
ROMAN RIVER MUSIC FESTIVAL

Audience survey November 2014

In November 2014 those who had bought tickets to the 2014 Festival were asked to fill in an online form with their views on the festival.

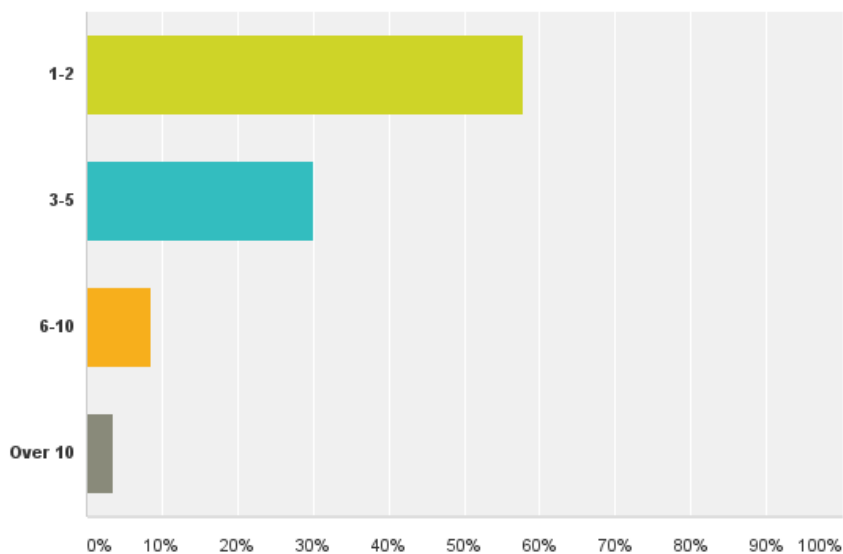
225 people responded to the following questions.

1. How many concerts/events did you attend in this year's festival?
2. How did you first hear about the festival?
3. Which were your favourite venues?
What can we do to improve venues (e.g. seating, sightlines, warmth, parking, front of house)
4. What do you think about our ticket pricing?
5. What kind of performances would you like to see more of?
6. Where would you most like us to put on concerts?
7. How many concerts roughly would you hope to come to next year?
8. Would you recommend us to your friends and what is your general impression of the festival?
9. Where should we concentrate our efforts on improving things for next year?
10. Would you be willing to join our wonderful team of volunteers, or support the festival in any other way?
(the 62 offers of help in answer to this question were given in confidence and are not replicated here)

The following pages give the answers.

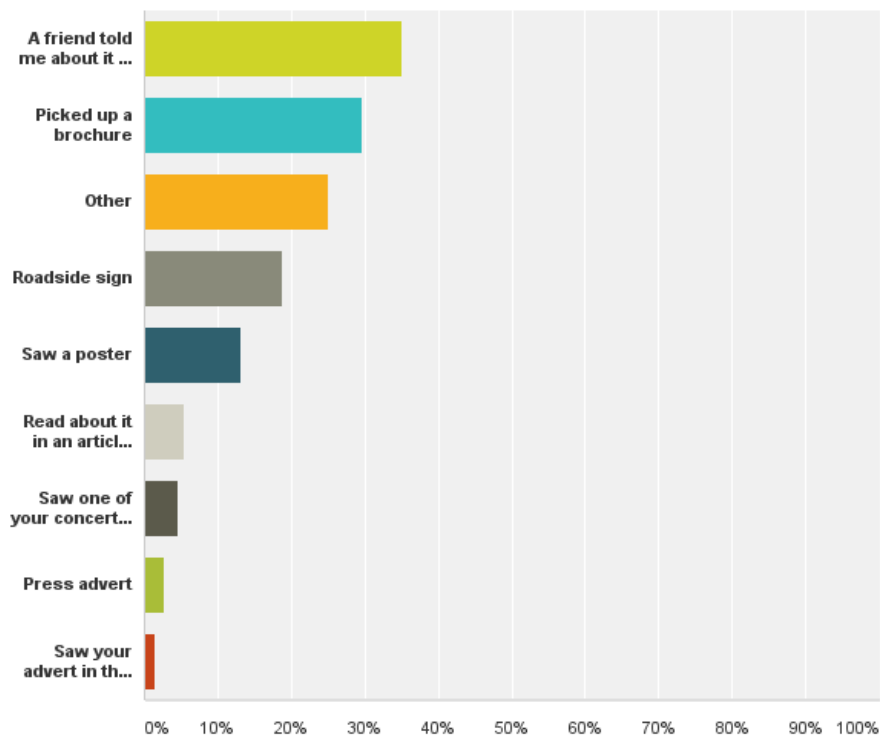
Q1 How many concerts/events did you attend in this year's festival?

Answered: 220 Skipped: 5



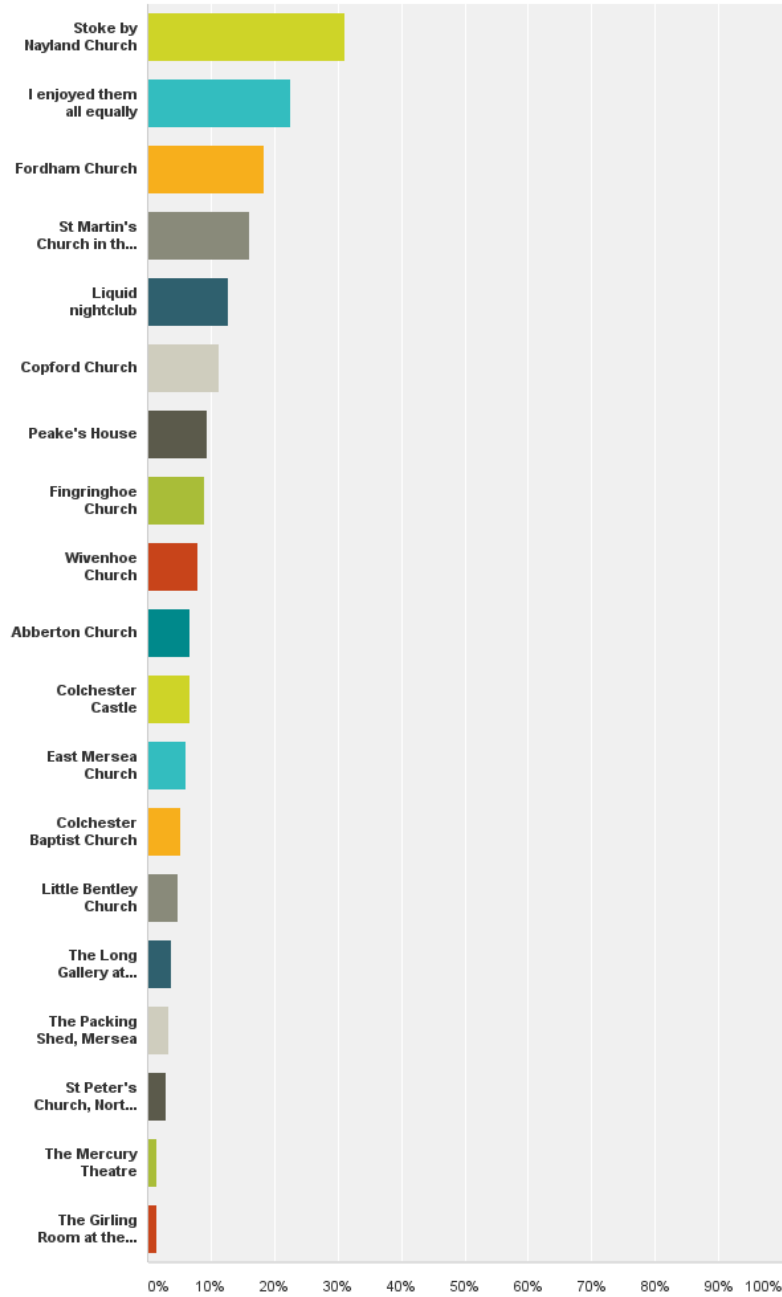
Q2 How did you first hear about the festival (you can tick more than one box if you heard from various sources.)

Answered: 219 Skipped: 6



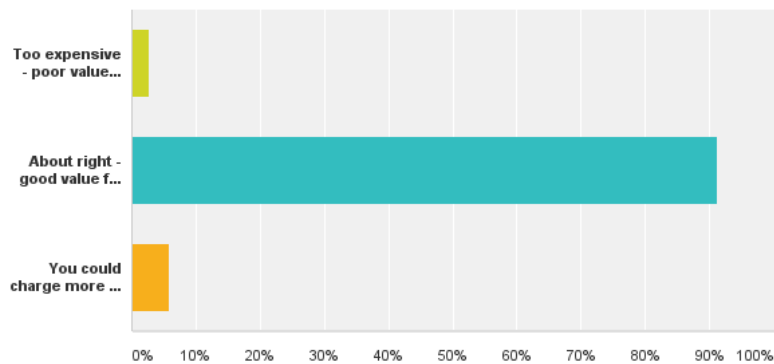
Q3 Which were your favourite venues? You can tick more than one...

Answered: 212 Skipped: 13



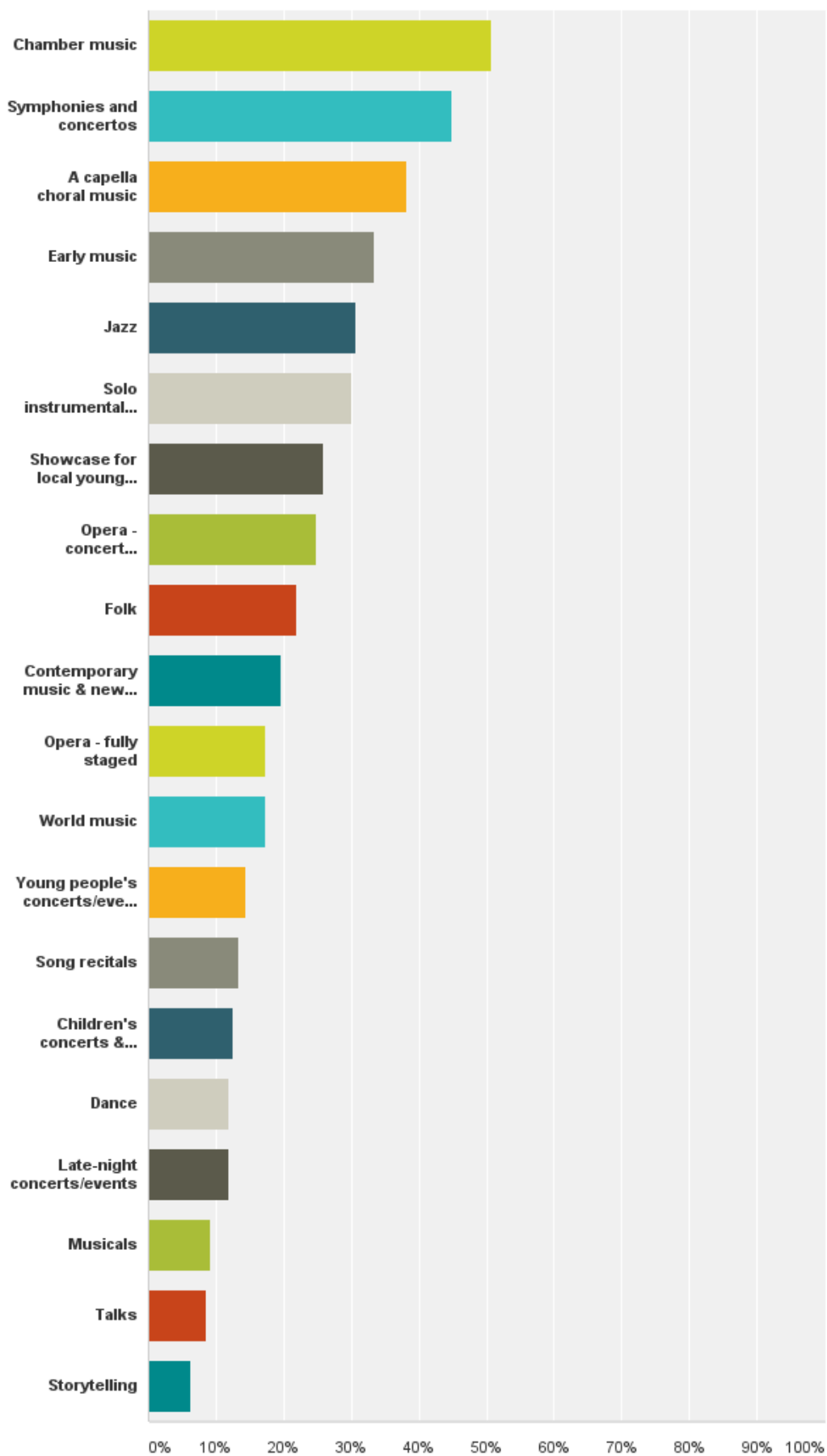
Q4 What do you think about our ticket pricing?

Answered: 219 Skipped: 6



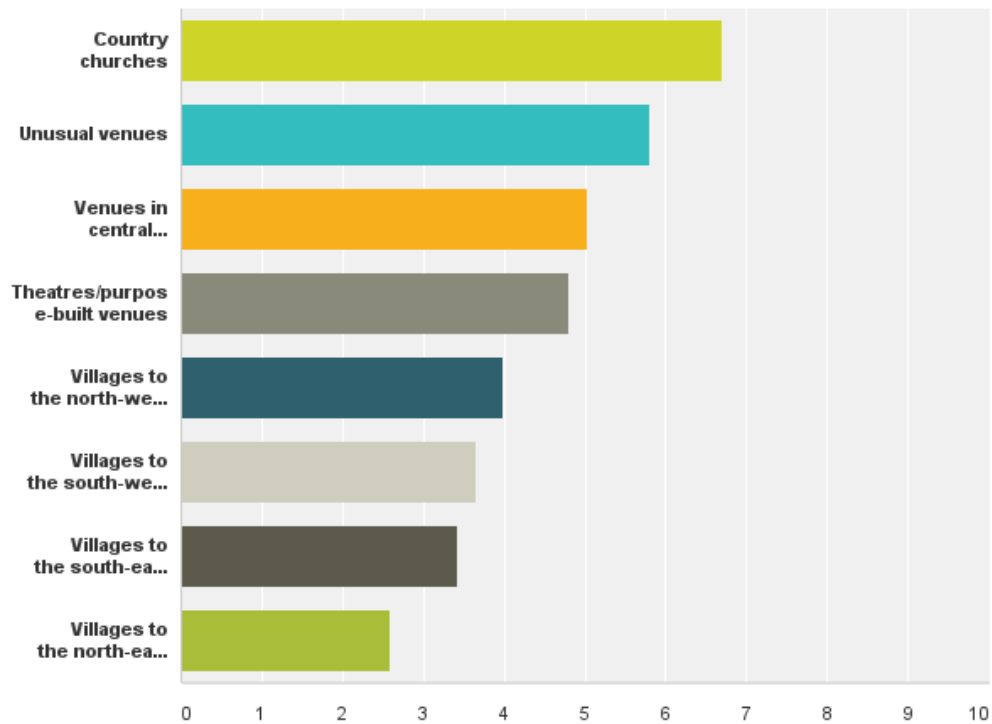
Q5 What kind of performances would you like to see more of? You can tick more than one...

Answered: 209 Skipped: 16



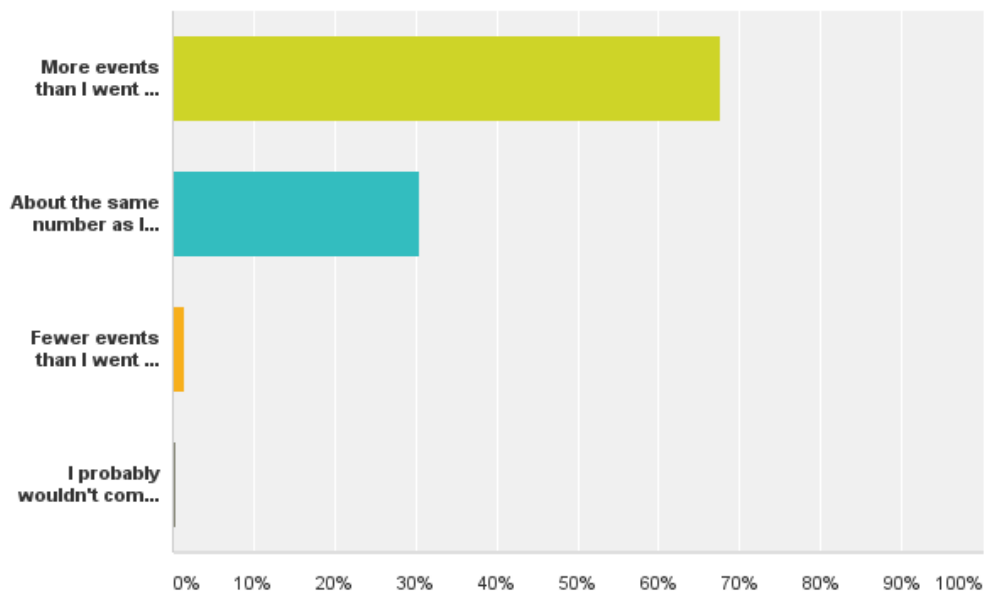
Q6 Where would you most like us to put on concerts? Please rank these in order of preference:

Answered: 205 Skipped: 20



Q7 How many concerts roughly would you hope to come to next year?

Answered: 217 Skipped: 8



What was your general impression of the festival?

Well organised, top-quality musicianship across a range of venues with good acoustic qualities. Especially encouraging to see your inclusion of 'Fiona Bevan' & 'Firefly Burning' at St Martin's on the opening w/e: really added to the eclectic mix of Roman River...

A wonderful surprise. I loved the fact that international musicians were playing in unusual locations like village churches

Well organised, good quality of performance, interesting music

Increasingly professional

I very much enjoyed the programming - including hearing works like the Messiaen which is not often on concert programmes.

Truly professional

Really varied programme of events. Enthusiastic and friendly. Different and special in terms of venues and celebrating a sense of place. Putting this special corner of the world on the map. Bringing new cultural opportunities to the people of NE Essex. Supporting music education for children and young people. I think it's brilliant that we now have a music festival in the area - and one that seems to be thriving. Thank you!!!

Some outstanding music-making

Wonderful

Excellent in every respect

We only attended the 2 concerts so I would find it hard say how they could be improved. Both were run to perfection.

Very professionally run.

very exciting, brilliant choices of music and venues

Quality music making in delightful, sometimes unusual venues in a friendly environment

Excellent, wonderful, brilliant!! Thank you very much for all your hard work!

something we are very lucky to have and should be very very proud of

I think it is fantastic to have such an event in this area. Well done.

Excellent. Opportunities to hear top class performances without travelling far.

well organised and growing in stature

being so close to the performers is the best thing about Roman Rivers - brilliant

Professional, classy, exciting. Lucky to have it on our doorstep.

Good, but if you want to attract the "undecided" have some shorter programmes.

Excellent value and great music.

Amazing, inspired programming. Beautiful venues. World class music.

Great, with a variety of music for everyone and particularly good to include young local musicians

Very good performances in more unusual venues at a reasonable price - and with very reasonably priced wines/beers!

Friendly approach with a real team of professional dedicated people behind it....wonderfully accessible to primary school children.

Enthusiastic excellence

Liked it last year when I attended a variety of events especially Gwyneth Herbert. Only attended one this year so difficult to comment. Need to see more than one event to make the most of it.

Wonderful variety of quality events in great settings. I was VERY impressed.

Excellent

quite enjoyed it

Wonderful

Friendly atmosphere, great value, just the sort of music I love - and of a very high quality.

Very welcoming and perfect organisation of venues and concerts

Very Mixed. Quite haphazard with organisation. Lack of thought on facilities for older and infirm people

Very well organised - something for everyone ! The Rachmaninov Vespers was magical and definitely one of the high points of 2014 for me. Thanks very much!

Wanted to attend more events but was away on holiday.

Friendly, varied, really good standard

A good varied mix of quality music and venues. Thanks to those involved for making this happen.

excellent, but resist getting too big. Keep it small & good quality

Well organised; superb potential to embrace alternative ground-breaking music & challenging performers.....

Excellent. Helpers and organisers are friendly and efficient. Music superb! Love it. Think we are very lucky to have an event of such quality available locally.

Great music, interesting venues, friendly organisers

Very good

very good

Having moved from London, probably the musical centre of the universe, it was a joy to stumble upon this enterprising festival.

High quality music, very eclectic. A real asset to the local arts scene.

Varied so something good to taste for everyone.

Great to get to hear good quality music outside of a big city. Good to encourage young talent.

I was very impressed. The concert was well organised and I was particularly impressed by the level of enthusiastic support you have within the community. You are an inspiration

Excellent

Excellent and varied

Excellent - really great range of events, and well organised.

Concerts easy to access and catering for a wide range of musical tastes.

Lovely performances with some impressive headline artists, music sometimes esoteric and for a slightly 'exclusive'/older audience which will put off younger audiences

Very well organised but cosy and friendly too...

Good varied programme, accessible to large numbers of people.

Well organised and professional. Great thought put into the variety of performance and appropriate venues. Excellent website with tickets easy to pay for. Efficient and polite service.

Fun, different, loved the venues However audience does seem to be of a certain age - mostly retired

Excellent

It was brilliant. I live in Colchester and to be able to walk into town and listen to such wonderful music in unusual venues was amazing. I especially enjoyed the concerts in the Dutch Quarter such as St Martins and Peakes House as well as Liquid Night Club and the Castle Chapel.

Really interesting and high quality performances in beautiful venues.

Excellent, wish we'd been available to attend more concerts. Think the festival is a wonderful concept.

Excellent. Something a little different to the norm.

Live music is always good to hear

Well organised, friendly people behind the scenes, excellent performers

Very well organised. Friendly and very professional

Remarkable programme quality and so accessible.

great

Very impressed with quality of performers

Very well organised

A blazing light for culture and excellence.

Good idea hope it continues

I tend to like more main-stream classical works

Interesting programme, varied without lacking focus

We are incredibly lucky to have professional performers of such high calibre and diversity. I was only sorry that some audiences were so small in number.

Great

Very professional

Enjoyable evening but would have liked to have a better view.

Great value for money. Saw artists that we would not normally have through of seeing.

Eclectic and relaxed. Perfect. You can even drink your drink in the pew!

excellent organisation. I really like the way you are engaging with all age groups and tastes. I did not enjoy one event, a little too radical and not really pleasant to listen too, even if he was related to a famous composer.

Thank you! The festival was magnificent: this was the first time I have been and I was delighted by the events I attended.

high quality music in lovely venues. Access to music and artists not often heard

Very well organized.

General impression good

A great range of concerts that should suit everyone.

Lovely to have such good music on home soil. I have not much experience, but seems a reliably good standard

I have already encouraged friends to attend what I regard as an excellent festival with first class performers.

Fantastic!

Extraordinarily high quality

Some good stuff, somewhat expensively priced.

Brilliant. I've recently moved from London, and if this festival was there, I wouldn't have a hope in hell of getting tickets, let alone be able to afford them. I think people I have spoken to have an impression the tickets are expensive, but I don't think they've actually looked.

excellent

fantastic experiences with perfect blend of local atmosphere and professional performances

great

Distinctive, varied, attractive, nicely balanced, personal in the sense of reflecting a crusading zeal and the taste(s) of the organisers. So many festivals today are anodyne, one could say anonymous, interchangeable, the events parachuted in

The Wivenhoe concert was superb - also pleasing that there was such a large audience for a "modern" and quite "difficult" work.

It is so varied, there is something for everyone. the concert at stoke by nayland was excellent

Excellent, wonderful music in unusual venues!

Its special and always highly enjoyable and the time of year is perfect!

Wonderfully imaginative.

A thoroughly professionally run festival providing a wonderful facility for Colchester

Superb - improving year on year

Amazing, wonderful, sublime at times

very well thought through.

Wonderful! What a great chance for us to enjoy fantastic music on our doorstep. All the volunteers were so helpful and efficient too. Thank you all very much.

Well run. Thoughtful. Impressive

A warm and friendly festival

Excellent organisation and music.

Well organised, very efficient on ticket sales. Liked the idea of one programme for all events: encouraged you to look out for other things next time.

It goes from strength to strength. It included some of the most enjoyable music listening this year. Live music is always more exciting but the superb standard of musicianship resulted in some extremely enjoyable and memorable concerts. The Peake House environment was magical.

Fantastic performers, many of them very young.

I was impressed with the very high standard of the performers, the well chosen music, the variety of styles of music, the detailed programmes and friendliness of the volunteers. I loved it all!

Quality and variety - difficult to beat!

Has immense potential so long as the right young artists can be produced.

Extremely high quality and unusually non commercial festival with a great deal of thought put into venues and instrumentalists and singers. High quality music for music-lovers in north Essex and beyond - a real treat to be savoured at the end of summer.

High standard of performances

wonderful music and musicians.

great i look forward to it

Very good

Increasingly ambitious and broad based. Well organised. Good publicity.

A glorious celebration of chamber/solo music in unusual venues

Terrific. Marvellous range of music and venues and such top quality. Very welcoming and efficiently run

Fantastic choice of music - we love it!
Most enjoyable

Splendid

Good and improving

Very high standard of performances.

Good music and friendly people. I really like the way the musicians talk to us in the audience about their instruments and the music they play. It's interesting the way the use of smaller venues maintains the intimacy of the concerts and the Festival as a whole. It would be a shame to lose that.

High quality performers, let down by amateurish organisation front-of-house

Very well organised. Extremely high standard of performers. Interesting venues. Varied programmes.

An excellent and enterprising festival

Brilliant

rich, entertaining, 'gritty'

Brilliant, varied, high quality.

fantastic music, fabulous performers, a range of styles, wonderful friendly atmosphere, excellent education programme

It is getting better year on year and I have been coming since the days of the Whalebone Barn.

Excellent for this area. Would come to more events but not the time or other engagements. Love the way you go into schools - our sons have benefitted from this part of the programme over the years.

Brilliant. Bringing music in easy reach

a good alternative to Snape which concentrates too much on contemporary/modern music

Excellent music in beautiful venues
Great value, interesting and 'different' programme and venues. fun to go to...relaxed!

World class performers who relate well to their audience. Well organised

Its brilliant and seems to have improved from previous years. The quality of the performances I have attended is very very high. Additionally, now there are more concerts, this year a good amount were reachable on public transport.

Well organised,

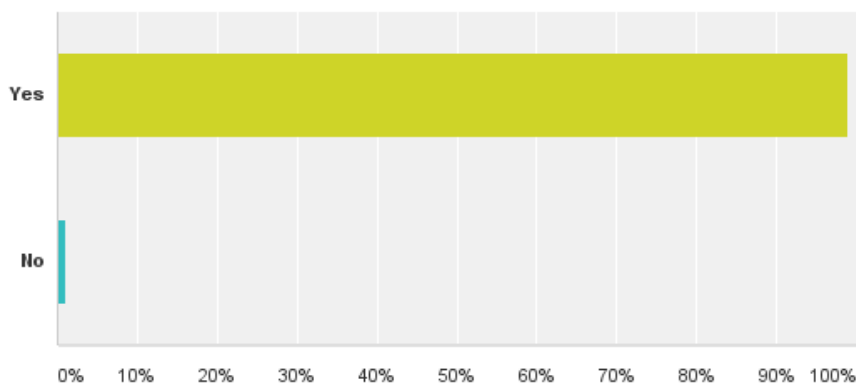
Quality

An amazing number of quality concerts. Well advertised and planned.

Excellent programming and superb musicians followed by fascinating venues ... Really quite extraordinary!

Q8 Would you recommend us to your friends?

Answered: 209 Skipped: 16



Where did you find us?

People found out about the festival from a huge variety of places. They mostly needed 2 or 3 prompts from different directions before they gave it a go.

People found out about the festival from:

the road side banner

The Quay Theatre Sudbury

picked up at Mercury theatre, I think -

Had heard about the festival from friends but never previously been aware of when it was happening.

Given brochure at railway station

My daughters' school as they performed in the festival

Brochure in St Mary's Woodbridge

Brochure I think in Guntons

Roadside signs were all over the place.

Seemed better advertised this year -

My son was singing with his school choir -

Picked up a brochure in my local pub, the Swan in Chappel

I'd seen the signs but the brochure reminded me I wanted to know more.

a poster in Colchester town centre

my village church in Fordham.

A talk given by Zélie Jopling at Wives Fellowship

My daughter was involved.

Can't remember but probably the library -

Roadside sign between Witham and Braintree.

Picked up brochure from Hudson and Hudson - Really interesting programme, and I walked past a cello rehearsal in a Colchester church. It was so beautiful. Wish I'd known about it earlier. -

I just read a poster in a shop window in Colchester town centre somewhere

I saw a poster on a shop's window

I saw a banner, was curious about it and ended up checking the internet

North hill and went online to look

I found the brochure at the Colchester Food Festival.

Tendring parish mag

Enjoyed the cello concert at Harkstead in March

The festival made contact with my book group Appetite Book Club

a waiting room of a solicitors' office

Brochure from Manns music shop

Posters on a134 brochure from library

It was a wonderful performance, the musicians of a very high standard, well organised on the admin side and everyone so friendly that I came to 2 other concerts and brought friends to the 3rd one at East Mersea Church. I look forward to the 2015 Programme. Thank you

What can we do to improve venues? / Where should we concentrate our efforts in improving things?

Most respondents generously said don't change anything and were generally very positive. There were also a variety of excellent suggestions, some of which are beyond our means and others which were cancelled out by directly opposing requests.

Leaving those aside, there were several useful suggestions requested by more than one person, which we will try our hardest to implement next year.

Individual programme sheets at each concert

Cushions for pews

Warmer churches

Lighting from car parks to venues

Reserved blue badge holder spaces

Limit audience in Castle Chapel to 100

More in-town concerts for those with no transport

Front of House

People enjoying the informal nature of FOH were roughly equal to the number of people wanting a more 'professional' welcome. We will try to keep a friendly welcome while briefing our hard-working FOH volunteers as well as possible, especially where there are two or more ticket prices.

Ticket pricing

Our box office gives us around 45% of our income; i.e. each £22.50 seat should actually cost £50. The team works incredibly hard all year to win funding and sponsorship to cover the shortfall. Our concerts are the same standard as those in the top concert halls in London, for which you can pay up to £45 per ticket (plus the train fare of £30 = £75). So we are delighted that most of you agree that the tickets are excellent value for money. For the few people who requested lower price tickets, the danger would be that this would lower the standard of the concerts, which would mean that our sponsors and funding bodies would withdraw their support, and we would end up having to charge more for the tickets to cover the shortfall.

Marketing

Finally there were several requests for more advertising of the festival itself, from people who came to the festival for the first time and then wondered why none of their friends knew about it. We will continue to try as hard as we can to spread the word, and hugely appreciate everybody who helps us by telling their friends. Because of everyone's help and support this year, we were delighted that there was a considerable number of new audience and supporters, and we can only hope that the word will continue to spread.