

Appendix 3: Full analysis report

Context

About Thurrock

Thurrock is a borough of Essex that sits on the bank of the river Thames, east of London. It has a population of 176,000, up 11.6% since the last census in 2011, and expected to rise a further 9.2% by 2030ⁱ. 51% are female, 54% are between the ages of 25 and 64 and 66.2% are White Britishⁱⁱ.

Over 20% of Thurrock residents were born overseas and there are over 130 different languages spoken by school children as their main languageⁱⁱⁱ.

Unemployment is higher in Thurrock (4.5%) than regionally (3.8%) and nationally (3.7%); however, rates of those who are economically inactive but want a job is far higher in Thurrock (22.6%) than in the East (17.3%) or England as a whole (17.5%)^{iv}. Just 10.9% of Thurrock residents live in the 20% most deprived areas of England^v.

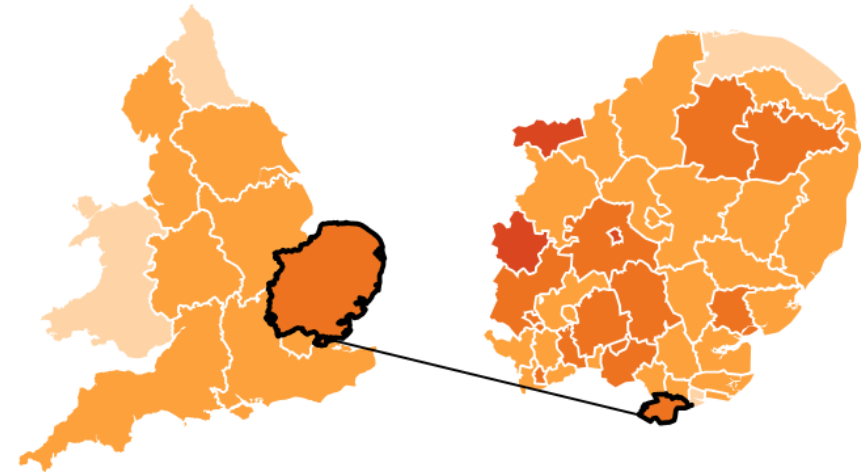


Figure 1: Thurrock location. Source ONS Census 2021

Life expectancy is substantially lower in Thurrock than regionally or nationally, and there are high rates of premature births, obesity, cancer and cardiovascular mortalities^{vi}.

Arts engagement rates in Start Thurrock's target area^{vii} are lower than the surrounding region^{viii}, where 81% of Start Thurrock's target audience are from groups less likely to engage in the arts compared with 57% less likely to engage in the surrounding area^{ix}.

About Creative People and Places (CPP)

Creative People and Places^x (CPP) is an Arts Council England (ACE) funding programme which aims to engage new people in the arts through commissioning projects in areas of low arts engagement. CPPs focus on engaging new audiences with an offer which is excellent in terms of process and product, through building new and unusual partnerships beyond the arts.

The current CPP 2022-25 projects were invited to apply for an additional year extension (up to March 2026). Start Thurrock successfully secured this extension.

About Start Thurrock

Start Thurrock is a CPP programme which is creating a new story for Thurrock.

It is a creative community organisation that aims to engage Thurrock residents to take the lead in what they want to create, see or experience in their place. Projects are formed by listening and working with communities to enable residents to select, make and experience ambitious, inclusive and relevant cultural activities.

The key principles that are the foundation for everything it does are:

Being resident-led in decision making and enabling the power shift in who decides what creativity is best for the people in that place.

- o To be innovative and test and trial. Everyone has the permission to fail.
- o The quality of the experience is as important as the quality of the outcomes.
- o Action learning is embedded into every step to draw out what is working and what could be different across all elements of the delivery.

Start Thurrock's overall aims are to have more arts and cultural opportunities, involve more people in them and, in the longer term, to create a viable arts industry in Thurrock.

The Start Thurrock core Consortium consists of Tilbury on the Thames Trust (lead organisation), Thurrock Community and

Voluntary Services (CVS), the Royal Ballet & Opera, Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions (TLS) CIC Services and Thurrock Council.

Here we provide additional information behind the summary we've presented in the main evaluation report, including charts and analysis.

Below we cover:

- o Start Thurrock events – what happened?
- o Demographics – who came along?
- o Reaching those least likely to engage
- o What did they think?
- o What could be different next time?

Start Thurrock events – what happened?

The largest segment of events (37%) were designed to have a universal appeal and nearly a third (28%) are targeted at families. There were also events specifically targeting disabled people and also older people.

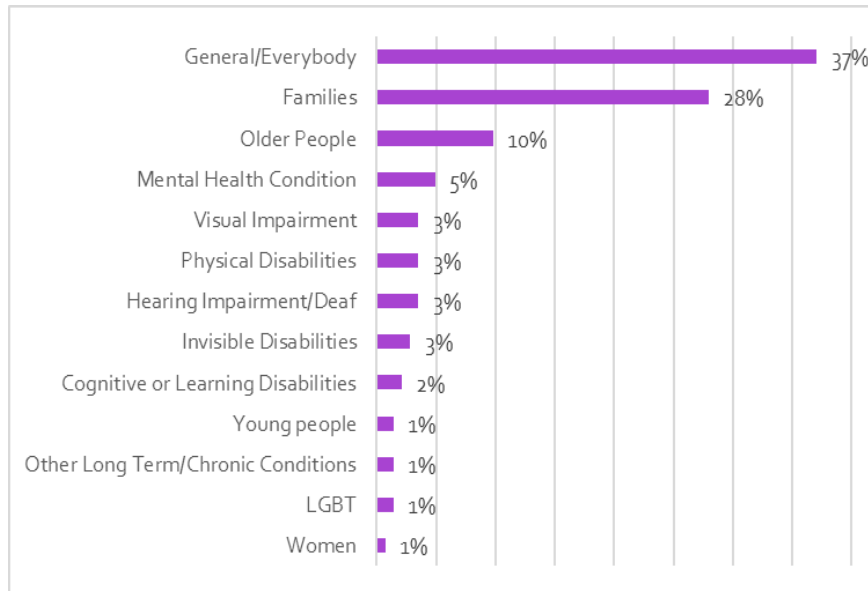


Figure 2: Target audiences. Base = 67 events, some targeting multiple groups, and some with a duration over multiple days.

Common main art forms include combined arts (36%), theatre (14%), outdoor art (10%) and craft (10%) as well as other (6%), which includes panel meetings. Other popular art forms, either main or secondary, include visual arts, dance and music.

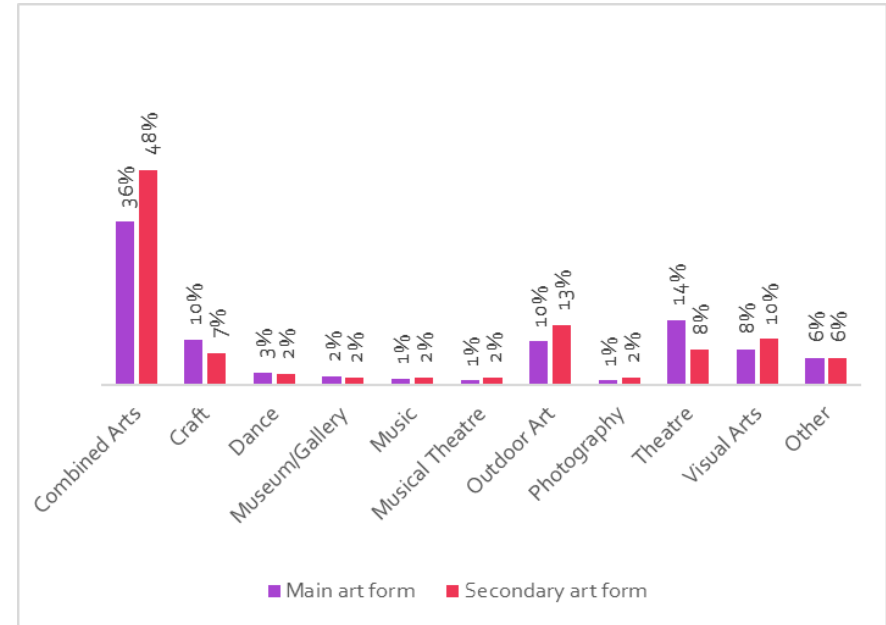


Figure 3: Main and secondary art form. Base = 67 events, some with a duration over multiple days.

Most events contained or used some digital content, most commonly in the form of ticket sales and audience feedback facilities. Those with digital artistic content were still delivered in person or via a hybrid format, and so were still delivered within the area of Thurrock.

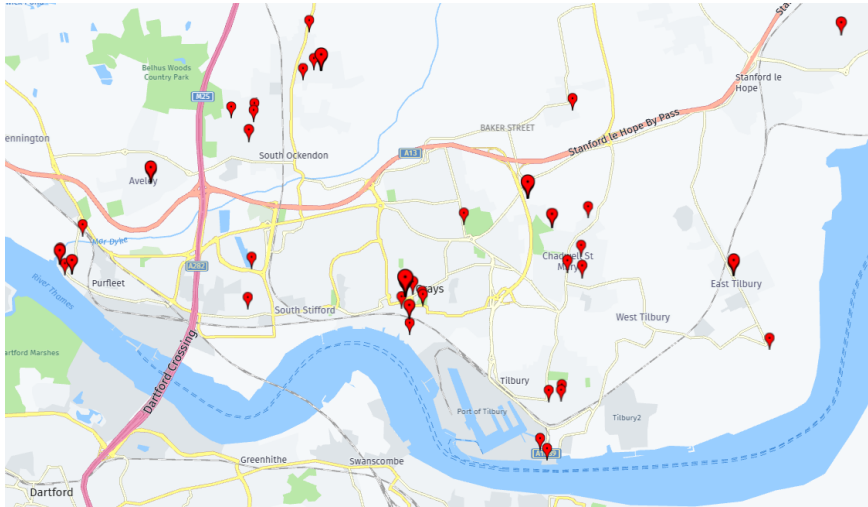


Figure 4: Activity map (scale of pin larger where instances of the same postcode are greater).

Demographics – who came along?

Here we present who came along to Start Thurrock CPP events this year.

A majority of Start Thurrock's audience and participants come from Thurrock. The map here shows the reach of participants using their postcodes. Overall, there is good reach within each ward in Thurrock and the map shows clustering around Purfleet, South Ockendon, Grays, Tilbury, East Tilbury and Corringham. Through offering a mix of central and hyperlocal activities, people have been able to engage.

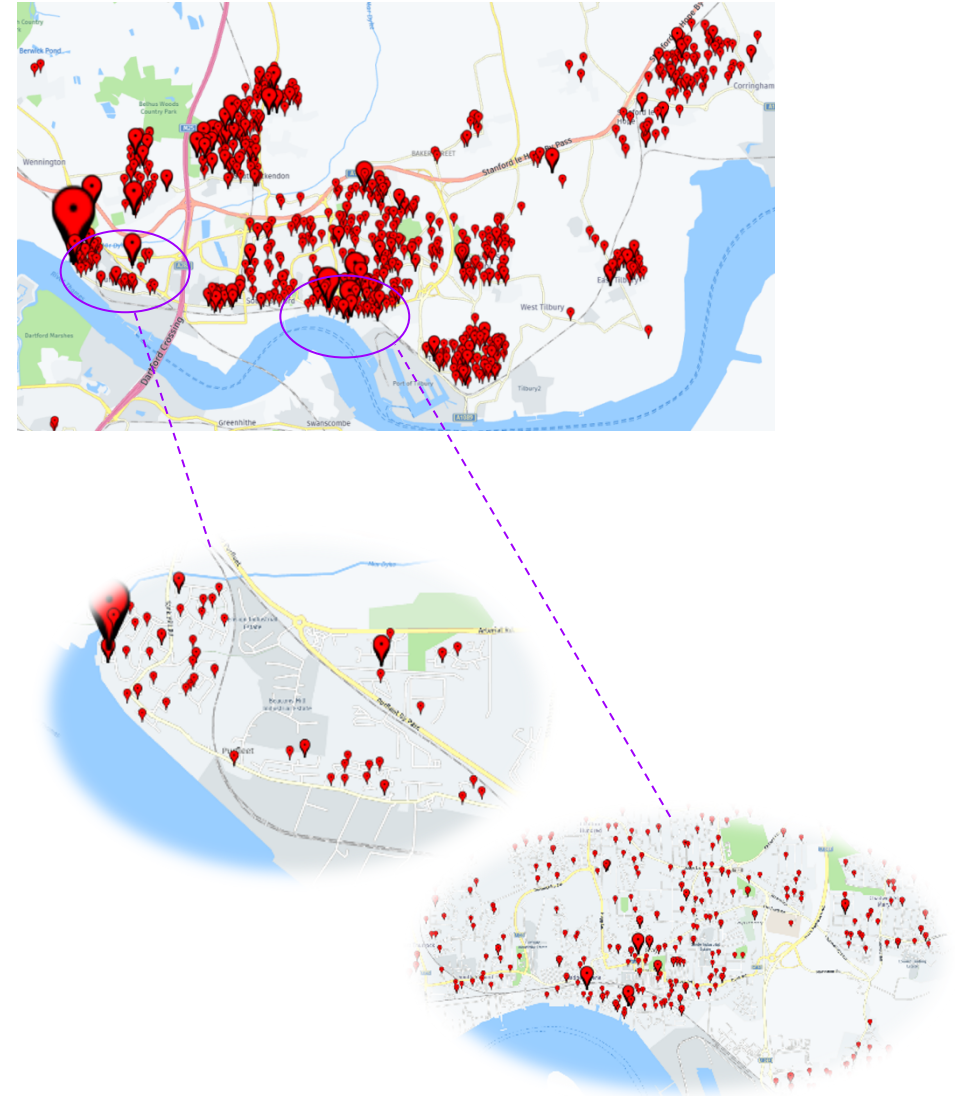


Figure 5: Postcode map centred on Thurrock, with zoomed-in areas (scale of pin larger where instances of the same postcode are greater).

Start Thurrock 2025 audiences surveyed tend to be female (80%) with the biggest representation of this group aged between 30-44 (58%). This audience segment has a broad spread of self-identified occupations, with the largest group of those surveyed describing themselves as modern or traditional professionals (15%), with the next-largest group (13%) identifying as 'other' (such as stay-at-home parents, part-time employed, tutors, carers and those on maternity leave).

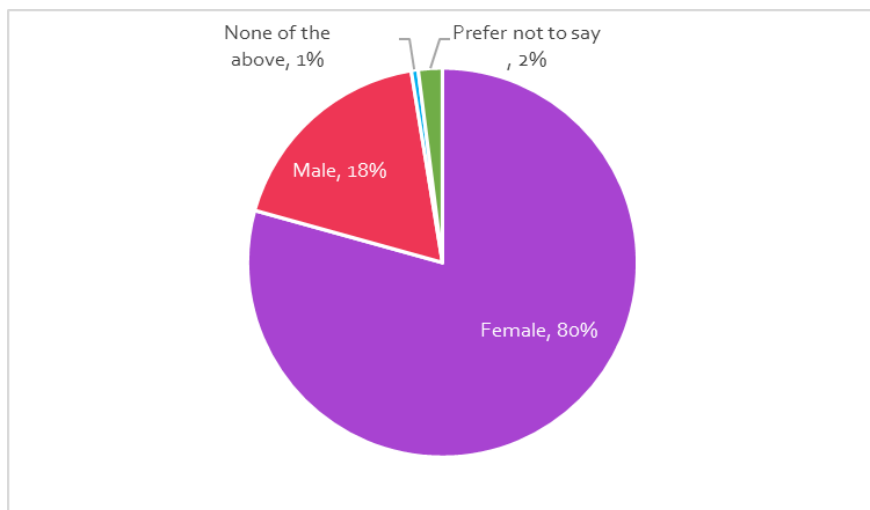


Figure 6: Gender identity. Base = 518.

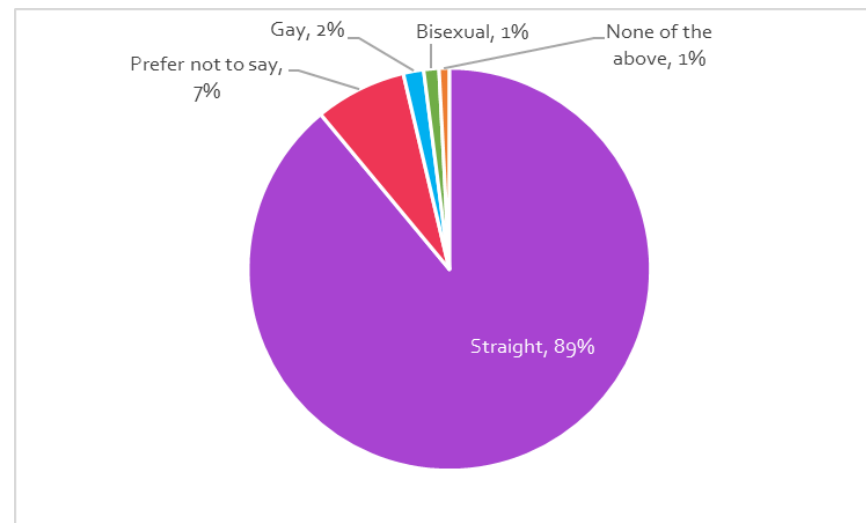


Figure 7: Sexual orientation. Base = 491.

Audience members are far more likely to be aged 25 to 44 than the average for the Thurrock population. Many do attend with children, but they are unlikely to fill out the surveys, so we have limited the age chart here to adults 16+ to provide an accurate comparison.

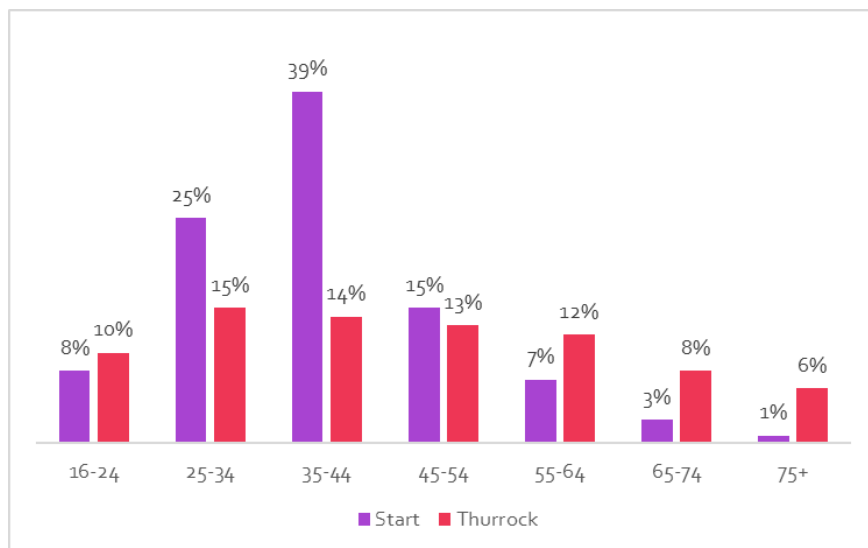


Figure 8: Start Thurrock audience adult ages. Thurrock comparator (ONS). (n = 508)

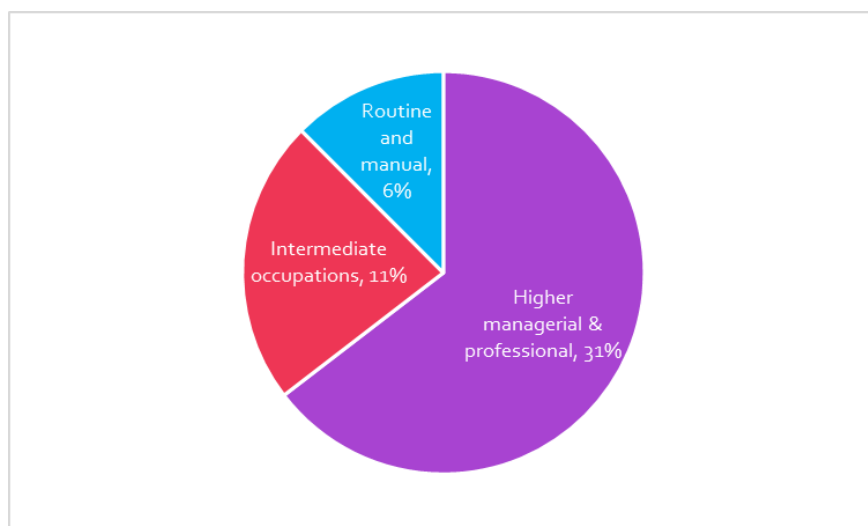


Figure 9: Occupations (n = 519)

A majority of Start Thurrock audiences (85%) attended with friends and family and three-quarters attended with children of a mix of ages (75%). As 37% of Start Thurrock events are targeted at a general audience, and 28% are targeted at families, their events appear to be successfully reaching their target audiences. The two most commonly occurring words from event feedback were 'kids' and 'children', demonstrating the impact that access to family-centred activity had on audiences' opinions of the events.

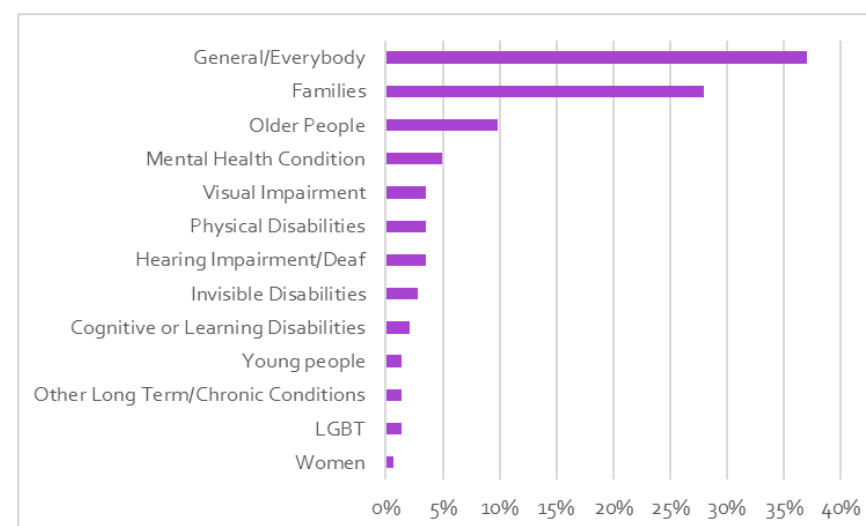


Figure 10: Target Audiences of Start Thurrock 2025 Events / Activities

In terms of the diversity of Start Thurrock attendees, those identifying as Black and Black British are represented in higher numbers than the Thurrock average (15% : 12%), while White and White British are lower than the regional average (65% : 77%). The proportion of Asian and Asian British is equal to Thurrock's average (7%). This suggests that Start Thurrock has an equitable approach to its inclusion of the region's diverse communities.

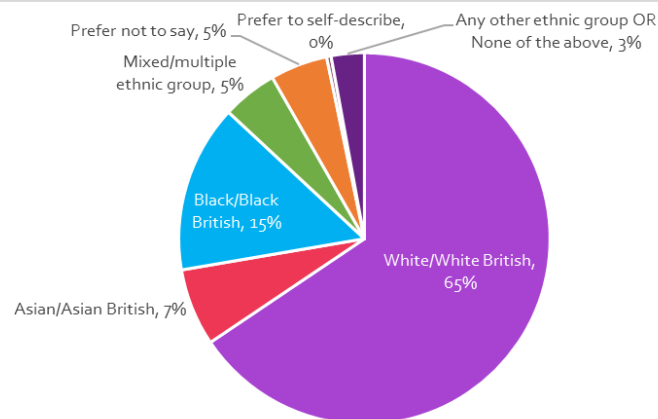


Figure 11: Ethnicity (n = 521)

Those who identify as D/deaf or having long-term conditions or illnesses is, however, lower than the local average (9% : 17%); similarly, those identifying as neurodivergent are less represented than in the wider UK population (9% : 15%). These figures either represent two areas for improvement or are perhaps indicative of mismatches between the cultural preferences of these groups in the region and the wider Start Thurrock audiences.

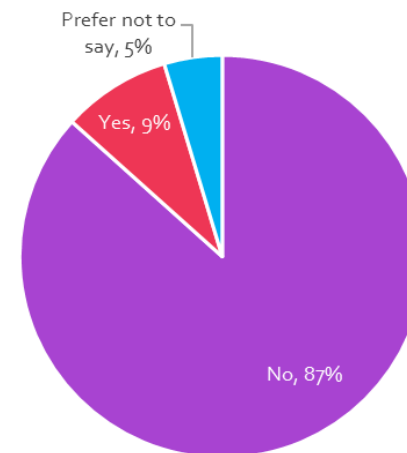


Figure 12: Responses to survey question 'Do you identify as D/deaf, and / or do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses expected to last for 12 months or more?' (n = 518)

Start Thurrock is well-placed to engage with those that fall below the regional average due to its track record in reaching those least likely to engage.

Reaching those least likely to engage

Start Thurrock appears to strongly attract non-regular and first-time engagers with arts and culture. A third of Start Thurrock 2025 audiences said this was their **first time engaging** with arts and culture; when including others that do not already regularly engage in arts and culture events, this rises to 78%.

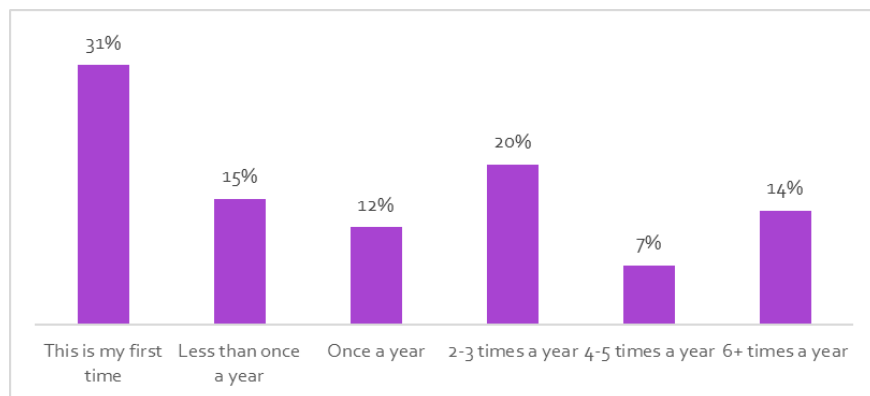


Figure 13: Responses to survey question 'How often do you attend or participate in arts and culture experiences?' (n = 527)

To explore this further, we consider levels of deprivation and likelihood to engage in the arts among Start Thurrock's audiences. Typically, those from areas of high deprivation are less likely to engage in the arts; here we present the results of two pieces of analysis of audience postcodes that allow us to investigate Start Thurrock's audience data in further detail.

Indices of Multiple Deprivation

The first is Indices of Multiple Deprivation analysis; using audience postcodes matched to the Indices of Deprivation (IMD) we look at the levels of deprivation for Start Thurrock engagements this year, compared with those for the Thurrock and England populations as a whole.

The chart below shows the levels of deprivation for Start Thurrock engagements this year, compared with those for the Thurrock and England populations as a whole. It shows the proportion of people who live in each 'decile' – the lower the decile the higher the levels of deprivation, with 1 being the 10% most deprived areas of England.

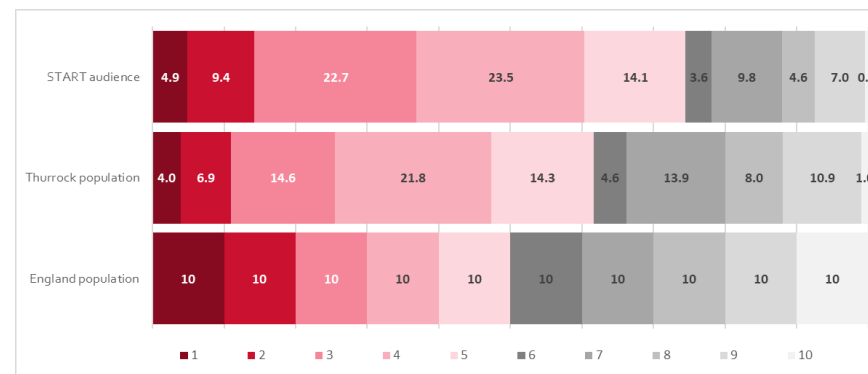


Figure 14: Indices of Multiple Deprivation analysis. Base = 1,496

This shows that levels of extreme deprivation are relatively low in Thurrock (4%) as well as for Start Thurrock engagements (4.9%) compared with the 10% most deprived areas nationally. This figure has risen since last year (from 3.5%), which shows an improvement the proportion of attendees from this group. Start Thurrock audiences are substantially more likely to come from the 30% most deprived areas of England (39.6%) than the Thurrock population (25.5%). Since last year there was an increase of 2.5% in deciles 1-5. Overall, this shows that Start Thurrock are doing well to reach those who will benefit most from their programming.

The more deprived wards were better represented than the less deprived in the postcode data collected overall. In terms of specific events, we found that Tilbury Big Lunch, Mental Health Mates Pottery Painting Workshop, Once Upon a Flowerbed, Green Light Circus Skills and Sublimation Textile Printing all had great representation in Deciles 1-3, while Port Of Tilbury Open Day had good representation from Deciles 1, 2 and 4.

Wards that we recommend for further attention are all lower decile wards, with low representation in the postcode data collected:

Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park, Chadwell St Mary, Little Thurrock Blackshots, and Stanford East and Corringham Town.

Audience Spectrum

The second piece of analysis is **Audience Spectrum**, which uses postcode data to categorise audiences into three levels of arts and culture engagement: low, medium and high.

Start Thurrock's four target audience segments are:

- **Supported Communities:** Those who are culturally low engaged, health poor, taking part in craft and church groups and typically in the senior and youth age groups.
- **Kaleidoscope Creativity:** Those who are urban low engagers preferring free, local, culturally specific arts and festivals of mixed ages.
- **Dormitory Dependables:** Those who are live in suburban and small-town areas who are interested in heritage activities and mainstream arts.
- **Trips & Treats:** Those who enjoy mainstream arts and are popular culture fans, who are influenced by children, family and friends.

Overall, we find that 36% of Start Thurrock audiences come from groups least likely to engage in arts and culture activities, compared to 27% of the Thurrock population in general, meaning that Start Thurrock are successfully reaching those least likely to engage with their targeted programming.

In terms of the four target segments, Start Thurrock are reaching Supported Communities (6%) and Kaleidoscope Creativity (6%) at a slightly higher rate than the Thurrock population (4%). The reach for Dormitory Dependables (14%) and Trips & Treats (34%) is

slightly lower than the population (18% and 35% respectively). This shows that Start Thurrock are engaging residents across Thurrock. Although not a target group, Start Thurrock have far better reach with Frontline Families (19%) than the population (13%); these are one of the low engagement groups which shows that Start Thurrock is achieving the ambition to reach audiences from areas of least engagement.

The chart shows the reach for Start Thurrock audiences (purple columns) compared with the population of Thurrock as a whole (blue bars).

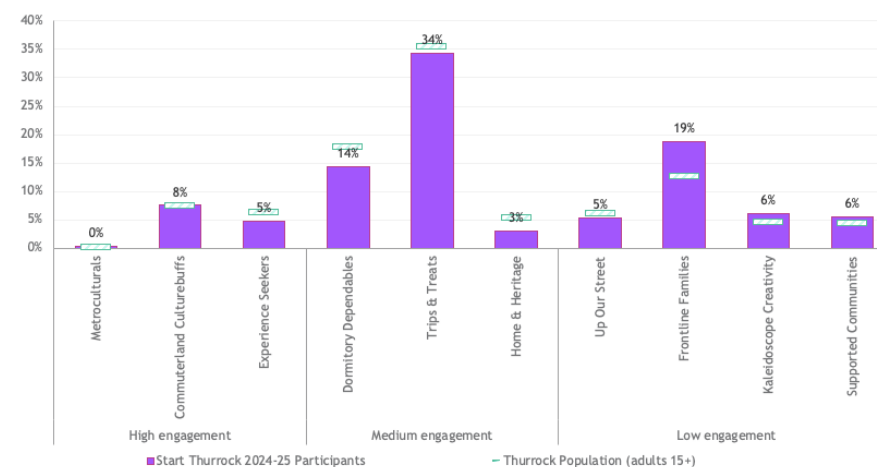


Figure 15: Audience Spectrum analysis. Base = 1,736

What did they think?



Figure 16: 25 most frequently occurring words in responses to survey question 'In your opinion, what were the highlights of the event?' (n=480)

The engagement and participation were spectacular.

Audience member, via survey

I thought it was really fun and very relaxed! I enjoyed it as much as my children. All the staff were very helpful and friendly. Nothing was too much to ask for.

Audience member, via survey

Audience members enjoyed the chance to participate in interactive activities and enjoyed learning new things. Audience members noted the friendly and welcoming atmosphere and how safe they felt with their children, and they praised the diversity, inclusion and sense of community they felt and observed.

The majority of people attending say Start Thurrock events make them feel proud of their local area (93%), and / or have helped them feel part of their community (93%).

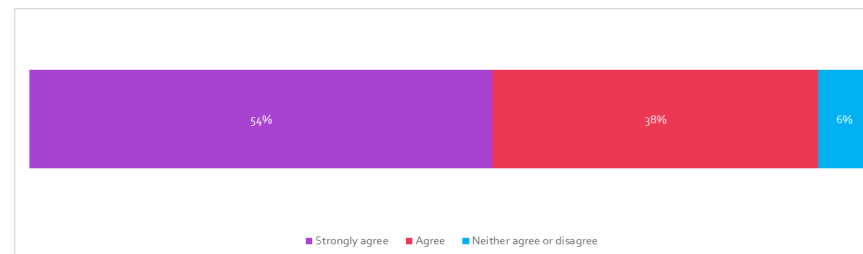


Figure 17: Responses to survey statement 'This event makes me feel **proud** of my local area' (n=508)

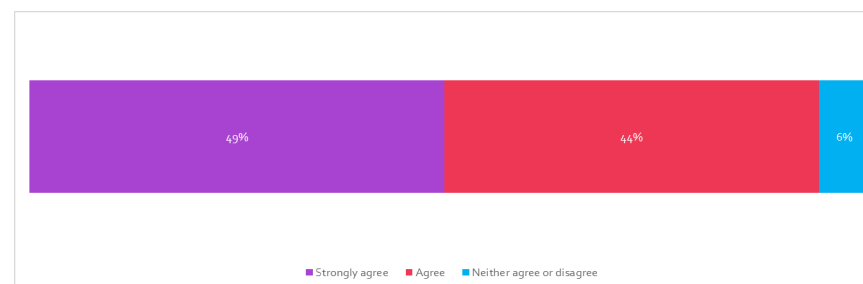


Figure 18: Responses to survey statement 'The event / activity has helped me feel part of the community' (n=489)

Many people commented on the sense of community:

My highlight was...

People (strangers to each other) socialising / working together

The community spirit

[...] creating the curiosity, teaching and encouraging local community

Audience members, via survey

Events were fun and entertaining - even when there were technical issues at the West Thurrock Big Lunch, attendees commented on how good the children's entertainment and DJ were. The bouncy castle and circus from this event were two of the most commented-on activities across all of the Start Thurrock survey data. The quality and variation of the stalls were appreciated by the community.

When asked whether they would recommend Start Thurrock events to friends and family, 92% rated the question 8/10 or above.

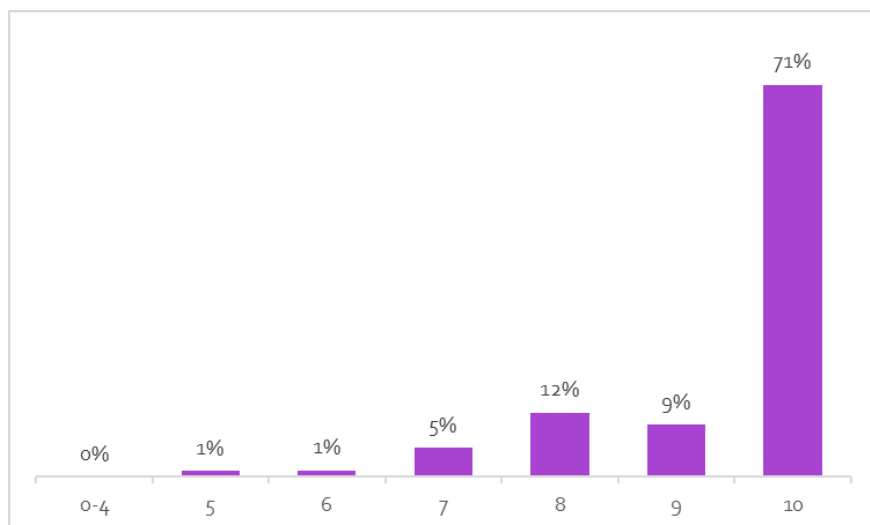


Figure 19: Responses to survey question 'How likely are you to recommend a Start Thurrock event to a friend?' (n=526)

The chart below shows that a third of audiences are hearing about events via word of mouth and another third via social media such as Facebook. Based on the age-group demographic most in attendance, this correlates with the usual profile of Facebook users, compared to other social media sources which could help promote the events to a younger age bracket.

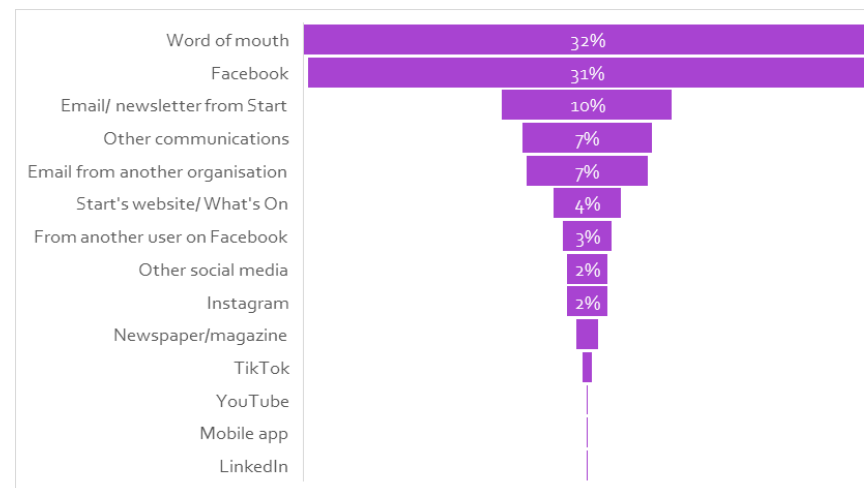


Figure 20: Responses to survey question 'Where had you seen or heard about Start Thurrock's event prior to your visit / attendance?' (n=520)

Beyond word of mouth, as little as 1% are attracted by newspaper / magazine advertisement so increasing these methods could help reach audiences who are less likely to be online (often specific communities or older age groups), depending on whether the cost of doing so is prohibitive.

What could be different next time?

People commenting on things that didn't work as well mentioned a technical glitch although the one matter that could be considered differently for next time is provision of shaded areas at events.

It is very clear that events being free to access and thought being given to wraparound activity being reasonably priced is important and largely this worked, although there were a couple of points about rides being expensive. People appreciate that it is kept at a reasonable price and the one time it wasn't it was noted.

Endnotes

ⁱ <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/sites/default/files/assets/documents/hwb-strategy-2022-v01.pdf>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/thurrock-facts-and-statistics/population>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/sites/default/files/assets/documents/hwb-strategy-2022-v01.pdf>

^{iv} <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157204/printable.aspx>

^v Indices of Multiple Deprivation analysis. For more, see section 2.2

^{vi} <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/sites/default/files/assets/documents/hwb-strategy-2022-v01.pdf>

^{vii} Defined as 30 minutes drivetime from Tilbury Cruise Terminal

^{viii} Defined as 90 minutes drivetime from Tilbury Cruise Terminal

^{ix} Audience Spectrum analysis from The Audience Agency

^x For more details, see

<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/creativepeopleandplaces/projects>