

## B Sharp Busking Festival – Evaluation Report

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## Festival Report

B Sharp's Busking Festival was held on Saturday May 10th 2025, in Lyme Regis in Dorset. It was a day of musical activities and performances across Lyme Regis with activity at Marine Parade, Langmoor and Lister Gardens, Marine Theatre, Town Mill and Gun Cliff Walk. The festival was aimed at all ages, with a strong offering for children and young people. Activities included:

- Main stage with performances by B Sharp's young people's groups, other school and community groups and young bands.
- Open-mic stage, open to performers of all ages
- Finale Concert in Marine Theatre
- Performances and activities for early years children
- Programmed stages with young performers, and local professional musicians
- Workshop and masterclass programme including DJing, Recording, Drumming, beat-making and synth experimentation, funk, theatre improvisation, arts, crafts and instrument-making.
- Performances by professional outdoor artists
- Community performances including samba groups, choirs, ukulele groups and morris dancing
- Busking opportunities for all ages
- Food Stalls

As the region's largest busking festival, the event offered a platform for young talent to shine with a jam-packed day of free musical experiences designed to inspire the next generation of musicians.

We were also able to train the next generation of producers and event managers, with 4 Young Producers supported to put on their own events as part of the festival, and 6 Festival Assistants learning about behind-the-scenes event management.

## Evaluation Introduction

This report evaluates the B Sharp Busking Festival held in Lyme Regis on May 10th, 2025. It assesses the event's success against bid objectives, using a combination of qualitative and quantitative data gathered through surveys, interviews, direct observations, and feedback from participants. The event was designed to support skills development, increase musical engagement, strengthen partnerships, and build B Sharp's organisational capacity.

### Data collection methods:

- Audio interviews with performers from B Sharp weekly groups, B Sharp music leaders and parents of B Sharp group participants in the group sessions after the event
- Audience feedback surveys completed on the day (27 responses received)
- Evaluation forms from children's activities on the day (31 responses received)
- Evaluation forms received from performers and attendees of workshops (22 responses received)
- Young producer and Festival Assistant reflections (6 responses received)
- Local Business feedback via short interviews
- Feedback gathered from B Sharp team facilitated evaluation session 1 month after the event

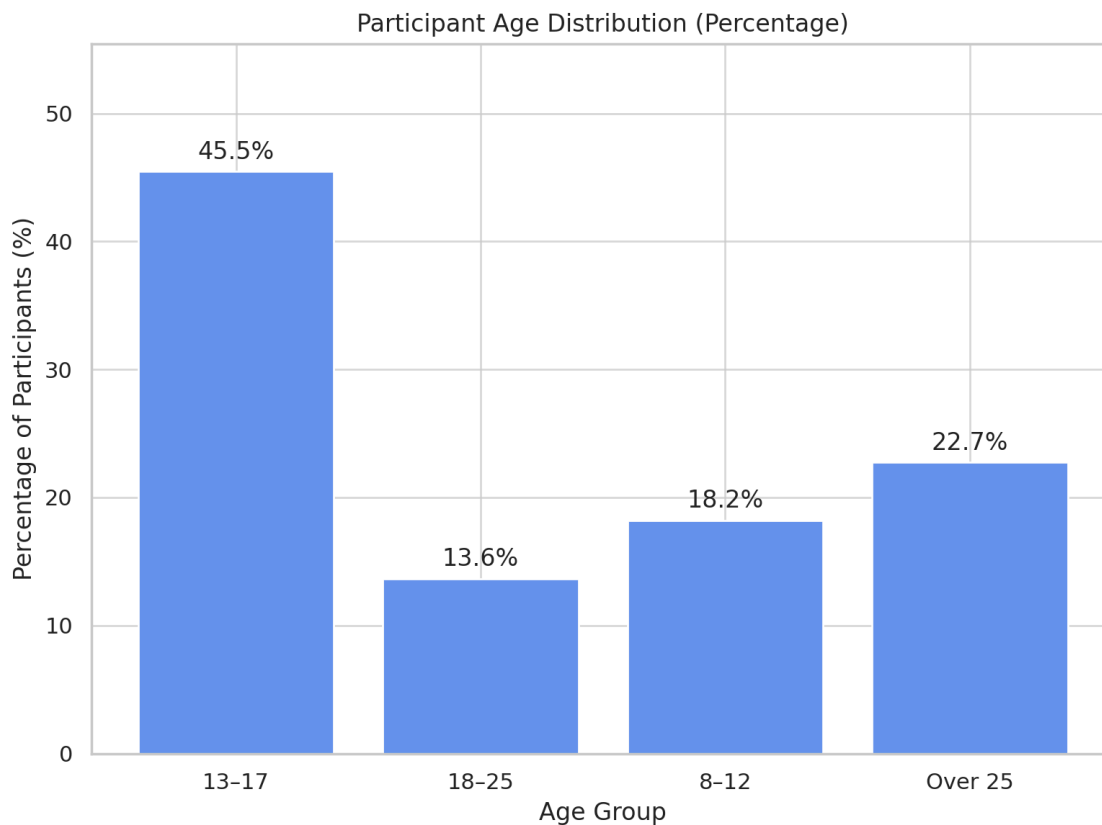


## Overview of Participation:

### Age Distribution of Participants

The age range of those surveyed spanned from babies to 65+, showing broad engagement across generations, but with the majority of attendees being within our under 25 target age.

Participant data for those who performed or attended the workshops and masterclasses was as below:



## Geographical Location of Audience and Participants:

### Within 15 miles of Lyme Regis:

The overwhelming majority of respondents (around 85%) came from nearby towns including Lyme Regis, Charmouth, Axminster, Seaton, Bridport, Beaminster, and Hawkchurch. This indicates very strong local and immediate regional support.

### Over 30 miles away:

Approximately 15% of attendees travelled from more distant locations such as Montacute, Yeovil, Exeter, Cirencester, and even as far as Texas?!

This breakdown confirms that the B Sharp Busking Festival has a deeply rooted local audience while also reaching new and more distant communities—a promising sign for growth and extended promotional efforts in future years.



## Summary of feedback against Aims and Objectives:



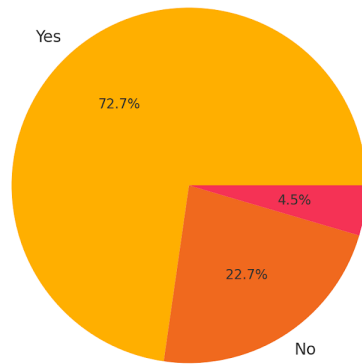
### AIM 1: Broader Musical Opportunities for Young People (8–25)

Over 80 young performers took part, spanning genres including pop, folk, jazz, rap, DJing, and acoustic. Many wrote original material and performed it publicly for the first time. Workshops offered new musical experiences such as DJing, improvisation, and songwriting. Performances included solo acts, duets, ensembles, and open mic sessions. Overall 402 people participated as either performers or workshop participants on the day.

#### Learning and enjoyment:

All 22 respondents said they enjoyed taking part in the activities.

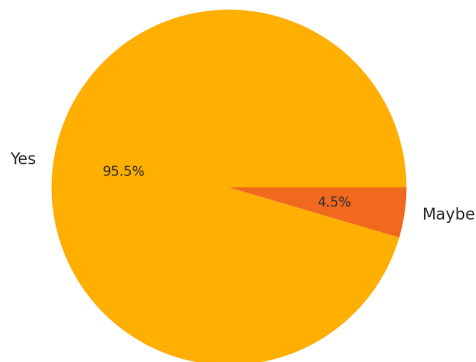
#### Learned Something New?



### Willingness to Take Part Again

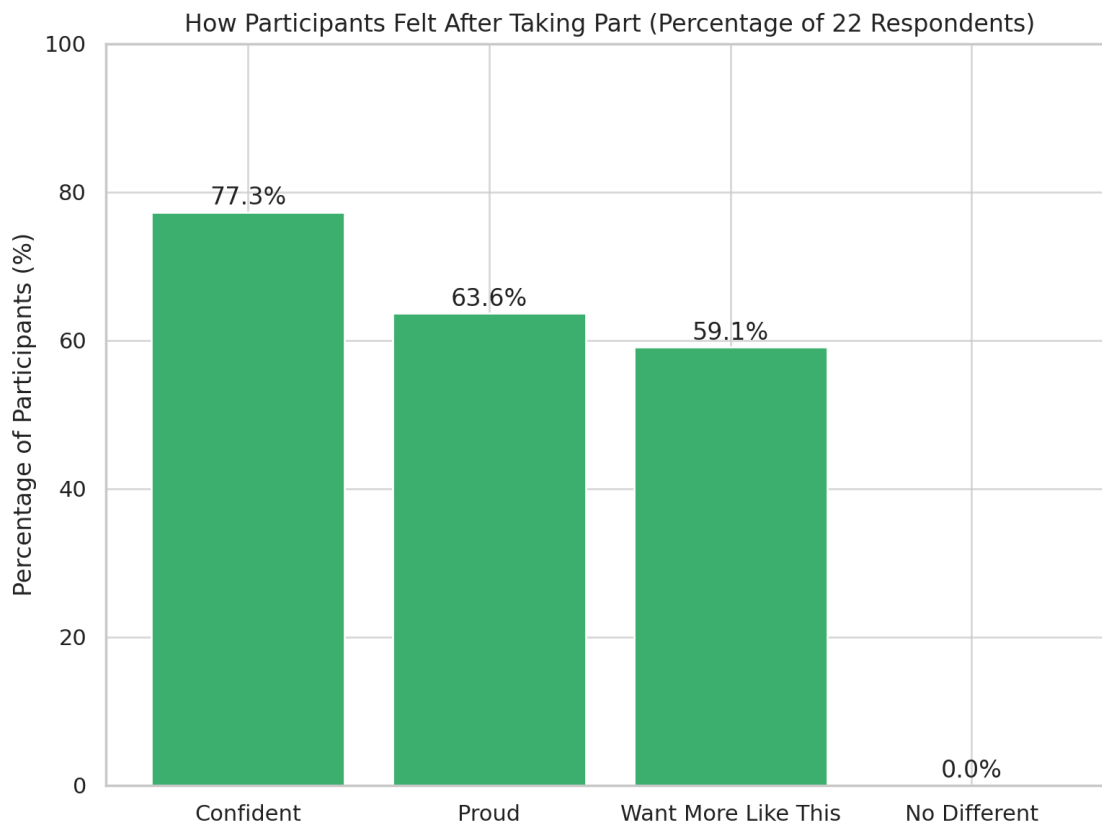
21 of 22 participants said they would take part again in a similar event, with one person saying 'maybe' which is also a positive indicator.

#### Would Like to Do Again?



### Summary of Feelings After Participation

Participants were invited to describe how they felt after taking part. Their responses were categorised into four key themes:



- 17 participants said they felt **more confident**
- 14 participants felt **proud** of what they did
- 13 participants said **they would like to do more things like this**
- 0 participants reported no change in how they felt, or any negative feelings about taking part.

These findings demonstrate a strong positive emotional outcome for all participants. The festival not only provided a fun and inclusive environment, but also fostered self-confidence, pride, and ongoing motivation to engage in creative and collaborative experiences.

## Participant Highlights

Participants shared a number of positive reflections:

- "It was fun to perform in public!"
- "Everyone was in it together and it was so lovely."
- "Loved learning how to improvise."
- "Knowledgeable teacher!"
- "I was proud of what I did."
- "It put me out of my comfort zone — in a good way."

' It was an absolutely incredible experience and a really well done event, I don't think I would ever have had the confidence to perform in front of people if it wasn't for B sharp'



## AIM 2: 10 Young People Develop Skills in Event Production

Ten young people were involved in the planning and delivery of the festival in the roles of either 'Young Producers' or 'Festival Assistants'.

They developed skills in budgeting, scheduling, artist liaison, risk assessment, contract writing, and tech setup.

They also mentioned development in transferable skills such as communication/speaking to people, confidence, time management and managing other people.

Many had never worked on live events before and reported significant growth in confidence and clarity about future career paths.

Highlights:

- 'I now feel much more confident in organising events.' – E
- 'I learnt to manage real budgets and understand artist contracts.' – J
- 'This was a fantastic opportunity, and I'd love to do more events.' – G
- 'I definitely feel more confident creating paperwork like risk assessments and budgets.' – A

Cleo Evans, who mentored the Young Producers, was impressed that they all completed the process and produced a successful event. She said: "They all engaged really well and all now understand the fundamental processes involved in producing an outdoor arts event. The combination of group sessions and individual



mentoring worked well. They helped each other out as part of the group process, and learnt from each other about each other's events. But the individual mentoring was needed as they all needed support with different aspects of the process. They all had lots of great ideas - and all different - and it was a real pleasure to help them shape these, and to work with them"

The Festival Assistants reported increases in confidence, communication and interpersonal skills and a greater understanding of what is involved in putting on a festival.

*"I have definitely improved in confidence and interpersonal skills. It was also great to work part as a team and help each other to manage the festival. It also helped me prepare for the unexpected" R*



### **AIM 3. New Partnerships and Future Momentum**

There was an increase in the number of partners involved in the festival this year.

**Venue partners, who provided space for workshops, stages or performances:**

Marine Theatre

Town Mill

Lyme Regis Town Council

Dorset Council

Jubilee Pavilion (Lyme Regis Visitor Hub)

**Performers & Workshop Leaders, who provided a workshop, act or performance:**

Woodroffe School

Mountjoy School

Lyme Morris

Sunshine Samba

Blackdown Samba

Lyme Luggers

Prom Prom Promotions

Rimski Piano and Double Bassycle

Brass Junkies

**Workshop Leaders:**

Sound Communities

Ashley Kellett

James Morton and Dennis Rollins

Drum Devon



A number of these partners assisted in promotion and marketing of the event.

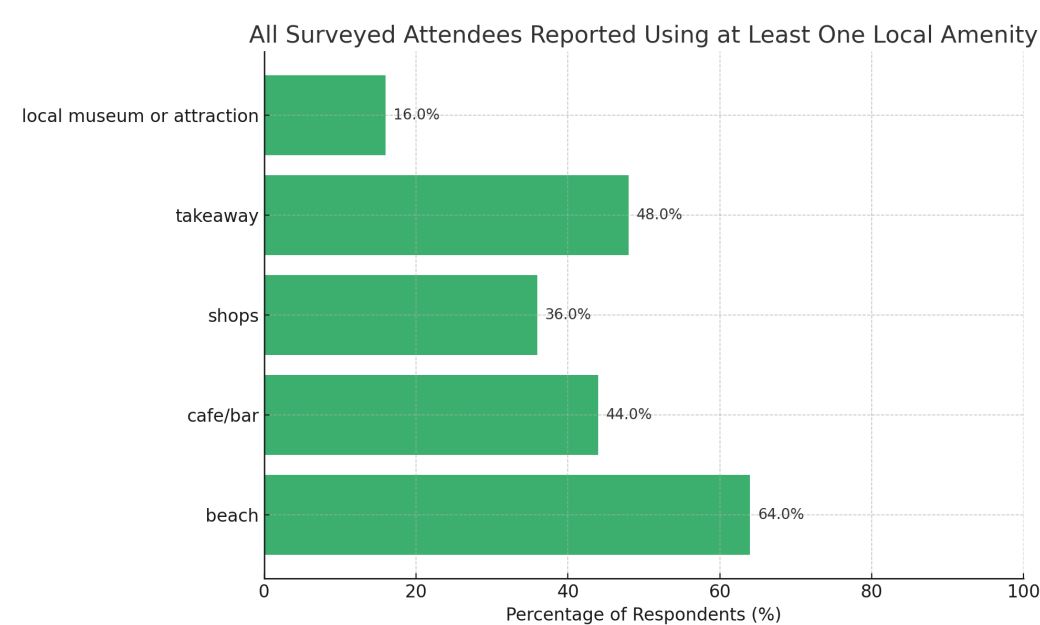
Feedback from partners was positive about the event, and indicated a strong appetite to build on this foundation in future years. Sound Communities have asked for B Sharp’s guidance to help them set up a similar event in their local area, so sharing the learning.

Local businesses reported being aware of the event before-hand, and reported increased footfall, positive buzz, and community pride:

“A really great vibe”

“Definitely a positive for the town!”

The audience survey showed that festival visitors combined their visit with using local business amenities, with 100% surveyed saying they had utilized other amenities in the town whilst visiting the festival, including cafes, restaurants, takeaways, local shops and attractions, and the beach.



**AIM 4. Growth in Festival Expertise, Marketing & Sustainability**

B Sharp significantly improved its festival planning model in 2025. Increased staffing and more clearly defined roles, improved schedules, and volunteer support contributed to a smoother operation.

B Sharp’s staff team comprised CEO/Artistic Director, Office Manager and Project Co-ordinator. Between them they carried out these roles:





Role/tasks involved:

- Fundraising
- Marketing
- Festival director
- Artist/busker liaison
- Food stall liaison
- Risk assessments/ licensing
- Site management
- People management
- Programming

Freelance capacity was brought in to help with:

- Outdoor Arts Production
- Young Producer Mentoring
- Marketing
- Technicians

Bringing in freelance capacity was helpful, and helped with learning and development within the organisation for the festival's future. Templates and systems were created this year that will help with future delivery.

*'Best organised festival yet – the team having clear roles made a huge difference.'* – Music Leader

We have increased our team of volunteers, and support for the festival from local community groups. Greater engagement with local school group performances built the festival reach, audience and diversity.

Marketing efforts led to 80% of surveyed visitors being aware of the festival in advance, and we have increased our social media reach. The festival's profile has been raised through the larger high-quality programme this year.





Multiple income streams supported delivery, predominantly grant funding but also trader fees, donations, and sponsorship.

However, festival delivery still stretched team capacity, and took substantially longer than budgeted for. It was extremely challenging for the team to deliver the festival as just one strand of a busy participation programme, and in future years a designated Festival Producer would be the best model if achievable. We also need to recognise the increased budget and time needed for high-quality marketing and communications.

While we brought in additional technical support this year, it still was not enough, and increasing this capacity further for future years, with designated rather than roaming support at each stage, would be desirable, as well as better support for Buskers. A similar programme to the Young Festival Assistants could be delivered to train technical crew, providing both skills development for the next generation, as well as providing increased capacity.

It was useful to learn more about the festival audience through the evaluation, particularly the festival's role in supporting the local economy through audience visits to other local attractions, traders and shops. This could be explored in more depth to determine a numerical value to the festival's contribution to the local economy as we now have initial evidence to demonstrate the festival's social and economic value.

While we succeeded in broadening our income generation strands, we found this challenging. It was more difficult to raise sponsorship than anticipated, ticket sales for the evening gig were lower than hoped, and income from traders also lower. However, donations from audiences, and contributions from adult buskers were significantly higher, pointing to strong local support.



## Impact Summary

The festival had wide-reaching impact:

- 85% of audience came from the local area; 15% from further afield
- Age range of attendees was diverse: strongest in 13–17 and 46–65 categories
- 95% of surveyed audience said they would return
- Children and young people's workshops saw joy, learning, and emotional uplift

### Quotes from attendees:

- 'Supportive and smiley B Sharp staff made the day special.'
- 'My child was blissfully happy for an hour – thank you!'
- 'It was great to see young people gaining confidence.'

## Final Summary

The B Sharp Busking Festival 2025 was a joyful, energising and impactful event that successfully met its intended outcomes. Through diverse musical opportunities, robust youth leadership roles, strong local engagement, and expanded partnerships, the festival delivered meaningful experiences for participants and audiences alike.

Across the board, data gathered through interviews, surveys, and creative feedback shows the event fostered:



- **Increased confidence, pride and aspiration** among young performers and producers
- **High audience satisfaction**, with 95% saying they would return
- **Strong engagement from the local community and businesses**, with many reporting increased footfall and visibility
- **New collaborations** with partners such as Sound Communities, Town Mill, Woodroffe and Mountjoy Schools, laying foundations for future growth
- **Organisational learning and improved delivery**, with clearer staffing, better planning systems, and more ambitious programming

From budding musicians performing in public for the first time, to young producers managing real budgets and logistics, this year's festival empowered young people and built valuable skills. Families and audiences responded warmly, praising the diversity of music, welcoming atmosphere, and creativity on show. The festival also likely provided a valuable economic boost to the town and helped raise the visibility of B Sharp as a cultural contributor in the region.

As we reflect on successes, we also acknowledge key learning points: greater production capacity is needed, technical support should be strengthened, festival branding made more visible and marketing given a higher priority. Income generation is still not secure. A dedicated Festival Producer is needed. These insights will be used to refine future delivery, and raise the quality.

Ultimately, the B Sharp Busking Festival 2025 demonstrated what's possible when young people are supported to lead, perform, and express themselves. It brought music to the streets, smiles to faces, and inspiration and skills to a new generation of creatives.

