Without Walls Associate Touring Network
2013-2015 Audience Development activity evaluation

Penny Mills, Area Director, London

March 2016
# Contents

**Introduction** ........................................................................................................... 4

Scope of this report ................................................................................................... 4

Participating festivals 2013-2015 ............................................................................. 5

**Project Audience Objectives** ............................................................................. 5

Audience development activity 2015 ....................................................................... 6

Target audiences ....................................................................................................... 6

Audience development activities overview ............................................................ 8

2013-15 Summary of workshop and ambassador numbers ..................................... 10

**Festival by Festival Audience Development 2015** ........................................... 11

**Bradford Festival** ................................................................................................ 11

Activities .................................................................................................................. 11

Impacts ..................................................................................................................... 11

**FUSE Medway Festival** ....................................................................................... 12

Activities .................................................................................................................. 12

Impacts ..................................................................................................................... 12

**SO Festival** .......................................................................................................... 13

Activities .................................................................................................................. 13

Impacts ..................................................................................................................... 13

**Left Coast - Spare Parts & Showzam** ................................................................. 14

Activities .................................................................................................................. 14

Impacts ..................................................................................................................... 14

**Summer in Southside, Birmingham** ................................................................. 17

Activities .................................................................................................................. 17

Impacts ..................................................................................................................... 17

**Freedom Festival, Hull** ....................................................................................... 18

Activities .................................................................................................................. 18

Impacts ..................................................................................................................... 18

**Out There, Great Yarmouth** ............................................................................... 19

Activities .................................................................................................................. 19
Bradford Festival ........................................................................................................ 38
Left Coast - Showzam and Spare Parts ...................................................................... 38
Freedom Festival, Hull ............................................................................................... 38
Out There Festival ....................................................................................................... 39
Derby Festé ................................................................................................................ 39
Introduction

The Without Walls Associate Touring Network (WW ATN) is funded by Arts Council England’s Strategic Touring funds, and managed and delivered by Xtrax – which delivers the Without Walls programme of outdoor work in collaboration with a consortium of other festivals.

Over three years (2013-2015) the WW ATN has facilitated the touring of outdoor performances to a network of festivals, and has delivered an innovative audience development programme.

The Audience Agency has been contracted to support the audience development programmes at each partner festival, and to devise and deliver an evaluation framework for the project.

Scope of this report

This report presents a summary of audience development activities which took place in 2015 across 10 partner festivals which make up the Without Walls Associate Touring Network.

Over the course of a three year project (2013-2015) Without Walls Associate Touring Network partners have delivered an ambitious programme of audience development activities alongside their events. With the support of Without Walls, and The Audience Agency, partners submitted plans in each year of the project which set out their objectives for developing audiences.

Partners were able to apply for up to £10K in 2013, £15K in 2014, and £18K in 2015 towards their activities.

Festivals were able to develop their audience development work over the three years to provide a solid legacy from this project, using the opportunity to embed new practices:

- Year one - scoping and exploration with some delivery
- Year two - develop and deliver
- Year three - refined delivery, set targets and embed

Each stage has required a slightly different kind of evaluation - which can be read in previous years’ reports. And each year informed the activity for the next in terms of learnings and refining objectives.

The focus therefore of this report is on the end point, i.e. where did they get to in their planned activities by the final year of the project in 2015. The following is an assessment of the final outcomes of their activities, with reference to the journey they took to get there. In this third year, we also asked them to closely monitor the outcomes of their activities which are recorded in their individual reports.
This report gives an overview of the range of target audiences, audience development activities and overall impacts for each festival of being part of WW ATN. Also included is an overview of digital engagement, links to video content generated across the festivals, and a summary of feedback from Ambassadors across the festivals.

A separate report outlines the quantitative findings from surveying undertaken by festivals across the three years. Festivals also received individual reports of their own quantitative findings as well as an assessment of their achievements against their own stated audience development objectives.

### Participating festivals 2013-2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Festival</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014*</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bradford Festival</td>
<td>12-14 June</td>
<td>13-15 June</td>
<td>14-16 June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford Urban Festival</td>
<td>11 July</td>
<td>11,12 July</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuse Medway Festival - Chatham and Rochester</td>
<td>13-14 June</td>
<td>13-15 June</td>
<td>14-16 June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO Festival, East Lindsey</td>
<td>25 June - 5 July</td>
<td>28 June - 6 July</td>
<td>28 June - 7 July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spare Parts - Fleetwood Transport Festival/Left Coast</td>
<td>19 July</td>
<td>20 July</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showzam/Left Coast</td>
<td>14-18 February</td>
<td>14-23 February</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Big Feast/Appetite, Stoke on Trent</td>
<td>28-30 August</td>
<td>29-31 August</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer in Southside, Birmingham</td>
<td>29 August</td>
<td>23, 24 August</td>
<td>22, 25 August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham Weekender, Birmingham</td>
<td>25-27 September</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6-8 September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom Festival, Hull</td>
<td>4-6 September</td>
<td>5-7 September</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out There Festival, Great Yarmouth</td>
<td>18-20 September</td>
<td>17-25 September</td>
<td>13-15 September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derby Festé</td>
<td>25-26 September</td>
<td>26, 27 September</td>
<td>27-29 September</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Project Audience Objectives

The audience objectives for festivals were:

- Targeted at those who may not attend arts venues or buy tickets for theatre or performing arts events
- Having an enjoyable experience they’d like to repeat locally
- Evidence of increased audience impact and reach
• Grow audiences with an appetite for outdoor work and festivals - discovery and increased interest

This report focuses on outlining what festivals did to achieve the third of these - evidence of increased impact and reach.

Wider impacts for the festivals were:
• Establish relationships with target communities and groups who can influence future work
• Increased audience engagement at festivals
• Grow audiences with an appetite for outdoor work and festivals - discovery and increased interest

This report outlines the approaches different festivals used to achieve these wider impacts. However, while these can be evaluated within the scope of the project to some extent, the legacy of this project is for festivals to evaluate on an ongoing basis to realise these impacts over the longer term.

Audience development activity 2015

Target audiences

The primary target audiences festivals focused on in 2015 followed on from previous years, but with a greater focus and clarity in the final year of this project, they included the following - specifically and/or in combination:
• Young people, primarily 16-24 years - mostly through community or youth groups and/or schools
• Families - particularly those less engaged with culture i.e. from Facebook Families, Kaleidoscope Creativity Audience Spectrum segments
• Elders - from the Heydays Audience Spectrum segment
• Particular geographic areas, invariably with low recorded cultural engagement or higher levels of deprivation or with a population of a particular ethnic community
• Particular ethnic or cultural groups for whom the festival may ‘not be for them’
• Schools - secondary and primary ages - mainly as part of strategies for engaging families and/or increasing participation with lower engaged groups in association with the festivals
• People with learning difficulties engaged through community groups and day centres
• Disabled people or those with life limiting health problems engaged through community groups and day centres

The following summarises the groups targeted by festivals in 2015.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Festival</th>
<th>16-24s</th>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Families</th>
<th>Elders</th>
<th>Areas of low engagement</th>
<th>Ethnicity/culture</th>
<th>Learning difficulties</th>
<th>Disabled people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bradford Festival and Bradford Urban Festival</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuse Medway Festival</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO Festival</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spare Parts - Fleetwood Transport Festival and Showzam† /Left Coast*</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Big Feast/Appetite, Stoke on Trent</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer in Southside Birmingham Weekender, Birmingham</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom Festival, Hull</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out There Festival, Great Yarmouth</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derby Festé</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Audience development activities overview

In 2015 festivals undertook different combinations of the following activities:

- Ambassador schemes
- Pre-festival workshops/participatory activity and follow-up visit to the festival
- Pre-festival workshops/participatory activity which formed part of the festival i.e. setting dressing, parades, performances
- Pre-festival ‘taster’ events involving companies performing at the main festival as well as local artists and community groups
- At festival, post-performance workshops
- At festival dedicated family areas - including activities and/or performances
- At festival events/activities targeted at young people i.e. chill out areas, skate competitions
- Dedicated marketing including designing dedicated campaigns to reach the target market i.e. family leaflets at festivals, targeted door drops, usually combined with some sort of specific training for staff, volunteers or ambassadors to reach that market.

Other activity included the following, which was usually part and parcel of one of the above activities:

- Creation of content to promote festivals and record activity for sharing and promotional purposes - video, photography, audience feedback
- Development of social media to reach particular communities
- Partnership with local media - particularly local radio
The following summarises which activities were focused on at each festival:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Festival</th>
<th>Ambassadors</th>
<th>Pre-festival workshops</th>
<th>Pre-festival participation - target groups</th>
<th>Pre-festival taster events</th>
<th>At festival workshops</th>
<th>Family area</th>
<th>Yng People’s events</th>
<th>Dedicated marketing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bradford Festival and Bradford Urban Festival</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuse Medway Festival</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO Festival, East Lindsey</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spare Parts - Fleetwood Transport Festival and Showzam† /Left Coast*</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Big Feast/Appetite, Stoke on Trent</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer in Southside and Birmingham Weekender, Birmingham</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom Festival, Hull</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out There Festival, Great Yarmouth</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derby Festé</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# 2013-15 Summary of workshop and ambassador numbers

Please note some Ambassadors worked across more than one year of the festivals, and the figures shown are numbers for each year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bradford Festival and Bradford Urban Festival</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuse Medway Festival</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO Festival, East Lindsey</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spare Parts - Fleetwood Transport Festival and Showzam† /Left Coast*</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Big Feast/Appetite, Stoke on Trent</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer in Southside and Birmingham Weekender</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>1,863</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1,468</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom Festival, Hull**</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out There Festival, Great Yarmouth</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>1,912</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1,405</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derby Festé***</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td><strong>152</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,381</strong></td>
<td><strong>84</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,648</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,498</strong></td>
<td><strong>85</strong></td>
<td><strong>111</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*includes Summer in Southside/Birmingham Weekender youth and library ambassadors

**Freedom Festival also had over 100 volunteer Freedom Makers

*** includes Derby Festé youth and community ambassadors
Festival by Festival Audience Development 2015

The following summarises the audience development activity at each festival in 2015. The impacts and reflections here are summarised from self-evaluation forms completed by the partner festivals.

Bradford Festival

Activities

- Family area with workshops and street theatre, signposted in brochure
- 6 Ambassadors planned and supported workshop programme and created content on performers and ambassadors for the BBC ‘MY Bradford’ Project for each Bradford Constituency - these were screened at the festival on the Big Screen as teasers pre-festival and used on social media
- Workshops included Music and DJ technology taster sessions for young people in partnership with youth services, community groups, BME communities and Eastern European communities. Many of which resulted in performances at Bradford Festival and the Urban Festival.
- WW performers were doing impromptu workshops after the shows, allowing audiences to meet the artists and learn a few moves.

Impacts

In this final year of the project, Bradford Festivals felt that the Ambassador scheme had had the greatest impact, having worked with a changing group of enthusiastic young people who were passionate about their city. The Audience development funding allowed the festival to work with young people from areas that would not normally attend an arts festival.

The Without Walls productions strengthened the street theatre element of Bradford Festival. As a legacy, the stage is now set for greater involvement by local artists i.e. commissions to create things for the family area, and community workshops to create ‘vibing’ i.e. bunting and flags for the Festival. This will bring the festival together with communities giving them an investment in the festival and encouraging them to be a part of it.

While the audience development activity supported both the Bradford Festival and the Urban Festival, Without Walls productions were only presented at the Bradford Festival.
FUSE Medway Festival

It should be noted that FUSE Medway Festival was 2 days in 2015 (compared to 3 days in previous years), due to very late funding decisions, several of the local engagement activities planned for 2015 could not take place i.e. Torch Procession and seed commissions from local artists and early recruitment of ambassador coordinator.

we always love it, keep it going, it's well needed and all the different acts are fantastic

Firing imagination, bringing people together. Inspiring - this means cohesion, community and society's future. This matters. Fuse matters.

it's accessible, great to see so many kids participating local dancers who opened Faust yesterday

Festival attenders

And the inevitable disappointment:

I hope they don't cut the funds for this as it is so good for the community

Festival attenders

Activities

- Ambassador scheme with 3 core members, led by a coordinator to visit local groups, and 2 additional ambassadors at the festival to do photography and chalk boards, and host an information tent.
- Workshops with young people pre-festival during May half term - South Paw dance, Akala and Hip Hop Shakespeare Company for 14/15 year olds and they opened, with a short performance, the Faust show at the festival.

Impacts

FUSE Medway Festival over the last few years has been successful in increasing interest, appreciation and knowledge of the arts in Medway and a sense of ownership of the festival by the community through engagement, inclusion and diverse programming. As a result of the funding issues the support which the Festival has built became particularly apparent - demonstrating a sense of ownership of the festival by Medway, its importance and place in the community.

Workshops were successful in engaging the ‘hard to reach’ and young people 16 -25 years, who have been particularly hard to attract or involve in arts activity in Medway. Additional funds
for audience development have enabled the festival to raise its profile by producing films to be screened on the ‘Big Screen’ in central Chatham, for 6 weeks prior to the 2015 festival, next to the bus station reaching a large number of people of a wide demographic. Increasingly audiences arrive in advance to secure a spot to see particular performances, so in Chatham there is no longer a reliance on passers by for audiences. This willingness and planning to see work on the street, and then stay to watch all the way through represents a major break through in Medway.

The quality of performances provided by Without Walls has been instrumental in increasing public perceptions of outdoor arts and has raised expectations.

SO Festival

Activities

- Young Ambassadors: 9 undertook training in health and safety, customer service (run by the local tourism agency) and child protection and were given accreditation for their training through the tourism organisation. Prior to the festival ambassadors visited youth groups and walked around businesses to act as an information source. During the festival ambassadors targeted young people under 25 for feedback and acted as information points in the Market Towns and Skegness and also handed out child wrist bands - with a phone number and if children got lost details of where to go.
- Dressing and local engagement: flag making - at community groups, youth centres, day centres, libraries and schools over 2 days Sat/Sun across the market towns and in Skegness.
- Circus skills workshops at the festival: 1,200 attended over over 4/5 hours each day.
- Family area - traditional games, handing out water, balloon making and an information point.

Impacts

- The festival is able to do longer term planning and integration with the wider work of Magna Vitae, now as an ACE NPO
- Embedding audience development activities as a key part of the festival
• Being able to programme shows which they may not have otherwise been able to afford, high quality support for audience development activities, responsive team to support the festival.
• Flag making and dressing made it feel more festive and like there was something happening, even if not at every moment.
• Going into the future, some of the Ambassadors will continue i.e. half of the existing ones plus new ones, so that there is a constant refreshing and the old can train the new. The festival also aims to engage a wider age range as ambassadors, not just youth ambassadors.

Left Coast – Spare Parts & Showzam

Activities
• An interactive activity map sent to every primary school in Blackpool that children complete on attendance at Showzam or Spare Parts - a making, a participatory and a viewing activity during one of the Festivals. Accredited so that 30 primary age children were awarded Explorer Arts Awards.
• Commissioned Lost in Translation circus to offer engaging participatory circus workshop activity as a trailblazer for Showzam
• Parade Workshops for Spare Parts x 4 took place throughout June & July 2015 to create vehicles (including young people from YMCA, Fleetwood Wheelers and others) for Spare Parts
• Developed the Ambassador programme to support the recruitment and retention of volunteers at the Spare Parts Festival and promoting the Extraordinary Bodies Choir Programme with local amateur dramatics, performing arts colleges and established choir groups.
• Young photographers - ‘Whippersnappers’ project was very successful in building deeper engagement with a smaller group of participants.

Impacts
The Spare Parts arts programme as part of the of Fleetwood Festival of Transport is starting to attract its own following as well as being an expected part of the whole event. Marketing is being undertaken jointly bringing the offers together - a bitarty and a bit about transport.
And there are growing levels of participation through the Hand Made Parade and other activities. There are also indications of audiences returning and widening their engagement, and the event is starting to attract more younger people. Key to achieving these outcomes is partnership working and seeking to embed the festival in the community.

One of the key successes in audience development work for Spare Parts has been around developing and programming the Festival with a voluntary committee. Developing a critical appetite for outdoor work with Fleetwood Festival of Transport’s Directors has been essential to building sustainability for the Festival. By supporting the volunteers to attend WW ATN gatherings at Spare Parts, capacity has been built to develop the programme in future years - although there is still some way to go in this.

“The more we can get FFoT to take leadership of developing the arts programme, for me that will be the success... The more they see work, choose it and bring it over, the better. A part of what we are about is capacity building, so where we led on this entirely in the first year, we have given 50% support this year, and next year we’ll be looking to see how we can get them to lead even further in terms of developing the programme”

Julia Turpin, Exec Director at Left Coast

In particular, the SpareParts events were seen as a welcome addition that could help the event appeal to a wider range of people. The vast majority of attendees were family groups, many of whom felt the arts activities made the event a more family-friendly - and child friendly - day out.

“It puts Fleetwood on the map. It’s a beautiful place, but not a lot of people, particularly young people, know a lot about it. It brings a lot of money in for the day and the community really need that”

“I’ve not been for a few years and I thought it was just vintage vehicles. My friend said there was arts entertainment and that’s why we came really”

Festival attenders

It is still the case that when there is an element of familiarity and entertainment value, the work attracts more engagement i.e. Granny Turismo offered a sense of familiarity in terms of it’s ‘panto’ style comedy and iconic music which helped people connect with the style of performance and welcome its entertainment value.

As in 2014, some audience members were less enthusiastic about being invited to participate - most citing the embarrassment of being centre of attention in a crowd as the reason. However
it felt like a greater proportion of people this year were more than happy to interact, and the act successfully engaged both adults and children in this respect.

Source - ESRO ethnographic study Spare Parts 2015

Big Feast, Appetite, Stoke

Activities

- Seven Ambassadors supported workshops, and then invited participants to the festival. They hosted an area/tent at the Big Feast where they gathered qualitative feedback and hosted Big Feast Bingo, plus did interviews for Appetite TV and supported social media activity. Those previously contacted could also go to the area to get tickets to events and 50 tickets were taken up and
  - The Big Feast Bingo cards provided a fun and engaging way to collect data on the day by offering bingo cards to people to write 3 words on the acts they’ve seen and rate them out of 5. This was a success, with 56 people filling out the cards and providing monitoring data.
  - Appetite TV - 40 short interviews in the tent conducted by the Ambassadors - in future it would good to provide further training on this.

- Target areas of low engagement through workshops and activities:
  - A series of workshops in dance and poetry were used to promote the Big Feast and give away free tickets, including at Freeport Shopping Centre, alongside a Taster Tour in partnership with Signal Radio.
  - The Taster Tour went to five areas leading up to the festival from 24-28 August. This activity was promoted on the Breakfast Show each morning leading up to The Big Feast and featured The Lift by Wet Picnic.
  - Developed new working relationships with target groups to become advocates for the programme. These included deaf and disability-led groups, libraries, children’s centres, hairdressers, taxi drivers, community centres, colleges and universities, young people, senior citizen groups, and BME-led groups.

Impacts

- The fantastic feedback to the shows and people beginning to see the value of investing in and hosting outdoor art events.

  I’m more likely to attend in the future and would be happy paying for them as it helps to fund more performances for each company.
Audience member who attended The Big Feast in 2015

- In year 3, over 50% of audiences were motivated to come to The Big Feast because they had been to an Appetite event before and enjoyed it. 39% came because they thought it would be high quality.
- Developing Appetite TV and Big Feast Bingo through the Ambassadors are strong ideas which can be developed in the future to collect data and attract new audiences.
- Developing The Big Feast Festival from scratch and people recognising the need and also there being an aspiration to have an annual outdoor festival in the city. Footfall into the city during the events has increased. For example in 2014 footfall in the city centre increased by 7.2% compared to the previous week.

Summer in Southside, Birmingham

Activities

- Library Ambassador Scheme - artist led workshops in 10 libraries following the themes of the festivals. Coach travel provided from libraries to Summer in Southside and Birmingham Weekender.
- Youth Ambassadors x 5 developed young-people-focused add-on events -
  - Unwind - Summer in Southside Arts and crafts and chill out area for audiences to talk about the event and give feedback - designed for young people.
  - Mix-up event Saturday 29th August - an evening of poetry, music and performance at Hippodrome’s Stageside Bar & Restaurant. Specific marketing campaign that included a 20% off drinks coupon for audience members that watched three shows at Summer in Southside.
- Local consultation with different parts of the Chinese community led by Aowen Jin a British Chinese Artist to understand interests and barriers to engagement.

One-to-one consultation, focus groups and artist-led workshops with local community groups over the period August - October 2015 in advance of Summer in Southside and subsequent Autumn programme (leading to an artist’s commission outside of this budget).

Impacts

Diversified audiences for outdoor arts, particularly for under 25s, growing an audience for outdoor arts across the region. Helped establish partnerships i.e. with BIDS and other local
businesses. The Festival supports the development of the identity of Southside as a distinct destination for culture within the city. Ambassadors have developed skills, networks and confidence. Summer in Southside achieved a 35% attendance rate to the festivals from the Library Ambassador scheme workshop participants.

**Freedom Festival, Hull**

**Activities**

- Community Correspondents - trained and produced 5 features for broadcast on local radio plus interviews with audiences and ambassadors
- Voices of Freedom - Pre-festival lantern making workshops with families and groups invited to attend and participate in the opening event of the festival
- Signal Intent - A Festival dressing project including community engagement workshops to make flags with older people.
- Little People’s Village - specific family programming alongside recommended programming for families - all signposted in dedicated leaflets.
- 20 Ambassadors and 120 Freedom Makers - trained about how to talk about the work and provide a street team during the festival
- Access Audit and training
- Tailored marketing - Dedicated flyers for target audiences - families, young people etc.

**Impacts**

Without Walls ATN provides access to high quality outdoor arts in the area.

The aim in 2015 was to challenge the perception of the festival as a late night ‘boozy’ festival by introducing a clear family offer - well packaged, signposted and supported. Voices of Freedom and Signal Intent (pre-festival workshops) worked well in targeting the chosen segments, engaging groups who were non-arts engaged. The project has provided the opportunity to test out participative activities as a way of engaging audiences while creating quality work for and by the residents of Hull - that empowers and elicits pride. And there is more work to do here in terms of understanding the connection between participation and attendance as well as the wider social impacts. Either way it was a good consultative, involving process for those who had not engaged with Freedom Festival.
There are useful legacies i.e. through the Ambassadors and Community Correspondents who will continue work. Family focused activity in the Festival, has prompted a positive change in the public’s perception of Freedom Festival - and the offer itself needs to develop now that perception change has begun (as it also then changes expectations). There is also an aim to extend ticketing to a wider range of events for grown-ups and children mainly in the big top area and including film screenings.

Out There, Great Yarmouth

*This year better organised. Got extra this year- show at Blackfriars. Loved iron man.*

*‘More expression this year’ as opposed to skills acts like jugglers and tight rope.*

*Had a really great time. Good atmosphere and acts. Great way to bring people together.*

*Good for the town. Keep going!*

*Normally get a programme in post but this year had to pay a donation. Don’t mind but that is usually a reminder.*

_Festival audiences_

**Activities**

- Troupers - SeaChange Arts Ambassador Scheme: supported with creating content, photography and chalk boards and distribution of marketing materials pre-festival.
- Portuguese Community Band and dance group: 20 participants took part in a show at the festival this year to launch the Festival on 19 September - The Oss and the Ox, alongside 60 dancers from the Portuguese Speaking community. Engagement involved workshops which took place pre-festival to create the show, plus rehearsals and costume making workshops.
- Festival dressing: The Décor was created in the park and other festival sites in the 2 weeks leading up to the festival and local residents (families), school groups and businesses were invited to take part in pre-planned sessions as well as open making sessions in St Georges Park after school and evening making sessions.

**Impacts**

Without Walls has enabled the festival to market itself through channels which it would not normally have tried/afforded. This has enabled the festival to attract new audiences to see outdoor arts and raised the profile of the festival. Better analysis of audiences has also helped to develop both the marketing activity and provision/facilities at the festival itself.
Without Walls has begun to be a recognised as a badge of dynamic new UK work, with both the Out There Festival and the Norfolk & Norwich Festival presenting WW shows, this is particularly relevant within the region.

The Schools days/workshops in 2014/2015 were extremely successful and schools are now activity wanting to engage with SeaChange and the work that we do.

Audience development is a very long and slow process and this project is only beginning to scratch the surface of what festivals can do to engage with audiences. It takes time to gain people’s trust and to get them involved and audience development needs to be a long-term commitment for any festival. Out There will continue to run some of the schemes which were developed through the ATN programme including the Troupers, Schools days and the community band. We are also still very committed to developing our target audiences for the Out There Festival.

**Derby Festé**

*Programming - is good. It's the only reason I came to Derby.*

*There was a great balance of events - glad to see music involved and the Cathedral Green used as a key area. Would like to see more events and a whole Festé weekend - Saturday and Sunday rather than just Friday evening and Saturday.*

*Fantastic to see good quality performances outdoors which are free and varied!*  
*Festival audiences*

**Activities**

- **Ambassadors**
  - Community Ambassadors - enabled them to perform at the festival on the Splash stage and pre-festival at high profile event in August in Normanton and supported Roma community as mentors and with workshops
  - Youth Ambassadors - 12 - helped programme the pre-festival Fringe event in August in Normanton with Artcore and undertook promotion to universities and colleges - plus training/workshop. Developed a social media campaign. Met with potential new audiences and community leaders - pre-festival outreach.
• Fringe event: A collaborative event that brought together Festé with hard to reach communities in Normanton in collaboration with Artcore - supported by community and youth ambassadors (who were involved with promoting it).

• Community stages at the festival:
  o Programmed a festival stage for the Market Place to engage harder to reach demographics - `Splash Stage` - all about Derbyshire artists - artists trying to establish themselves
  o The Music Stage showcased national talent - Baby J helped programme it and local communities were supporting as well following on from the Fringe event.

• Youth hub at the festival on Bass Recreational Ground to integrate the skate competition with the festival.

• Targeted marketing: door drops to reach areas of lower engagement

**Impacts**

The most effective way to engage target audiences through Festé is to allow target demographics to influence the programme. Fringe Festé was a fantastic way of introducing very hard to reach audience members to the festival, however this would not have been as successful if these acts were not also programmed into the main Festé programme. This kind of approach is both effective in ensuring that these demographics attend the festival, but is also a gateway for other acts in these communities to open up a dialogue with the festival. The skate competition attracted around 200 young people, whilst MC Evergreen also attracted a large number of young people. Surtal Arts performance on the Main Stage on the Saturday, attracted a large number of South Asian audiences, many of whom had attended the Fringe Festé event also.
Ambassador Feedback 2015

Ambassadors at each festival were invited to fill out a feedback form and return it to The Audience Agency. This is a summary of the feedback received from 23 ambassadors from across all festivals.

Numbers

There were 85 Ambassadors engaged across the festivals in 2015.

Demographics

A diversity of ambassadors were involved across the festivals.

- 30% Male and 70% female
- 55% 16-24 years and others up to 64 years
- 90% White British
- 1 person whose day to day activities are limited a little

Recruitment

- A quarter had been Ambassadors previously at the festival in question
- Otherwise they were made aware through a variety of sources - existing Ambassadors, advertisements, a local organisation or a friend/relation.

Motivations

- Ambassadors had many and varied motivations for wanting to be involved, including - `to make a contribution to my community` (83%), `to meet new people` (78%) and `learn more about outdoor arts and festivals` (70%) coming out top for, and around a half wanting to learn new skills, build confidence, add to CV, represent their community, to do something different and have fun.

Roles

- Roles are reported to cover a range of activities - mostly collecting comments and feedback from attenders (70%), but also facilitating workshops and events 48%, making contact with community groups (52%), using social media (48%), taking photographs (43%). A quarter had coordinating roles or programmed events, others hosted people
from local communities and were part of the information team. A few performed and did artist liaison.

- The objectives which ambassadors set out to achieve (in their own words) included:

  to show communities more theatrical alternatives than going to the theatre

  As a team, we aimed to programme and market a fringe to the Derby feste (named fringe feste). We wanted to take some of the acts from Festé (as well as some new and local acts) to Normanton, an area just outside of the city centre. Personally, I wanted to learn new marketing skills, as well as wanting to network with people my age

  Wanted be part of a wider artistic community and helping out a local arts organisation. Gain experience in film and camera work. Gain skills in festival organisation and input in events managing.

  create a successful, co-ordinated social media output

  ensuring people were aware of the festival, what it was about, as I knew there had been confusion

- In terms of achieving these objectives - 14% said they achieved half, 48% achieved most and 38% achieved all - where achievement was lower it was put down to the challenge and that the work overall was part of a learning curve.

Experience

- Overall ratings of the experience were 86% very good

- Ratings of the organisation of the Ambassadors was good to very good - administration (rated 100% good or very good), opportunities to input into the work programme (90% good or very good), training, briefing, clarity of role (all rated 91% good or very good).

  it has made me want to join the events sector even more

  I had such a great time working at the festival and met some great people and gained some brilliant experience of working in arts events!

  the training, networking and theatre visits made the entire experience not only worthwhile but enjoyable

  Been a good opportunity to meet like minded people and be a part of an artistic community.

- 100% would be an Ambassador again, if the opportunity was available
• A few Ambassadors gave feedback to support the improvement of the schemes particularly around such things as opportunities to input, better briefing and training or clarity of role - most of which were put down to a lack of lead in time.

**Go See and training**

• Those who attended the Go and See visit to GDIF (around half) felt that it was helpful - 40% in some ways and 60% very much so. About a 1/3 attended the training in Birmingham and of those 75% said it helped them to achieve what they set out to do very much so.
A view from outside 2015

This section summarises the content, social media activity and press coverage from across the festivals to give a flavour of the kinds of activity taking place and the response it received.

Facebook overview

The majority of Facebook interaction is promotional or informational by the festivals themselves. This is supported by photography of the event either by the festivals or by professional or non-professional photographers sharing their images. There are very few posts by audience members enjoying the event and sharing their experiences in the main. It is more difficult to assess the wider impacts of Facebook in generating a buzz about the festivals, however it is a core part of the promotional activity for each festival.

Some festivals also supported youth or other ambassadors to use their networks to generate interest, however, again it is not possible to assess the impacts of this activity. The recommendations outline the importance of using digital analytics to assess the impacts of social media activity.
Twitter overview

All festivals had a Twitter stream and as an overview of the impacts of the posts and interaction we used the digital analytics tool Topsy.com to assess. This tool enables you to see all posts with particular hash tags, categorises them according to content i.e. text, photo, video, identifies influencers and gives the overall stream a ‘sentiment score’.

Reports run on main #tags for each festival, focusing on the period during the festival, using topsy.com:

- Bradford Festival - Topsy sentiment score 70
- FUSE Medway, Topsy sentiment score 65
- SO Festival - Topy sentiment score 74
- Left Coast Spare Parts - Topsy sentiment score 70
- Big Feast, Appetite Topsy sentiment score 53
- Birmingham Summer in Southside Topsy sentiment score 81
- Freedom Festival, Hull Topsy sentiment score 74
- Out There, Great Yarmouth Topsy sentiment score 61
- Derby Festé sentiment Topsy score 65

The ‘influencers’ identified using Topsy on Twitter for each festival were invariably the official festival channel itself, the local press, Arts Council England officers, local councillors and artists themselves (or those promoting the artists).

Unfortunately, since writing the first version of this report in December 2015, Topsy has been closed down.

Sentiment analysis:

Sentiment analysis (also known as opinion mining) refers to the use of natural language processing, text analysis and computational linguistics to identify and extract subjective information in source materials. Sentiment analysis is widely applied to reviews and social media for a variety of applications, ranging from marketing to customer service.

Generally speaking, sentiment analysis aims to determine the attitude of a speaker or a writer with respect to some topic or the overall contextual polarity of a document. The attitude may be his or her judgment or evaluation (see appraisal theory), affective state (that is to say, the emotional state of the author when writing), or the intended emotional communication (that is to say, the emotional effect the author wishes to have on the reader).
Press coverage summary

Many festivals were covered by their local media - print media, online and radio - with general editorial by journalists as well as through partnerships which offered specific content. Some examples are in the document and are given in the Appendices.
Summer in Southside sizzles in the sunshine as Birmingham crowds enjoy the festival

18.25. 29 AUG 2015  BY JOE CHAMBERLAIN

From huge art installations to madcap street theatre, there’s loads of free fun to be had all weekend around Birmingham Hippodrome and the Arcadian Centre.

Enter your e-mail for our What’s On newsletter

Subscribe

VIEW GALLERY

It really was Summer in Southside today as crowds of people enjoyed live music, theatre and street food in the glorious sunshine.

The streets were filled with colour and sounds as families gathered to soak up the atmosphere at this wonderful free event.

Recommended in Family & Kids

CHRISTMAS
Santa’s Grottos in Birmingham: Where to find Father Christmas in 2015 »

CHRISTMAS
Magical Journey closes: Alternative venues to meet Father Christmas »

ACORN'S CHILDREN'S
Watch scores of Santas dance to Sexy and I Know It in the streets of Birmingham! »

CHRISTMAS
Is the Santa Safari at West Midland Safari Park any good? »

CHRISTMAS
Hatton Adventure World’s Santa’s Grotto: Our Verdict »

AMERICAN AIRLINES
Seeing New York
Conclusions 2013-15

The festivals and project managers have been on a journey which means that they are now much more able to articulate, identify and deliver audience development in a festival context. They are now taking a holistic audience engagement approach which contributes to their sustainability as organisations, financially, artistically and socially using a strong understanding of their own audiences and potential audiences.

The seeds of some fundamental changes have been sewn, whether that is a structure and purpose for Ambassadors as in Bradford, where none existed previously, or a change in perception from being a predominately adult festival to one which is welcoming for families such as for Freedom Festival, Hull.

Models of community engagement

Festivals have chosen different models to engage their target communities, which can be summarised as follows:

1. Support through workshops or participative/making activities in advance and then being part of the festival i.e. perform or participate, for example Oss and Ox workshops and performance for Out There or Roma community workshops and performance for Derby Festé and Bradford Festival and alternatively lantern making at Freedom Festival and making for the procession at Spare Parts.
2. Enhanced at-festival experience focused on target markets i.e. Little People’s Village at Freedom Festival and similar children’s areas at SO Festival and Bradford Festival or Unwind at Birmingham Southside for young people and Skate competition at Derby Festé.
3. Pre-festival engagement activity and supported visits to the festival i.e. Birmingham’s Library Ambassadors workshops and bus to the festival, the Big Feast taster event and Derby’s Normanton Fringe event or workshops by artists through a residency as with FUSE.
4. The final approach is about engaging people as volunteers to be involved in the festival in advance in order to reach the community those volunteers are from i.e. ambassadors across the festivals and volunteer programmes as at Freedom Festival and Out There.
Effective approaches

While the following approaches are not necessarily mutually exclusive, highlighted here are the key approaches appropriate in different cases.

Engaging communities in areas of lower engagement

Effective strategies have mostly included workshops taking place within communities such as Birmingham’s Library Ambassador scheme and Bradford Festival’s local workshops, but also larger scale Taster events such as for Big Feast and Derby Festé’s Fringe Festé. These have served to raise the profile of the festival and engage a community. An integral part of SO Festival is taking the whole festival to the market towns in East Lindsey, culminating in the final weekend in Skegness.

Most festivals have been increasingly successful in attracting audiences from pre-festival activity to the main event, however, the signposting and support to attend should be clear. It should also be possible to put a target against the proportion of visitors making the journey between the two. It could be less successful if the geographic relationship between the two and/or the connection is not made i.e. in most cases it was made by the activity being a part of the festival i.e. set dressing or performing or activity took place adjacent to the festival site.

Engaging young people

While few of the festivals have radically increased the quantity of young people at their festival as a proportion of the overall audience, those who had young people as a target audience created opportunities for them to get involved and gave them a place to go within the festival. A key part of this was through youth ambassador schemes, supporting engaged young people in various ways to help engage audiences like them (the role of ambassadors is explored more below). Engaging young people has been most effective when festivals have met them on their own terms, offering to support them with their existing interests i.e. around music or skateboarding, and then integrating this into the festival programmes i.e. through the work of the ambassador coordinators in Bradford and Derby. Alternatively, providing an environment at the festival which suits what they already do socially i.e. the Unwind experience at Summer in Southside - involving something free, like drinks.

Measuring the impact of such work requires a greater level of qualitative evaluation at the festivals as well as an ongoing tracking of overall perceptions and demographics.

Engaging families

The key aspects of engaging families fall into two areas - firstly the overall experience at the festival and secondly engagement in advance of the festival through participation or other kind
of community engagement. Festivals have also produced marketing materials either dedicated to a family offer or clearly signposting the family offer.

- The family areas with a combination of free, open drop in workshops, post-performance workshops and specific programming have all enhanced the experience for families at SO Festival, Freedom Festival and Bradford Festival. This was further enhanced with targeted marketing activity at the festivals and prior to them.
- Participative activities in advance have also been key - whether to raise the profile or create something to be part of the festival ie. for Out There Festival.

While many of the festivals are considered to be family friendly overall, the festivals have discovered that they can develop their facilities and offer to be more supportive of families, and make them feel a greater sense of ownership (combined with the activities outlined above in the section on engaging low engaged communities). Engaging families is a clear way to make initial connections with target communities which are less engaged.

Specific communities

Where communities may feel particularly excluded generally and/or are unaware of the festival, festivals have created bespoke programmes of engagement. This has been particularly the case with the Roma communities in both Bradford and Derby. In each case workshops were taken to them and they were supported intensively to develop their skills, gain confidence and then bring their work to the festival to be showcased. The outcomes of this are both about breaking down barriers for those communities, but also about overall community cohesion.

Further research would be required to better understand the social impacts of such work both immediately at the festivals and over the longer term.

Creating a festive atmosphere

Festivals have aimed to make their festivals feel ‘bigger’ and more present in a number of ways. This has been crucial in terms of ensuring as wide a range of people as possible are aware that something is happening (perhaps even when it is not actually), to create an air of anticipation and a sense of celebration which encompasses the whole area. Festivals have achieved this through set dressing, opening community parades and performances, local media engagement and the work of local ambassadors. Taster events, as covered above, also have an impact in this area. Each of these activities has had the double benefit of engaging and involving the community and promoting a sense of pride and ownership of the festival and supporting an enhanced sense of place in relation to the festival.
• Set dressing has invariably also had another function in terms of participative workshops with artists to create materials with target communities and in open drop in sessions.

• Opening parades involving elements created by or performed by the local community happened for Spare Parts and Freedom Festival, usually on the opening evening of the festival with the result of bringing a community of participants and their families and friends in at the beginning to experience the event and then spread the word.

• Local media engagement has involved producing content which the media can use, invariably by ambassadors trained in this area such as in Bradford and for the Big Feast or by training ‘community correspondents’ as Freedom Festival has. Again, bringing the community into a proactive role.

• Ambassador working for SO Skegness also included a local information role, talking to businesses in the area of the festival to tell them what was going to happen and to engage them with it.

Overall this is about mobilising the local community to help extend the promotional effort. The more proud the local population feel of the festival, in terms of its content and sense of celebration, the more likely they are to attend and support it. It is therefore an accumulative impact of all of the above activities which brings this into focus for a community.

Ambassador working

Overall the Ambassador programmes have been developed and refined over the years. In the third year their function and objectives were clearer and overall Ambassadors were satisfied with their experiences.

There are however some top tips which have come out of the process.

• Ambassador Coordinators are essential - dedicated to the role and employed at least 6 months in advance for planning purposes. Those who are already connected to the local community or already work for and with different communities tend to be most effective as they have models and ways of working which are effective i.e. it is not an administrative role, but strategic and entrepreneurial as well as someone who is open to ideas and inspirational.

• Commitment is required all round - from the festival to commit to an Ambassador scheme over the longer term and from Ambassadors to deliver on the role.

• Ambassadors like to be engaged early on so that they can be as involved as possible not only with devising their own programme of work, but also to have the opportunity to be involved more widely in the festival and understand it better.

• Effective briefing, training and clarity of roles is essential, with clear objectives.
• Ambassadors are usually looking to support their community better in the main, and should be recruited as such, and a well-supported scheme or programme will then offer the wider benefits they are seeking ie. experience, confidence, learning.
• Ambassadors undertook a whole range of activities which reflect the needs and objectives of each festival and most were aware that they and the festival were on a learning curve, so capturing that learning is essential to inform future developments.

**Audience Feedback**

The most critical feedback from audiences focused on the availability and usefulness of information and signage. This is a constant call from audiences, but a good map with clear locations and timings is invaluable both to support those planning in advance as well as those coming across the activity on the day.

The other area is the issue of sight-lines, which can be challenging in the outdoors, but should be a consideration when planning locations and `stages` for different kinds of work.

Basic facilities are often quoted as not being adequate i.e. provision of toilets and aspects around accessibility (which Freedom Festival had done some specific auditing work on, and have learned about the issues through the course of the 2015 festival).

Audiences often mention the need for more pre-festival promotion reaching wider, as once they have experienced it they are looking to make sure as many people as possible engage with it. Alternatively, they are surprised by the event having heard nothing previously. This is really down to festivals promoting far enough in advance and considering their target audiences and ensuring that those who come across the event know that it is annual and encourage residents to seek it out in the future.
Recommendations

A note on setting objectives

It is a tricky business setting SMART objectives, and most of the festivals did indeed put a line in the sand and attach percentages or numbers to their objectives. As most festivals in their quantitative data collection are working with a margin of error of ±5% or more, it is clear that monitoring targets of increases of 1% or 2% is difficult to assess. Added to which some festivals responded rate changed across the years, making it harder to compare year on year, where margins of error were substantially higher. With this in mind, it is therefore important for festivals to maintain a consistent level of data collection each year, so that trends can be monitored with a similar margin of error year on year.

Where festivals have not dipped below an average on any particular measure over three years it should therefore be taken as an indication that they could be having an impact through the specific activities they are doing, and could indeed be changing in the right direction - and it is only by monitoring over the longer term that it will be possible to see a trend.

It is also suggested that where it is more appropriate, as some festivals did, objectives should be set more specifically ie. the target number of participants in a workshop from a particular community combined with a percentage who will go on to attend the festival.

Evaluation

Once objectives have been set, it is then important to consider how they might be measured, and to ensure that they can indeed be measured realistically and within resources. Festivals should be integrating evaluation in both formal and creative ways into their project management and the more it is approached in this way, the more useful it should be in its findings. This does require a dedicated resource ie one person’s responsibility for overseeing all evaluation, particularly for fieldwork, but also in the planning.

Audience development practice

While written guidance and templates were provided for audience development planning and meetings covered audience development, some more formal training in its principles may have been useful. This would have supported more exchange and discussion of the issues, as well as providing a framework for the plans.
Alongside this training, more sharing of festival audience development activities during the programme (beyond the written reports) in a more dedicated exchange environment (rather than a meeting environment) may have also been beneficial.

Community engagement

Most of the festivals undertook community engagement of one sort or another using different models and approaches. Such participative activities are invariably well received by different communities, and can be a step on the road to other kinds of involvement both locally or through the festivals in cultural activities more widely. However, given that one of the project’s stated objectives was to increase the audience for outdoor arts at festivals, the route from participative activity within the community to attending a festival was not always fulfilled. This route was most effective where the participative activity led to participation at the festival i.e. a lantern parade or a performance, or if buses were available to take participants to the festival. Some festivals were however, starting to explore ways of ‘hosting’ communities at the festival, so that they could attend independently but feel some familiarity. The Appetite Bingo was perhaps the most engaging way of achieving this, offering benefits on all sides.

It is also clear that some companies are also more adept and experienced in relation to supporting festivals engage different communities and target audiences, and some assessment of this could be useful to support effective programming and planning for festivals. Companies could be involved in this conversation more directly to collect their feedback and ideas. South Paw and Wet Picnic appear to be the best examples from 2015.

Creating a festive atmosphere

Many of the festivals have invested in ‘set dressing’ in one way or another to create a festive atmosphere – something which is greater than the sum of its parts. This has been two fold in its outcomes, firstly to indicate clearly that something is happening (the need for which cannot be under-estimated) and secondly it has given rise to a great deal of community participation activity. However, this could go further in terms of involvement of local businesses, as well as local media, as has been discussed and demonstrated across the festivals.

Use of social media

Where social media is considered a key tool for communication with and promotion to audiences, it is vital to be clear what the target and purpose of creating and ‘broadcasting’ social media content is, as well as having a plan to evaluate its impacts. While all festivals
used social media, fewer could track its impacts. More effective use if the digital analytics available should therefore be encouraged as the social media activity is considered a core aspect of the promotional campaigns for each festival.

**Top Tips for Success in Audience Development**

- **Planning** - consider your overall festival objectives, specifics of the target audiences, which model of community engagement best suits your location, resources and capacity/skills. Then set strategies accordingly which can be developed over three years. Use evidence to inform the planning whether previous results of audience surveying, population statistics or local knowledge.

- **Employ people** - use any additional funding to engage people dedicated to investing in audience development on the ground, with local communities and to integrate this across the festival. Rather than seeing if it can work on existing resources initially, consider this as an investment up front (which you may need not so much of in the future). This also applies to a dedicated resource allocated to delivering evaluation.

- **Where a high level of investment is required in volunteers such as ambassadors, make sure they are engaged as early as possible so that you can work with them and ensure that they are confident to achieve their objectives. Also, consider what goes on outside festival time, to provide a bridge for volunteers or ambassadors between festivals, as they are a resource to be invested in who could provide a wider range of benefits to cities or across arts organisations.**

- **Ensure direct connections between off-site, pre-festival activity to the main event if your objective is to increase attendance at the festival from target groups.**

- **Maps, signage, information points are crucial - once engaged, audiences do not want to feel that they may have missed out.**

**Evaluation into the future**

This project has honed the delivery of quantitative impacts for the festivals, and audience monitoring data is crucial for tracking progress and impacts over time with target audiences. Although it can be challenging collecting data face to face at festivals, the participant organisations have all mostly overcome this in one way or another.

However, given the achievements of the festivals and their overall ambitions, evaluating social impacts - such as community cohesion and sense of place would seem to be the next most logical area of investigation. This would provide evidence of the intrinsic and longer term impacts of a festival both for the location and its residents - possibly useful in making the case
to a wider range of supporters as well as supporting the further development of community engagement activities. Rather than the festival being an annual event, this could support the festivals to articulate an unfolding story of artistic development and engagement.

The other area of exploration is asking the question - how does having a festival benefit the residents and businesses of a town/city? While some festivals have incorporated a full economic impact study, there is something about the wider benefits and opportunities to investigate.

Finally, further research could focus on the different types of work presented, involving the companies in the evaluation, and audiences’ responses and engagement with each, as most festivals present a diversity of work.

In terms of delivery, better training and support for fieldworkers may ensure response rates are maintained - particularly about the wider context of the festival and its operation.

Many festivals are also looking for more creative ways of integrating feedback from audiences into the workings of the festival - the purposes of which would have to be clear (and this could not replace the quantitative audience monitoring data collection), and the resources available to deliver it effectively. Freedom Festival in their digital playground in 2014 achieved this to an extent, as did the Big Feast Bingo by Appetite in 2015. Other ideas include mini-interviews and vox pops.
Appendix

Films, videos and content links 2015

The following is a sample of the content generated by the festivals in 2015.

Bradford Festival

Ambassador - Storify around Urban Festival  https://storify.com/AllStarEnts/bradford-ambassador

features:

- Tweets and posts from people attending the festival.
- Media releases from Telegraph and Argos, Bradford Review and Urban Echo.
- Links to the films produced in the project.
- DJ Mixes from the artists.
- Photos from both festivals.
- Behind the scenes photos and tweets in the lead up to the festivals.

Left Coast - Showzam and Spare Parts

https://storify.com/LeftCoastUK/showzam-presents-circus-town

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPC0cK3Ow

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0mWPKNawy5k

Freedom Festival, Hull

Features by community correspondents:

- **Episode 1** The Bell by Periplumb  

- **Episode 2** Voices of Freedom Sailing Under Empty Skys / Premier Performance  
  https://soundcloud.com/freedomfesthull/voices-of-freedom-sailing-under-empty-skiesending  

- **Episode 3** Frantic by Acrojou  
• Episode 4 Signal Intent  

• Episode 5 Tangle  

• Episode 6 Lighting the Voices of Freedom  
https://soundcloud.com/freedomfesthull/lighting-the-voices-of-freedom-our-lantern-makers

Out There Festival

Ambassador’s video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PBvf9EMqe1U

Derby Festé


• Gallery  http://www.derbytelegraph.co.uk/pictures/Gallery-3-Day-Derby-Feste-2015/pictures-27869782-detail/pictures.html

• Independent journalist blog  http://derbynews.org.uk/2015/09/27/derby-feste-2/

• England Events  http://englandevents.co.uk/derby-the-splash-stage-at-derby-feste-2015/402194

• Mik Scarlet  http://miakscarlet.com/derby-feste-here-we-come/

• http://www.madeinderbyshire.org/events/derby-feste-2015
Contacts

London Office
2nd Floor, Rich Mix
35-47 Bethnal Green Road
London E1 6LA
T 020 7407 4625

Manchester Office
Green Fish Resource Centre
46-50 Oldham Street
Northern Quarter
Manchester M4 1LE
T 0161 234 2955

hello@theaudienceagency.org
www.theaudienceagency.org

Registered in England & Wales 8117915
Registered Charity No. 1149979