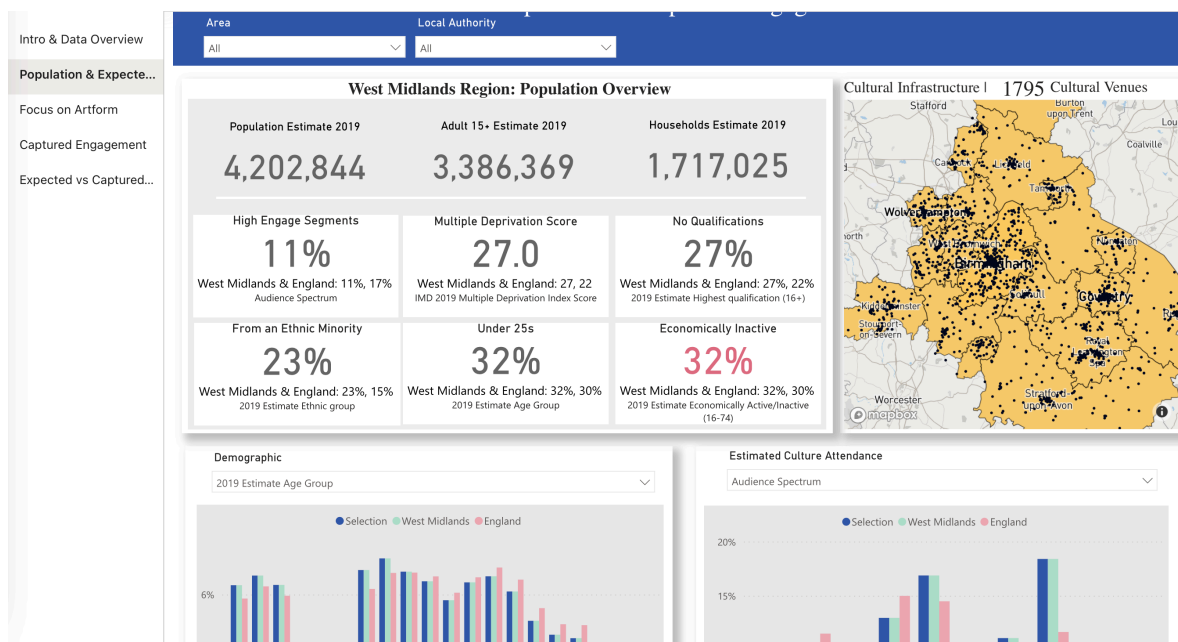
In the audience engagement strategy, we have attempted to re-frame the hierarchical model for areas into a segmentation of audiences based on the types of cultural choices people have available to them, depending on which type of area they live in.

We hope others will build on this work in the future and begin a new and different conversation around how people engage in arts and culture (as defined by themselves), in the areas in which they live, and the impact this has on their lives.

PART ONE: MAPPING CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT

3. The Cultural Place Profiler

As part of this project, working with Baker Richards, Indigo created an interactive **Cultural Place Profiler** for the West Midlands, which allows, for the region as a whole or at a local level, examination of some of the factors that may influence cultural engagement in a place and how they relate to each other.



It shows, for the first time, where areas across the region share similar characteristics and may therefore have similar challenges, as well as the huge disparities and differences from place to place.

It gives the opportunity to compare and interrogate sources of data at a very local level (MSOA)², and hence to understand more clearly how areas are currently accessing culture as defined by this scope – in order ultimately to develop specific cultural activities that are relevant to each locality. We have also incorporated some of the data from the Cultural Infrastructure mapping to observe how provision varies across areas.

The profiler contains the most recent data from 2019 (pre Covid-19) and we recommend that this report is read in conjunction with using the Cultural Place Profiler to explore our findings in further depth, or for a particular area of interest.

The data sources included in the Cultural Place Profiler are illustrated in Appendix 1.

² Middle Layer Super Output Area: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/geography/ukgeographies/censusgeography>

4. Population profile

4.1 How is the West Midlands distinctive?

The areas below highlight the significant differences in the West Midlands when compared with average for England as a whole. These can be summarised as:

- A. Age
- B. Families
- C. Ethnic Group
- D. Social Grade
- E. Level of Education
- F. Economic Activity
- G. Levels of Deprivation

A. Age – a young population

	Area 1: Birmingham	Area 2: WMCA	Area 3: Wider WMCA area	All West Midlands	All England
Age: Under 25s	36%	35%	30%	31%	31%
Age: Over 60s	18%	20%	27%	22%	24%

Table 1: Age – 2019 Population Estimate Experian

Whilst the West Midlands as a whole has the same percentage of under 25s as the average for England, Areas 1 and 2 are significantly higher, with areas of high concentration for 20 - 24 year olds in Coventry, Birmingham and Warwick. (See Cultural Place Profiler³). Correspondingly the region has a lower percentage of over 60s than England, with the lowest percentages in Birmingham, Coventry and Sandwell.

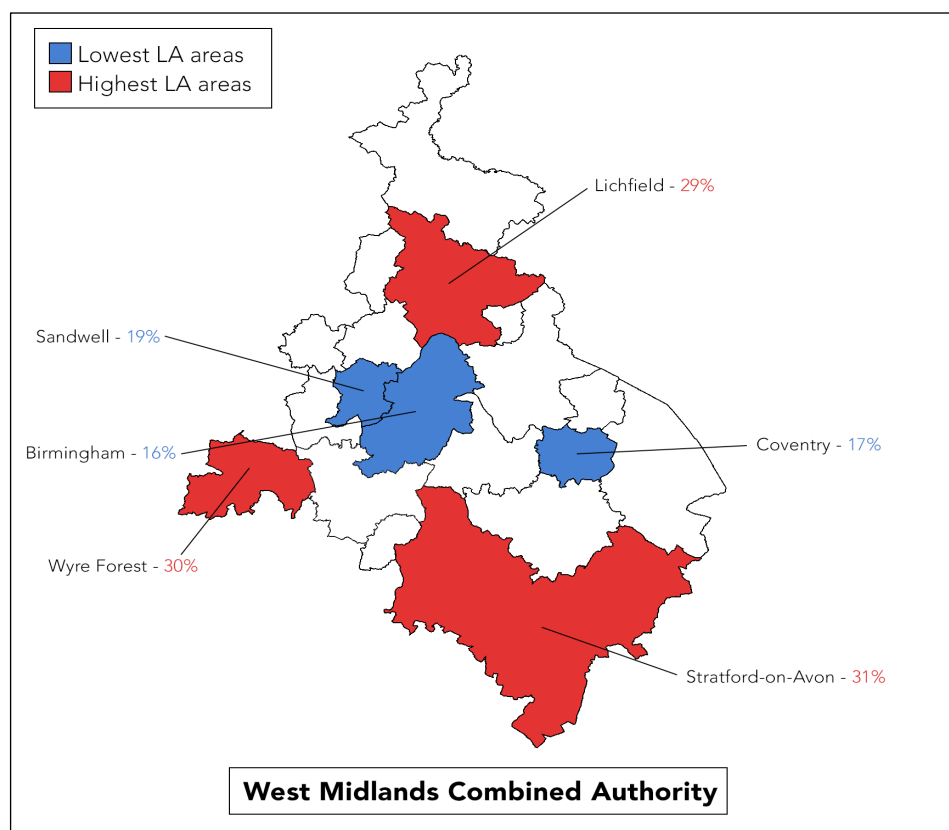


Figure 3: Age – over 60s – 2019 Population Estimate Experian

³ West Midlands Cultural Place Profiler, built as part of this project
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B. Families – higher than average

The region correspondingly has significantly **more families with dependent children**, with Birmingham, Coventry and Sandwell having the highest concentrations, and Wyre Forest, Lichfield, North Warwickshire and Stratford upon Avon the lowest. (See Cultural Place Profiler⁴)

	<i>Area 1: Birmingham</i>	<i>Area 2: WMCA</i>	<i>Area 3: Wider WMCA area</i>	<i>All West Midlands</i>	<i>All England</i>
<i>Dependent children in household</i>	51%	48%	41%	45%	43%

Table 2: Dependent Children – 2019 Population Estimate Experian

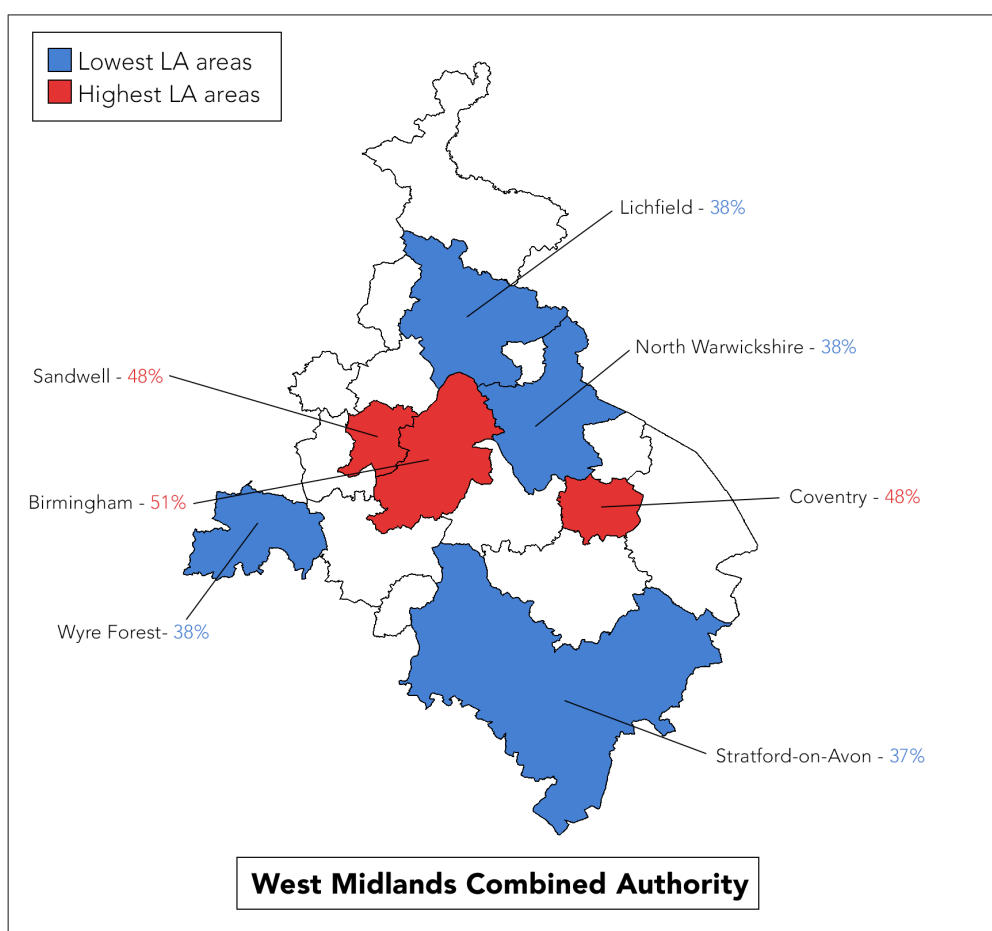


Figure 4: Dependent Children - 2019 Population Estimate Experian

⁴ West Midlands Cultural Place Profiler, built as part of this project
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C. Ethnicity – more ethnically diverse with British Asian/Asian focus

The region has a significantly higher proportion of the population from ethnic minorities than the average for England, with very high concentrations in Birmingham (40%), Wolverhampton (30%) and Sandwell (28%). Area 3 has a significantly lower percentage of ethnic minorities, with North Warwickshire (2%), Tamworth (3%), Lichfield (3%) Stratford upon Avon (3%) and Wyre Forest (3%) having the lowest overall.

	Area 1: Birmingham	Area 2: WMCA	Area 3: Wider WMCA area	All West Midlands	All England
Ethnic minority	42%	30%	6%	23%	15%

Table 3: Ethnic Group – 2019 Population Estimate Experian

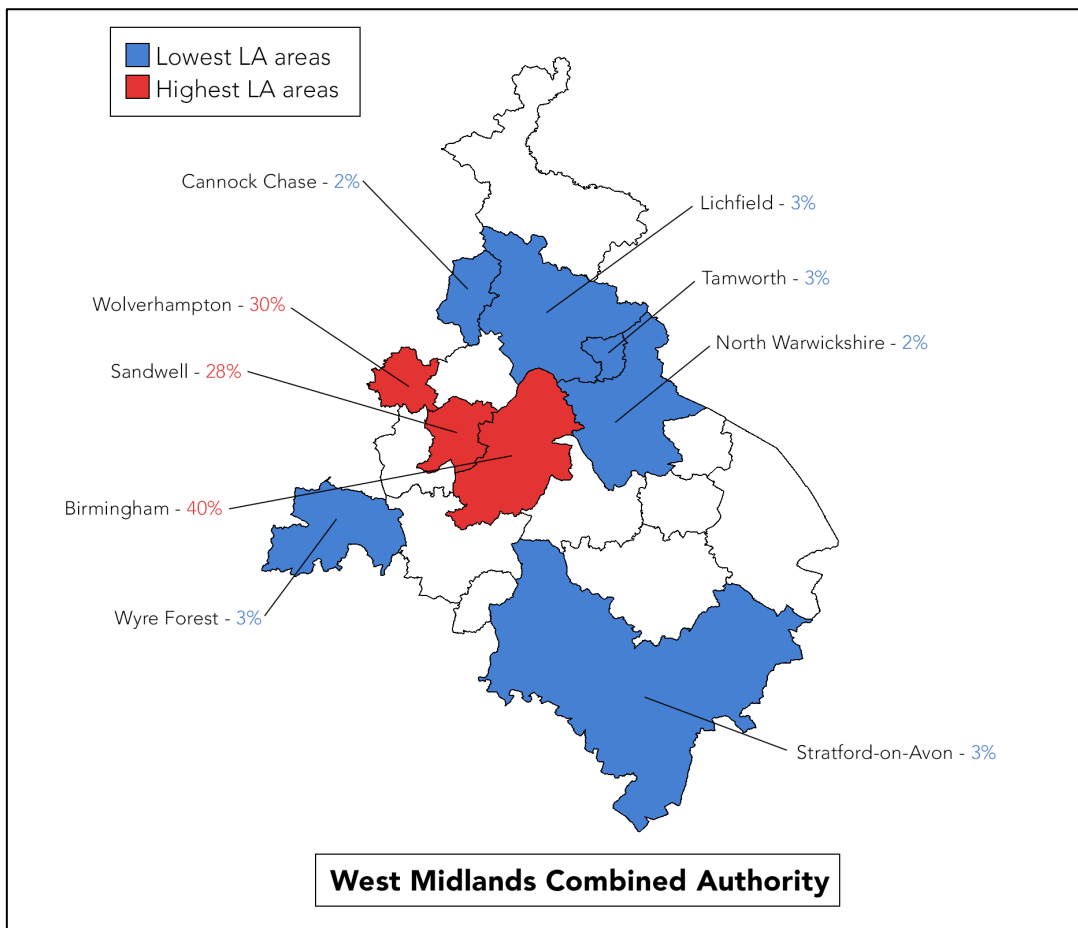


Figure 5: Ethnic minorities - 2019 Population Estimate Experian

The largest minority/migrant groups in the city are British Asian/Asian representing 14% of the region's population overall, with concentrations over 20% in Birmingham and Wolverhampton.

D. Approximated Social grade – lower social grade than average

The region has a higher proportion of DE (semi-skilled, unskilled workers and non-working) people than the average for England, and significantly higher in Sandwell (37%), Wolverhampton (36%) and Birmingham (34%). The areas with the least percentage of DE population are Bromsgrove (16%), Warwick (17%) and Stratford upon Avon (17%).

	Area 1: Birmingham	Area 2: WMCA	Area 3: Wider WMCA area	All West Midlands	All England
AB	18%	17%	24%	19%	23%
C1	30%	29%	29%	29%	31%
C2	18%	21%	22%	22%	21%
DE	34%	32%	24%	30%	25%

Table 4: Social Grade – 2019 Population Estimate Experian

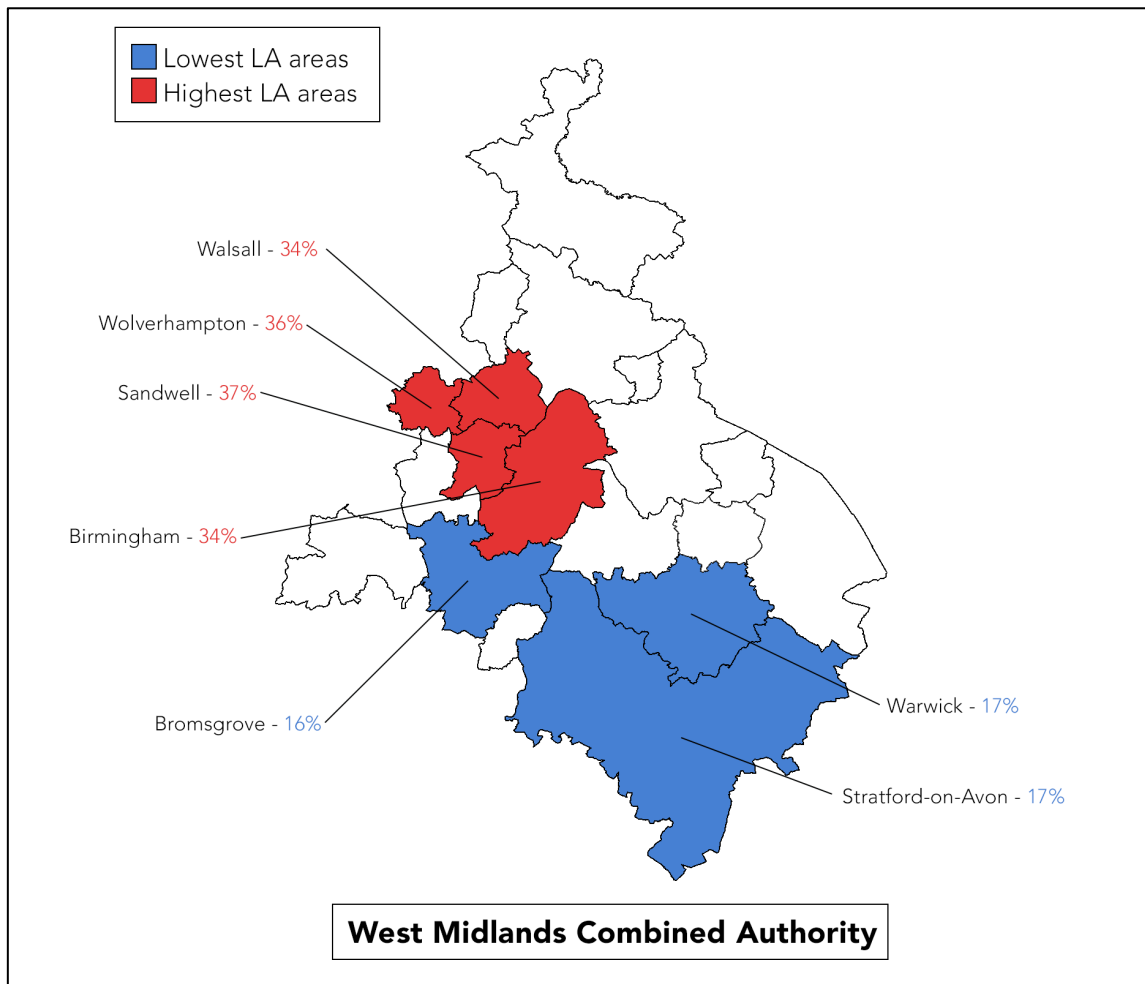


Figure 6: Social Grade – 2019 Population Estimate Experian

E. Level of Education – lower than national average

The percentage of the population with **no qualifications** is higher in the West Midlands than the average for England, with significantly higher than average in Sandwell (35%), Walsall (34%), Wolverhampton (31%) and Dudley (30%); the areas with the lowest percentages are Warwick (16%), Rugby (19%) and Stratford upon Avon (19%).

	<i>Area 1: Birmingham</i>	<i>Area 2: WMCA</i>	<i>Area 3: Wider WMCA area</i>	<i>All West Midlands</i>	<i>All England</i>
<i>No qualifications</i>	28%	29%	23%	27%	22%

Table 5: Education - 2019 Population Estimate Experian

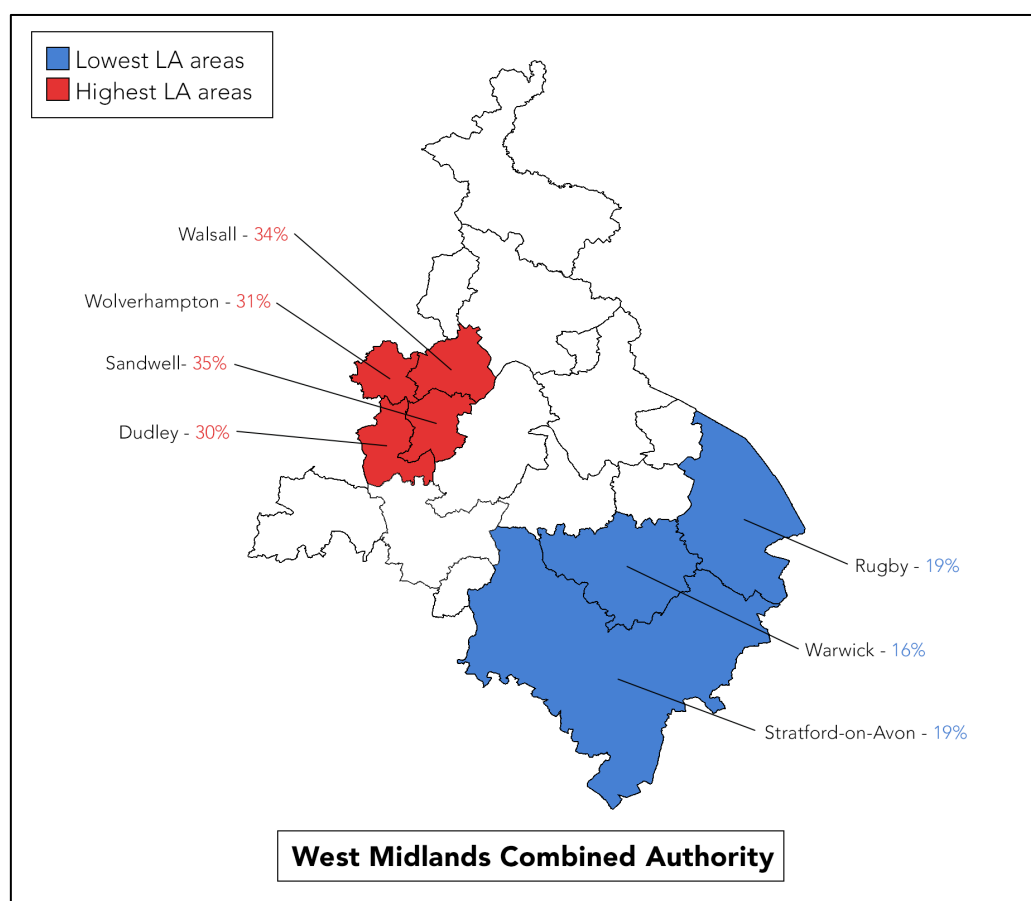


Figure 7: Education - 2019 Population Estimate Experian

F. Economic activity – higher proportion of the population economically inactive

The region has almost one third of the population classed as ‘economically inactive’ which is slightly above the national average. This is made up of Retired (14%), Students (7%), Looking after home or family (5%), Long term sick/disabled (5%) and other (3%).

	<i>Area 1: Birmingham</i>	<i>Area 2: WMCA</i>	<i>Area 3: Wider WMCA area</i>	<i>All West Midlands</i>	<i>All England</i>
<i>Employed or self-employed</i>	52%	56%	65%	58%	62%
<i>Unemployed</i>	7%	7%	4%	6%	4%
<i>Economically inactive (retired, students, carers, disabled/sick)</i>	36%	34%	29%	32%	30%

Table 6: Economic activity - 2019 Population Estimate Experian

G. Deprivation – higher deprivation levels in specific areas

The levels of multiple deprivation have been represented by a Deprivation score⁵, higher score indicates higher levels of deprivation. The West Midlands has a significantly higher score than England, with Birmingham considerably higher at 37.5, compared with 22 for England. The highest deprivation areas are:

- Brandwood in Birmingham with a score of 62 (Area 1)
- Bushbury South in Wolverhampton with a score of 57 (Area 2/WMCA area)
- Foley Park in Wyre Forest with a score of 50 (Area 3/Wider WMCA area)

	<i>Area 1: Birmingham</i>	<i>Area 2: WMCA</i>	<i>Area 3: Wider WMCA area</i>	<i>All West Midlands</i>	<i>All England</i>
<i>Multiple Deprivation Score</i>	37.5	27.6	17.3	27.0	22.0

Table 7: Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019

⁵https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/833947/loD2019_Research_Report.pdf

4.2 What challenges or opportunities does this present for culture?

The demographics of the region present a number of challenges for any cultural programme seeking to meet the needs of the population and to be ‘representative of the demographic of the city and region’.

a) Demographic disparity

There are huge differences in the demographic make-up of different areas of the region – for example Area 3 (Wider WMCA area) diverges from Areas 1 (Birmingham) and 2 (WMCA area) particularly in terms of **age**, **ethnicity** and **economic activity**. However, as we will see in Section 2 of this report, there huge differences in the levels to which people engage in publicly funded culture - and therefore how some areas benefit more or less – which presents an opportunity to address this in a regionally coherent way.

b) Key characteristics of over-represented demographics

The DCMS Taking Part Survey is a household survey in England that measures engagement with the cultural sectors including the Arts and Digital Culture.

It includes some indicators around demographics that are useful to us, when we consider the population and demographic make-up of the West Midlands region:

Engaged with Arts in last 12 months	Arts Attendance
All adults (Aged 16+)	77%
Age:	
16-24	77%
Socio-Economic status	
ABC1	85%
C2DE	67%
Ethnicity	
White	79%
Mixed	89%
Asian	60%
Black	69%
Other	67%

Table 8: Taking Part (DCMS 2015)

Those **with low socio-economic status**, and those of **Asian** or **Black** ethnicity are significantly less likely to have engaged with the arts as defined here in the last 12 months, compared with the English population as a whole (77%). Bearing in mind that the West Midlands has almost 25% of its population from an ethnic minority, (compared with 15% for England), and over one third of the population is in the C2DE bracket, these findings have significant implications for any cultural programme being developed.

This is compounded by COVID, which according to the ‘*Audience Agency’s Covid Cultural Participation Monitor*’⁶ (March 2021) is likely to increase inequality regarding cultural engagement. Their figures indicate that those in **less affluent occupational types**, and those of **Asian or Black ethnicity** have been **more negatively affected financially** by COVID – compounding the problem.

It is, however, encouraging to see that **16-24 year olds** have the same level of cultural engagement as ‘all adults’, so this potentially presents an opportunity, with a young demographic in many areas across the region, especially as the ‘*Insights Alliance Culture Restart*’⁷ research suggests that this is the group most likely to return to cultural events soonest. (32% say they would return within 3 months, compared with 19% of over 65s).

However, the same research also shows that young people are also one of the groups most uncomfortable (36%) with the idea of a **vaccine passport** being required to attend events, along with Asian and Black audiences (40%).

5. What would we ‘expect’ to see in terms of cultural engagement?

There are currently three main sources of data we can use to inform our understanding of ‘expected’ cultural engagement for an area:

- Audience Spectrum (Audience Agency)
- Artform Engagement (TGI Leisure)
- Active Lives (Sport England/Arts Council England)

The limitations of such tools are discussed in Chapter 2 but we should be reminded that we are largely measuring the engagement of individuals with (largely) publicly funded arts and culture, rather than with the totality of creative or cultural activity

5.1 Audience Spectrum – lower engagement in the West Midlands than the national average

Audience Spectrum⁸ is run by the Audience Agency⁹ with funding from Arts Council England.

It segments the whole English population by their attitudes towards the arts, and by what they like to see and do. It is created by using a combination of geo-demographic profiling (MOSAIC) plus additional data from surveys and audience booking patterns for arts organisations.

⁶ <https://www.theaudienceagency.org/bounce-forwards/covid-19-cultural-participation-monitor>, retrieved 24/03/2021

⁷ <https://datastudio.google.com/u/0/reporting/770c2998-785b-4c84-98de-a52f6f163ec2/page/ortsB>

⁸ <https://www.theaudienceagency.org/audience-spectrum>

⁹ <https://www.theaudienceagency.org/>

There are ten different Audience Spectrum profiles that can be used to understand the make-up of a particular area in terms of likely Audience Engagement, and for simplicity we have grouped these into the segments with 'High', 'Partial' and 'Low' engagement levels.

Audience Spectrum profiles the population at household and post-code levels which means that segments for a particular area can be compared with the population in another region or city, as well as for England as a whole.

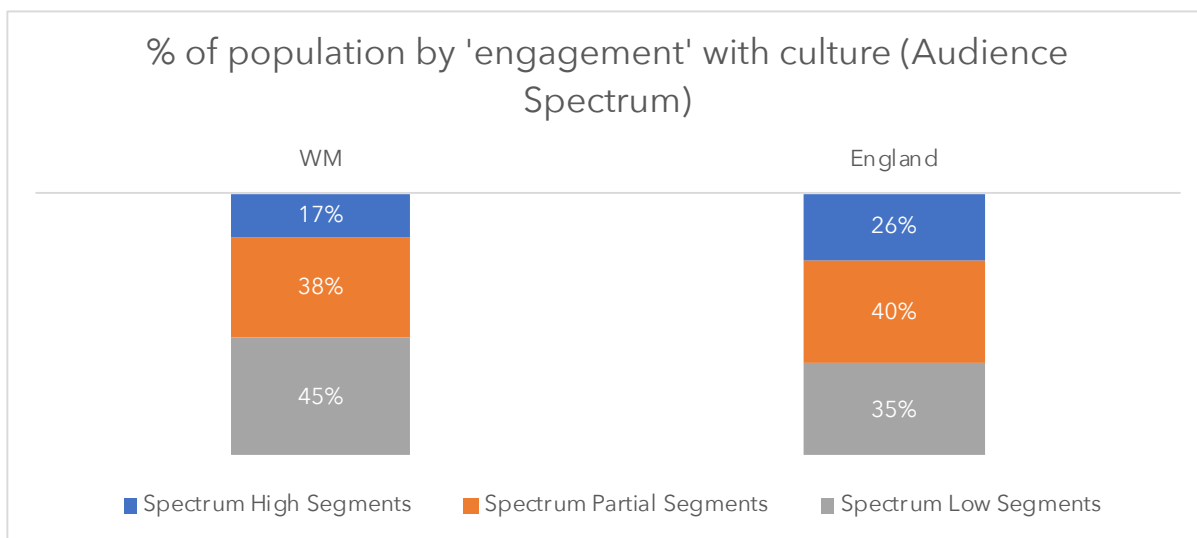


Figure 8: Audience Spectrum (Audience Agency) Feb 2021

The West Midlands has **almost 50%** the population in the 'low engagement' segments, compared with 35% for England as a whole.

Regional differences by area:

Looking at the three areas of the study, Area 1: Birmingham has the lowest cultural engagement, whilst Area 3: Wider WMCA area has higher levels than the national average.

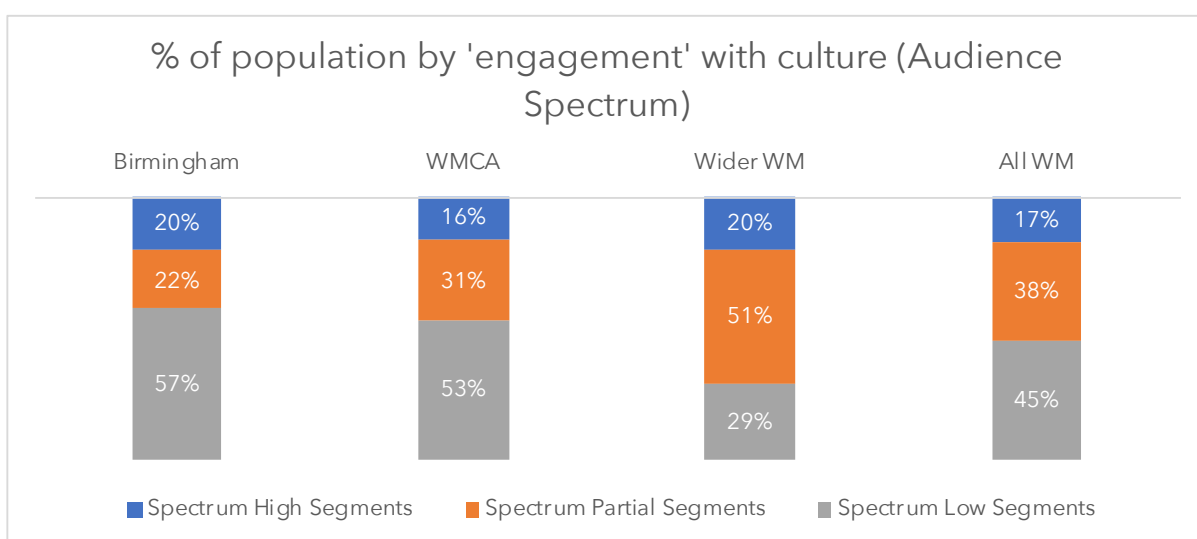


Figure 9: Audience Spectrum (Audience Agency)

There are similarly big differences when looked at by Local Authority, as Figure 10 below, taken from the Cultural Place Profiler, illustrates:

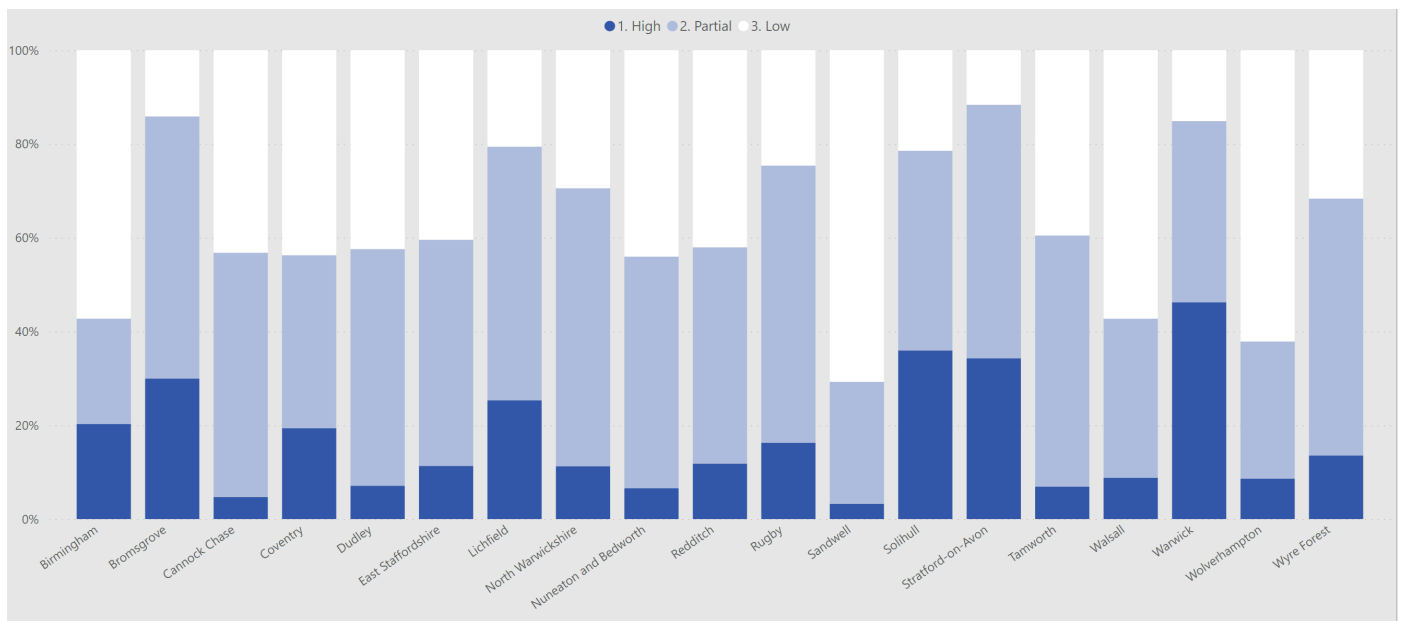


Figure 10: Audience Spectrum engagement level by Local Authority

5.2 Artform Engagement (TGI) – lower engagement in West Midlands than the national average

The Target Group Index is a UK population survey conducted by Kantar Media¹⁰ on a regular basis, covering consumer habits and preferences across a range of goods, services and activities. Questions about cultural consumption have been included in the survey for many years, although as discussed in Chapter 1, this list now appears less comprehensive than we might wish to measure.

Respondents are asked what they have attended or visited in the previous 12 months and the following activities/artforms are included:

Arts:

- Art Galleries
- Art gallery once a month or more
- Ballet
- Classical Concerts
- Comedy shows
- Contemporary Dance
- Jazz concerts
- Opera
- Plays
- Pop/Rock concert
- Any performance in a theatre
- Any performance in a theatre once a month or more

Heritage:

- Museums
- Archaeological sites
- Stately homes/castles

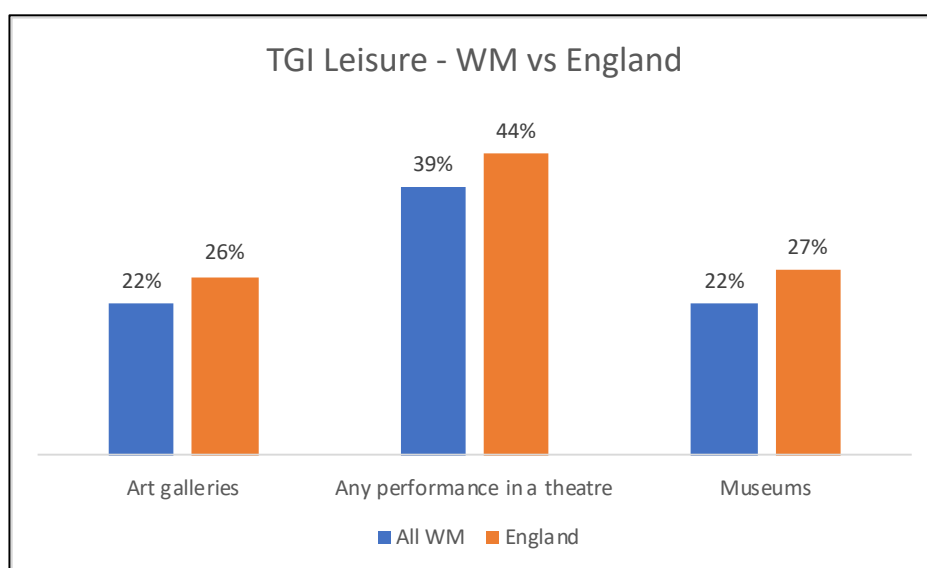
Cinema:

- Ever to go the cinema
- Go every 2-3 months
- Go once a month or more
- Never go to Cinema

¹⁰ <https://www.kantarmedia.com/uk/our-solutions/consumer-and-audience-targeting/tgi-survey-data>
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The survey results are combined with MOSAIC profiling information to give an estimated percentage of the population who engage in culture (by type) for any given area, down to MSOA or postcode level. These figures have been provided to us by The Audience Agency.

If we look at the top-level figures: Visual Arts, Theatre and Museums, the West Midlands (WM) overall is lower than England on all three. This has slight variations across the three geographical areas, as shown in the table below.



	<i>Area 1: Birmingham</i>	<i>Area 2: WMCA</i>	<i>Area 3: Wider WMCA area</i>	<i>All West Midlands</i>	<i>All England</i>
<i>Art galleries</i>	<i>21%</i>	<i>21%</i>	<i>24%</i>	<i>22%</i>	<i>26%</i>
<i>Any performance in a theatre</i>	<i>38%</i>	<i>38%</i>	<i>42%</i>	<i>39%</i>	<i>44%</i>
<i>Museums</i>	<i>24%</i>	<i>21%</i>	<i>22%</i>	<i>22%</i>	<i>27%</i>

Table 10: TGI - Leisure (Adults 15+) – Jan 2021 The Audience Agency

This fits with the picture we saw previously in Audience Spectrum data – that the region seems to have a less culturally engaged population than England overall, with particular regional and local variations, which can be explored more fully in the Cultural Place Profiler.

5.3 Active Lives Survey (2015-2017) – lower overall engagement than the national average

The Active Lives Survey explores participation in leisure and recreational activities, including sport, physical activity and culture. The survey is led by Sport England in partnership with Arts Council England.

The first data release in February 2018 (for surveys between November 2015–May 2017) measured:

- Arts participation (doing creative, artistic, theatrical or music activity or a craft)
- Arts attendance (attending an event, performance or festival involving creative, artistic, dance, theatrical or music activity)
- Museums and gallery attendance
- Use of a public library service

It is possible to compare results by local authority area or region, but not by ward or MSOA, due to the sample sizes.

Participation in culture in the West Midlands was **lower than the national average** for the combined engagement percentages.

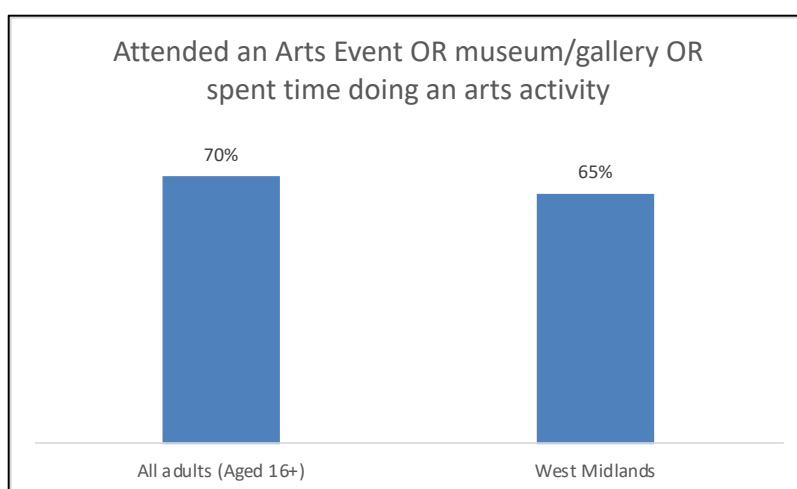


Figure 11: Percentage of people who have taken part in a cultural activity over the last 12 months (Active Lives Survey)

Again, there are differences between the three areas as shown in the graph below, and the table in Appendix 3 shows the differences by local authority area.

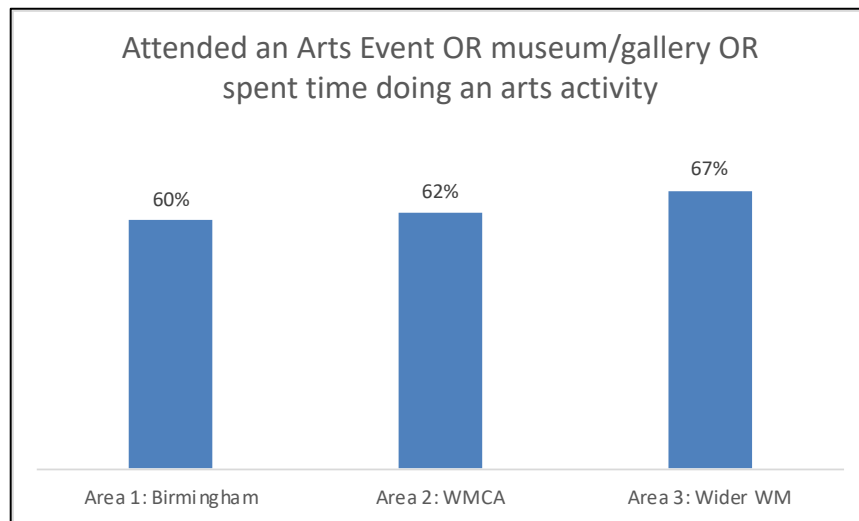


Figure 12: Percentage of people who have taken part in a cultural activity over the last 12 months (Active Lives Survey)

5.4 The challenges of estimating cultural engagement

What has been clear from the analysis we have run on each of these methods of estimating cultural engagement is that none of them is perfect, and some are more consistent predictors of ‘actual’ or ‘captured’ cultural engagement than others.

- **Audience Spectrum** is heavily based upon booker behaviour concentrated on mainstream artforms in established / funded venues, but even so is the least consistent measure when trying to predict patterns of ‘actual attendance’ at such types of events.
- Similarly, **TGI** is a survey which asks people about their attendance at traditional artforms and venues over the last 12 months – but seems to be a more accurate and consistent measure for understanding patterns of this type of cultural engagement.
- Only **Active Lives** takes a broader view of culture, and includes participation in culture, rather than simply attendance – but it is limited in its usefulness for a project such as this as the data set is too small to be used at anything below local authority level.

It is also worth referring back to the definitions of culture as outlined in Chapter 2, as the tools currently available for estimating cultural engagement are largely based on measuring engagement with funded and established culture in cultural buildings – rather than all cultural activity, including participation, outdoor and community activities.

Given that the scope of this project is to measure culture using these available tools, and accepting the limitations of that, **we are proposing to use a ‘best fit’ estimation of cultural engagement using TGI Theatre.**

Whilst this might seem counter-intuitive to everything outlined above, we believe **for now** that it’s the best predictor of cultural engagement across the region. The rationale for using TGI Theatre is outlined in appendix 4.

5.5 Analysis of Areas by Engagement

In order to begin to identify some differences and similarities across the region each MSOA¹¹ has been categorised as having High, Medium or Low Expected Engagement, based on the single metric method identified in the previous chapter, although a slightly different interpretation of this could be to describe them as the areas in which people are benefitting most or least from the type of publicly funded culture we have discussed.

By incorporating cultural infrastructure data into the Cultural Place Profiler, we have also been able to assess at a very top level the extent to which areas have more or less cultural provision.

In Summary, the characteristics common to each type of area are shown in the table below:

MSOAs - Common Characteristics		
<i>High Benefitting areas (High engagement)</i>	<i>Medium Benefitting areas (Medium engagement)</i>	<i>Low Benefitting areas (Low engagement)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ High proportion of Social Grade ABC1s ○ Lower than average proportion of 'no qualifications' ○ Lower than average dependent children ○ Higher levels of cultural infrastructure: 6 venues per MSOA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Half population C2DEs ○ Medium proportion of 'no qualifications' ○ Medium levels of cultural infrastructure: 3 venues per MSOA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ High proportion of Social Grade C2DE ○ Higher than average proportion of 'no qualifications' ○ Higher than average dependent children ○ Lower levels of cultural infrastructure: 2 venues per MSOA

It is interesting to note that the average number of venues¹² per MSOA reduces significantly between each type of area. This undoubtedly warrants further examination, as it begs a number of questions:

- Are the areas with more cultural infrastructure seeing higher levels of engagement **because** there is more provision?
- Do the types of people who live in those areas have more influence and power when it comes to lobbying for local provision in their area, **resulting** in more provision?
- Would **investing** in more cultural infrastructure be likely to enable the people in that area to benefit more from engagement in culture?

Each of the three area types can further be clustered into two 'groups' which largely divide along ethnicity and age lines, as well as a concentration on more urban areas in the second

¹¹ Middle Layer Super Output Area

¹² Supplied by Hatch, We Made That and Tom Fleming Consultancy as part of the wider research and mapping project by the regional stakeholders
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group. This inevitably results in a change of focus in the type of cultural infrastructure found in each area. Again, this suggests that different types of activities may need to be considered in the different area groups.

MSOAs – Further groupings	
<i>Group 1 = Older, white, rural</i>	<i>Group 2 – Younger, mixed, urban</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Predominantly White ○ Older than average ○ More rural areas ○ Less cultural infrastructure than Group 2 areas, focused on village halls, village sports centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More mixed ethnicity ○ Younger than average ○ More urban areas ○ More cultural infrastructure than Group 1 areas, focused on community and faith centres, libraries, arts centres, education settings

More detail on each of these groupings, maps showing their locations, and examples of each type of MSOA are included in Appendix 5, and details of the Cluster Analysis used to create these groupings in Appendix 6.

6. Cultural engagement profile of West Midlands residents

In this section we will explore the evidence we have of **captured** buyer/booker/attendance from West Midlands residents and consider to what extent this fits with the picture we expected to see as outlined in Chapter 5.

By ‘**captured**’ data we mean the postcodes of the ticket buyers at venues and events across the wider West Midlands **by** people who live in the Wider West Midlands area. It does not include tickets purchased by people outside the West Midlands, nor those purchased by residents of the West Midlands for events elsewhere.

There are **three main sources** of this data:

1. **Audience Finder**¹³, operated by the **Audience Agency**¹⁴ with funding from Arts Council England. Funded organisations in England are required to submit their booking and/or attendance data to a data warehouse, where the data is aggregated to form a single source of information on booker behaviour
2. **Data from third parties**, which includes agencies such as the TicketFactory and Ticketsellers
3. **Data directly from cultural organisations**

The 148 organisations from the West Midlands whose data have been used to create the analysis below are listed in Appendix 7.

6.1 How comprehensive is our data?

One of the concerns of the commissioning partners and cultural organisations throughout this process has been over how ‘complete’ a picture of cultural attendance we can assemble.

In order to undertake a comparative analysis with the previous data outlined, it is necessary to have cultural behaviour data for individuals or households with postcodes attached. Usually, therefore, this is only possible from admissions or booker data where someone has given their name and address when booking a ticket, for example. In addition, ‘captured’ attendance only typically includes the primary purchaser and of those only those with a valid postcode

People attending free outdoor events or festivals, or visitors at free-to-enter galleries and museums, would therefore not usually be captured in this way, which makes analysis of

¹³ <https://audiencefinder.org/>

¹⁴ <https://www.theaudienceagency.org/>
Identity | Confidence | Connection

them problematic. (The introduction of booking for free visits during Covid may change this picture in the future of course).

Appendix 2 shows an overview of the decisions made in the transformation of the captured data, and the known limitations.

The questions we need to ask are:

- a) Of the available data, **how much** have we captured, and is it **representative** of the cultural output of the region?
- b) What are the **types** of cultural activity where currently **no data** is captured, and how could we improve on this in the future?
- c) We believe we have managed to identify a very high percentage of cultural attenders who have booked tickets across the region, through their bookings for a range of types of cultural activity at a range of organisations including small music gigs in pubs through to concerts in large arenas.

By including data from all ticketed National Portfolio Organisations of the Arts Council, TicketFactory data (which includes most large scale rock and pop events) and TicketSellers data (which includes a range of events in pubs and less traditional venues) we have data from 148 cultural organisations, including venues and a number of non-venue based organisations such as festivals, touring orchestras and independent producers.

By cross-referencing our list of venues with the cultural infrastructure work done as part of the wider mapping and research, we have identified the organisations who are likely to engage in the sorts of culture that fit our definition, but are not currently included in our picture.

These include the following:

- **Sporting and conference venues**, where attenders' data would often be owned by the promoter, rather than the venue
- **Smaller theatres and arts centres** (including amateur and community-run) which are not National Portfolio Organisations and who manage their ticketing in house.

Despite this, we believe that the size and range of our dataset from NPOs, TicketFactory and TicketSellers will mean that a large proportion of the data of individual bookers that does exist will already be included in our data.

Therefore, whilst we do not believe there are any significant 'gaps' in our captured data, it would be misleading to suggest that this represents the totality of engagement with culture across the West Midlands – it is a comprehensive sample of ticketed activity.

Again, identifying the Cultural Infrastructure venues from whom we have not collected data, around 85% are listed buildings (with no customers or data) or types of infrastructure

that were out of the scope of this project (such as cinemas and libraries). The remaining 15% includes:

- Live music venues: largely nightclubs and pubs who may collect small amounts of data for one-off events, but most likely people pay ‘on the door’
- Community settings, such as churches, community centres, where for the types of events and activities they put on, they are unlikely to be collecting data in a systematic way
- Outdoor event spaces, which are used by festival organisers, and for free events would not typically collect data from attendees
- Museums, galleries, heritage and environmental attractions – who, at least pre-Covid, were unlikely to be capturing attendees’ data.

To collect data from these types of events and activities is much more challenging. However, the need to manage event capacities as a result of Covid may present an opportunity to ‘ticket’ even free events (as is the case at Coventry City of Culture), which would allow for audience data collection over a much wider range of activities than is currently possible.

6.2 Overview of West Midlands attendance

According to all captured booker data for 2019:

- There were **400,000 cultural bookers** (22% of the West Midlands population)
- They bought over **2m tickets** (1.4 tickets per adult head of population)
- They spent almost **£60m on tickets** to cultural events, with an average ticket price of around £28, an annual value per booker of £160, and an average frequency per year of 2.06.

This establishes a baseline set of metrics, from which the West Midlands can measure future engagement and activity.

6.3 Is this the booker data what we would expect to see?

In the Cultural Place Profiler we have created a tab that allows comparison between ‘expected cultural engagement’ as outlined in Chapter 5.4, and ‘captured cultural engagement’ as outlined in Chapter 6.1.

It has allowed us to investigate whether the areas in which we would **expect** to see low engagement, are recording low levels of captured engagement and vice versa – as shown in the table below.

		Captured Engagement		
		Low - 67	Medium - 360	High - 86
Expected Engagement	MSOAs			
	Low - 94	45	48	1
	Medium - 333	21	270	42
	High - 86	1	42	43

Expected Low Engagement Areas

Half of the **expected** low engagement areas were also areas of low **captured** engagement, but the other half are displaying **higher levels** of engagement than we would expect to see.

There are a number of questions the low engagement areas raise:

Q1: Is there a difference in cultural infrastructure and/or opportunity to engage in creative or cultural activity that explains more/less captured engagement?

We have already seen that the MSOAs with lower expected engagement have, on average, less cultural infrastructure than the high expected engagement areas. Can the increase in engagement, where we see it, be correlated with a higher level of infrastructure?

Whilst we have not been in a position to do a comprehensive analysis of this, looking at isolated examples, there is evidence that local provision may be making a significant impact on the levels of captured engagement.

Case Study – East Staffordshire, Burton upon Trent

Three of the MSOAs in East Staffs (004, 005, 006) are showing significantly higher captured attendance than the expected engagement levels would suggest.

East Staffordshire Borough Council has invested in the Brewhouse Arts Centre, which is also responsible for promoting an Easter Festival aimed at Children and Families. The '*Audiences at the Brewhouse 2019 genre and participation*' report on audience data by Heather Maitland showed the following:

- The Brewhouse has a very local catchment (20 mins drive of the venue)
- The areas with highest number of bookers map directly on to the three MSOAs over-represented in our profiler
- Almost 70% of the work presented at the Brewhouse is under the heading 'Made in Burton' – performances of local relevance and by community groups
- Attendances at the Brewhouse totalled 20,000 in 2019, with a further 4,000 attending a family-focused Easter Festival

Conclusion:

By providing appropriate cultural infrastructure, understanding clearly how to engage in a relevant and specific way with local audiences, East Staffordshire have delivered 24,000 local attendances in an area which would otherwise be an area of much lower engagement.

Q2: To what extent is ethnicity or age a factor?

Given that our ‘expected engagement’ areas fell into 2 groups:

- Group 1 – Predominantly white, older, rural
- Group 2 – More mixed communities, younger, urban

It is interesting to look at which of the expected low areas ‘over perform’ on cultural engagement.

Group 1: If we look at the areas of low expected engagement that are ‘Group 1’ areas, of which there are 59, only 11 of these remain in the low ‘captured’ engagement group – with 48 of them showing more engagement than predicted.

Group 2: However, of the ‘Group 2’ areas (35 in total), all but one of them (34) remained in low captured engagement.

Conclusion:

This could suggest that the types of culture currently on offer are less appealing to this more urban, ethnically diverse, younger group of people, or that they are engaging with culture in a way that is not currently captured or recorded, and perhaps this provides an opportunity for the programming and audience development strategy for Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games cultural programme.

Q3: Are there other forms of cultural and creative engagement happening in these areas that are simply not being recorded or ‘seen’ through the current prism of cultural engagement?

Our discussions and consultations would suggest that far from being areas of ‘low engagement’, there is in fact a lot of creative activity happening – often in ‘non cultural’ spaces, such as homes, community and faith settings, or outdoors.

Very little, if any, of this activity would historically have been recorded in the estimated or captured figures as discussed earlier.

Two examples of this are the ‘Roaming Project’ consultation in North Birmingham (2019) and Creative Black Country¹⁵ Creative People & Places Programme

¹⁵ <https://www.creativeblackcountry.co.uk/>

Case Study – The Roaming Project, North Birmingham

The Roaming project was a comprehensive and in-depth consultation by Punch Records in 2019 with communities in North Birmingham. The area includes Aston, Handsworth and Lozells, where most of the MSOAs fall into 'low expected' cultural engagement as defined by the WM Place Profiler, and the captured engagement is less than 10% of the population.

So does this mean that there is little cultural activity or engagement in this area, or that arts and culture features any less in the lives of the people who live there, when compared with higher engagement areas?

The project in fact reveals a population highly engaged in cultural participation, using a range of spaces and places that are familiar to them. The area is home to two of the largest South Asian and Black festivals, including Simmer Down Festival.

Activities

The report found that the range of activities people engaged in were widespread but mostly participatory, for example: dance (hip hop, street dance, bhangra and Bollywood); music (private music tuition, choirs and orchestras); visual arts & crafts (art club, crochet, henna, knitting and painting); and drama (drama club). There was some attendance at events such as the African Weekender and Birchfield Jazz Festival.

Spaces and Places

Responses showed that many diverse venues and spaces are visited regularly across the area. These include sports facilities and wellbeing centres, libraries and community centres, but also informal spaces such as corner shops, barbershops and cafes. The parks and canals in the area are also widely used, and the art trails over the past few years have been popular.

An appetite for culture

Far from being an area with little interest in culture, this is an area where the residents want to see more culture. 63% of respondents rated the arts offer in their area as poor or very poor, and they have a clear idea of what they want to see changed, including:

- A wider range of place-based **workshops** and particularly more dance and drama workshops plus street art, photography and film
- More flexible use of **existing provision** and further investment in the **existing spaces**, rather than the development of new venues
- **Pop-up or temporary structures** which could tour the area

However, it's also clear that the **expectation of formal funding or recognition for such activities in their area is low**, and creative and cultural activity is therefore often citizen-led: the report author can evidence countless examples of citizen-led initiatives such as the 'Daily Mile' in George's Park and 'Mr T' in Lozells, who fills huge disused lorry tyres with floral and plant displays to improve his neighbourhood.

Case Study – Creative Black Country/Creative Communities

Creative Black Country (CBC) is a Creative People and Places project working in Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton, all areas which have considerably lower cultural engagement on all of the measures we have used in this methodology.

Their 'Creative Communities' project aims to 'enable more people to have creative experiences in their community'. CBC work with members of the community and independent arts advisors to co-design activity that their community want to experience, which has included film screenings, street festivals and community choirs – again all taking place in 'non-cultural' spaces, and happening within the locality.

In 2016 'Desi pubs' gained national recognition for telling stories about Asian landlords and their pubs. Commissioned artworks including handcrafted pub signs have now become favourite local landmarks.

Conclusion:

A similar picture emerges – of areas who want creative and cultural experiences – but want them to have meaning and relevance to their lives, and which happen in familiar spaces to them.

Expected High Engagement Areas

There are a number of areas (43 in total) where we would expect to see **high** levels of cultural engagement but our 'captured' data shows **medium or low** levels. This list is detailed in Appendix 6. They include areas such as Myton & Heathcote in Warwick, Belbroughton in Bromsgrove, Kinwarton in Stratford upon Avon and Whittington and Steethay in Lichfield.

The questions this raises for us are:

Q4: Is this because these people are attending or participating in cultural activity outside the West Midlands?

For the majority of these areas, this may well be the case. For most of the MSOAs in area 3, our analysis would suggest that they **are culturally active**, and attending outside the West Midlands area. Where we have available data it suggests that up to 64% of their tickets are being bought for venues and events outside the West Midlands area. This is particularly the case in Stratford upon Avon, Lichfield and Bromsgrove.

Conclusion:

These areas therefore need to be key targets for using the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games cultural programme to draw the cultural 'centre of gravity' for these interested audiences back to the West Midlands, rather than elsewhere.

Q5: Is there a lack of opportunity to attend in the immediate area, due to lack of cultural infrastructure?

Given that the average number of venues per MSOA for these areas is 8, compared with a regional average of 3.5, this is unlikely, and we think it is more likely to be explained by people attending outside the region.

Conclusion:

This presents a challenge and an opportunity for Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games cultural programme and beyond – on how to reposition the West Midlands in the minds of active cultural attenders as a natural choice for high quality cultural experiences.

7. Summary of Part 1 findings

7.1 The tools of measurement

The established tools across England (TGI Leisure, Audience Finder, Audience Spectrum) for estimating and measuring cultural engagement provide a consistent picture for the West Midlands

- That cultural engagement is **lower than average** in much of the region
- It **correlates strongly** with low **educational achievement** levels and **socio-economic** profile

However, all these systems for estimating and measuring cultural engagement are based largely upon:

- Funded cultural work in **'established'** cultural venues or organisations
- Evidenced **paid-for attendance** (usually ticket purchase)
- Art form definitions heavily skewed towards **mainstream and traditional work**

Much less data, if any is captured about:

- **Free** experiences
- **Outdoor, immersive or participatory** arts
- Activity in **non-cultural venues** or spaces
- **Volunteering**

These contradictory findings perhaps suggest that an **alternative way of measuring** – and then estimating - cultural engagement, widening the scope of activities and settings, needs to be developed and explored for the West Midlands, and similar places where a new narrative around citizens' creativity and cultural involvement is emerging

7.2 Key opportunities for increasing cultural engagement in the West Midlands

Through conducting thorough data analysis and creating an interactive Cultural Place Profiler for the West Midlands region, we have created the tools to enable much more evidence-based decision making. Our work so far has identified **a number of opportunities**, and further interrogation using the profiler, testing assumptions around audiences or areas can be built upon as the cultural programme is developed. These include:

- **Reconnecting** audiences with Culture post-Covid, **by targeting** the areas of expected high engagement with a clear and compelling cultural offer and reassuring messages about safety
- **Positioning** the region as a **cultural powerhouse** to attract cultural attenders on the edges of the region who would typically look to London or other cities, to look inside the region first
- Taking the opportunity that a **young and diverse population** can offer in terms of co-creating new experiences to appeal to a large segment of the region, currently not captured or engaged in sufficient numbers.

PART TWO: AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

8. Purpose and vision

This Audience Development Strategy intends to support audience planning, commissioning, and delivery for the 6-month cultural festival – that takes place alongside the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

But it is also the first step in defining a region-wide approach that is expected to continue well after the Games have finished. It is informed by the key findings from the cultural mapping in part 1, and consultations and discussions with a cross section of cultural leaders and practitioners, conducted by Mel Larsen and Pam Jarvis.

Vision for Audience Development – where do we want to be by 2023?

The Festival programme has successfully brought the region together to celebrate its culture and diversity. Audiences from all backgrounds genuinely feel respected, valued, and included: they've seized the opportunity to engage and to try out a cultural activity for the first-time.

The cultural sector has collaborated to maximise the opportunity for Covid recovery and is ready to build on the assets gained through the Festival, eager to deliver a lasting legacy where cultural growth is demonstrably supported and valued by audiences, providers and funders alike.

This strategy document is about how the West Midlands uses the opportunity of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games cultural programme to make an ambitious response to the needs of its residents in a post-Covid world.

9. Audience types and groups in the West Midlands

As outlined in the Part 1 report we have identified three types of **areas**, based on their estimated and captured engagement with culture.

However, when translating this into talking about **audiences** we want to take an inclusive approach, and to move away from a hierarchical deficit model of cultural engagement.

For example, it follows that an area showing **low** levels of engagement with publicly funded culture, means that these are the areas that have benefitted the **least** from that public investment; and have the most **limited choices** when it comes to arts and culture, through both lack of provision locally, but also through other socio-economic factors which are much more likely to limit their life choices more generally.



Informed by the conversations and workshops with practitioners in the sector throughout this project, we have re-framed our view of and ambitions around audience engagement through a lens of ‘**choice**’: the choice people and communities **have** and the choices they **make**. We want everyone in the West Midlands to have choice and we want them to value and actively **choose** creativity as an essential part of their lives.

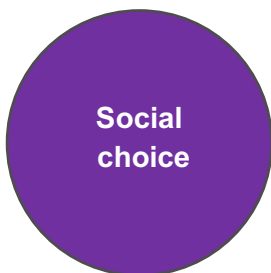
By identifying and acknowledging specific issues around access to and the availability of choice in relation to arts and culture for different audience groups, we have created a framework for audience development that, used in conjunction with the Cultural Place Profiler will inform programming and communications decisions.

Our three audience ‘types’ have been grouped as those who have **limited** choice, those whose choices are largely influenced by their **social** and family priorities, and those who enjoy **unlimited** choice:

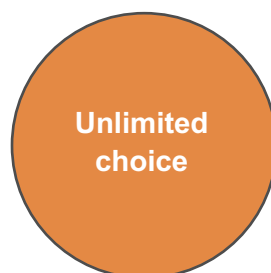
Audience types



People in these groups live in areas which have benefitted the least from the overall public investment in culture. They have less access to culture and greater limits on the number and types of cultural activity they can engage with. This does not mean that they value creativity any less but that their access is often limited by a wide range of factors, including transport, location and cost, as well as issues of identity, relevance and feeling safe and welcome. They are likely to have been severely financially affected by Covid.



The cultural engagement by these people is often influenced by their social and family priorities and informed by community, family, faith and social group contacts. These groups engage with arts and culture in theatres, galleries, and concert halls as well as in community spaces and informal locations such as cafes and bars.



These people have traditionally had the most access to culture. They attend a range of large and smaller-scale arts events in the West Midlands, as well as further afield, particularly in London. Their cultural choices tend to be based on personal interests and their perceptions of quality. They are the least likely group to have been financially affected by Covid.

The characteristics of these audience types are summarised in the table below – but we have also identified two distinct ‘clusters’ within each type – one which clusters around an older, predominantly white demographic, living in more rural or suburban areas (around 72% of the region); and another which is younger, more diverse and largely in urban areas (28%).

Group 1 (all types)	Group 2 (all types)
Predominantly white, slightly older than average, living in (less urban) areas of lower deprivation.	Younger than average, multiple heritages/races, living in city-based areas of higher deprivation than group 1.
Limited Choice	
70% population C2DEs Medium proportion of ‘no qualifications’ Higher proportion of dependent children	
Social Choice	
Half population C2DEs Medium proportion of ‘no qualifications’	
Unlimited choice	
High proportion of Social Grade ABC1s Lower than average proportion of ‘no qualifications’ Lower than average dependent children	

These six groups represent the following percentages of the total areas (MSOA¹⁶s) in the West Midlands:

Audience Type	Group	% WM MSOAs	Number	Example areas
Limited Choice	1	12%	59	<i>Tyburn, Shard End, Chelmsley Wood, Bloxwich West, Foley Park</i>
	2	7%	35	<i>Birmingham Springfield, Washwood Heath, Palfrey, Sandwell/St Paul’s, Coventry/Foleshill, Soho & Victoria</i>
Social Choice	1	47%	244	<i>Longbridge, Bourneville, Dudley/Gornal, Castle Bromwich, Franche & Habberley North, Belgrave</i>
	2	17%	89	<i>Handsworth Wood, Blakenhall, Coventry/St Michael’s, Lodge Park, Anglesey</i>
Unlimited Choice	1	13%	68	<i>Sutton Four Oaks, Meriden, Streetly, Lichfield/Highfield</i>
	2	4%	18	<i>Hall Green, Moseley/Kings Heath, Walsall/Paddock, Coventry/Wainbody</i>

¹⁶ Middle Layer Super Output Area - the geographic area that is being used for measurement and planning for this project

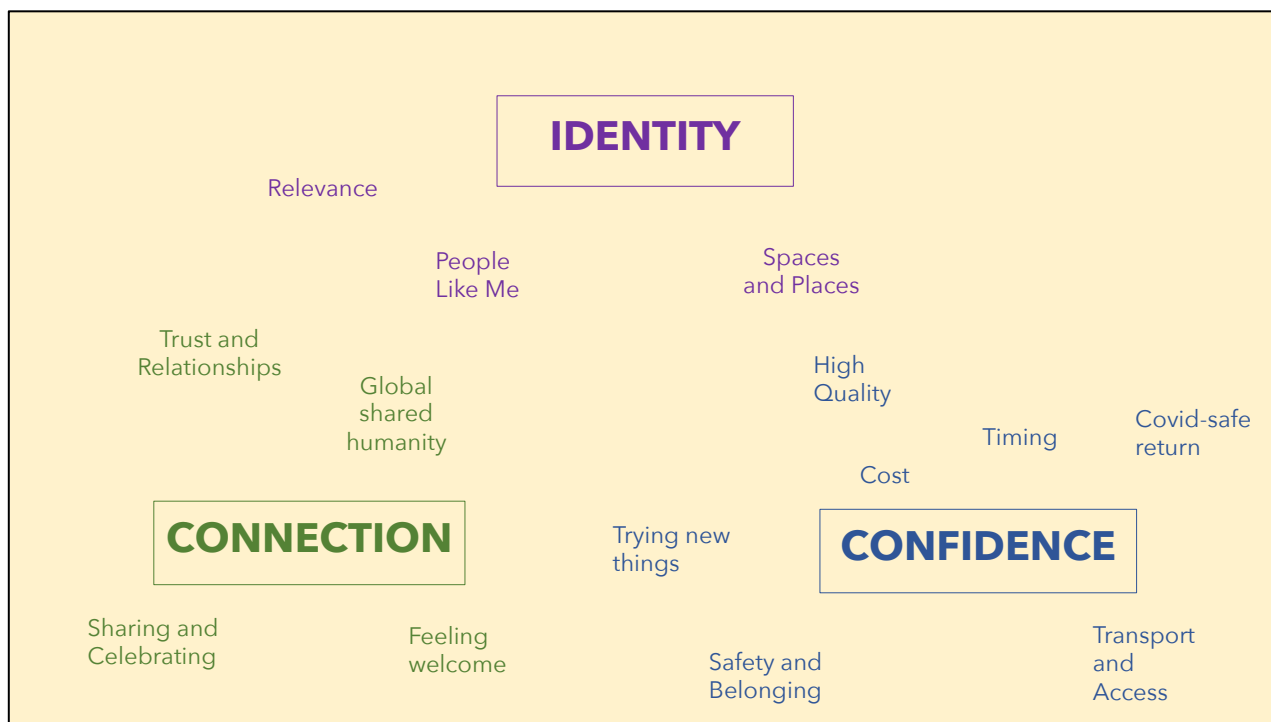
10. Identity – Confidence – Connection

We are suggesting a model that can be used to develop a coherent set of plans and actions to support the region and its people having more choices around arts and culture. It will underpin an approach not only for the Cultural programme of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, but to audience engagement across the region in the future.

This strategy is about people’s relationships with arts and culture focusing on three key elements: Identity, Confidence and Connection:

- **Identity** – for every person so see themselves reflected in the programme; to celebrate the identity of the West Midlands as a place through its creative offer
- **Confidence** – to be a beacon of hope, and re-build confidence in returning to arts events and activities post-Covid for previous cultural attendees; and for others to have the confidence to be brave and try something new in a special year, full of special events; for the West Midlands to showcase its creative confidence on a world stage
- **Connection** – for people to re-connect with culture; with each other after the trauma of Covid; with their own culture and that of others; with our shared humanity across the world

The model aims to help the region, the country and the world to choose culture in the West Midlands. It contains **three key elements** with a number of sub-elements. These elements have been identified through a series of workshops and conversations with key arts and community organisations in the West Midlands.



These **elements** and **sub elements** are:

Identity – For people to identify with culture, they need to find relevance in it, see ‘people like them’ represented in the audience and the artists, and encounter the work in spaces and places in which they feel at home and comfortable. For many people in the less engaged areas this will not be traditional cultural venues, but places either more local or more accessible to them – open spaces, cafes, bars, community centres, sports clubs and village halls.


Confidence – at a very basic level, people need to have confidence that they will feel safe post-Covid, but their confidence also includes elements such as cost, transport and access, as well as the confidence to try new things.

Connection – includes being made to feel welcome and able to share and celebrate experiences with others, and forge new understandings of our shared humanity, whether with our local neighbour, or for Birmingham 2022, another member of the Commonwealth across the world.

The following pages outline how these three themes of Identity, Confidence and Connection can be fashioned for each of the target audiences and the needs they share; and suggest the focus of **communications** and **programming** choices for each group.

11. Focus for each audience type

11.1 IDENTITY



Limited choice

- Familiar Spaces and Places
- 'People like me'
- Appropriate and relevant images and language

These audience groups are potentially the most disconnected from how 'relevant' culture and creativity can be to them. The points of connection for them are limited, and so cultural programmes will need to happen in **spaces and places** they already feel comfortable, and where they can see '**people like me**'.

Do the creative choices on offer feel appropriate and welcoming, with a strong sense that you'll be part of a friendly and familiar community? Images and language play a big part here – for some audiences the messages they receive about creative choices are alienating and they do not see themselves represented.

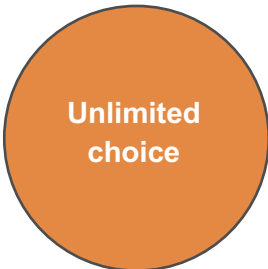


Social choice

- Events with wide appeal across a family/social group
- Strong West Midlands identity
- An inclusive welcome in cultural organisations

These groups are already engaging with events, theatres, visual arts venues and music venues in the area, but this tends to be for high profile or known artists. The key to creating relevance for these groups will be through events that **appeal to the whole family** or wider social groups; and that have a **strong West Midlands identity or connection**.

Creative organisations need to ensure they are **welcoming and accessible** to everyone. (Includes images and copy).



Unlimited choice

- Signature Cultural events
- New and ground-breaking artistic projects

The opportunity with this audience type is to re-position the West Midlands as the primary source of the **high-quality culture** they find most relevant to them. There is some evidence that this group is likely to travel to London for high profile theatre and visual arts, particularly new work or original productions, and so events unique to the West Midlands, **new or ground-breaking work** should be of ultimate appeal.

11.2 CONFIDENCE

Re-building or creating confidence with communities or attenders post-Covid is fundamental to the success of any cultural programme. Whilst feeling safe will be a fundamental for all, building or restoring confidence to engage with culture will mean different things for different audiences.

Limited choice

- Transport, access and cost
- Reminding them why arts, culture and creativity is important to them

These are the groups financially most affected by Covid: **location** and **access** already have significant impacts on the creative choices available to this group, with limited access to activities outside their immediate communities for a range of social and economic reasons – and that is likely to be compounded by Covid. The **cost** of events themselves is also an issue; tickets need to be priced appropriately or on a Pay What You Decide offer

This group may have the least access to creative opportunities but it's important not to assume that this means they value creativity and culture any less, or that it doesn't play **an important part in their lives**. Helping to remind them of this will build confidence.

Social choice

- Make time to try something new
- Don't miss the opportunity (FOMO)

This group has access to a wide range of venues and locations across the region but will have multiple competing priorities in terms of **time** with their social and family groups. There are some issues around price with this group, but some are relatively affluent and willing to pay higher ticket prices for events that are seen as high quality and good value. Known and familiar names are important as indicators of value and this has an impact on the prices audiences are willing to pay – so persuading them to try something **unfamiliar** will need to play on their desire not to 'miss out' on important cultural events. Encouraging them to **seize the moment** will be an important message.

Unlimited choice

- Artistic quality
- National and International recognition for the West Midlands


Cost is less of an issue for this group; they are relatively affluent and likely to prioritise creative activity as part of their leisure spending. These audiences are familiar with conventional timings and spaces so may be more reluctant to divert to different locations and types of activity – although their behaviour during Covid, in switching to outdoor events and digital¹⁷ would suggest that this will not be a problem.

Motivated by value for money and put perceived artistic quality high on their list as an indicator of this. They are less likely to be influenced by immediate family and community and more by artistic leaders, opinion leaders, reviews etc. and so seeing the **West Midlands being nationally & internationally recognised** for artistic quality will be paramount to them.

¹⁷ Indigo: After the Interval / Act 2 research. www.indigo-ltd.com

11.3 CONNECTION

Trust and relationships, sharing and celebrating, feeling welcome, global shared humanity



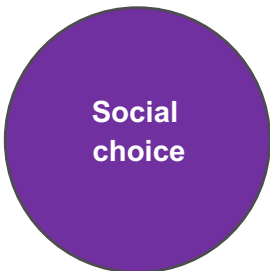
Limited choice

- **Community-focused**, celebrating communities, **global** connections

The least affluent of the groups, with less access to cultural choices, this group needs a long-term vision for high-quality, sustained arts and cultural activity, starting in community settings. Building trust and relationships with community leaders is vital.

Where cultural activity takes place in communities it should be shared and celebrated more widely, via PR and media in order to raise the profile and confidence of doing this work. This will need handling sensitively, of course.

Similarly, where the programme offers opportunities to make connections with other communities across the globe through culture, these could be very powerful.



Social choice

- **Socially focused** events that bring communities together
- Everyone's **welcome**
- Large-scale 'sharing' events that **celebrate diversity**

These groups are heavily motivated to enjoy cultural events together as a **social and family experience**, so a natural extension is to encourage themselves to see their engagement as being part of a global event where **everyone is included** and invited.

Again, finding existing connections through which to encourage interaction with other types of work, cultures or artforms will be important.



Unlimited choice

- Use **relationships with traditional arts organisations** as gateways to develop links with new communities or artforms

This group is confident at accessing a broad range of creative choices. However, we need to develop opportunities for more links between communities, better understanding between cultures and greater confidence in experiencing creative work in different settings. Perhaps the existing relationships they already have with traditional arts organisations could be used as 'gateways' to other communities.

A table summarising the key strategies for each audience type can be found in Appendix 9.

12. Recommendations for Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games cultural programme

12.1 Use the audience development framework and Cultural Place Profiler

This framework needs 'road testing' and we recommend that the Cultural programme team begin using the framework and profiler in the following ways:

- to create marketing and audience development plans for approved projects
- to create examples and case studies from implementation of the framework on 'live' projects to demonstrate to the sector and embed the approach
- to underpin decisions or application processes for deciding on future projects – such as the Creative Communities grants programme
- to inform the monitoring and evaluation work for the cultural programme
- to use the profiler and framework to identify and maximise opportunities to animate towns and high streets animation post-Covid – particularly in areas of historically 'low' engagement
- to shine the media spotlight as equally on 'everyday culture' as on high profile events – to show the diversity of creativity across the region and represent all types of areas.

12.2 Ticketing and data capture

One of the main issues in understanding how people participate in a much broader range of arts and cultural activities is around **data capture**. How do we obtain the postcode data from those engaging in free and outdoor festivals, heritage sites and community activities, so that we can include these in our 'captured' engagement figures in the future?

Covid has resulted in many areas and events now needing pre-booking, where previously they may have been free entry or walk-up. Does this present **an opportunity** for the cultural programme – to ticket many of the events (even free) and thus capture meaningful data on attenders?

This will need to be considered alongside issues around access to technology, and the extent to which a ticketing process may exclude certain groups.

In addition to specific recommendations for the cultural programme, we think there is the opportunity for some **sector-wide initiatives** that are focused around the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, but address some of the wider sectoral issues. We have suggested two examples – but these will need further consultation with sector leaders during the dissemination of this work and the conversations that follow.

12.3 An inclusive welcome programme

A **training and development programme** to equip all cultural venues to be open, welcoming and inclusive in readiness for the influx of visitors should be developed.

A consistent **set of standards** for all participating venues could award them with a ‘Games Ready’ accreditation (or similar) and range from safety (particularly around Covid measures), to customer facing staff, as well as with marketing and communications teams reviewing images and copy, and the website experience, in order to be inclusive to all.

12.4 A ‘Creative Partners’ scheme

We have identified that one of the biggest challenges for some of the more established cultural institutions is around their **confidence to tackle issues of diversity and inclusion**, not least with their audience members.

At the same time there are cultural organisations in the region who have relationships with particular audiences or communities but may find it challenging to reach a wider audience or shine a spotlight on their activities in the media.

Audiences trust the cultural organisations they have relationships with, and so using those relationships to **‘introduce’ another cultural organisation** or their work could be very powerful. A scheme to partner two contrasting cultural organisations with each other for at least the life of the cultural programme, with an endorsement from the Games, could provide the opportunity to:

- **Showcase** each other’s work to each other’s audiences in a planned and sustained way – perhaps even performing in each other’s spaces and to each other’s audiences
- **Exchange** artistic or marketing staff to learn more about audiences, explore how work is created, potentially resulting in artistic collaboration
- **Perform** in each other’s spaces to each other’s audiences
- **Work together** on improving **data capture** and/or providing ticketing or data gathering resources to support this.

For a programme like this to work it **would need support from creative facilitators** to foster collaboration and ensure that each organisation is encouraged to step outside their ‘usual’ way of working and mutually benefit from the partnership.

13. Recommendations towards a 10-year cultural strategy

How can we use the dissemination of this work to underpin an approach towards a 10-year Cultural Strategy for the West Midlands?

13.1 Eliciting a clear response from the sector to the strategic issues identified in this report

We believe that there are a number of key issues identified by our work with which the sector needs to engage, and come to a shared position on, in order to start the process of creating a shared 10-year cultural strategy.

We have framed these issues as **'provocations' or 'challenges'** for the sector to engage with and respond to, alongside the issues emerging from the economic and infrastructure mapping work commissioned by the research partners. We have outlined these in Chapter 14.

Our recommendation is that a launch of this report followed by a **process of engagement** with representatives from senior and artistic leadership, strategic partners, 'thought-leaders' and academics should take place. It should be **future-focused** and positioned as a 'starting point' for conversations around the future of the cultural sector in the West Midlands, building on the provocations from this work and the other parts of the overall research and mapping project. This could take the form of an online launch and roundtables to bring the sector together on a series of shared priorities for the region.

From this, a sector response should be created as the starting point for a more detailed action plan to develop a 'Theory of Change' model including key outcomes for the 10-year cultural strategy.

13.2 Creating a data infrastructure and culture

The West Midlands Place Profiler created for this project can now be used effectively to match community/audience needs with relevant creative opportunities as outlined in Chapter 11, and our aim is to provide a version which is widely accessible to the sector from Summer 2021.

In addition, the tools being developed by the West Midlands Growth Company to support visitors and tourism during 2022 will have a strong data component.

This data needs to be **understood, disseminated and used**, not only by the 'usual suspects' – marketers and audience development specialists – but by artistic and programming leads as well

13.3 Forming a cultural research group

This group (including public sector organisations, audience analysts, cultural organisations and researchers) should 'own' the Cultural Place profiler and support its use, implementation and development within organisations.

This group would look specifically at **how the data can be used 'now'** to better understand the changes within the region and the development of organisations' approaches to understanding and capturing this data.

This group will have a deep understanding of the research and tool and will look at how other data can usefully be combined and explored alongside existing data to better support and make the case for how the cultural sector meets the needs of people and places across the region.

13.4 Updating the Cultural Place Profiler

This should be updated **annually**, with new sources of data. This may include simply repeating and updating the existing sources, or indeed incorporating new ones. The research working group should create the specification for this work, which, based on using a similar methodology to the current profiler we would estimate around £20,000 per year for this (not including any costs incurred for access to the data).

13.5 Conducting a population survey of the West Midlands

This should be considered to capture more meaningful data on the type of cultural and creative engagement happening in the West Midlands. Ideally, this would be an annual survey, representative of the whole West Midlands population, and modelled to MSOA level. Should this be possible, this data could then be incorporated in the place profiler as a more reliable and accurate measure of our own population's engagement with arts and culture potentially replacing the 'best fit' measure we currently have. There are various options for how to do this, ranging from:

- Agreed and standardized question(s) around cultural engagement in each local authority's **annual residents' survey** (assuming they have one)
- An **annual household survey** on a range of issues, including arts and culture, but perhaps also including engagement with sport and leisure activity as well as health and wellbeing. Local authorities could agree a 'core' set of questions common to all, but then have specific questions around their own leisure or cultural offers
- A **telephone survey** to a representative sample of the population in the West Midlands, specifically to understand cultural engagement

Costs for such a survey would be dependent on a number of factors:

- **Method** of surveying – telephone would be the most expensive, whilst including something in mailings already being sent to council residents would be the cheapest
- **Level of granularity** – ensuring data is robust at MSOA level would require a larger sample than for reporting at Local Authority or Ward level
- **Access to respondents** – for example, telephone surveying is dependent on having enough people with landlines who would take part in each of the MSOAs. If there would be a need to 'buy' access to telephone numbers this would be more expensive.

Costs per Local Authority would be somewhere in between £10,000 and £40,000, depending on the above.

14. Our challenges to the sector

Finally, we have identified four challenges and/or provocations to the sector, for them to respond to, through the dissemination of this work and we look forward to continuing the conversation.

14.1 Reframing definitions and measurement of culture and creativity

As we outlined in Part 1 of this project (Chapter 4), the picture the current narrative paints is of a region with low cultural engagement. However, our data analysis and discussions suggest that the reality is likely very different, particularly in terms of ‘everyday creativity’ and culture. The examples we have uncovered, where engagement is higher than expected, are not delivering traditional forms of cultural experiences in established cultural spaces.

How do we **re-frame our definitions** to reflect people’s experiences of culture in a wider sense and to ensure an inclusive approach? How do we **measure engagement** with this wider remit?

14.2 Disparate communities

The data highlights that there are shared differences between those who engage in traditional forms of culture at different levels, which strongly correlate with socio economic status and levels of education.

Their needs are similar in many ways. However, there are also very clear differences between these communities across the whole region (an older/white/rural versus a younger/diverse/urban) which organisations have the opportunity to consider:

- To what extent do their **social tastes, values and norms differ**?
- Is there **dissent/distrust** between these groups?
- What is the **bridging or discursive** role that organisations could have?
- Are cultural organisations **reflecting the full breadth of these communities**, at all levels?

14.3 Re-centering and re-valuing the region

Our analysis clearly suggests that there are significant proportions of people, particularly on the edges of the region, who are highly culturally engaged, but don’t see Birmingham and the West Midlands as a valued cultural destination of choice – many travel elsewhere (presumably to London) for high quality cultural events. The opportunity to re-position the region as a cultural capital is important, not only for this group of West Midlands residents, but for tourism possibilities as well.

How can the region **be seen in this way** and how is this reflected in the ‘cultural capital’ of the region and its audiences?

How can the collaborative and responsive ways of working over the Covid crisis offer new ways of **connecting people** to what is on offer in the region (in some ways, ‘supporting local’)?

14.4 Gravitational pull

The incorporation of cultural infrastructure venues into our analysis has shown that there are **significant differences** in the built cultural provision, which is concentrated in the areas with the highest expected cultural engagement and higher socio-economic status.

Whilst this area needs much further investigation, it does question how resources may be re-aligned in the future to support and recognise communities, particularly given that we know that creative and cultural activity in lower engaged communities tends to happen in less traditional spaces and places.

If we want to see radical change in terms of populations with historically less access to culture embracing the arts and culture, we need to see **targeted and specific investment** in the low engagement geographical areas, **matched to local population need and characteristics**.

- Does this suggest investment in **more non-venue-based activity** rather than capital programmes in these areas?
- And if so, **how is that measured?**
- Does it have implications for **what we consider to be cultural infrastructure**, and instead widen it to include creative output?

Authors of and contributors to this report

Katy Raines (Founding Partner, Indigo-Ltd)¹⁸ is regarded as one of the UK's leading consultants on data-driven marketing for Cultural Organisations, and as such has developed and led research and implementation programmes for large and middle scale organizations throughout the UK and Europe. She has a particular passion for using data to effect change and drive an audience-led approach in the cultural sector.

During the 2020 Covid-19 crisis she developed and delivered the UK's largest research programme of cultural attendees' attitudes to returning to events – beginning with *After The Interval* - working with around 600 organisations and capturing responses from almost 300,000 attendees. Her current clients include the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Bradford 2025, MAC Belfast, UK Sport, Hull Theatres and TATE.

Prior to becoming a consultant in 2006 she held senior marketing roles in large scale venues, holds a Music degree from Cambridge University and a 1st-class MBA from Durham University.

Baker Richards¹⁹ is a leading international consulting and software firm that aims to foster a thriving cultural sector by helping organisations achieve their commercial potential. Founded in 2003, their areas of expertise include admissions pricing, affiliation and customer segmentation.

Mel Larsen²⁰ began her career in the Arts with her role as Administrator for touring company Black Mime Theatre and as Marketing Officer for Talawa Theatre Company before joining A.R.T.S. consultancy. Here she conducted feasibility research on several audience development agencies and major new building and refurbishment projects including the Peckham Library, London.

Pam Jarvis²¹ has experience and expertise in stakeholder consultation, evaluation and analysis of cultural projects, strategic planning and audience engagement. Her research measures the difference made by organisations, examines how culture contributes to successful places and provides intelligence to support business growth and sustainability in the cultural sector.

With grateful thanks for their input to:

Prof Jonothan Neelands, Warwick Business School
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Salla Virman, West Midlands Combined Authority
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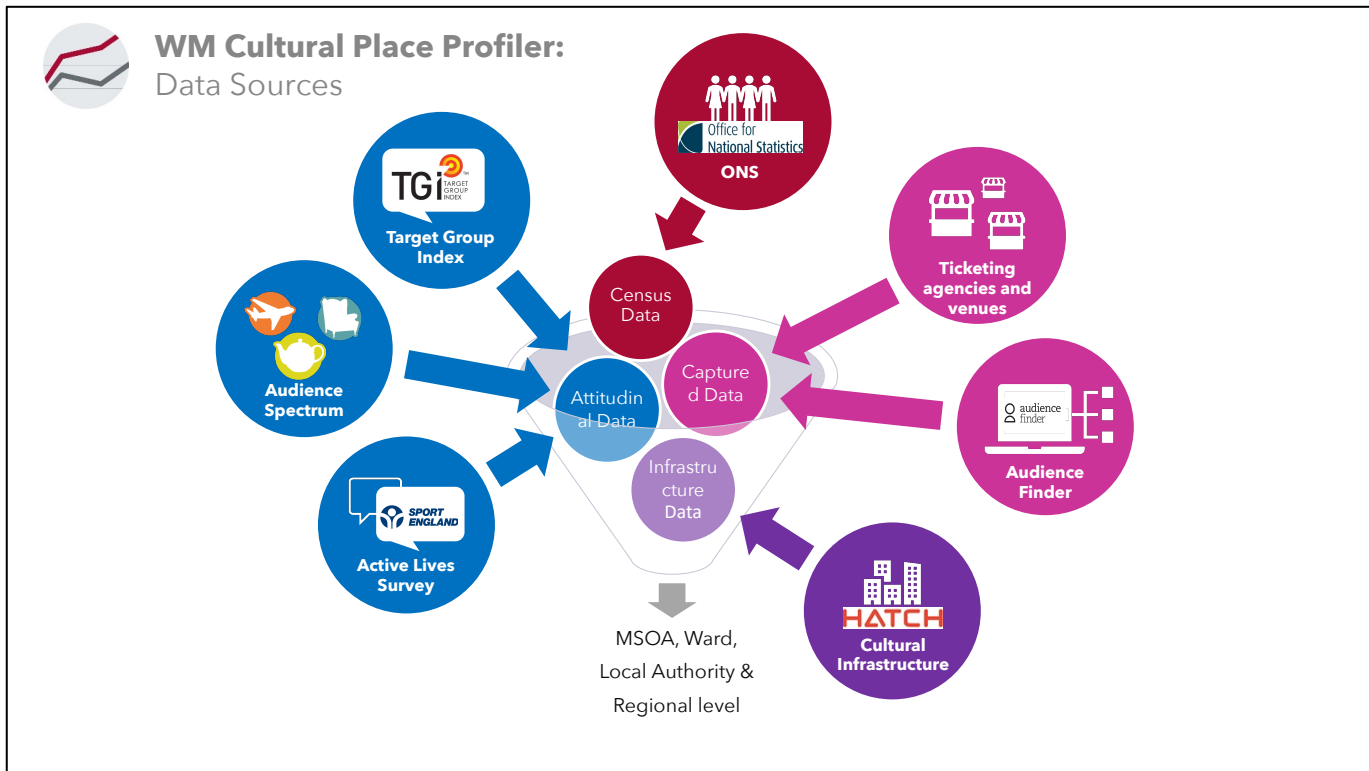
Appendices

Appendix 1: Definition of Culture

The definition of culture as defined by the scope for this work is:

- Performing arts venues
- Arts centres
- Theatre performance
- Dance performance
- Live music
- Live art
- Visual arts
- Circus
- Carnival
- Mela
- Outdoor arts
- Festivals
- Live literature, storytelling and poetry
- Museums
- Galleries
- Exhibitions
- Photography exhibition

Appendix 2: Cultural Place Profiler Data Sources, transformations and limitations



Captured Data: transformations & limitations

- Data is a MSOA level, but can be interrogated at Ward, LA and Regional level.
- Data includes only WM bookers, and only their bookings at WM venues
- Bookings with invalid or not captured postcodes are excluded

Postcode



- The scope of events is limited to ticketed events only
- There is currently no data available for non-ticketed events.
- Genres are not included in the data

Events



- Data includes both paid & free tickets
- Income shown is always gross.

Tickets



- Data includes a count of primary bookers only, not the actual attendees.
- As data is not at booker level, it is not possible to filter for bookers with certain demographics.

Bookers



- Assumptions about crossover between venues have been made
- Based on crossover between venues within Audience Finder, we estimated a 32% crossover
- That was used to derive a more realistic estimated number of bookers

Crossover



Appendix 3: Active Lives by Local Authority Area:

Done in past 12 months	Arts participation	Arts Attendance	Attended an arts event OR spent time doing an arts activity	Attended an arts event OR museum or gallery OR spent time doing an arts activity
Average for England	35%	52%	60%	70%
Local Authority:				
E08000025 Birmingham	31%	43%	51%	60%
E08000026 Coventry	32%	49%	57%	69%
E08000027 Dudley	29%	49%	57%	66%
E08000028 Sandwell	23%	36%	43%	51%
E08000029 Solihull	31%	51%	59%	67%
E08000030 Walsall	24%	40%	49%	58%
E08000031 Wolverhampton	29%	42%	51%	60%
E07000192 Cannock Chase	25%	39%	47%	59%
E07000193 East Staffordshire	28%	43%	52%	57%
E07000194 Lichfield	32%	57%	64%	72%
E07000199 Tamworth	27%	42%	53%	63%
E07000218 North Warwickshire	26%	45%	52%	59%
E07000219 Nuneaton and Bedworth	28%	43%	51%	61%
E07000220 Rugby	36%	49%	59%	70%
E07000221 Stratford-on-Avon	37%	60%	67%	74%
E07000222 Warwick	40%	63%	70%	82%
E07000234 Bromsgrove	38%	59%	66%	74%
E07000236 Redditch	27%	51%	56%	65%
E07000239 Wyre Forest	34%	53%	62%	72%

Appendix 4: Creating a single metric for cultural engagement

The difficulty in using any of the sources of data outlined in Chapter 5.4 for understanding cultural engagement is that none of them in themselves is a comprehensive measure. In addition, because we are working at MSOA level rather than household level, we are looking at the percentage of households within an MSOA, which prevents us from creating a single combined measure. For example, if an MSOA has 50% of households who based on TGI attend theatre and 25% who attend museums, we do not know what proportion of the 50% who attend theatre also fall into the 25% who attend museums – it is possible, although unlikely, that none of them do, which would mean 75% of households attend theatre or museums. We therefore wanted to find which of the single measures was the best proxy for estimating cultural engagement.

To determine which measure of cultural engagement to use, we can look at how well correlated the measures are, i.e. to what extent does an increase in one measure also relate to an increase in another measure. We began by analysing the correlations between each of them in turn based on the percentage of households per MSOA who:

- Have attended theatre (based on TGI)
- Have attended museums (TGI)
- Have attended Pop/Rock (TGI)
- Belonged to Audience Spectrum High Engagement segments

The strongest correlations were between the percentage of households who had attended theatre and each of the others as shown below in table 8. +1 would represent a perfect positive linear relationship, i.e. as one variable increases, the other variable increases through an exact linear rule. As we can see in the table, attended theatre has the strongest positive correlations with each of the measures: attended Pop/Rock (+0.88), Spectrum High Engagement (+0.81) and attended museums (+0.77).

	<i>Attended Theatre (TGI)</i>	<i>Attended Museums (TGI)</i>	<i>Attended Pop/Rock (TGI)</i>	<i>Spectrum High Engagement</i>
<i>Attended Theatre (TGI)</i>		<i>+0.77</i>	<i>+0.88</i>	<i>+0.81</i>
<i>Attended Museums (TGI)</i>	<i>+0.77</i>		<i>+0.60</i>	<i>+0.87</i>
<i>Attended Pop/Rock (TGI)</i>	<i>+0.88</i>	<i>+0.60</i>		<i>+0.66</i>
<i>Spectrum High Engagement</i>	<i>+0.81</i>	<i>+0.87</i>	<i>+0.66</i>	

Table 8: Correlation coefficients between measures of cultural engagement

To dig deeper into the relationship between attended theatre and the other measures of cultural engagement, we then ran several linear regression models to determine how consistent the correlation was, i.e. how good is attended theatre at predicting the other measures of cultural engagement. The resulting R squared value, i.e. measure of ‘best-fit’, is show in table 9 below.

	<i>R-squared with Attended Theatre (TGI)</i>
<i>Attended Museums (TGI)</i>	<i>0.99</i>
<i>Attended Pop/Rock (TGI)</i>	<i>0.99</i>
<i>Spectrum High Engagement</i>	<i>0.47</i>

Table 9: R-squared values for linear regression between Attended Theatre (TGI) and other measures

Both attended museums and attended Pop/Rock were easily predicted by attended theatre with R-squared values of 0.99, i.e. as % of households who attend theatre increases, the % of households who attend museums or Pop/Rock increase in the same predictable pattern. Whereas while the % of households who fall into Spectrum High Engagement segments had a strong positive correlation, the low R-squared value (0.47) reveals a lot more volatility as shown below in figure 13.

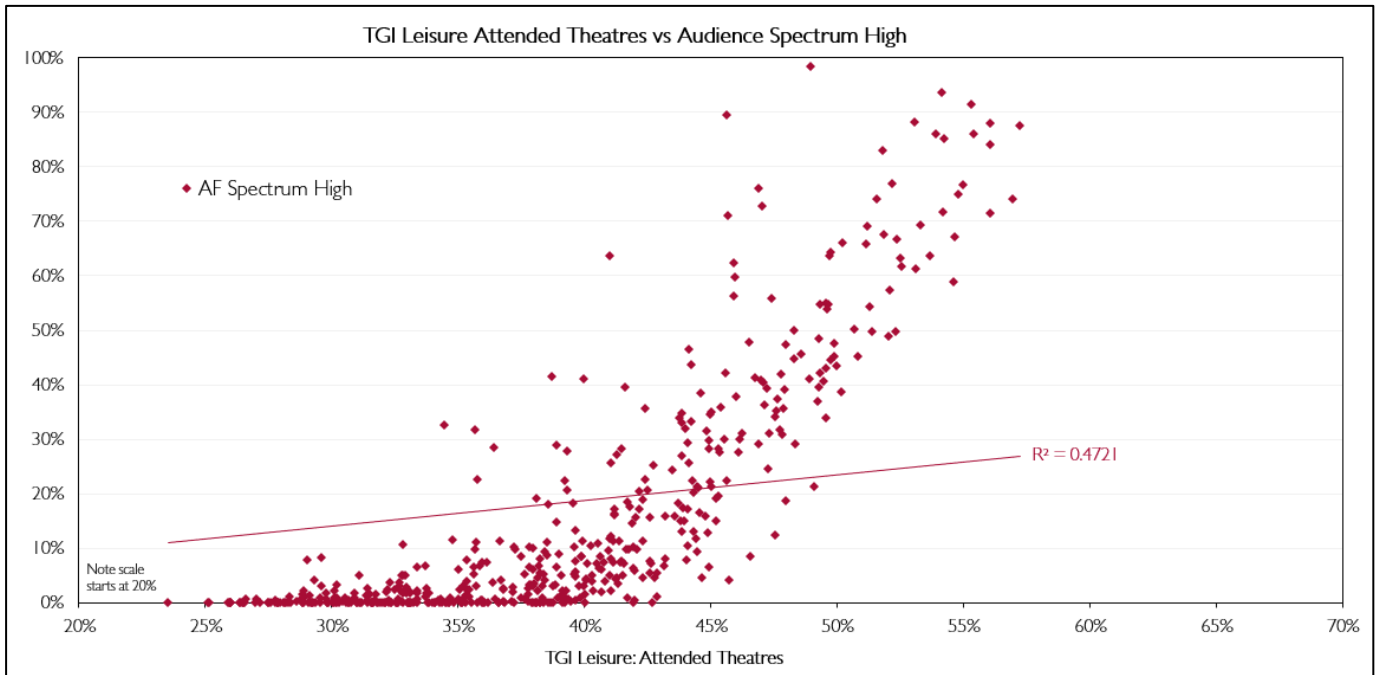


Figure 13: Linear regression between Attended Theatre and Spectrum High

One of the reasons for the volatility between attended theatre and Spectrum High Engagement can be explained by the fact that there are many MSOAs where the proportion of households in Spectrum High Engagement segments is 0%. However, that does not mean there are no households in these MSOAs who attend theatre. In fact, even the MSOA with the lowest proportion of households who attend theatre is 24%. While Audience Spectrum is useful as a way of understanding different types of audience, it is not in itself an estimate of cultural engagement.

We have therefore chosen to create an 'Expected Engagement Level' in the West Midlands Place Profiler using TGI Theatre as the best fit metric. This allows analysis of low engagement areas, and the ability to compare them with 'Captured Engagement' as described in section 3.

Appendix 5: Cluster analysis of MSOAs used to create the area profiles

	High			Medium			Low			Total
	High 1	High 2	Subtotal	Medium 1	Medium 2	Subtotal	Low 1	Low 2	Subtotal	
MSOAs	68	18	86	244	89	333	59	35	94	513
Captured Bookers	32%	29%	31%	25%	17%	23%	15%	6%	12%	22%
AF Spectrum (15+) High	51%	64%	54%	10%	10%	10%	1%	1%	1%	16%
TGI Leisure (15+): Attended Theatres in past 12 months	51%	50%	50%	40%	36%	39%	29%	28%	29%	39%
TGI Leisure (15+): Attended Pop/Rock in past 12 months	41%	43%	41%	36%	34%	36%	30%	23%	27%	35%
Age Group: Under 25	26%	39%	29%	28%	36%	30%	36%	44%	39%	32%
2019 Estimate Ethnic group: White	90%	58%	84%	91%	65%	84%	78%	22%	57%	79%
2019 Estimate Ethnic group: Asian/Asian British	7%	25%	11%	5%	21%	10%	11%	55%	28%	13%
2019 Estimate Ethnic group: Black/Black British	1%	8%	2%	2%	7%	3%	5%	15%	9%	4%
2019 Estimate Social Grade (household): C2DE	28%	31%	28%	51%	59%	53%	70%	70%	70%	52%
2019 Estimate Economically Active/Inactive (16-74): [Active] Employed or self-employed	66%	50%	63%	64%	54%	61%	52%	41%	48%	59%
2019 Estimate Economically Active/Inactive (16-74): [Inactive]	29%	37%	31%	29%	34%	30%	36%	44%	39%	32%
2019 Estimate Disability: Day-to-day activities limited	16%	14%	16%	19%	19%	19%	23%	18%	21%	19%
2019 Estimate Children (household): Any dependent children	39%	42%	39%	41%	51%	44%	52%	64%	56%	45%
2019 Estimate Highest qualification (16+): No qualifications	17%	15%	16%	26%	30%	27%	39%	37%	38%	27%
IMD19 SCORE	9.33	26.18	12.85	20.15	37.11	24.68	46.45	50.74	48.05	26.98
2019 Estimate Economically Active/Inactive (16-74): [Active] Full-time student	3%	7%	4%	3%	4%	3%	3%	5%	3%	3%
% AF Tickets outside of West Midlands	16%	15%	16%	15%	9%	13%	7%	10%	8%	13%

Appendix 6: Captured data sources

1000 Trades
Acapella Music Bar Birmingham
Amusement 13
Arches Venue, Coventry
Arena Birmingham
Arena Theatre (University of Wolverhampton)
Artrix
Austin Sports & Social Club
BE Festival
Bel Air at The Belfry Hotel & Resort
Belgrade Theatre Coventry
Birmingham and Midland Institute
Birmingham Botanical Gardens
Birmingham Contemporary Music Group
Birmingham Hippodrome Ltd
Birmingham Repertory Theatre
Birmingham Royal Ballet
Black Country Living Museum Trust
Blossoms Liquor + Grind
Blue Orange Theatre
Bottega Prosecco Bar
Brewhouse and Kitchen Sutton Coldfield
Capsule Events Ltd
Casino 36 Wolverhampton
CBSO
Centrala
Chic
City Banqueting Suite
City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra
Clayton Hotel
Coventry Caribbean Association
Diamond Suite
E57 Social Club
Ekhaya
Ex Cathedra Ltd
GLEE Club, BIRMINGHAM
Gorgeous Nightclub
Handsworth Park
Hare & Hounds
Hennessey's Bar
Holiday Inn Hotel
Holy Trinity Church
Hornets Football Club
Hurst Street Area
ICC Birmingham
Ikon Gallery
Irish Centre
Kings Heath Cricket Club
Lab11
Lant Playing Field,
Legacy Centre of Excellence
Lichfield Garrick
Loft Lounge in the Penthouse Suite
MADE Festival
Mama Roux's
Mango Lounge
Matterley Bowl
Medicine Bakery + Gallery
memoirs bar

Midlands Arts Centre
Missoula, Birmingham
Moseley Rugby Club
Moseley School
Muthers Studio & Warehouse
Newhampton Arts Centre
Nuvo Bar
O Bar Birmingham
O2 Academy Birmingham
O2 Institute
Orchestra of the Swan
Palace Theatre Redditch
Performances Birmingham Limited
Perry Park
Piccadilly Banqueting Suite
Players Bar
Popworld Birmingham
Popworld Solihull
Popworld Wolverhampton
PST Rooftop
PussyCats - Telford, West Midlands
Quantum Event Centre
Quantum exhibition centre
Reflex
Resorts World Arena, Birmingham
Rosie's Birmingham
Royal Shakespeare Company
Sampad (South Asian Arts Development)
Selly Manor Museum
Serbian Orthodox Church of the Holy Prince Lazar
serve
Sion Cocktail Bar
Slug and Lettuce
Spotlight
Stirlings Bar & Lounge.
Stories nightclub
Sugar Suite & Velvet Music Rooms
Suki10c
Symphony Hall Birmingham
Tamworth Assembly Rooms
The Actress & Bishop
The Arena Stourbridge
The Bear Tavern
The Bierkeller, Birmingham
The Bond Company
The Castle and Falcon
The Colmore Club
The Core Theatre
The Crossing, Birmingham
The DanceXchange Limited
The English Breakfast Club
The Flapper
The Glee Club Birmingham
The Grain Store
The Hagley (Ibis Hotel)
The Hub
The Jamhouse
The Mill
The NEC, Birmingham
The Night Owl
The Old Crown
The Parisian Wolverhampton
The Parklands Banqueting Suite, Richmond House

The Penthouse
THE ROYAL HOTEL SUTTON COLDFIELD
The Ticket Factory
The Shirley Centre
The Slug & Lettuce
The Sunflower Lounge
The Tunnel Club
The Victoria
The Village Hotel Coventry
The Wakes
Ticketsellers
Town Hall Birmingham
Tudor Grange Park
University Of Birmingham
Utilita Arena Birmingham
Various
Wagon & Horses
Walkabout Birmingham
Walkabout Solihull
Warwick Arts Centre
West Midlands Transport Club
Wolverhampton Art Gallery
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre
Writing West Midlands
Zara nightclub
Zen Metro
Zig Zags Play & Par

Appendix 7: Summary of key strategies by audience type

	Identity	Confidence	Connection
Limited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiar Spaces and Places • People Like Me • Relevant images/language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport, access and cost • Reminder of the importance to them of creativity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community focused • Celebration of communities • Global connections
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events with wide appeal for family/social groupings • Strong West Midlands identity • Inclusive welcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make time to try something new • Don't miss out (FOMO) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socially focused • Everyone's welcome • Large scale celebration of diversity
Unlimited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signature cultural events • New and Ground-breaking artistic projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote artistic quality • National / international recognition of the West Midlands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships with existing cultural organisations as gateways