

EVALUATION REPORT

WOVEN 2023

3 JUNE – 9 JULY



Funded by
 **Kirklees**
COUNCIL

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INTRODUCTION WOVEN 2023

WOVEN in Kirklees is a festival celebrating innovation in textiles which ran from 3rd June to 9th July 2023.

Produced by HATCH and funded by Kirklees Council, this year was the third iteration following events in 2019 and 2021.

A series of embedded long-term projects and smaller partnership events were delivered throughout the year across Kirklees, alongside a big festival in June. A wide range of community groups, businesses, cultural organisations, artists and heritage sites across the district have been involved.

WOVEN's theme is generations of innovators, connecting a strong heritage with today's innovative developments in industry, university research, a strong arts and crafts scene and the creative expression of the district's rich and diverse communities.

This report summarises this year's programme highlights, audience feedback and learning from partners and stakeholders. It has been produced by Tom Brennan of Brennan Research Ltd, WOVEN's evaluation partner.



METHODOLOGY

A summary of the evaluation methods and corresponding sample sizes are shown in the table below.

Evaluation tool	Method	Sample
Post-festival audience survey	Shared online & directly with audience members opting-in to further comms	33*
Event evaluation survey	Online & on-paper at events	96
Workshop evaluation survey	Online & on-paper at workshops	26
Audience postcards**	Administered at many events & activities across the programme	296
Community project survey	Online, shared directly with projects delivering their own activities as part of the wider programme	9
Stakeholder survey	Online, shared directly with key partners supporting delivery	15
Interviews with stakeholders and the core team at HATCH	Online meetings	8
Total		483

* Whilst the sample for the post-festival audience survey was low compared to previous years, the volume of feedback surveys for individual events & activities increased significantly.

** The audience postcards were new for this year and have enabled us to capture more anecdotal feedback of a wider range of events & activities across the programme, including audience demographics and personal contact data for marketing / evaluation follow-up.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

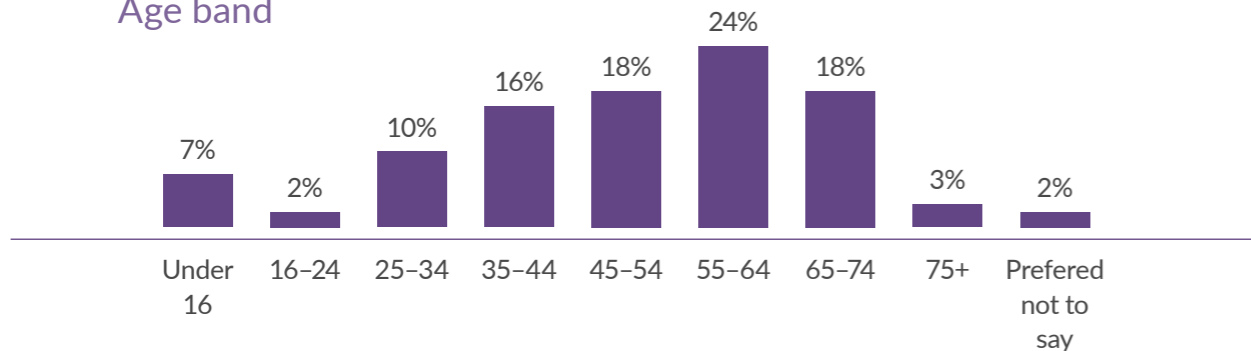
- The evaluation data suggests that WOVEN attracted a more diverse audience this year in terms of age band and ethnicity.
- 36% of audiences came from outside Kirklees, including visitors from Leeds, Manchester, York, Sheffield, Doncaster, Newcastle and London.
- Audience ratings were extremely high, even compared to previous festivals. Anecdotal feedback suggests that audiences have particularly enjoyed the diversity of activities and the opportunity to interact with like-minded people.
- A key difference this year was the specialist marketing and communications support received from an external agency, which helped to significantly increase the scale of social media and PR activity, enhancing the festival's profile both regionally and nationally.
- Kirklees's rich and diverse textiles history continues to be celebrated through many aspects of the festival programme; 97% of audience members said they had learnt about the region's textiles heritage through their WOVEN experience.
- The introduction of larger-scale, multi-disciplinary events like Strut has broadened the appeal of the festival, whilst the Mission to Mend Roadshows and Growing Colour Together projects have continued to build audiences in all areas of the district.
- The Mission to Mend roadshows have been instrumental in raising awareness and understanding of environmental and ethical issues connected to the textiles and fashion industry, including developing key skills in re-use and repair. This appears to have had a significant effect on the shopping habits of participants.
- Community and school-based workshops continue to be popular strands of work, evidenced by positive outcomes for participants including skills development, increased confidence and renewed aspirations. Talks, demonstrations and exhibitions have inspired, challenged and entertained audiences too.
- Overall WOVEN has been largely beneficial to professional stakeholders involved in delivering the festival this year, as well as affiliated community projects. Being part of WOVEN enables people and projects to reach new and diverse audiences, expand professional networks, and build skills, knowledge and confidence to deliver activity within the creative sector locally.



AUDIENCE PROFILE

The following section explores the demographic characteristics of the WOVEN 2023 audience based on data collected through audience surveys and postcards. The data has been benchmarked against previous years and ONS regional population data.

Age band



As in previous years, most audience members (60%) were aged between 45 and 74, although there was a greater spread of ages. The proportion of younger audience members grew: 28% were aged between 16 and 44, compared to 23% in 2019 and 12% in 2021.

This is more in line with the wider Kirklees population, of which 38% are aged between 15 and 44.

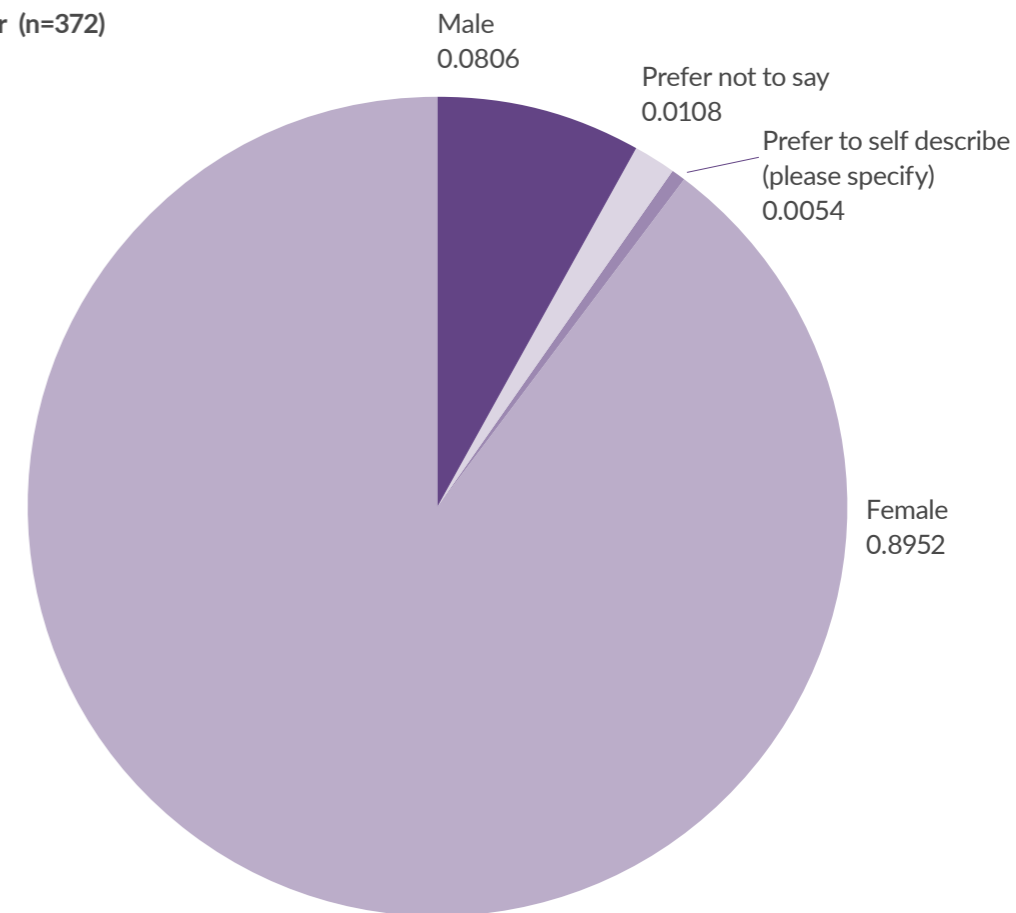
Younger adults (44 and under)

	Percentage	Difference
WOVEN 2023	28%	0%
WOVEN 2021	12%	-16%
WOVEN 2019	23%	-5%
Across Kirklees	38%	+10%

Gender

The vast majority of audience members were female. This was the case for both previous WOVEN festivals.

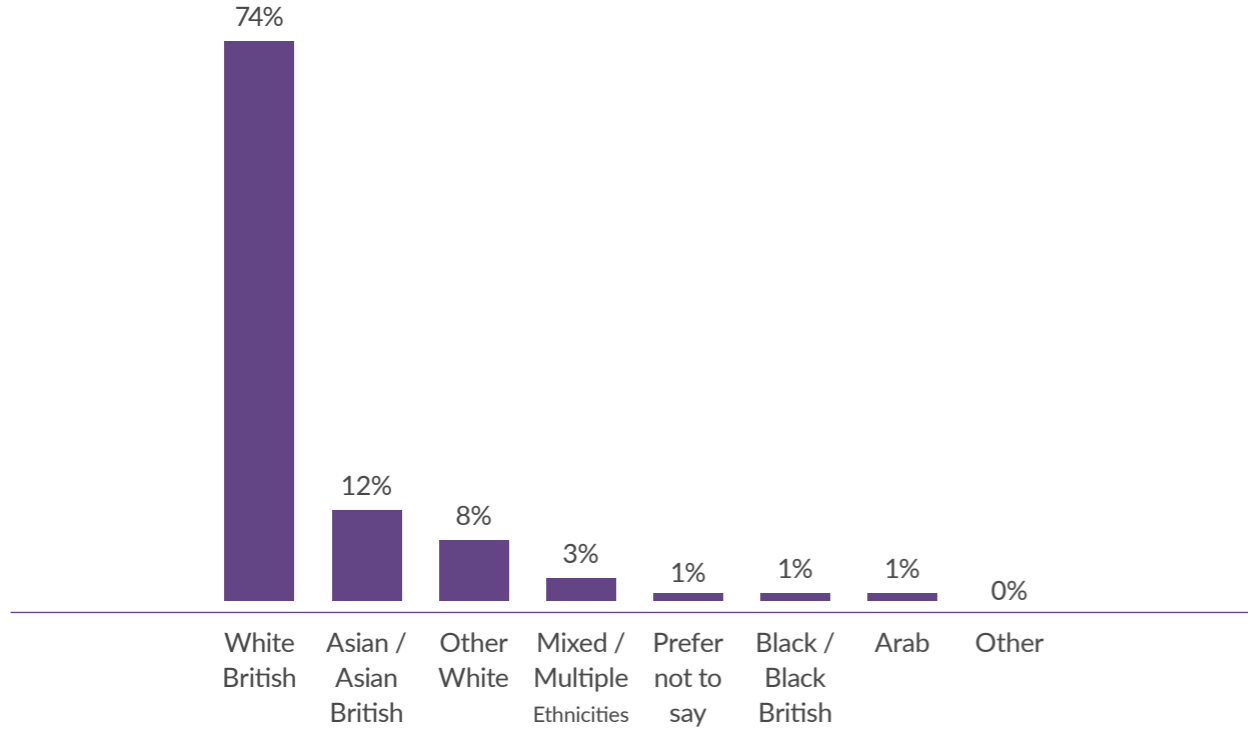
Gender (n=372)



Females

	Percentage	Difference
WOVEN 2023	90%	0%
WOVEN 2021	92%	+2%
WOVEN 2019	85%	-5%
Across Kirklees	50%	-40%

Ethnicity



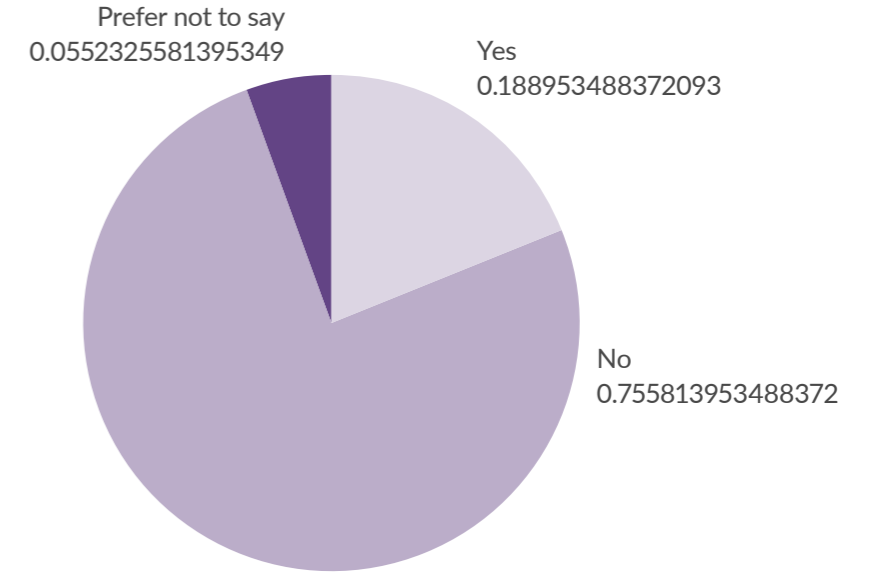
Around three-quarters of audience members were White British. The proportion of minority ethnic groups was significantly higher than in previous years and is now more in line with the wider Kirklees population. This is largely driven by increases in the number of Asian / Asian British and Other White audience members.

Minority ethnic (non-White British)

	Percentage	Difference
WOVEN 2023	25%	0%
WOVEN 2021	5%	-20%
WOVEN 2019	12%	-13%
Across Kirklees	29%	+4%

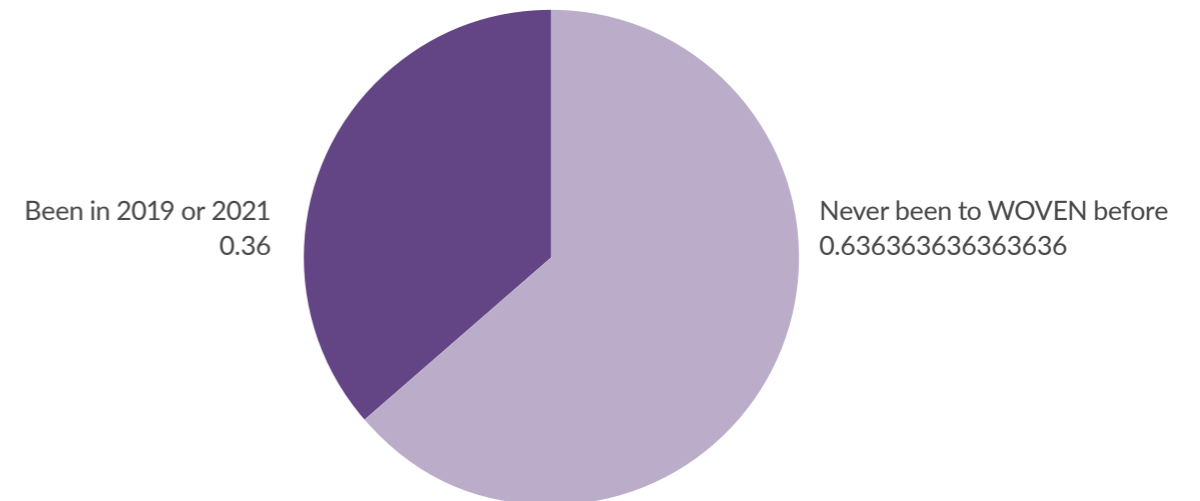
Disability

One-in-five audience members identified as being deaf or disabled, which is roughly in line with the wider Kirklees population (18%) however these metrics are not directly comparable due to differences in question wording.



First-timers

Despite a small sample size on which to base the results, the audience survey suggests that a significant proportion of participants were attending WOVEN for the first time.



Audience Location

According to the postcode data supplied by audience members (n=350), 64% were residents of Kirklees with 36% classed as visitors to the area.

The three postcode maps below show the distribution of audiences locally, regionally and nationwide. Note that pink pins represent Kirklees residents and purple pins represent visitors. Red and yellow circles denote clusters of postcodes showing the number of postcodes within that cluster.

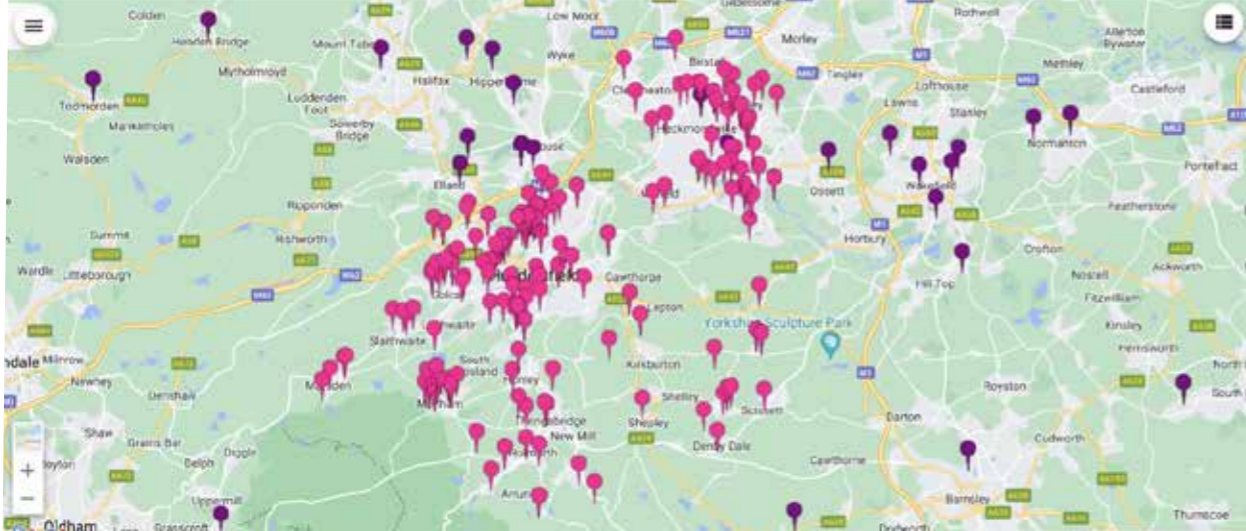


Figure 1: WOVEN audience members from Kirklees and neighbouring locations residents of Kirklees with 36% classed as visitors to the area.

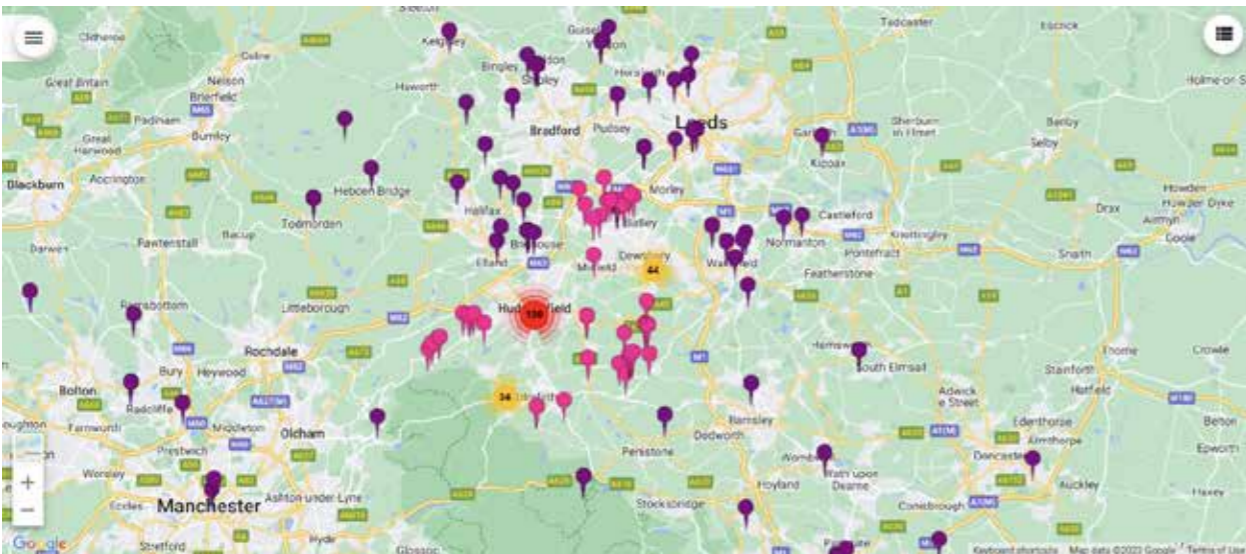


Figure 2: WOVEN audience members from across Yorkshire and parts of Lancashire.



Figure 3: WOVEN audience members from across the UK.

“A lady actually came up from London to see the exhibition. She came to one of our original zooms.”
WOVEN Stakeholder



Marketing & Digital Reach

The marketing and PR for this year's festival was, for the first time, supported by an external marketing agency. Their strategy included a highly effective 'Influencer programme' in which social media influencers from the world of fashion and textiles were enlisted to help promote the festival. This resulted in:

- 58 Instagram stories
- 3 Instagram reels
- 3 TikTok videos
- More than 38k confirmed views
- A combined following of 442,800

WOVEN's Instagram following has subsequently risen from 1,707 in 2021 to 2,822: a 65% increase.

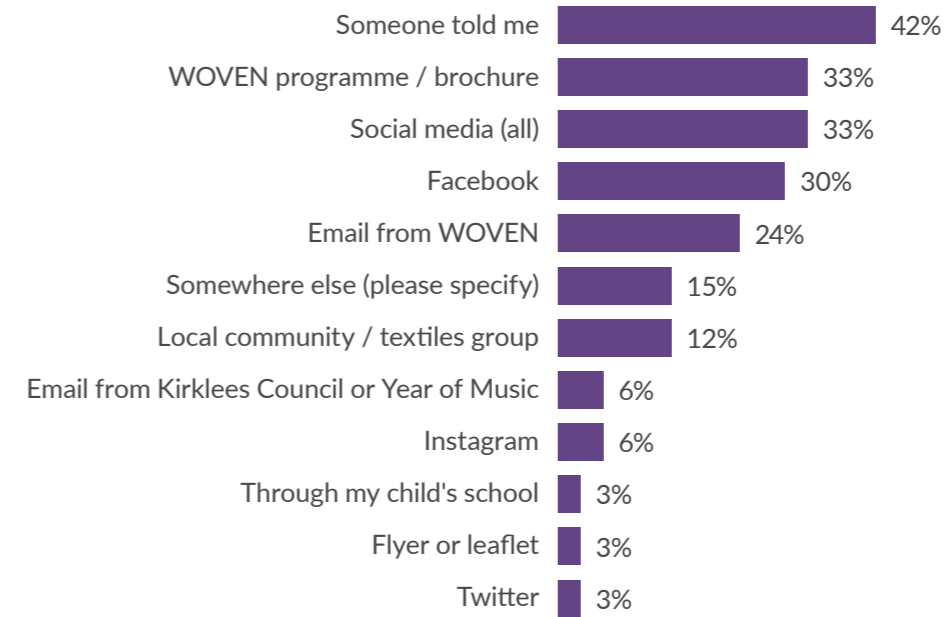
A full report on digital highlights and reach is provided in a separate document, but other key points include:

- Social media followers grew steadily across all platforms, including over 1,000 new Facebook followers between January and June
- Between January and June there were over 1m impressions, 48k engagements and nearly 7k post link clicks on social media
- Over 2 million people had the opportunity to see press coverage of WOVEN
- The Advertising Value Equivalency (AVE) of the press coverage was £34k
- 39 press stories and 65 social media pieces were published, including articles in the Yorkshire Post, Dewsbury Reporter, Huddersfield Daily Examiner, and an official endorsement from Alan Titchmarsh
- Recommendations for growing WOVEN's digital profile and reaching more diverse audience groups – such as approaching influencers - are contained within the separate report.

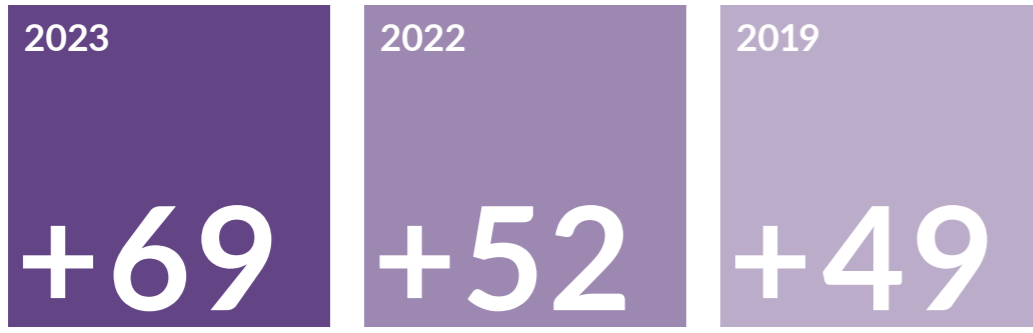
The audience survey data also indicates that social media has been more pivotal this year in terms of raising WOVEN's profile. A third of audience members said they had heard about WOVEN either on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, compared to around 15% in 2021.

However, word-of-mouth continues to be the main source of information about the festival.

Q: Where did you hear about this year's festival? Please tick all that apply. (n=33)



AUDIENCE RATINGS



Net Promoter Score for WOVEN

As in previous years, most audience members (60%) were aged between 45 and 74, although there was a greater spread of ages. The proportion of younger audience members grew: 28% were aged between 16 and 44, compared to 23% in 2019 and 12% in 2021.

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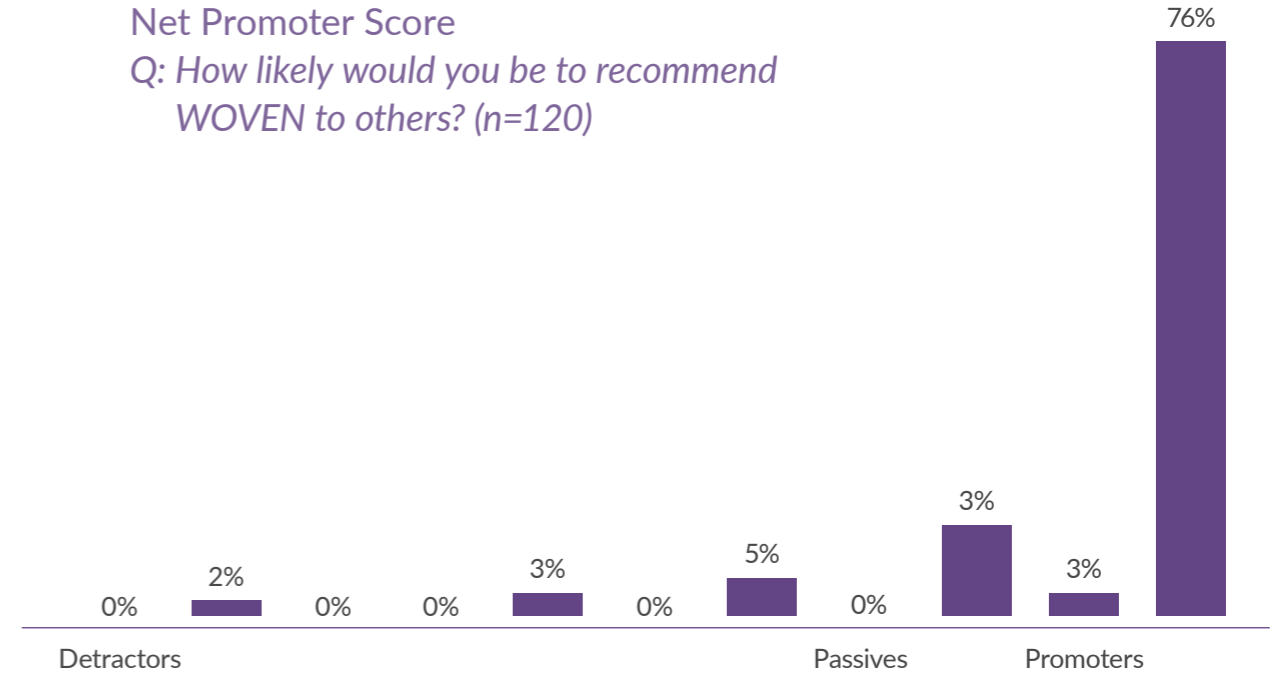
WOVEN audience members were asked how likely they are to recommend the festival on a scale of 0-10 where 0 is not at all likely and 10 is extremely likely:

- Promoters (9 - 10) = 79%
- Passives (7 - 8) = 12%
- Detractors (0 - 6) = 10%

The Net Promoter Score is calculated by taking the % of promoters and subtracting the % of detractors. A score of +50 is considered to be outstanding.

Net Promoter Score

Q: How likely would you be to recommend WOVEN to others? (n=120)



Net Promoter Score for WOVEN 2023 was +69, indicating outstanding quality. This was significantly higher than the NPS for both 2021 (+52) and 2019 (+49).





ENJOYMENT & LEARNING

As in previous years, levels of enjoyment amongst audience members were high.

This year's festival appears to have been particularly successful in giving people a different experience of the area, perhaps reflecting the greater geographical representation within the programme.

"WOVEN was an enjoyable experience"

67%

agreement
in 2023

91%

in 2021

60%

in 2019

"WOVEN provided me with a different experience of the area"

91%

agreement
in 2023

77%

in 2021

80%

in 2019

"WOVEN showed me that there is more to Kirklees than I expected"

71%

agreement
in 2023

71%

in 2021

75%

in 2019

"WOVEN made me feel more connected to the stories of Kirklees and its people"

66%

agreement
in 2023

76%

in 2021

75%

in 2019

Events

Specific evaluation was conducted for WOVEN events which included the following talks and demonstrations:

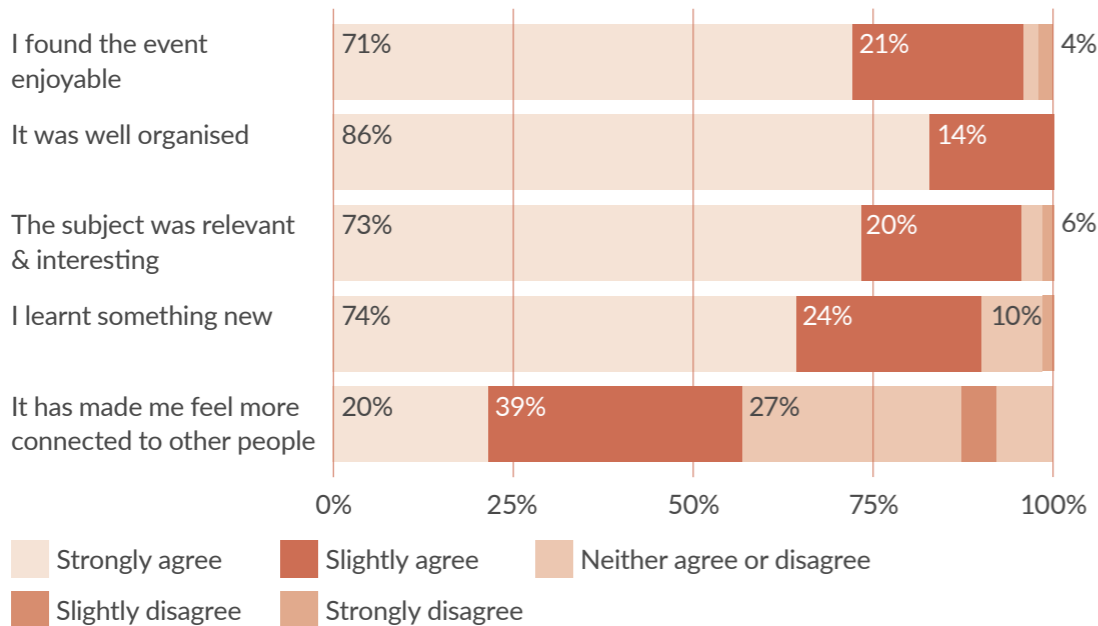
- Growing Colour Together talks:
 - Deborah Margo and Lucille Junkere
 - Cara Marie Piazza and Hannah Ross (Hanoux)
 - Mariana Leyva and Janette Terrezas
- Nicola Perren & Dionne Swift
 - In Conversation
- Know Your Town – How the Industrial Revolution Shaped the North

Feedback on these events were equally positive; the vast majority of audience members reported that the subject was relevant & interesting and they had learnt something new.

100% agreed that it had been well organised (86% strongly agreed).

Over half said it had made them feel more connected to other people – however it should be noted that several of the talks were delivered online so there was limited opportunity for audience interaction.

Q: Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about the event you attended (n=52)



Skills & knowledge

Including all events and activities, 97% of audience members said they had learnt about Kirklees' textiles heritage through WOVEN.

91% said they had learnt new skills (or were intending to learn new skills) as a direct result of their WOVEN experience. Amongst workshop participants (mainly Growing Colour Together workshops) the proportion of respondents who said they had gained new skills or knowledge was 96% (n=25) with specific examples shown below.

What skills or knowledge have you gained?

"I've learnt new skills which will benefit my floristry business."

"Consideration of dye vat disposal. Understanding of mordants / modifiers."

"There is more than one way to dye something - you are limited only by your imagination."

"Different perspectives. Historical dyeing knowledge. History of community / Kirklees culture."

"Knowledge about natural dyeing. Could be useful in my own practice and my PhD research."

"Lots of ideas - more community engagement, the value of working together with other groups."

"I was reminded of a lot of things I'd forgotten e.g. the funding politics in healing arts. Debbie's session on chemistry and Hannah's session on industrial were really fresh and informative."

"The importance of historic research in dyeing and how this informs the future."

"I learned more about the history of natural dyes and projects they can be used with in the community"

"I really enjoyed the event and learned about different projects and activities within the community."

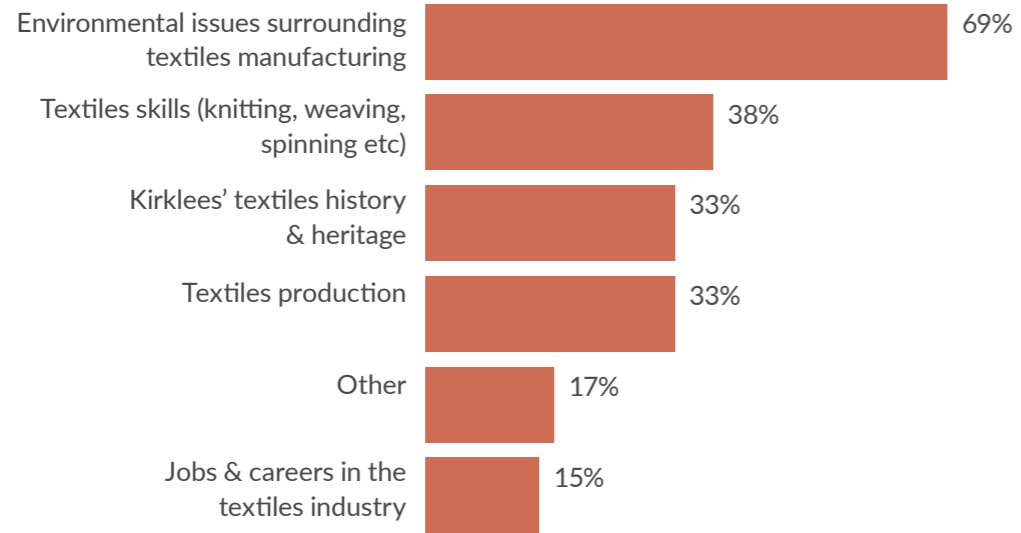
"Gained and rekindled my knowledge of natural dyeing."

"Much better understanding of natural dyeing techniques and what sort of plants you can use. Have changed some of the planting in the garden."

"Sewing! I made my own bunting :)"

90% of audiences who attended talks and demonstrations said they had developed knowledge or skills in one of the areas shown in the graph below.

Q: Did you gain or develop your understanding of any of the following topics? (n=52)





NEW PERSPECTIVES ON THE TEXTILES INDUSTRY

84% felt that WOVEN had given them a better understanding of ethical issues within the textiles industry. This was significantly higher than in 2021.

This year’s festival appears to have been far more effective in raising awareness and aspirations around careers within the local textiles industry, with all statements garnering higher levels of agreement than in previous years.

One of the projects within the programme which supported these outcomes was Textile Futures, explored in the case study on the following page.

“WOVEN has given me a better understanding of environmental and ethical issues in the textiles and fashion industry”

93%
agreement
in 2023

51%
in 2021

N/A
in 2019

“WOVEN has shown me that the textiles sector is a relevant, modern-day industry”

84%
agreement
in 2023

79%
in 2021

81%
in 2019

“WOVEN has shown me that there is potential for employment within the textiles sector”

88%
agreement
in 2023

65%
in 2021

68%
in 2019

“WOVEN has shown me that there is potential for career progression within the textiles sector”

72%
agreement
in 2023

51%
in 2021

63%
in 2019

“WOVEN has shown me that there is more potential to work, study or live in Kirklees than I previously thought”

83%
agreement
in 2023

58%
in 2021

64%
in 2019

CASE STUDY: TEXTILE FUTURES

Bringing textile industry demonstrations, higher education tours and careers information together for the first time in Kirklees, Textile Futures was a collaboration between WOVEN, industry partners Camira, Wooltex, Bower Roebuck, Gardiner Yarns, Fabworks, Textile Centre of Excellence, and the University of Huddersfield. It was supported by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

A series of talks and workshops in schools was followed by an open-day event at the University of Huddersfield on 8 July which provided an opportunity to speak with local textile manufacturers, tour the fashion and textiles facilities at the University, learn about various career pathways into different textile sectors and tour the Technical Textiles research labs to watch textile science experiments.

The aim of the project was to inform and inspire young people and their families with the impressive textile manufacturing, science, innovation and design on our doorstep in Kirklees.

Evaluation data collected from pupils at 3 different schools who attended indicates that, for all but one, this was the first time they had visited a further or higher education textiles department.

The data also indicated that the event significantly increased their understanding of, and improved attitudes towards, jobs and careers within the textiles sector (see below) with particular highlights being:

- Learning about the variety of opportunities within textiles
- Seeing designs, costumes and other samples produced by current students
- Understanding how textiles is linked to other disciplines like Science and Engineering
- Robots



What did you most enjoy?

"Different activities, lots of useful information, getting to see/watch/touch"

"I liked the robots, they were fun"

"The careers advisor and the robotic people. Everything was very interesting and technical"

"The variety of opportunities the textiles future holds"

"Now I understand that textiles is not all about clothes"

Pupils attending the Textile Futures event

97%

had never been to a further or higher education textiles department before

91%

said that Textile Futures had inspired them to think about jobs in the textiles sector

70%

reported higher levels of knowledge of textiles careers

85%

were able to name more textiles sector jobs than they had done previously

Based on 33 pre and post responses



To measure the impact on pupils' knowledge, pupils were asked to think about ways in which the textiles industry is adapting to meet environmentally sustainable goals, both before and after taking part in Textile Futures.

Before taking part just 58% of pupils offered an answer to this question, which rose to 94% after the event. Answers were also far more detailed and included strategies around carbon emissions, natural dyeing and the value of recycling / reusing.

'After' responses to the question: Do you know any ways in which the textiles industry is adapting to meet environmentally sustainable goals?:

"Extracting carbon from the atmosphere and utilising it for the production of fabrics, and accounting for the harmful emissions produced from the transport of materials"

"They are using eco friendly materials which could help reduce the bad gasses in the air such as carbon dioxide"

"Fast fashion, using carbon, using natural dyes, recycling materials"

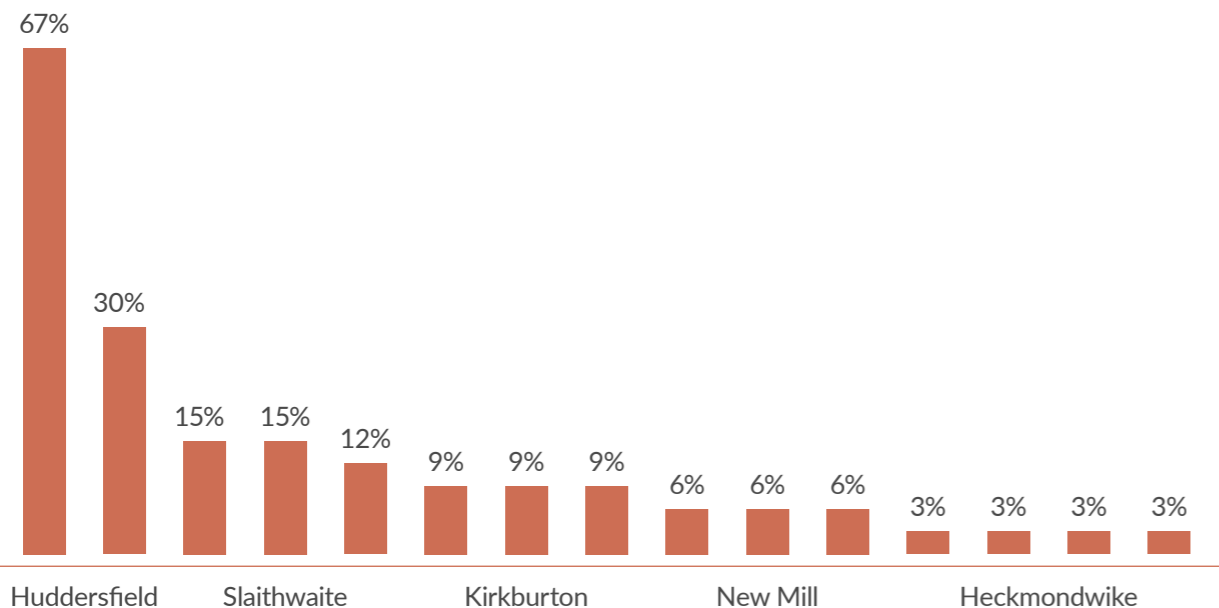
NEW PERSPECTIVES ON KIRKLEES

Of those who took the end-of-festival audience survey (n=33), around two-thirds said they had visited Huddersfield as part of their WOVEN experience. 30% had visited Holmfirth and 15% had visited Dewsbury.

39% of audience members said they had visited one of the following locations for the first time:

- Meltham
- Skelmathorpe
- Birkby
- Slaithwaite
- Kirkburton
- Mirfield
- Heckmondwicke
- Holmfirth
- Dewsbury

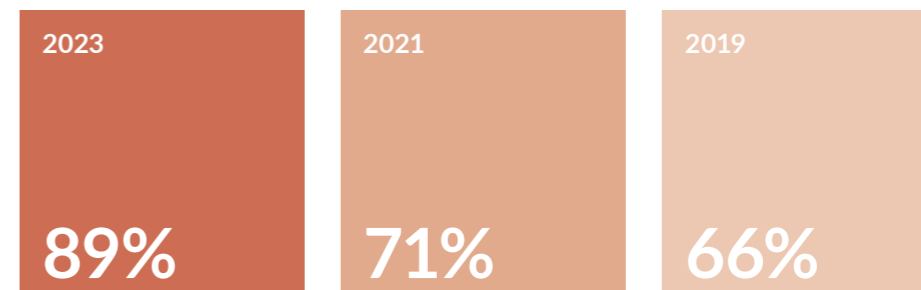
Q: Which of these places did you visit as part of your WOVEN experience? (n=33)



Pride

Kirklees residents who took part in the Audience Survey were asked if their WOVEN experience had made them feel any more or less proud of Kirklees and its textiles heritage.

Despite a small sample size (n=18), it appears that the festival has been successful in generating increased feelings of pride amongst local people.



of respondents said WOVEN had made them feel more proud of Kirklees and its textiles heritage



SHOPPING HABITS

Compared to WOVEN 2021, this year's festival appears to have made a much more significant impact on people's shopping habits, particularly around making ethical choices and repairing clothing that would have previously been thrown away.



Take into account whether a product has been ethically sourced and manufactured

70%

more likely
(30% no change)

47%

more likely
in 2021

Choose products that are longer-lasting

77%

more likely
(23% no change)

56%

more likely
in 2021

Re-use or repair clothing that you would have thrown away previously

73%

more likely
(27% no change)

53%

more likely
in 2021

Buy from local, smaller or independent retailers

77%

more likely
(23% no change)

72%

more likely
in 2021

A key factor in these improved scores was the Mission to Mend roadshows, which are explored in the case study below.

CASE STUDY: MISSION TO MEND

Mission to Mend was a new strand of activity for WOVEN Festival 2023 which celebrates everything to do with sewing, mending and making textiles. It was part-funded by National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Mission to Mend was delivered in five locations across Kirklees – Golcar, Meltham, Mirfield, Holmfirth, Heckmondwike. In each location a focused community day of activity was delivered as part of the WOVEN festival to celebrate and promote mending and creative repair. A series of 'creative repair' hand sewing workshops were delivered in the run up to each event to develop an appetite for mending and to build audiences for the festival events.

"I feel more able to tell people what a great place it is. I have previously concentrated on the closeness to the country and reputation of university. Woven has shown a different angle."

"Glad to see the younger generation very keen to keep traditional woollen crafts alive."

"Have gained an understanding and appreciation of the current and important role that the area holds within the textile industry both nationally and internationally."



Figure 4: How would you describe your experience?



Feedback suggests the roadshows were supportive, friendly and creative environments in which people with varying ability levels were able to learn, develop and share textiles knowledge. Impacts could be categorised loosely under the following headings:

Skills & knowledge development

Audience comments:

"Amazing workshop! Come away with a new skill - visible mending."

"Excellent, thank you very much. I learnt 5 new stitches and will use them."

"This has been a very well organised and friendly event. Enjoyed everything about it and learnt some new skills as well - happy bunny."

"I enjoyed everything. I learnt how to knot the thread."

"Was great, never learnt how to sew before."

"I really enjoyed learning how to do blanket stitch and sew on button securely. Very calm and enjoyable experience."

"I had an inspiring day at the Holmfirth Roadshow, and got to try 2 new stitches to add to my repertoire."

"Where did the time go! Loved learning new ways to mend creatively."

- Skills & knowledge development
- Enjoyment & enhanced wellbeing
- Increased confidence & creativity
- New hobbies, actions & community initiatives

Increased confidence & creativity

"Fun! And inspiring. I'm going to go have a look to do some darning."

"Brilliant way to encourage your children to sew."

"Got the confidence to try to mend my t-shirt"

"Thank you so much! A great session, learning new skills, helping to inspire my children. Fabulous boxes for the children too. Thank you!"

"Thank you so much for a great time. Came for a wander and stayed 2 hours and discovered a new hobby of embroidery. Debbie is a fab teacher!"

"The creativity here is amazing! We really enjoyed ourselves! Thank you."

"I have been inspired to restart my sewing, thank you. I am amazed at the hidden talent in Kirklees."

Legacy

Mission to Mend appears to have made an impression on the wider community by helping to bring artists and textiles practitioners together, showcasing wider opportunities for participation and inspiring people to set up their own community initiatives.

"I've set up a skills swap session after being invited with Mission to Mend."

"We are setting up a stitch social. I have spoken to the educator and she'll support it. It will be wonderful meeting once a week."

"A good get together of crafts to join in with. I found out about a lot of other groups too."

"Amazing day for the community, to show off what Meltham / Kirklees has to offer and skills! Definitely inspired me to get sewing again! It's been an inspiration."

"Love it! Fabulous to know so much is going on locally. Am going to sign up to lots of things."

"Amazing day for the community, to show off what Meltham / Kirklees has to offer and skills! Definitely inspired me to get sewing again! It's been an inspiration."

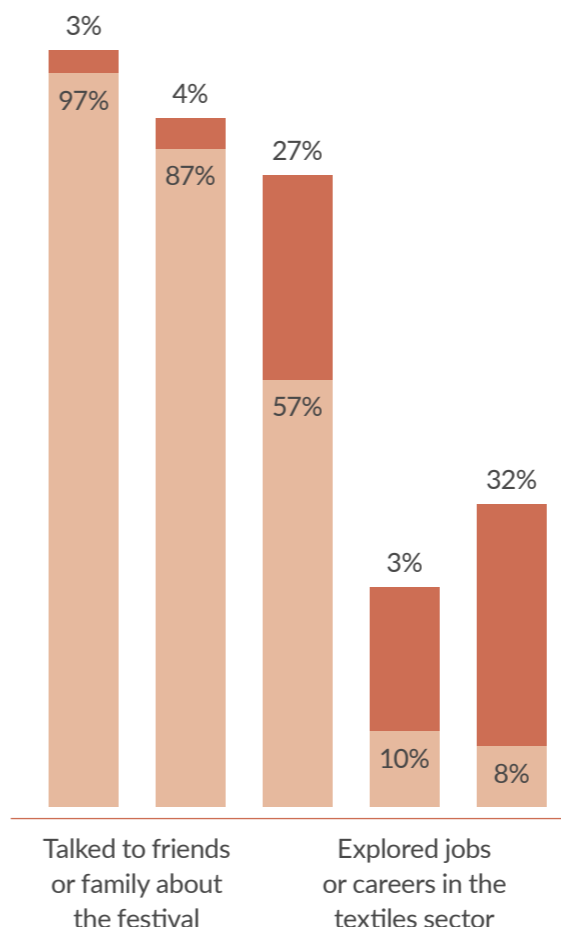


OTHER IMPACT AREAS

Attending WOVEN has started conversations amongst friends and family and taught people new skills, but perhaps most significantly it has encouraged people to take part in similar activities within their local community. A notably high proportion of respondents (40%) said they were now considering setting up their own group.



Q: As a result of attending WOVEN, have you done - or do you intend to do - any of the following things? (n=37)



Added value

As with previous years, we asked audience members to share how much they spent during their WOVEN experience to gain an understanding of what direct financial benefits the festival brings to the local economy.

The average spend per audience member this year was £31.04, which was approximately £10 higher than the average spend in 2021. A breakdown of audience spend is shown in the graphic below.



CASE STUDY: STRUT

STRUT was free, one-day event of fashion, music, and fun which took place on Saturday 3rd June outside Dewsbury Town Hall. The central feature of the event was a catwalk located directly outside the Town Hall where schools, community and youth groups modelled upcycled and embellished fashions that they had developed during a series of workshops.

The day was hosted by Rima Ahmed, BBC Presenter, whilst Kirklees Year of Music set the soundtrack to the event with live acts playing throughout the day. Other free, drop-in activities included:

- A pop up skate park by Skate it Yourself
- Pop up Photo Studio by Casey Orr
- Print Your Own T-Shirt with West Yorkshire Print Workshop
- Hat and headwear-making for families with Dewsbury MakerWorld



Figure 5: How would you describe your experience in 3 words?



"A very enjoyable afternoon. Really appreciated the subtitles. Thank you."

"Great catwalk show, my son got up and I loved it. Need more events like this. Very entertaining."

"I felt so amazing, the atmosphere was incredible. It was amazing for myself and I enjoyed everything."

"It was amazing to sing along and have fun with the community. The good part was young children were enjoying it."

"Really good turn out. Just what Dewsbury needs."

"Very good, I really like it. Would like to have more events like this in Dewsbury town."

"We have had loads of fun joining in with activities and making new friends with other kids and staff."

"The variety of opportunities the textiles future holds"

"Now I understand that textiles is not all about clothes"

WOVEN Audience Members



I thought the event was brilliant and I thought there was a professionalism there with having the stage. It felt like a really great thing to bring in."

"On the day it felt a little bit separate with a lot of activities going on in one place and then not so much going on at the stage. But for my participants, the feedback from them was that they loved it, and they loved going on the stage. It ticks all my boxes because it's all about participation."

"I think that sometimes people get confused about which thing was for which [Year of Music] but I think in general for things like Strut, that was incredible, having the combination of the two really brought in a new and different crowds and with it being so central to Dewsbury that was really interesting."

"I thought the organisation of the event was really well done. The fact that there were stewards and people bringing water around for people running sessions, it just had really good infrastructure."

"It's a really difficult line for anyone to draw between the ambition and what's going to work and whether the town's going to embrace it. All of that is really tricky. I'm all for the ambition and I think that's what was great about Strut, that it had that professional level."

WOVEN Stakeholder



STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

A variety of stakeholders provided reflective feedback on their WOVEN experience including:

- Artists
- Producers
- Textile Practitioners
- Community Organisations
- Teachers
- FE/HE Institutions
- Private Industries
- Local Authority Staff

Their feedback and recommendations are summarised in the following section.

General Impressions

In general stakeholders were extremely positive about their overall WOVEN experience, both as delivery partners and audience members. They picked out a wide variety of highlights from their experience as audience members, reflecting the scale and diversity of this year's programme. Several of the comments indicate that activities within the programme were successful in engaging audiences from young to old.

"All of the Mission to Mend roadshows that I went to were really lovely. To see it all come together, all of the different bits of the project working together, was really lovely."

"I think it was very rich with diversity as well as demographically, it took in a lot of areas which I was very impressed by."

"I did love going to listen to the artist talks... it was very inspirational. On the back of that I decided to read the Subversive Stitch again."

"I just loved every single aspect of it. I loved the In Conversation with Dionne Swift and Nicola Perrin, I was just absorbing at all. The thing I loved the most was the tour of the Hepworth Building to see what the students do. I just kept saying 'I wish I was 40 years younger' because I wanted to go there and do 12 months of what they do, it would just be a dream. Every day was a school day for me at WOVEN, and I loved every minute of it."



"One of the ladies, in her 80s, said she was going to Bagshaw to have a look at the quilts. She was there nearly two hours and she read every single square. She had backache when she got home because she was bending down that much, but she found it very emotional and very powerful. It was nice to get that kind of feedback."
"I'd love to be involved with Woven next time in some shape or form, even if I'm just sweeping up."

"The reaction that everyone had to the Quilted exhibition was absolutely gorgeous. Just seeing something like that, where something that's so homemade and so community-based being put in a white wall setting was brilliant and really elevated it."
"I really liked [WOVEN]. I mean, there's nothing like that going on elsewhere, to have a whole festival dedicated to crafts and learning different skills. As well as taking part myself, I also went on some of the open days and attended some of the talks that were really interesting. I think it's just fantastic."

"I went on one of the dye plant collecting walks. I can't remember the name of the lady that did it but she was just so knowledgeable and so friendly. It really got me back into that kind of stuff as well."

"I got a lot of kids wanted to have a go because they've not seen stuff like that before, so that was really fun. There was one little boy, who started was asking his mum if he could have a spinning wheel for his birthday."

"There were quite a few people who were born-and-bred local. Especially the older generations were talking about family members working in the industry. A lady came with a beautiful shawl that had been made for her grandmother's wedding and she was asking me questions about that. So yeah there were a lot of stories and local history that came out."

"There was a woman there with a couple of older people, it seemed like she was their carer. The guy wanted a t-shirt, and I heard him say it was because he wanted the clothing, rather than for the print. He was around 90 and he printed his name on his T-shirt and I got a photograph of it. And that, for me, was just a wonderful thing. He was like, 'I've never done this. I can't believe you can do it, you learn a new thing every day'. It was just lovely. The fact that he just wanted a piece of clothing made me feel a bit sad, but he enjoyed the process and was really quite proud of it as well."

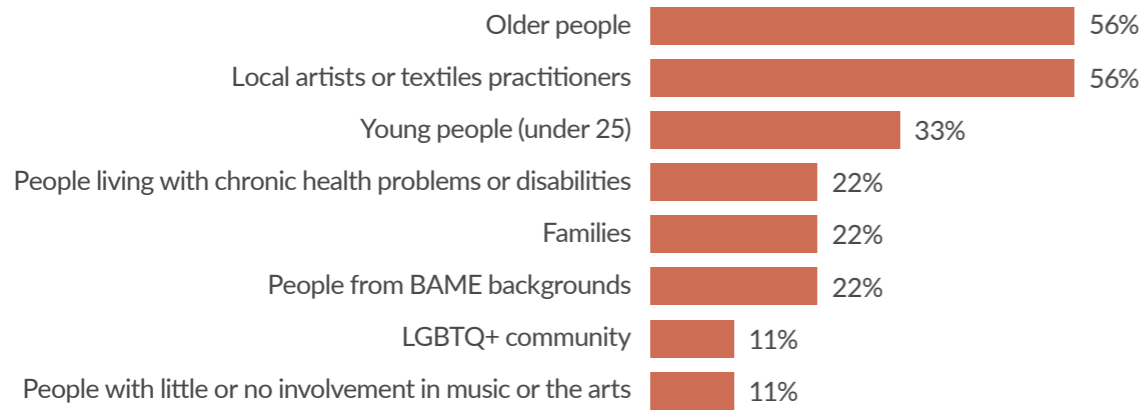
"The Charity Shop Challenge participants really, really enjoyed it. The son in particular wanted to keep going with it, he had loads of different ideas. He wanted to do more than one colour and I was saying that this is only a taster session but maybe come back and have a look at some of the other screen-making things at half term or school holidays. The feedback from the workshop was really lovely, I do think it was a good workshop."

"WOVEN was a real highlight. We saw a lot of people and people we don't normally engage with. It was a really wonderful experience so we'd definitely love to be involved next time."

Impact on Community Projects

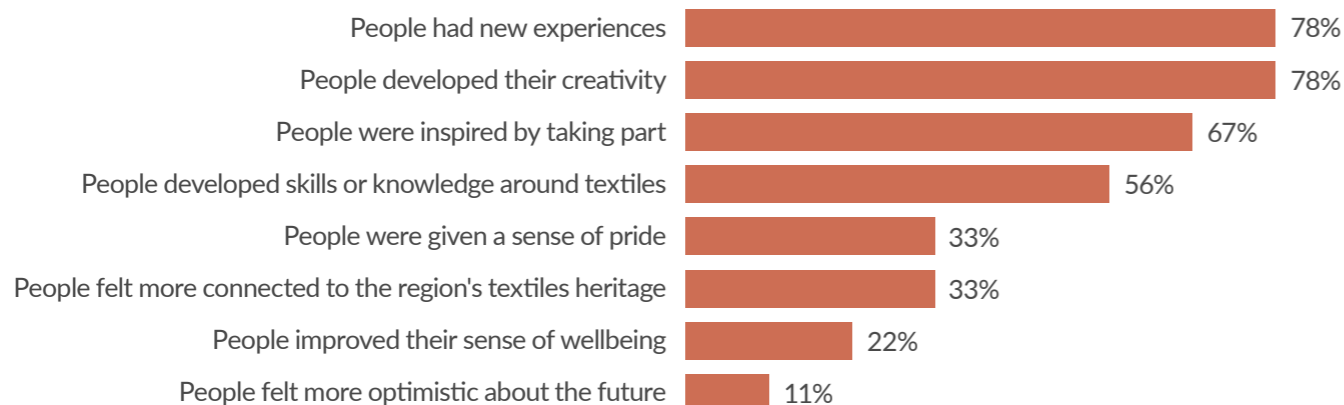
A sample of community groups and organisations who delivered their own projects as part of the wider programme indicated that most of these activities had helped them to reach or further engage with older people and local artists and textiles practitioners.

Q: Has the project enabled you to reach or further engage with any of the following groups? (n=9)



It was reported that most of these activities had provided people with new experiences, helped to develop their creativity, provided inspiration, and taught them new skills or knowledge around textiles.

Q: Do you feel that your project contributed to any of the following outcomes for audience members / participants? (n=9)



"Our project was publicised through the Woven website, drawing attention to Unity Yard as a venue, and to our group specifically."

*"Using the website meant that we had participants from outside Kirklees."
"Publicity and new members."*

"We attended the information meeting regarding applying for funding for the group and will be following this up in the coming months."

Community Projects

Professional Impact on Stakeholders

Capacity building within the sector was evidenced by the feedback collected from WOVEN's key partners which included local artists, textiles practitioners, community organisations and private-sector industry.

Two-thirds agreed that their experience had helped them gain or develop skills / knowledge within their organisation. Most of this was linked to the opportunity to work with multiple partners, thus improving their approach to collaborative project delivery models.

Audience development, project management, interpersonal, and community engagement skills were enhanced for several partners, whilst some indicated that their knowledge of the textiles industry within Kirklees had improved.

Table 3: Has working on WOVEN led to any of the following outcomes for you or your organisation? (n=9)



"We worked with a wider range of people age-wise than we normally do. We had quite a lot of adults getting involved, which is lovely, as well as children. In Dewsbury it's a much more ethnically diverse group of people so that was really nice. We were able to let them know about our free family workshops in Huddersfield. Some people said, 'oh but I don't go to Huddersfield, I'm from Dewsbury,' but one or two people said they might come over and a few people said they would find us on Facebook, which is good."

"We have had new members from the visitors to our open day."

"We had several enquiries to join our group, and many enquiries for felt making courses or lessons."

"The exhibition was vibrant and local engagement was good. We had a good response to all the events and many positive comments on the natural dye exhibition. The natural dye workshop was popular and created a lot of interest."

WOVEN Stakeholder

Almost all partners and stakeholders acknowledged that working on WOVEN had influenced their practice. Much of this stemmed from the opportunity to meet and collaborate with other creative professionals, which had inspired them to adopt new ideas and approaches within their work and given them renewed confidence.

"It's always useful to learn about the specificities of different disciplines and how different kinds of creatives practice and interact - I am often working with contemporary visual artists and musicians so it's been good to get a handle on counterparts in the textiles field."

"I feel more confident running workshops & classes now. I am able to speak with more clarity & run sessions naturally. I have gained so much inspiration, ideas, knowledge & techniques when working with other artists and seeing fabulous pieces."

"Working on Woven has triggered a long-term desire to undertake educational factory tours."

"It's good to know that I can work with a wide number of people to achieve a goal."

"It's helped me to connect with a new partner and help them think of new ways to run their project"

"Professionally, I have been encouraged by my involvement in the Woven project to be involved in more event workshops. They are a dynamic and exciting way to meet new potential printmakers."

"WOVEN has inspired me so much. I'm going on a quilt workshops next year to make a vintage quilt so I can enhance my textiles skills rather than just doing craftivism where it doesn't matter."

"There was learning for me as well: ask the questions prior and take more control. Ask questions and if I don't think it's getting answered then go higher up and say, right, I need this answering. It's all learning."

"I think it did help to build my confidence. Doing something that I really enjoy and getting to share that enjoyment with other people and see other people be enthusiastic and interested in that thing, I find that really rewarding."

WOVEN Stakeholder

7 out of 9 stakeholders who responded to the survey (78%) indicated that WOVEN had helped them either to establish new relationships or enhance existing relationships with others within the sector.

Of these, 3 said that these relationships would definitely lead to further opportunities (43%) and 3 said they would probably lead to further opportunities (43%).

"There was one lady who came to every workshop and she made three of the quilt panels. It turns out she was a researcher in the art department at the University and she actually brought a student with her the last time who did an amazing panel. She invited us to go and do a workshop at the university so I gave her my email address."

"You're working with the same people but there's always new people coming in, which allows for future possibilities."

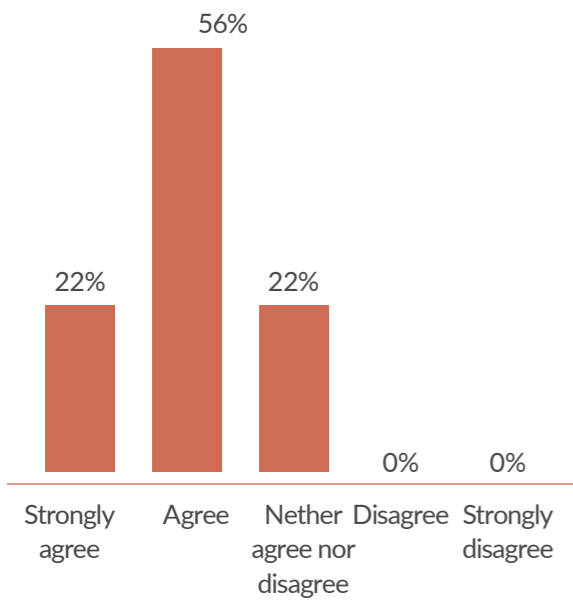
"It's been nice because I tend to do workshops all over the place and it's been really nice to do more locally based stuff and really see things grow around here. It has made me more aware of other practitioners. There's been a few times we've had people down to Thread Republic to do workshops for us, so even if we haven't collaborated yet, there might be some opportunities in the future."

"I was hoping to get talking to lots of creative people and see what sort of things were happening locally so I could start getting involved. It really was like that and I did find that I got talking to loads of really good people and had some really good conversations. I found out about local groups that were happening like the quilters and the knitters groups."

WOVEN Stakeholder



Q: Overall, to what extent would you agree or disagree that working on WOVEN has been beneficial to you / your organisation? (n=9)



Reasons for why their involvement had been beneficial mainly linked to facilitating professional connections, building the profile of smaller individuals/ organisations and developing audiences.

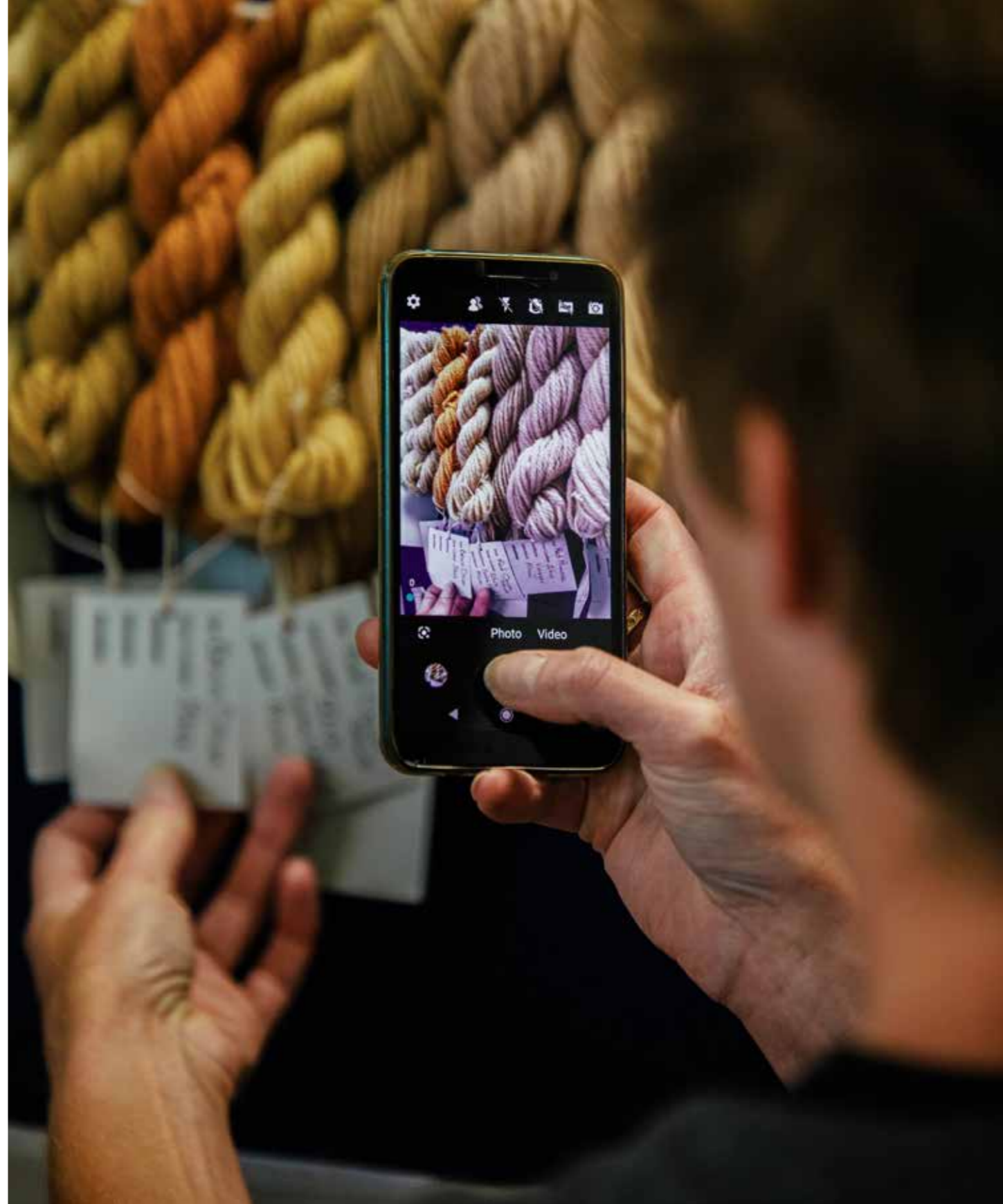
*"It assisted with establishing our gallery."
 "I would have said strongly agree, but our in-house event was very poorly attended (less so than our usual pop-up print events) and I wonder if some co-ordination of externally hosted events might be beneficial. There were a lot of workshops on the same day we held our event."*

"Gives us a focus to achieve a different project."

"Through the workshops & sessions I have run, the participants have got to know me and would be interested in attending other workshops of a similar nature. Some of the organisations that have been involved have seen my work and are interested in working together. The Woven team are really welcoming and supportive and so would like to work with them again in the near future. I would love to share ideas for future workshops."

"We still meet weekly and are enthused to make more postbox toppers."

"It was great to make connections, meet new people and share my love of textiles with a new audience."





WORKING WITH HATCH

“I think it's really well organised and everyone was really supportive. I really felt like my time and skills were appreciated.”

“The team at WOVEN were fantastic. Everybody that helped us at WOVEN supported us. The whole time I was just like, ‘ooh’ and ‘ahh’, I just loved every minute. I said to Natalie, ‘I really wish we could do this every year’.”

“Everybody was really friendly and approachable. I could ask questions and I got prompt replies which is not always the case.”

WOVEN Stakeholders

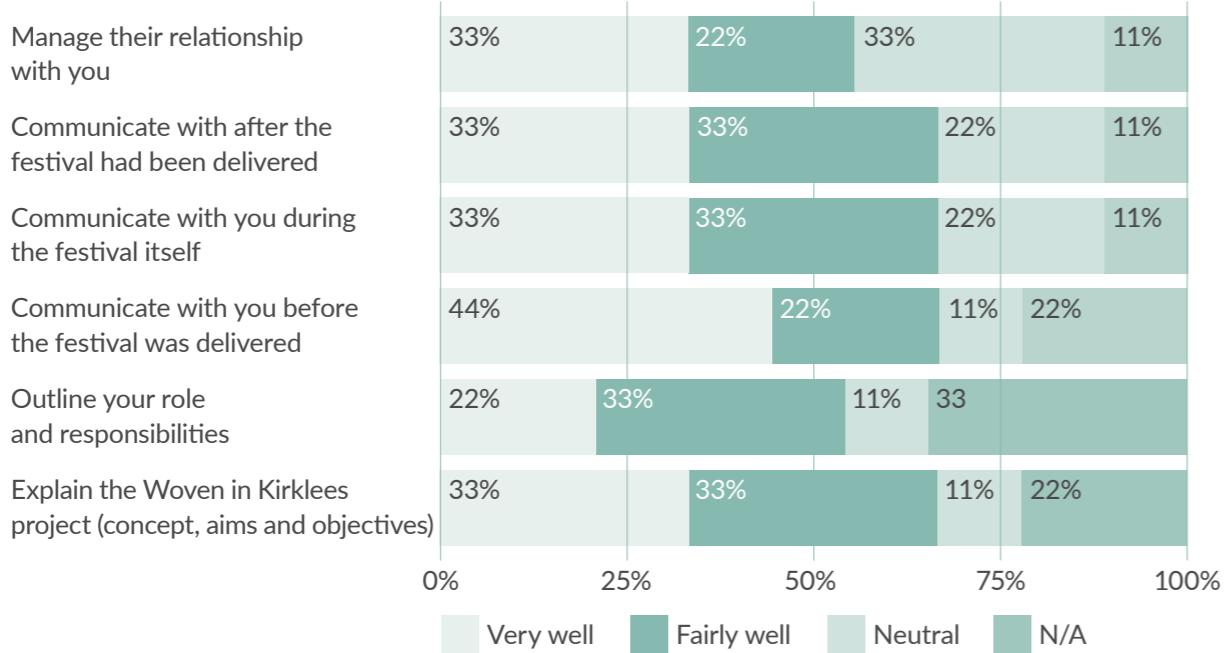
As in previous years, the experience of working with HATCH was reportedly positive overall with none of the project management aspects – communications, expectations and general relationship-management - rated poorly. However, the aspect rated least highly was ‘how well did HATCH outline your role and responsibilities’.

This was a sentiment echoed by some of the community projects who would have liked more clarity on their role within the wider festival.

“It was not always clear how those involved directly with Hatch and Woven intended local groups to engage - sometimes information came out late or with deadlines that did not fit well with volunteer groups.”

WOVEN Stakeholders

Q: Thinking about your partnership with HATCH, how well did they...? (n=9)



"It's always helpful to be looped in as early as possible and to be really clear about expectations and what we can provide."



CHALLENGES & LEARNING

Professional stakeholders and community projects reported encountering some of the same challenges, namely:

- 1. Scheduling –**
some activities were poorly attended due to other things happening at the same time in different places.
- 2. Advertising / publicity –**
some felt more could have been done to promote individual projects / activities within the programme and give audiences more advanced notice
- 3. Low engagement –**
linked to the factors above, some projects reported lower-than-expected audience/participant numbers
- 4. Staff / volunteer resources –**
some of the more popular events would have benefited from additional staff or volunteer support, although it was sometimes hard to predict audience numbers.
- 5. Clarity of expectations –**
some community projects and partners were not always clear about their role within the project, and what was included in the 'offer' from WOVEN
- 6. Evaluation & feedback –**
collecting feedback from audiences continues to be a challenge, particularly when evaluation is required for multiple funders.



"We only sold two tickets and it was really cheaply priced it, around £4. And then only one person came. Given that a normal Saturday workshop we might get five or six people, I was quite disappointed. Obviously the same amount of planning goes into each workshop."

"Lack of publicity and no catalogues well ahead of time."

"Being a victim of our own success and being very busy at the Strut event, we could have used more volunteers (difficult for us to source our own) and a bigger space."

"There was low numbers at the workshops I ran but that was because there was more than one event on the same day."

"Keeping deadline for publicity"

"Reaching enough participants"

"We received feedback cards from WOVEN and then had our own. I thought it's just gonna look like we're giving them paperwork all the time."

"The educational workshops at Kirklees college were undersubscribed completely. It hit them at the wrong time for their exams, even though they were part of a creative project and they were into textiles and illustration etc. As an artist who preps a lot and was geared up to deliver, to have just three members was a little bit disconcerting, and then I had no one turn up. For the college not to communicate... but they're snowed under with what they have to do."

"It was not always clear how those involved directly with Hatch and Woven intended local groups to engage - sometimes information came out late or with deadlines that did not fit well with volunteer groups. Asking if the photographer can attend at 9am when the workshop starts at 10am is not helpful."



LOOKING AHEAD

In order to address these challenges and as a way to enhance the festival more generally, stakeholders offered a series of suggestions and recommendations for WOVEN 2025:

Continue to diversify the festival programme geographically and build audiences in the areas with lower cultural engagement.

"With the cost of travel being a real barrier it's good to have the smaller satellite activities too, they're really warranted."

"A lot of people seemed really pleased that stuff was happening within the local village or area. A lot of people were saying, 'I enjoy doing this but I've never really known if there was stuff going on around here.' So I think it was signposting people to a lot of stuff."

Ensure there is a focal event or space that audiences can access to learn about the wider programme.

"It brings crafty people together but I think we need to try and drag other people into it. A lot of people went to see HERD at St. George's Square but I don't think we had a focal point apart from the art gallery and the different things going on around the area."

Make the most of existing groups and networks (particularly those managed through partner organisations) to maximise uptake of opportunities.

"It's important to remember that I have these groups actually because you've got a captive audience. They didn't all come this time because it was half term and finding that right weekend was really tricky - we know it's a middle class area and a lot of children will be on holiday during half term - but we still had as many, if not more than, some of the schools who were actually local. So I would say, don't forget them in the future, and remember I can do much more ambitious stuff than what you can do in school."

Continue to programme larger, multi-faceted events and activities that have broad appeal in order to maximise engagement opportunities

"I'm all about children and families, so for me the Strut event was perfect for that. I see it as being a really positive way of connecting with people, because parents who wouldn't go on their own, will go, because there are activities there for children, so you're connecting with people that you wouldn't normally connect with. And people remember it because they enjoyed the vibe. I think events like that are the way to go, allowing the activities to be quite broad, like the pop-up skate part, it's nothing to do with textiles but it brings people in, and that's what we need to do."

"It's good to have a big event because I think you reach a lot of people."

Oversubscribe workshops and participatory opportunities to guard against high DNA rates

"We did some home education sessions and I think anything like that, we should be booking higher numbers because the dropout rate is huge."

Identify suitable venues and spaces for WOVEN activity as early as possible, along with back-up plans should civic venues close.

"I think the challenge is that most of our community spaces are going to disappear. Kirklees is going to have a struggle regarding the fact that it's nearly bankrupt and we're going to lose all of our civic buildings so I don't know where they're going to deliver. They've wanted to close Batley Library for years, that might go."

"We've got a gallery exhibition space and Thread Republic are going to have a small space within that, It's going to be where Poundland is, where the snow dogs were, which is a big space. So we could think about how we use that for WOVEN 2025."



Offering projects sight of a shared programme calendar to enable them to schedule activities appropriately – e.g. when there are fewer events happening elsewhere, or to tie in with larger events happening locally.

"The only thing I would think about, with the independently-run workshops, is some sort of coordinated list of events so that people organising their events could see beforehand how many other things are happening at the same time."

I know there were so many events on over that weekend so our usual audience were going to things in other places. I wonder whether it would be useful to have some sort of internal planning calendar so we could have maybe planned it for a different weekend when there was less going on."

"The Holmfirth event was at the same time as other events which meant that they were so busy and reached this completely new audience. I think that worked really well. Making sure that things like that coincide with other events that are already happening, or tagging on to other things, works really well."

Implement a ticketing system for more popular drop-in events

"A simple ticket system on the day for screen- printing so crowds can be avoided."
"From our point of view, I think some of the learning from this would be to have a ticketing system where people could come back at a certain time to participate or pick something up. We just didn't realise how busy it was going to be. Maybe we also need 3 artists, rather than the 2 we had, because of how busy it was. We have some volunteers but a lot of them are older, so weekends aren't what they want to do."



Ensure the programme calendar and promotional activity (including the festival brochure) is shared with partners as early as possible, and that the 'offer' to community projects is clear

"I found this consistent to a lot of Woven things: often the printed materials didn't go out quite as far in advance as they could have done. I know that's tricky because there's so much to balance with getting the programme together and getting stuff made and delivered, but the only drawback to working in so many places was that a lot of the time it was communities we hadn't reached before and getting the information to them before the first workshops was a little bit difficult. Hopefully we can work in those communities again and keep something going, because there was a lot of call for there to be more regular things like that in certain areas."

"Contact the organisers well ahead of the festival ie. 8 weeks to insist on proof reading of catalogue entry & supply of same for distribution"

"Kirklees College are keen to get things scheduled earlier, maybe January or February time, then I think we would have got a better uptake."

Ensure health and safety and safeguarding measures are in place for all staff and volunteers, including protocols for extreme weather conditions

"Unfortunately for me as an artist that was a very bad experience. I became ill during it because it was stupidly hot and we were snowed under - we didn't have enough staff. The session was just too long. There should be health and safety for people working in heat."

Ensure that any media captured for publicity or evaluation purposes (photographs, videos etc) is also shared directly with partners

"It is not satisfactory that no link to the photographs has been provided to the participants."

"I was disappointed not to receive any of the images your photographer took of our exhibition."



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If you would like to find out more about any aspect of the WOVEN 2023 evaluation, please get in touch with Tom Brennan, Director at Brennan Research Ltd: tom@brennanresearch.com.





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