



Local Voices Creative Choices



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



THREADS OF UNITY 2026



2026 Festival Dashboard Contents

1. Festival headlines
2. Impact
 - Programme measures
 - Reach
 - Activity breakdown
 - Co-creation / engagement
 - Volunteers & feedback
3. Surveys & feedback
 - Audience
 - Artist
4. Summary
 - Progress against programme measures



Key Observations

- Audiences enjoyed the variety and quality of programming and felt South Asian culture was celebrated.
- The atmosphere was 'lovely' and 'inclusive' – diversity, unity and communities coming together was specifically highlighted in audience feedback.
- Significantly more diverse (+20%) audience representation and audience postcodes show a strong Worcester City and wider Worcestershire footprint.
- Co-creation was limited in comparison to other festivals with more opportunities to engage, participate or view performances / demos (which were really enjoyed).
- Worcester Mela is now an established organisation and is recognised within local South Asian communities.
- Opportunities to improve promotion, signage on event days, stall variety and more co-creation with local communities.
- Making good progress against measures but query audience figures and intended digital element.



Impact



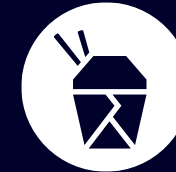
Impact: Key Programme Measures Threads of Unity 2026



4 weeks of activity
7 events



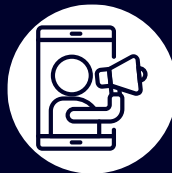
74 artists
& creatives



10 food traders
7 market stallholders



44 Installations/works
/performances



12 student
volunteers/
placements



5 community organisations
involved



1-month long
exhibition



26 volunteers
148 volunteer hours



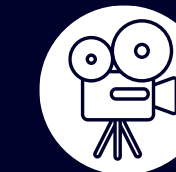
199 Survey responses



14 co-created activities
213 co-creation participants



26 production team
members



1 film-maker
1 photographer

Impact: Audience Threads of Unity 2026



5584 estimated footfall/audience
across all programming



7 events
44 Installations/works/performances



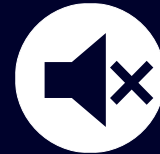
86,075 digital / social reach
4083 Mela website page views



Advertising via news releases, posters, flyers,
digital screens and websites



533 programmes/maps downloaded
9,500 maps distributed



9 access & inclusion / quiet sessions



24,713 total social video views



1 radio interview
12 articles

Impact: Survey Headlines

Audience:

51%

Heard about the festival through word of mouth (35%) and Facebook (26%).

30%

Said the festival made them feel **proud**.

95%

Said the quality of the programme was either very good or good.

83%

Would be interested in attending another festival

33%

Attended a previous LVCC festival.

"This is the type of thing Worcester needs more of."

"Uniting the community."

"Honestly I'm so happy seeing multiculturalism celebrated."

Activity Breakdown



Activity	Audience/footfall	Installations/ artworks/ performances	Co-creation participants	Community organisations	Artists & creatives	Student volunteers/placements
Worcester Mela	1,200	15	82	3	49	4
Mughal Miniatures	127	2	26		3	2
Culinary Feast	1385	4	45	1	3	6
Poetry Slam	16	1	4		6	
Storytelling	241	5	4	1	4	
Qawwali Night	115	1			6	
Exhibition, Guildhall	2500	2	1		3	1

Mela Festival

8

Performances

- Sabira Mollah
- Malayali Dancers
- Awantika Music
- Dhol Crew
- Sadi Jori
- Awantika Dance
- Malayali Youth
- Tariq Saher
- Suki Pantal
- Awantika Storytelling

49

Artists & creatives

2

Tug of War Demonstrations

82

Co-creation participants

Activities:

- Market Stalls
- Stage
- Cooking Demonstrations
- Candle making
- Tote bags
- Sewing
- Colouring
- Paint play
- Bouncy Castle
- Face Painting
- Food Traders
- Volleyball
- Tug of War
- Carnival Games
- Henna



Co-creation, engagement and participation :

231

Co-creation participants

- Activity focused on engagement, participation and on the day co-creation rather than pre-festival co-creation e.g.:
 - Stitching Light Group
 - Mela Chef
 - Sports & Cooking Demos
 - Festival day activities
 - Performances
- Building strong audience engagement and awareness with aims to deliver more co-creation in Year 2



Surveys



Survey: Responses

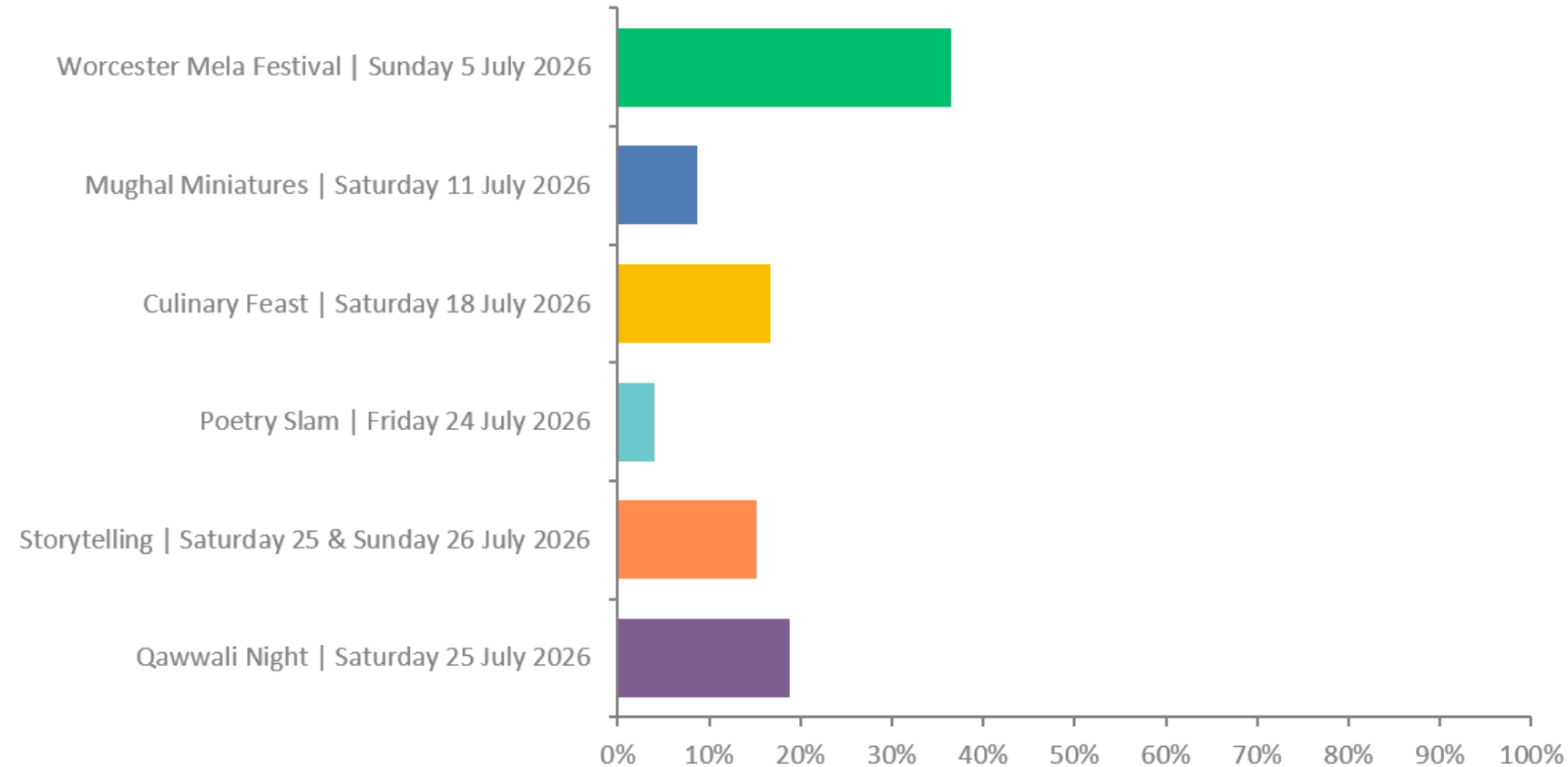
- Audience – 198
- Artists – 1
- Most significant Change – 1 group (9 participants)



Responses:
199

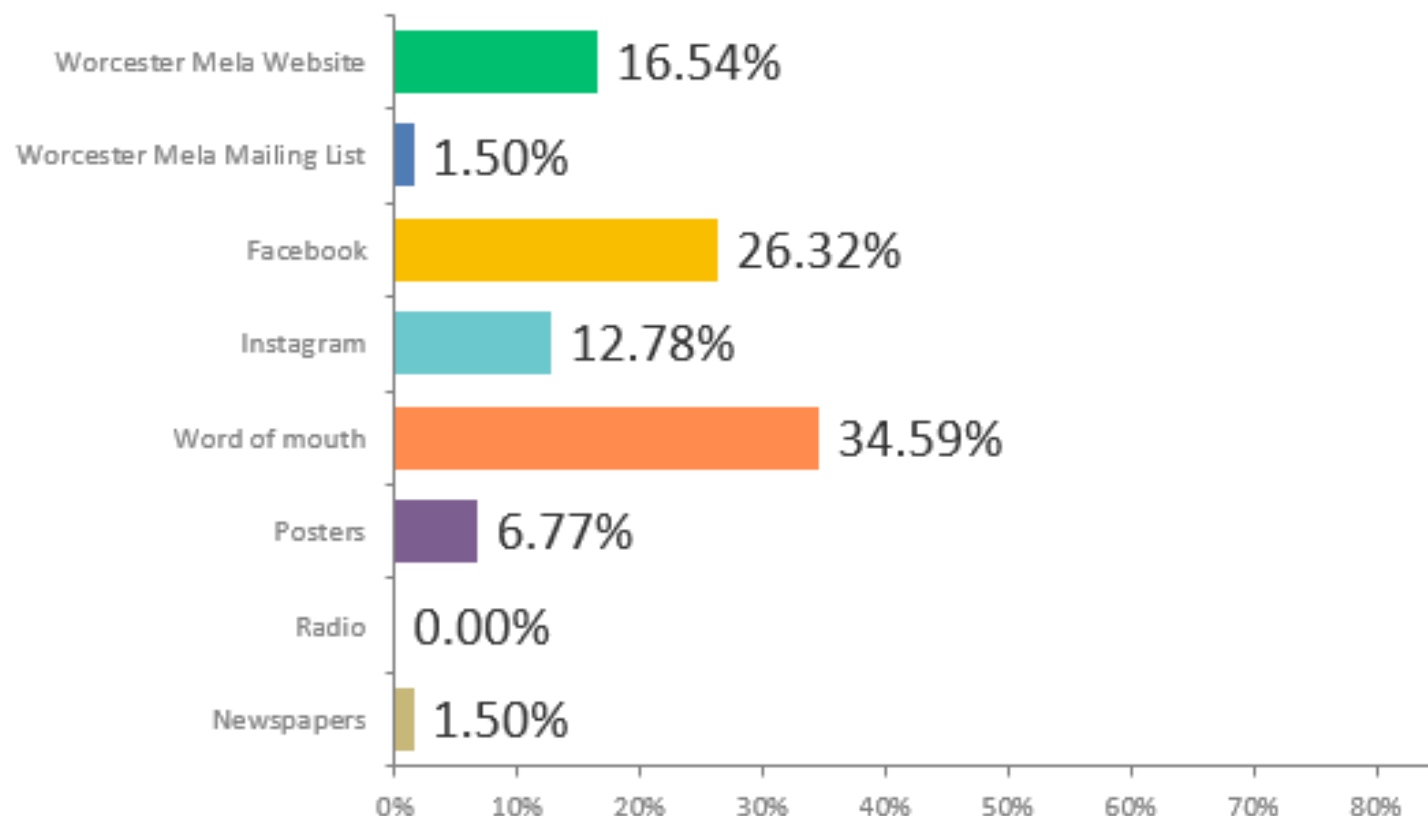
Q1: What did you attend as part of Threads of Unity (South Asian Heritage Month)?
Tick all that apply.

Answered: 197 Skipped: 1



Q2: How did you hear about today's festival/event?

Answered: 133 Skipped: 65



35%

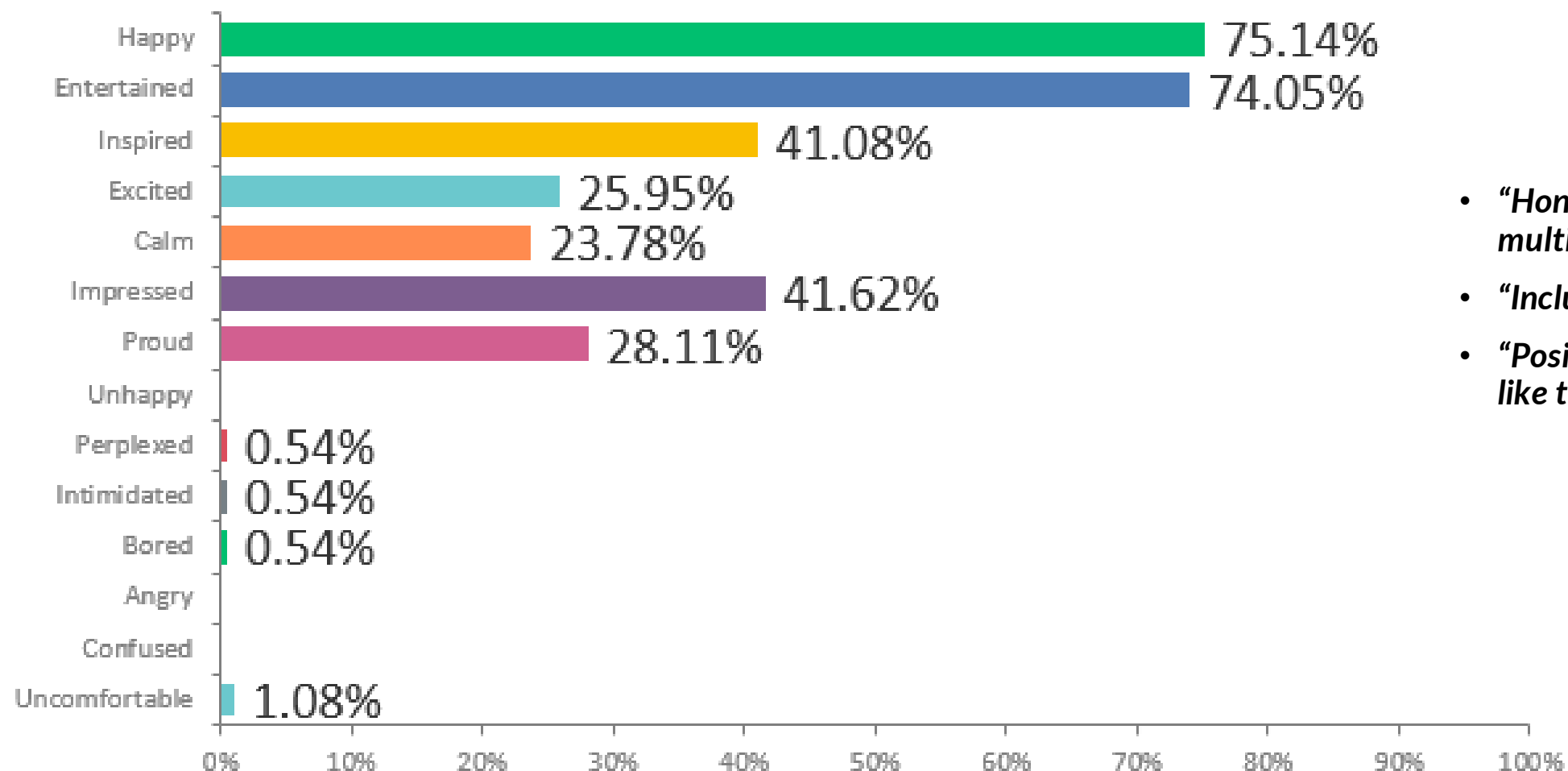
Found out about the festival through 'word of mouth'.

Additional free text comments:

- Visiting the Hive
- Walked past by chance
- Eventbrite

Q3: How did Threads of Unity make you feel? Tick all that apply.

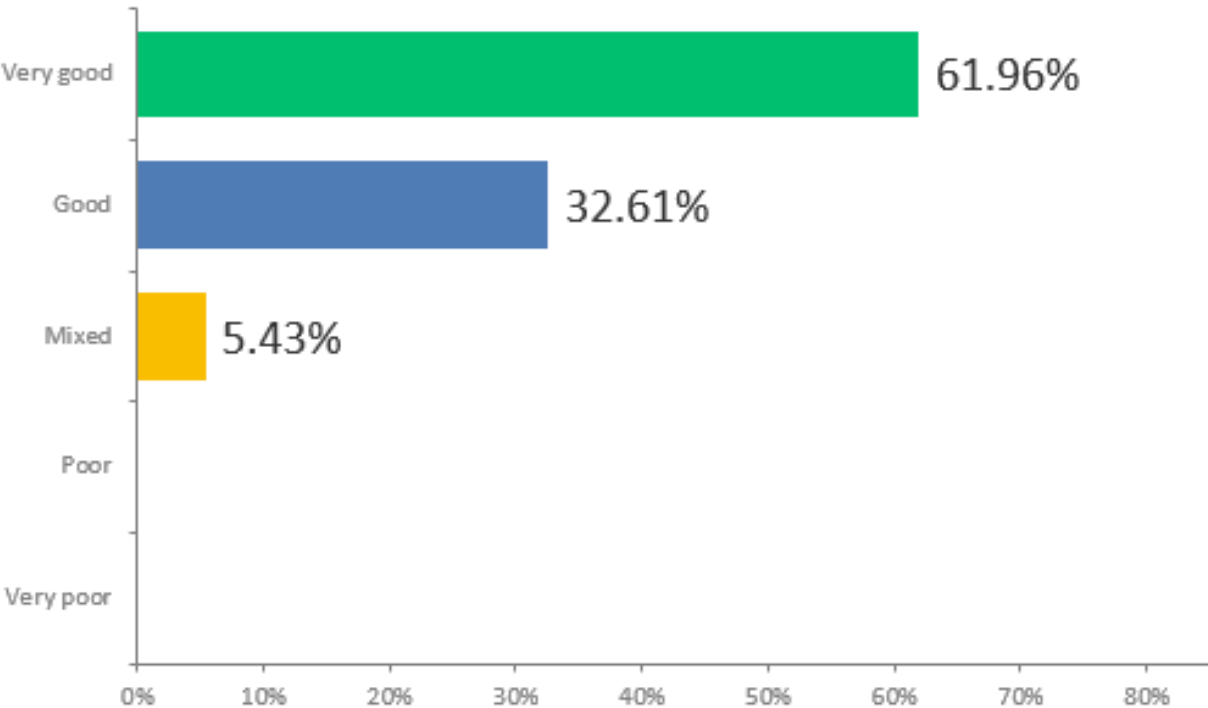
Answered: 185 Skipped: 13



- *"Honestly I'm so happy seeing multiculturalism celebrated!"*
- *"Included" "Inclusive"*
- *"Positively overwhelmed, I'd like to go and cry"*

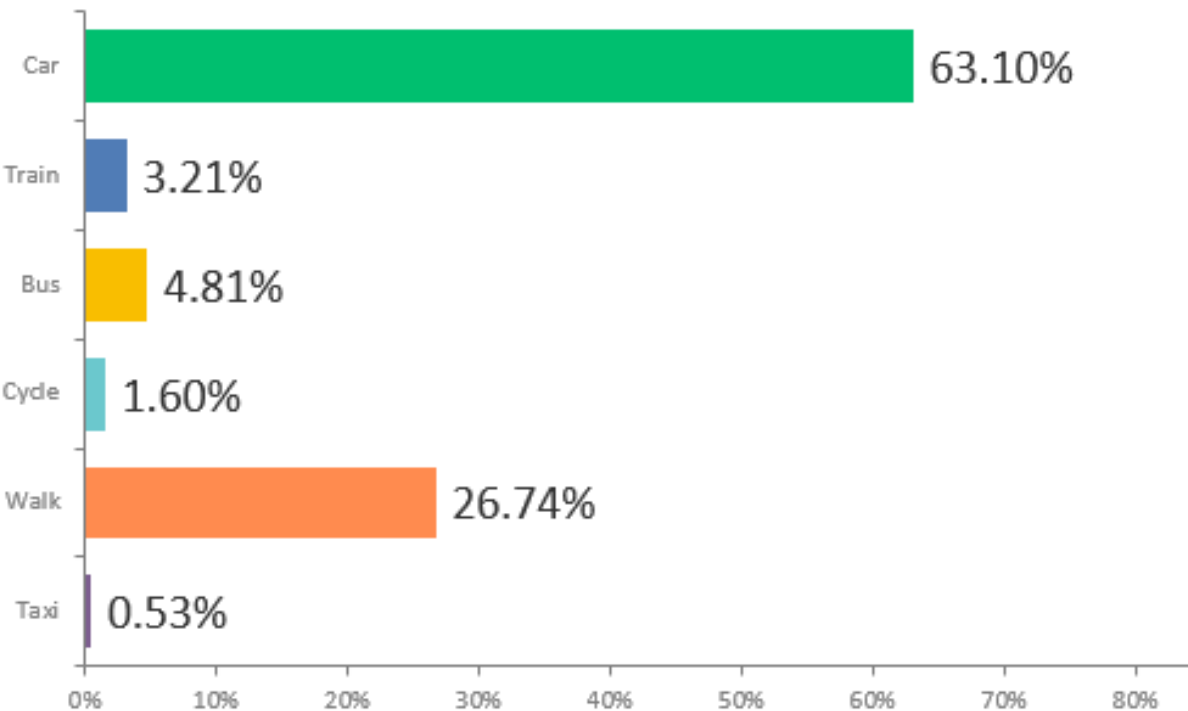
Q4: What did you think of the quality of the Threads of Unity programme?

Answered: 184 Skipped: 14



Q6: How did you travel here today?

Answered: 187 Skipped: 11



94%

Felt the festival was 'definitely' (%) or 'probably' (%) well managed.

94%

Felt the range of activities was 'very good' or 'good'.

Q What did you think of the quality of Threads of Unity? (free text)

Strengths:

- A 'lovely' and 'inclusive' atmosphere
- Qawwali was 'mesmerizing' and 'amazing'
- Audiences enjoyed learning about South Asian culture, particularly sharing this with their children
- Positive comments highlighting the range and quality of performance, including 'beautiful costumes', 'expressive storytelling' and 'wonderful poetry'
- Organisation, management and lovely staff

Areas for improvement/recommendations:

- Lack of advertising pre-event
- Unclear signage and event information on the day – a few comments on programme not being followed
- Hot weather needed more shade
- More food options

Q5 What would you like to see at Threads of Unity next year? (free text summary)

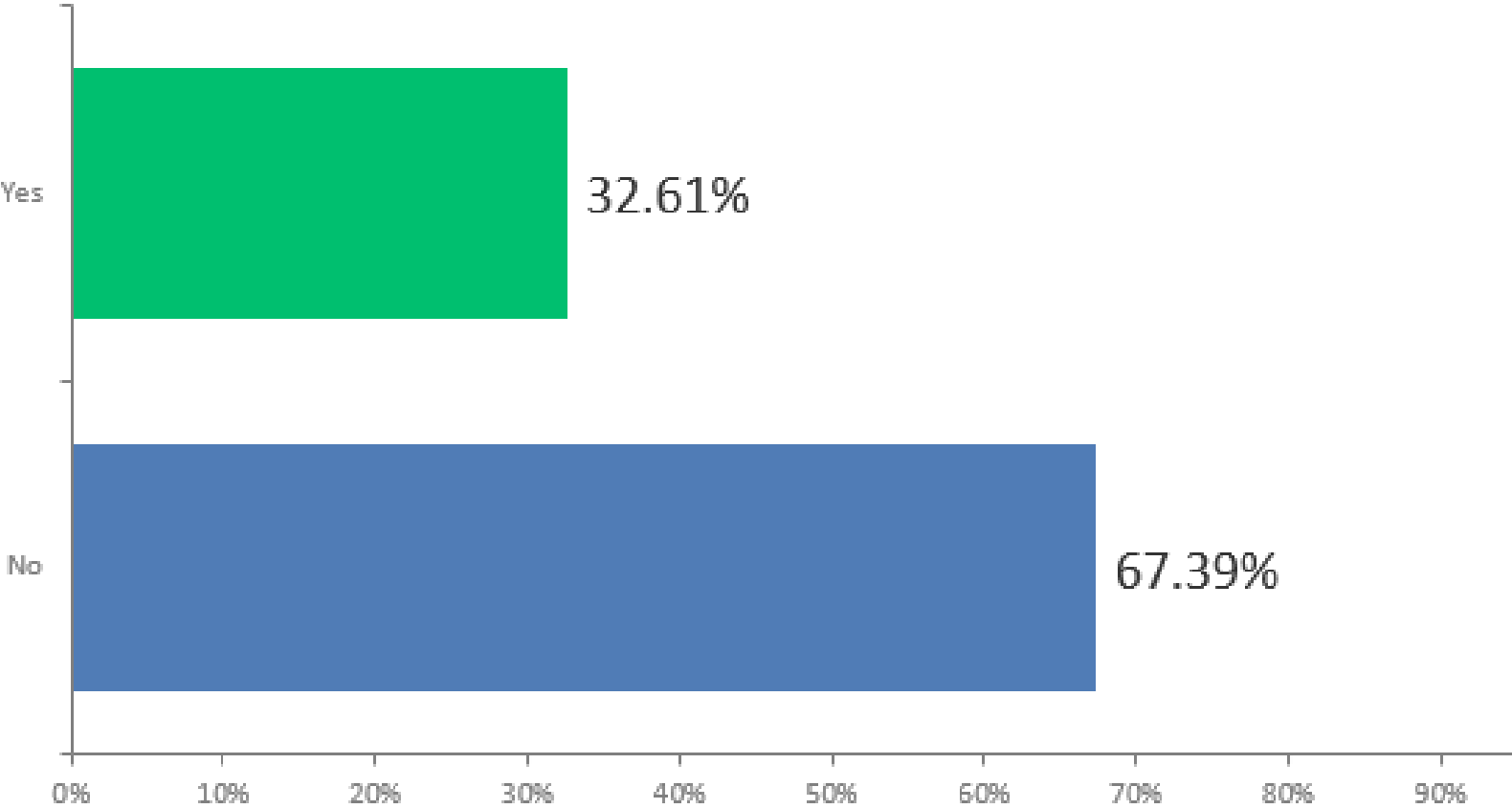
- More of programming– specifically dance (Bhangra) performances, instruments, cultural events and shows
- More market stalls and food vendors
- More cultures celebrated e.g., Nepalese
- LGBT stories
- More children's entertainment
- Fireworks
- Open mic night
- Opportunity to try out different instruments, dancing and singing
- Drawing/Rangoli
- Henna
- Candles

Accessibility / practical suggestions:

- Better advertising and promotion
- More shade / inside spaces and more seats
- Not allowed dogs in some venues

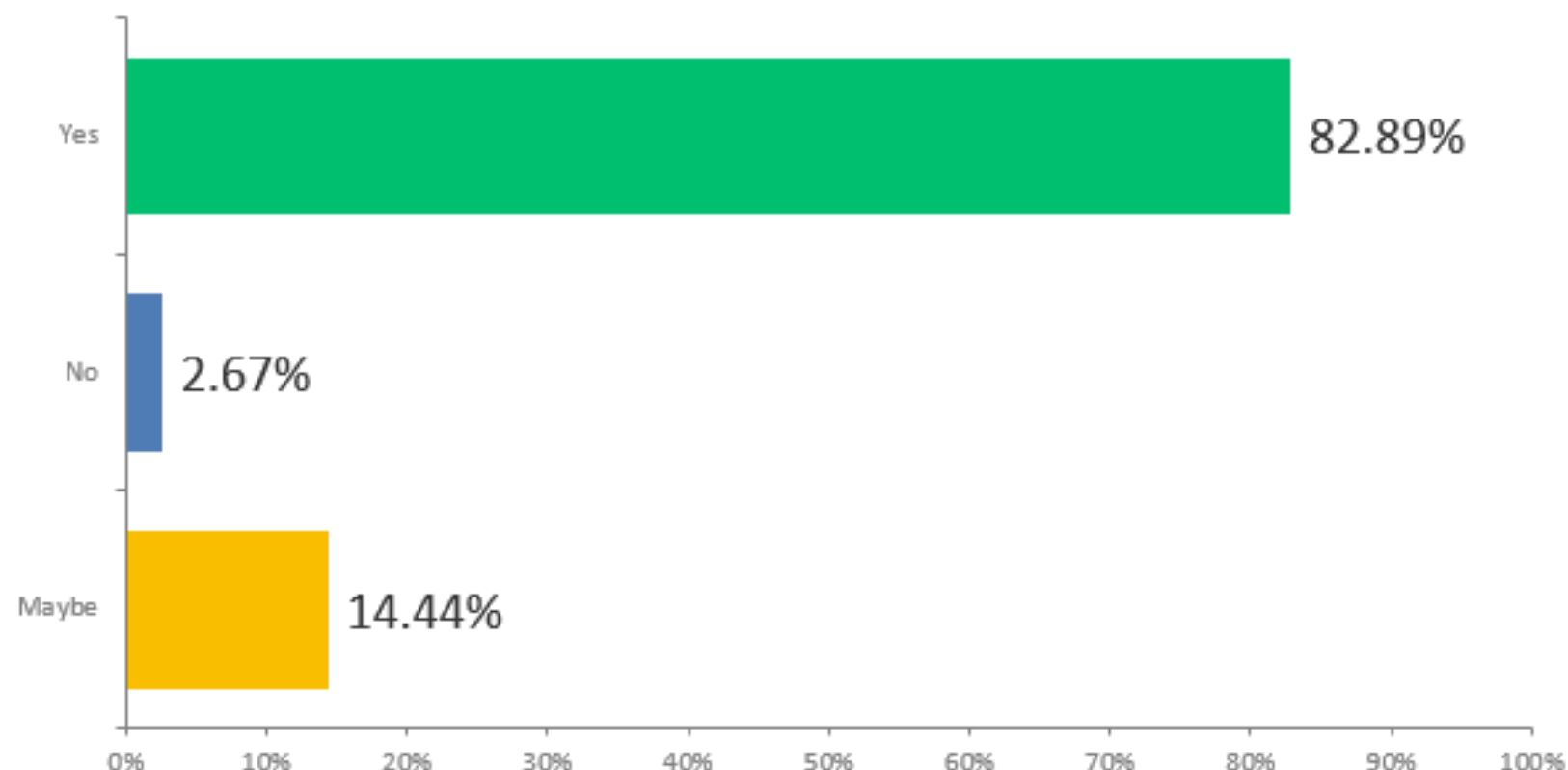
Q8: Have you previously attended any other LVCC festivals, e.g. Bridges of Light or the Festival of Play?

Answered: 184 Skipped: 14



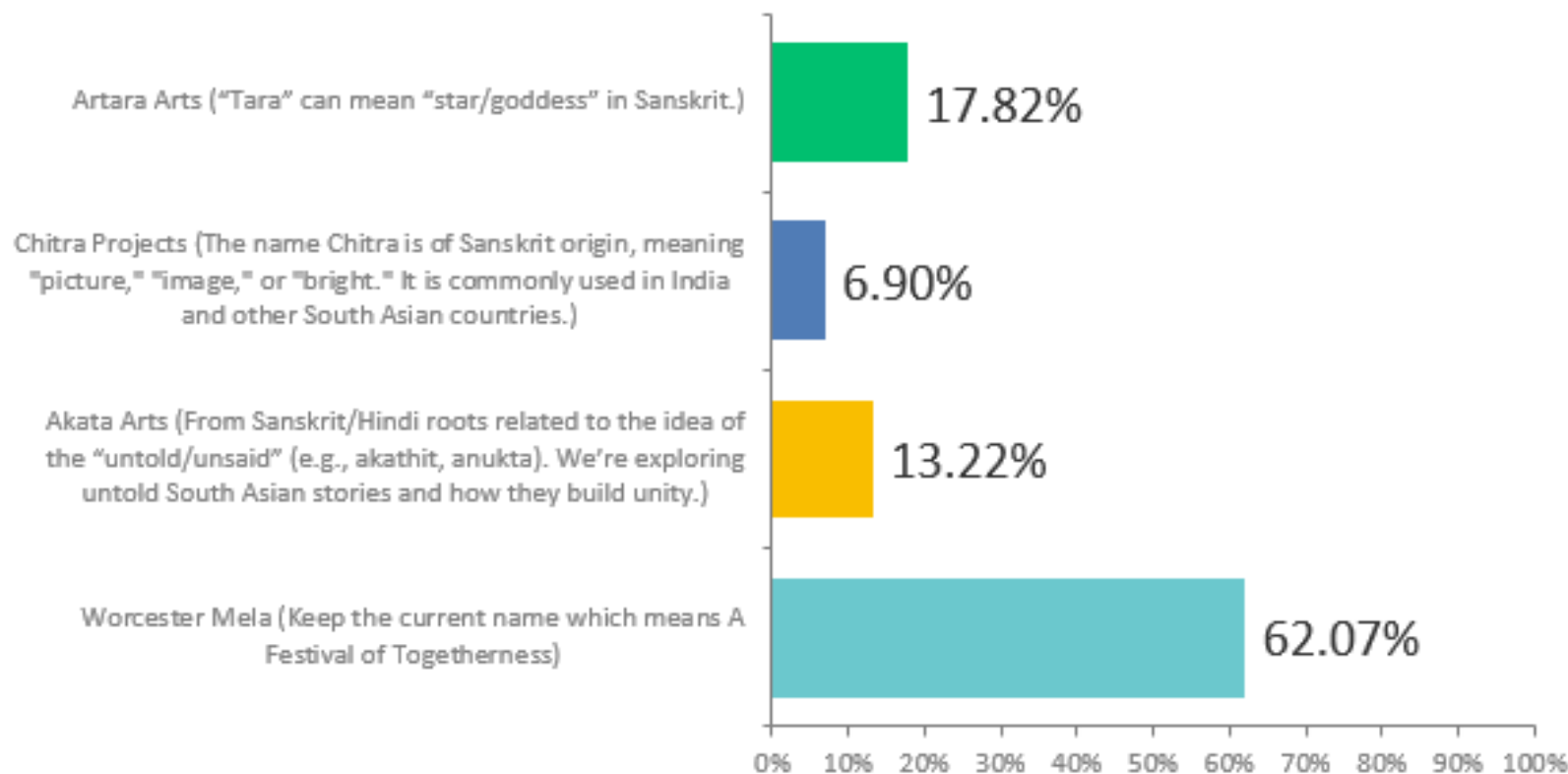
Q9: Would you be interested in attending another festival or event in Worcester's Creative Quarter (e.g. The Arches, The Hive, Angel Place, Scala) or other city centre venues?

Answered: 187 Skipped: 11



Q10: Worcester Mela is changing its name! Reflecting our growth from one Mela event to a South Asian arts organisation delivering a range of arts, social history and cultural identity-based work. Help us decide.. which do like best? [select one]

Answered: 174 Skipped: 24



62%

Think the name should stay as Worcester Mela

- *"Mela means togetherness that's what mela does brings togetherness"*
- *"It's already known, maybe worcester mela arts might add a new dimension to the name"*
- *"Think mela is too narrow a name - means one thing to those in the know, Akata is a chance to reset"*

What People Said:

- A city where South Asian culture and creativity is visible, celebrated and embraced by people Worcester-wide
- South Asian festival audiences report greater awareness of South Asian culture

“Worcester needs this kind of creative community drive”

“Very magical experience for us and our children.”

“This is the type of thing Worcester needs more of.”

“Introduction to many different aspects of South Asian culture”

“Uniting the community.”



“The festival was lovely, very inclusive feeling.”

“Lovely to see so many communities coming together in Worcester.”

“A good variety of events showcasing South Asian culture.”

“Honestly I'm so happy seeing multiculturalism celebrated.”

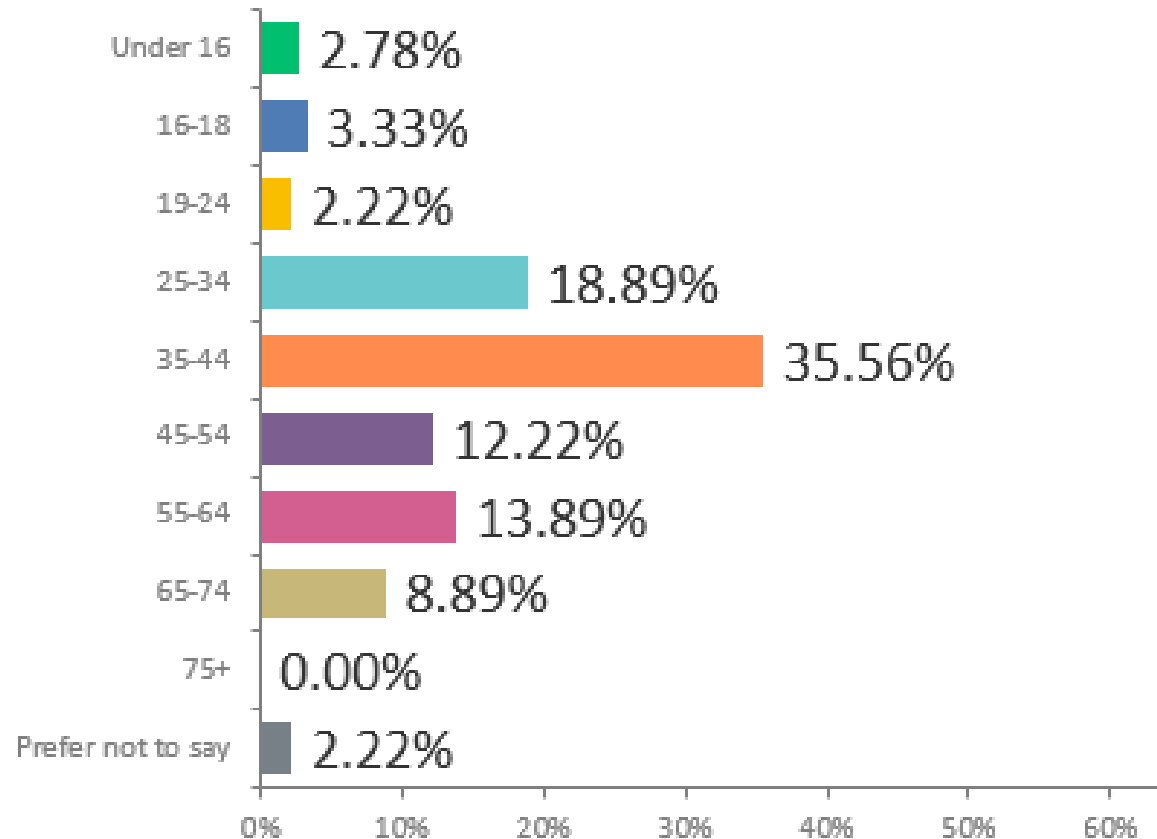
“It's wonderful to see diversity in this city. People being kind to each other and having fun together, and the diverse richness of other cultures. We found it fun, interesting and it was lovely.”

Survey Demographics

Survey – Demographics

Q11: What is your age?

Answered: 180 Skipped: 18

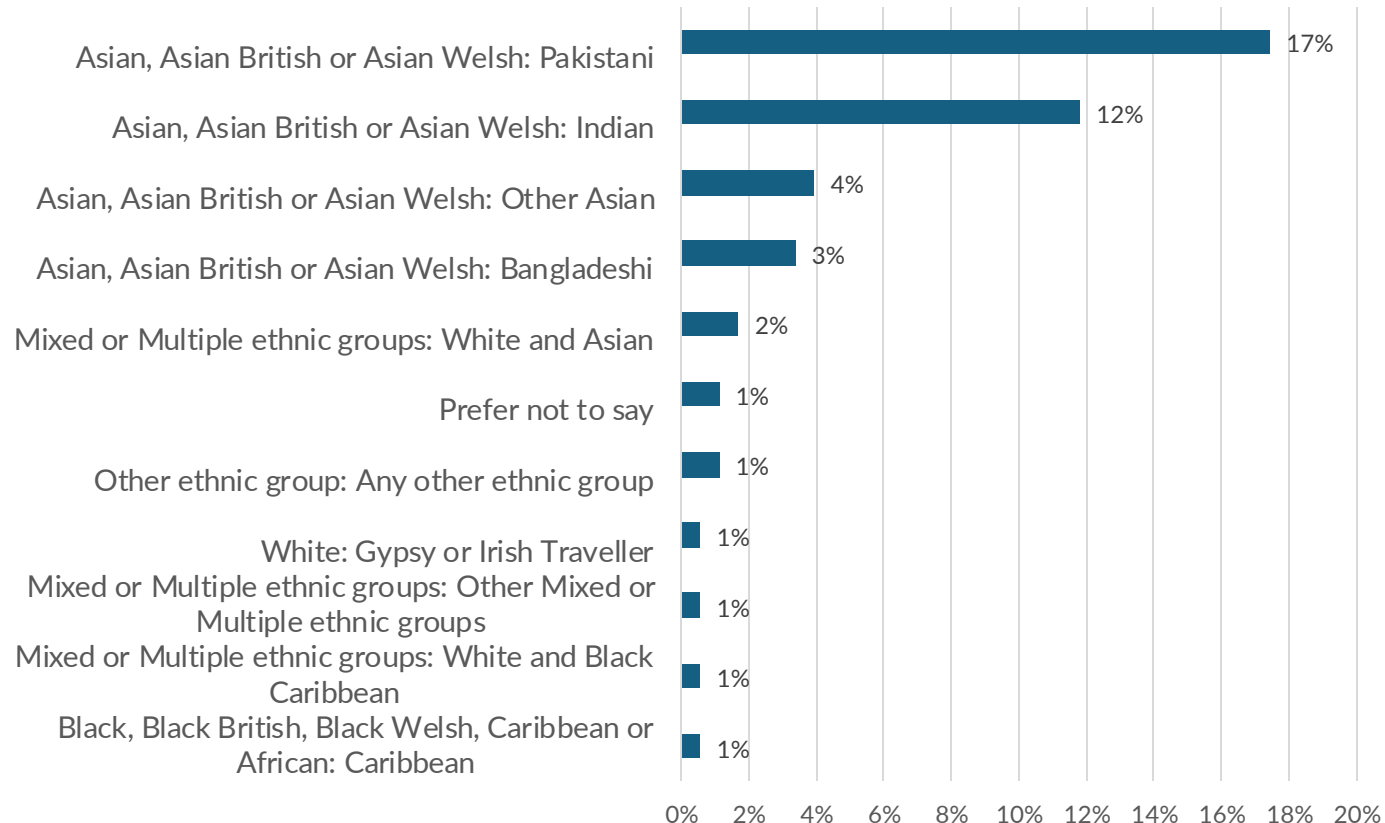


- Broad mix of age ranges
- Observation: multi-generational groups

Survey – Demographics

Q With which ethnicity do you identify with?

53% White English/NIrish/Scottish/Welsh, White Irish, White



- 53% White English/NIrish/Scottish/Welsh, White Irish, White Other
- Bridges of Light (94.6%)
- Festival of Play (73%)
- Chart shows remaining selected ethnicities

Top 4:

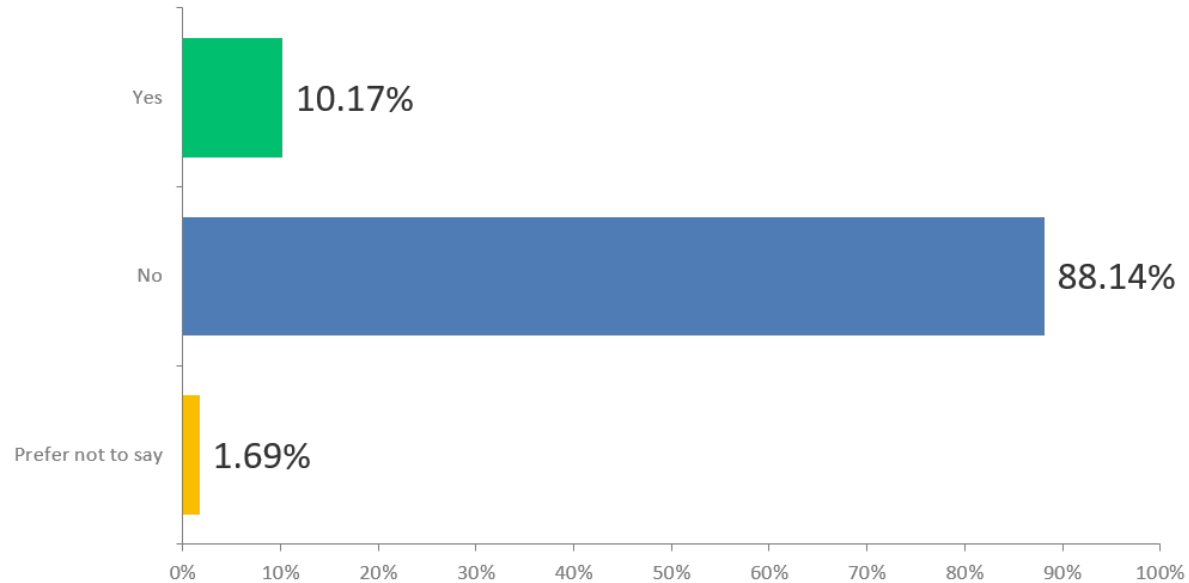
- Asian British or Asian Welsh: Pakistani
- Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Indian
- Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Other Asian
- Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Bangladeshi

Survey – Demographics

- 10% identify as D/deaf, disabled or having a LTHC
- 7% identify as neurodivergent

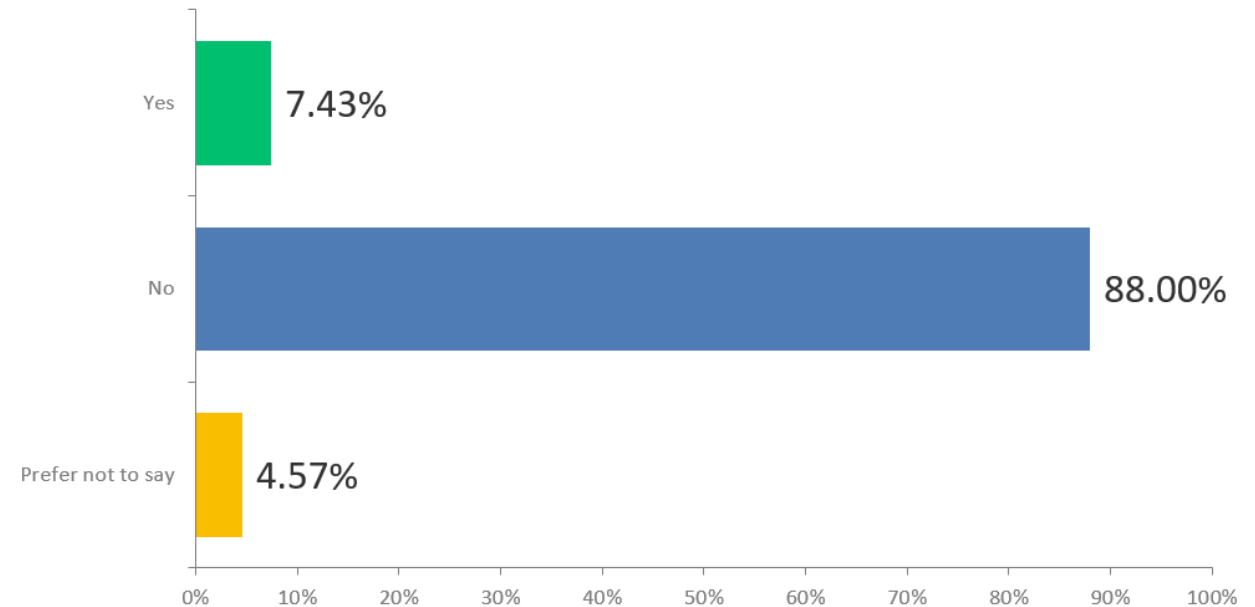
Q13: Do you identify as D/deaf, disabled or have a long-term health condition?

Answered: 177 Skipped: 21



Q14: Do you identify as neurodivergent?

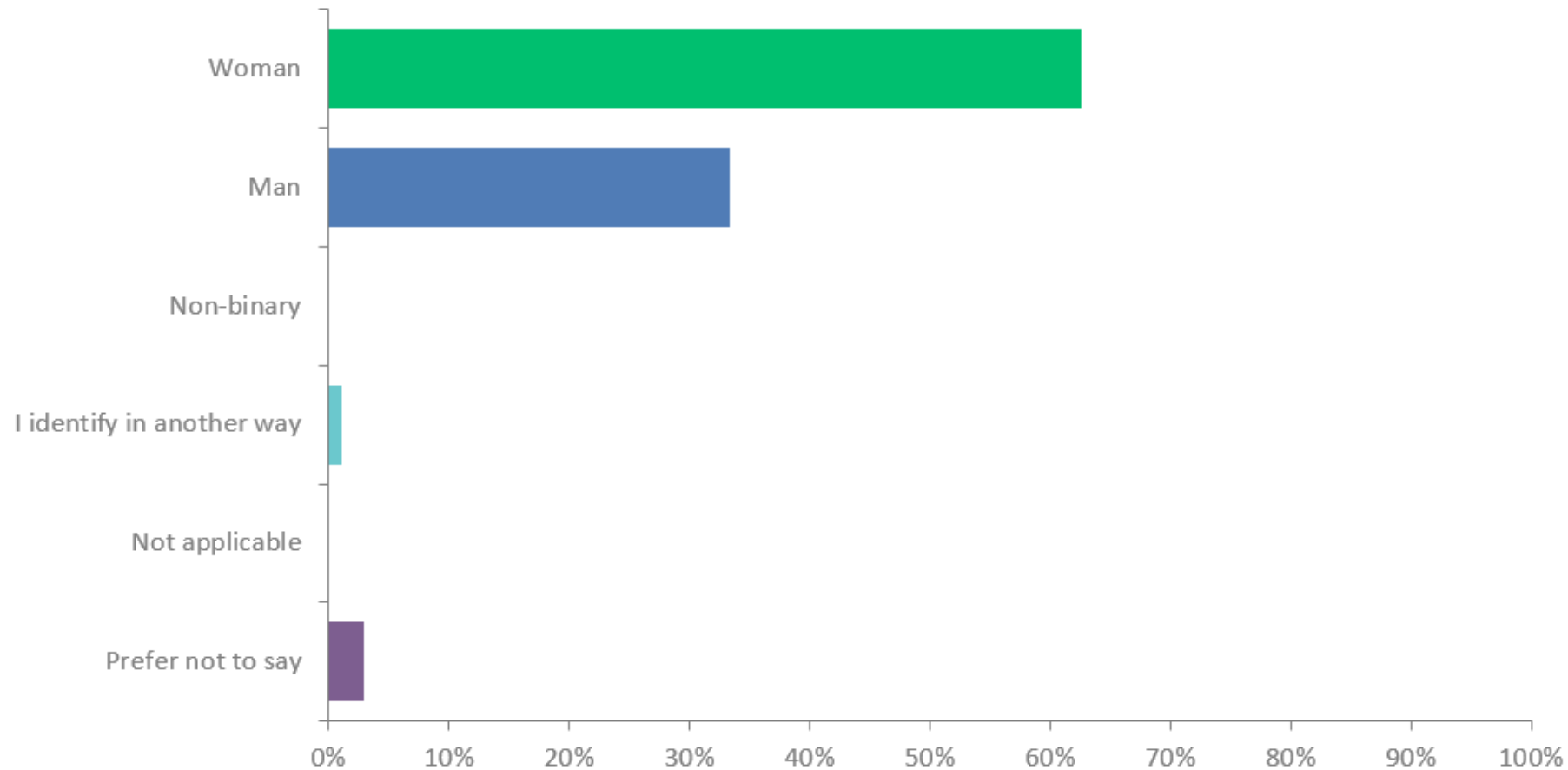
Answered: 175 Skipped: 23



Survey – Demographics

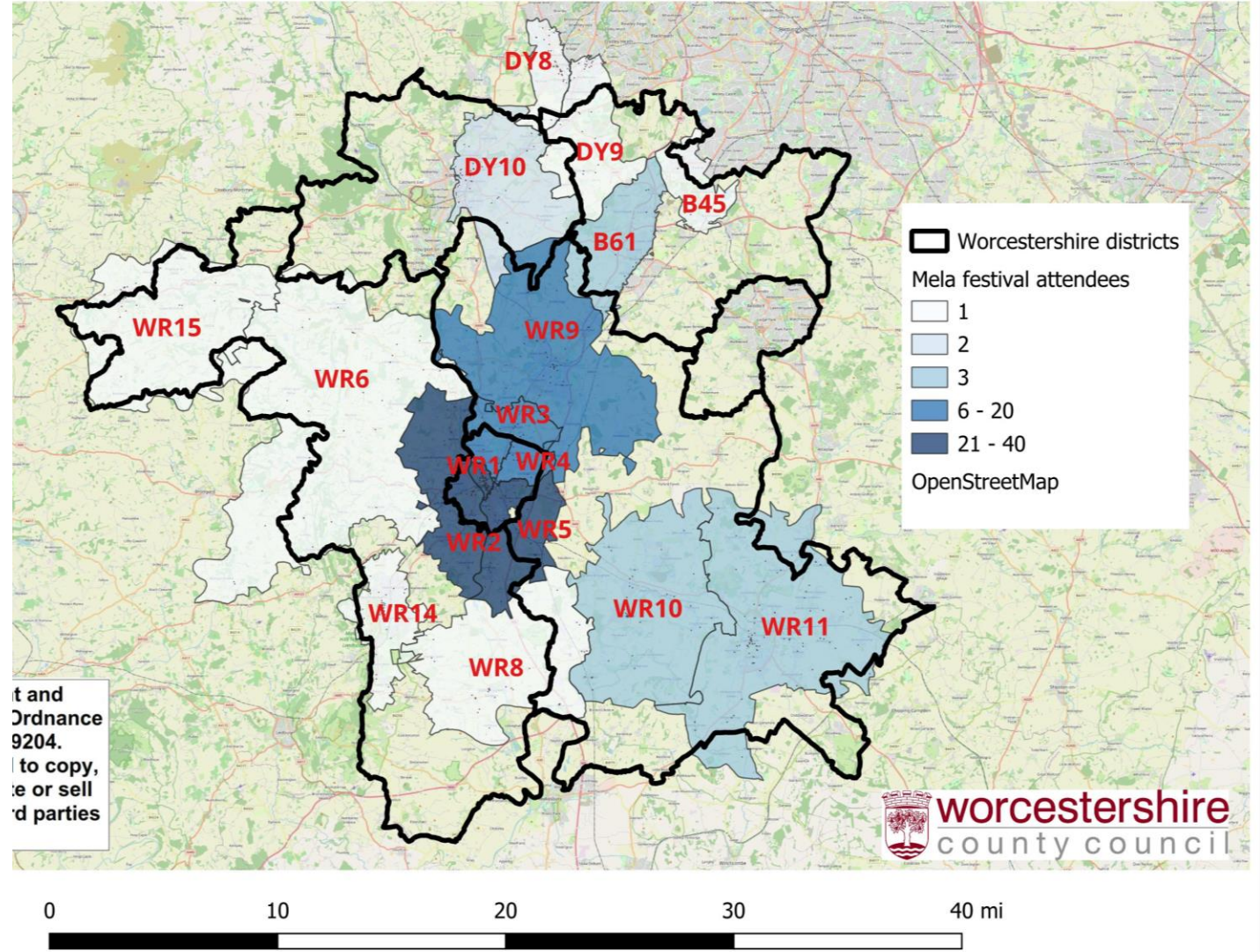
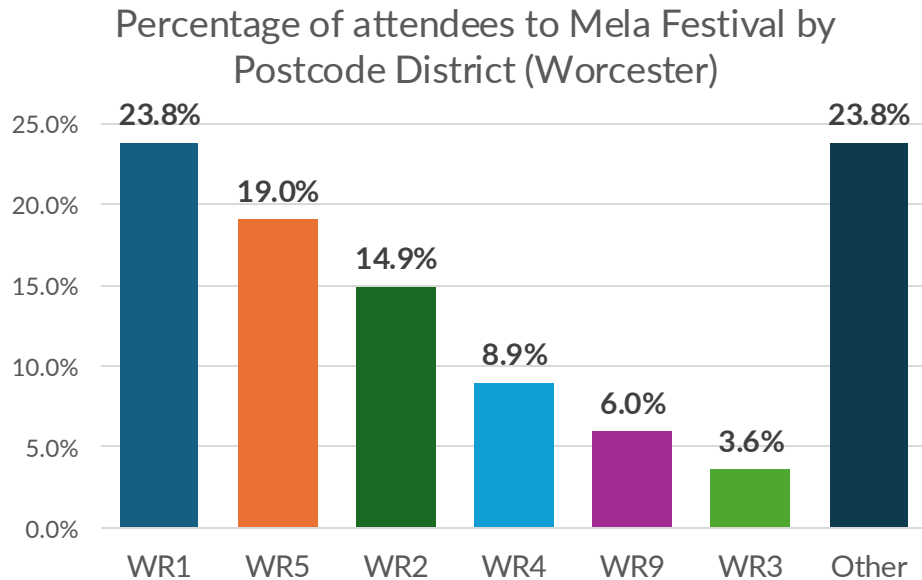
Q15: What is your gender identity?

Answered: 174 Skipped: 24



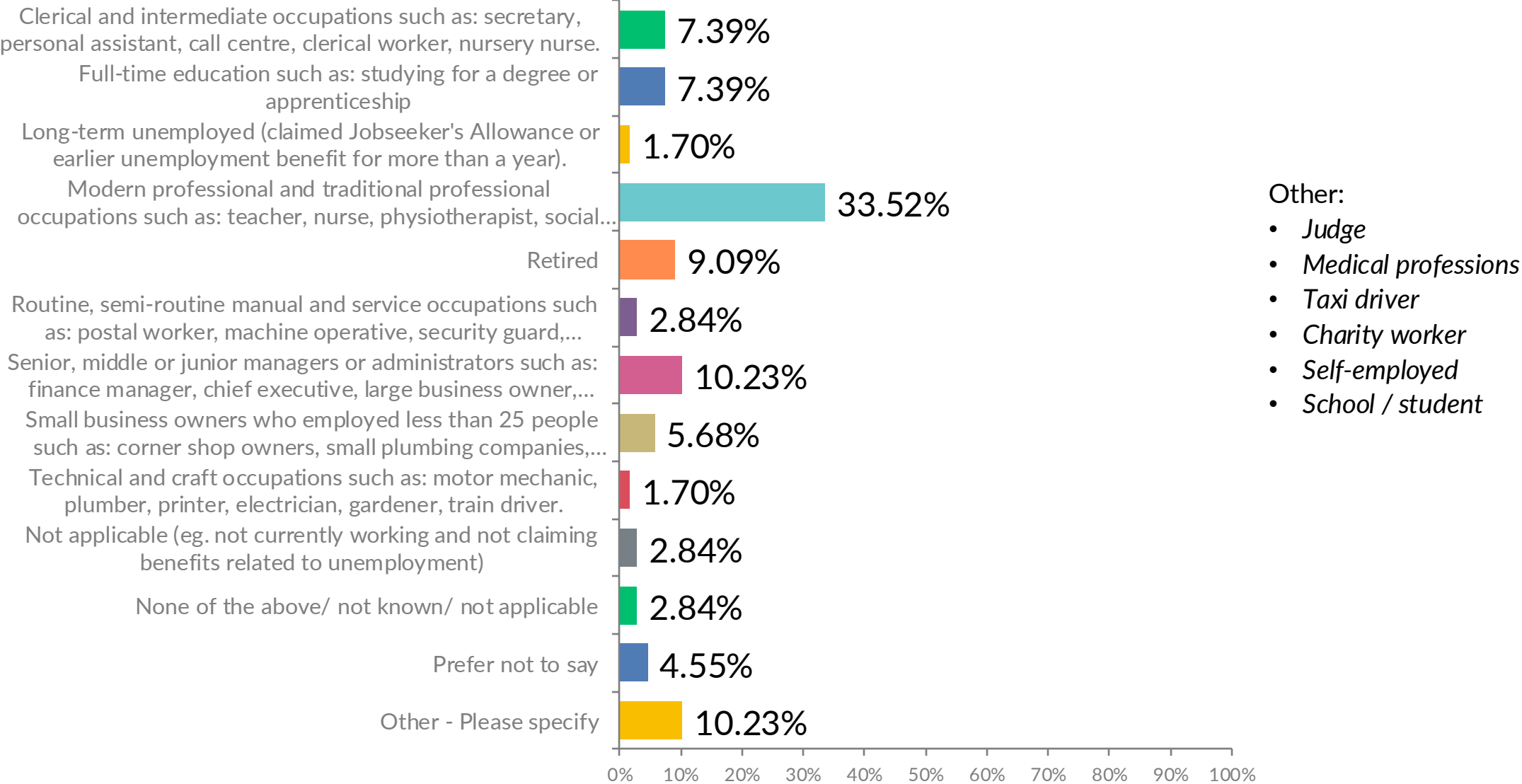
Survey - Postcodes

- 76.2% Worcester City postcodes
- Clear representation from wider Worcestershire residents too
- Higher proportion of 'other' post code areas



Mela Festival Attendees by Postcode District

Survey - Occupation



Artist Survey

Artists – 1 full response, 1 partial (data not included)



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- Significantly more diverse (+20%) audience representation and audience postcodes show a strong local footprint.
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- Worcester Mela is now an established organisation and is recognised within local South Asian communities.
- Opportunities to improve promotion, signage on event days, stall variety and more co-creation with local communities.
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Programme Measures: Festivals Only

LVCC Data and Evaluation Reporting.xlsx

PROGRAMME MEASURES

	Totals BOL 25	Totals Play 26	Totals SAHM 26	Year 1 Totals	Aim	Yr 1
A thriving, new Creative Quarter that is well used by artists, participants and audiences						
•83,550 audiences/visitors by 2027	22,000	6,150	5,815	33,965	83,500	41%
•2k+ mass participation co-creators	442	2,210	213	2865	2,000	143%
•80% using Creative Quarter say they will return	93%	97%	83%	91%	80%	114%
A city where people from under-served communities take ownership of high-quality cultural activity that relates to them						
•900+ co-creation participants from Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) areas 1 & 2	442	148		590	900	66%
•Festival attendees from these areas increase 15% by 6th festival	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
•Best practice process for co-creation	N/A	N/A	N/A	Progress report	Complete for Y2	On track
•NEW Co-creation participants report workshops are accessible, develop skills, increase confidence and grew pride in creating festival artworks Replacing: 80% co-creation participants say workshops accessible; developed confidence; increased cultural appetite; grew pride in creating festival artwork)	Qual insight gathering and Most Significant Change			Progress report	Complete for Y1 and Y2	On track
•NEW: Development of access and inclusion report	Report complete	Report complete	Report complete	Progress report	Complete for Y2	On track
A city where South Asian culture and creativity is visible, celebrated and embraced by people Worcester-wide						
•20,310 participants, visitors & audiences SAHM	N/A	N/A	5,815	5,815	20,310	29%
•Events daily in South Asian heritage month	N/A	N/A	Activity covers every day	Activity covers every day	Complete for Y1 and Y2	On track
•South Asian festival audiences report greater awareness of South Asian culture	N/A	N/A	Yes - qualitative analysis	Yes	Complete for Y1 and Y3	On track

Threads of Unity 2026

Embed video