



RE-DISCOVERING HIGH ANGLE BATTERY 2025

RE-DISCOVERING HIGH ANGLE BATTERY CULTURAL PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The programme offered a wide range of community-focused and creatively driven events that brought people together in different ways.

Some activities celebrated the history of the High Angle Battery (HAB), helping visitors connect with its past, while others explored what the HAB means to people today. There were also events that encouraged participants to imagine new and exciting ways the HAB could be used in the future.

Alongside these activities, the project also guided visitors toward other heritage sites and archives across Portland and Weymouth, helping to build stronger connections between local places and stories.

RE-DISCOVERING HIGH ANGLE BATTERY INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Generate new public awareness, pride and community ownership of the High Angle Battery
- The site is enjoyed by more and a greater diversity of people, increased visits to the HAB and other nearby heritage sites of interest
- The HAB and its surrounding unique biodiversity is recognised and better protected, maintained, and celebrated.
- The creative community see the site's potential for future cultural events

SOME QUICK STATS



40% of visitors to the cultural events programme had never been to the High Angle Battery before

90% of visitors to the cultural programme said the visit has encouraged them to visit other heritage sites

56% of visitor surveyed were from the local area

RE-DISCOVERING HIGH ANGLE BATTERY - THE CHALLENGES

- The site is open to the public and is frequented by dog walkers and ramblers, which helps diversify audiences and access. However, this also means that artwork needs to be stewarded and monitored overnight, both of which have resource and cost implications.
- The tunnels are remarkable, and artists enjoy using them just as much as audiences enjoy exploring them. However, the dampness in the tunnels can limit the types of artwork that can be displayed there.
- Fixing artwork to the walls is prohibited due to the historic status of the High Angle Battery. We managed to work around this by utilizing existing wall fixtures and purchasing free-standing display stands. Future exhibitors should keep this in mind.
- The site is large and complex, making stewarding essential for providing a welcoming front-of-house experience, as well as ensuring safety and guidance. This requirement places a heavy demand on volunteers and staff, making it more challenging to safely staff long-term installations on a day-to-day basis.
- The site is also exposed to the elements, which must be taken into account when deciding on appropriate events. We prioritised the welfare of volunteers and artists by providing a station with water, hot drinks, and snacks, as well as sun cream, gazebos, parasols, and blankets. On particularly windy days, when the gazebos were not feasible, volunteer stewards were invited to use a van for shelter.
- Additionally, the site lacks electricity, and investigations into the costs of bringing power to the area revealed that they were prohibitively high. Generators were used to supply power for lights, sound, and tea urns. This setup is expensive and necessitates overnight security for the generators if the event lasts more than one day.



THE EVENTS

RE-DISCOVERING HIGH ANGLE BATTERY CULTURAL PROGRAMME



State of Alarm April 26-27th

A captivating sound-world that comes alive through an ensemble of visually striking 'instruments' – gongs, bells, whistles and explosive events.



Guided Walks May - Sept

Monthly history tours + foraging, herbal, archeaology and bat guided walks



Underground Gallery June 26-29th June

Exhibition of photographs by torchlight



Destination Opera July 19th

An inspiring afternoon of music-making and opera at High Angle Battery.



Big Flinger August 24 + 25th

Family friendly teddy flinging participatory performance



b-side BIG Weekend Sept 11-14th

Excess Baggage and MAS(S) -Two sound and film installations



3,715

Visitors attended cultural events at the High Angle Battery



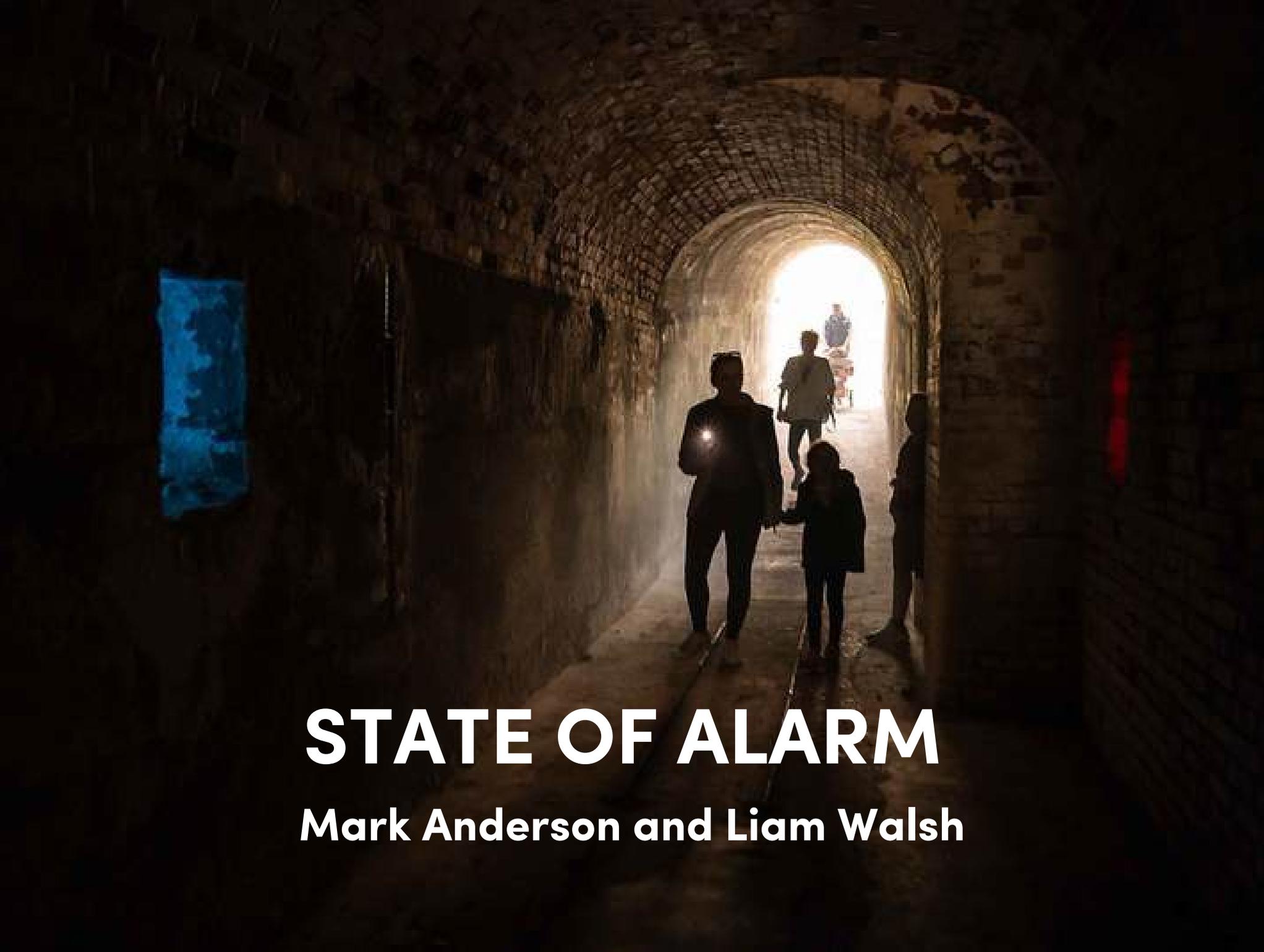
16

Events between April and Sept 2025



300+

People attended the opening event 26th April 2025



STATE OF ALARM

Mark Anderson and Liam Walsh



“Brilliant! My 6 yr old and 2yr old loved it, we loved the trippy, noisy cacophony perfectly captured war time. Great to see Portland’s assets appreciated!”

Image: State of Alarm by Mark Anderson and Liam Walsh Photo Jayne Jackson



“So glad we came across this b-side event. We found the art/sounds totally mesmerising. Brilliant!”



Image: State of Alarm by Mark Anderson and Liam Walsh Photo Jayne Jackson



EVENTS
HIGH ANGLE BATTERY
APRIL - SEPT 2025
ART, WALKS, PERFORMANCE,
ACTIVITIES + MORE
www.b-side.org.uk

REVEAL 2025

Logos for various partners including the National Trust, Dorset Council, and others.

SECURITY
OVERNIGHT SECURITY
ON-SITE

GUIDED WALKS

Steve Wallis, Andrew Cowling, Paul Burkhardt , Bryan Edwards, Andrea Frankham-Hughes and Catherine Bennett



Bat spotting Walks



Archeaology Walks

278
people took part in
guided walks



Herbal and Foraging Walks



History Tours

The image shows an underground gallery space. A large black photograph is displayed on a brick wall, depicting a person in flames. The gallery is dimly lit, with a small black stand visible on the left. The text "UNDERGROUND GALLERY + NO MAN'S LAND" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font across the lower half of the image.

**UNDERGROUND GALLERY +
NO MAN'S LAND**

Selected photographers and Gil Muallem-Doron



“Amazing!!! Lived here all my life and never been to the Tunnels before (I’m 54!!)

Underground Gallery Visitor

Images: Underground Gallery Photo Pete Millson



"Really exciting photos and such a great setting. Really adds to the experience"

Underground Gallery visitor

Image: Underground Gallery Photo Pete Millson

""What a treat to see such great art displayed in such a unique way, a superb exhibition! Thank you"
Underground Gallery visitor



Image: Underground Gallery Photo b-side



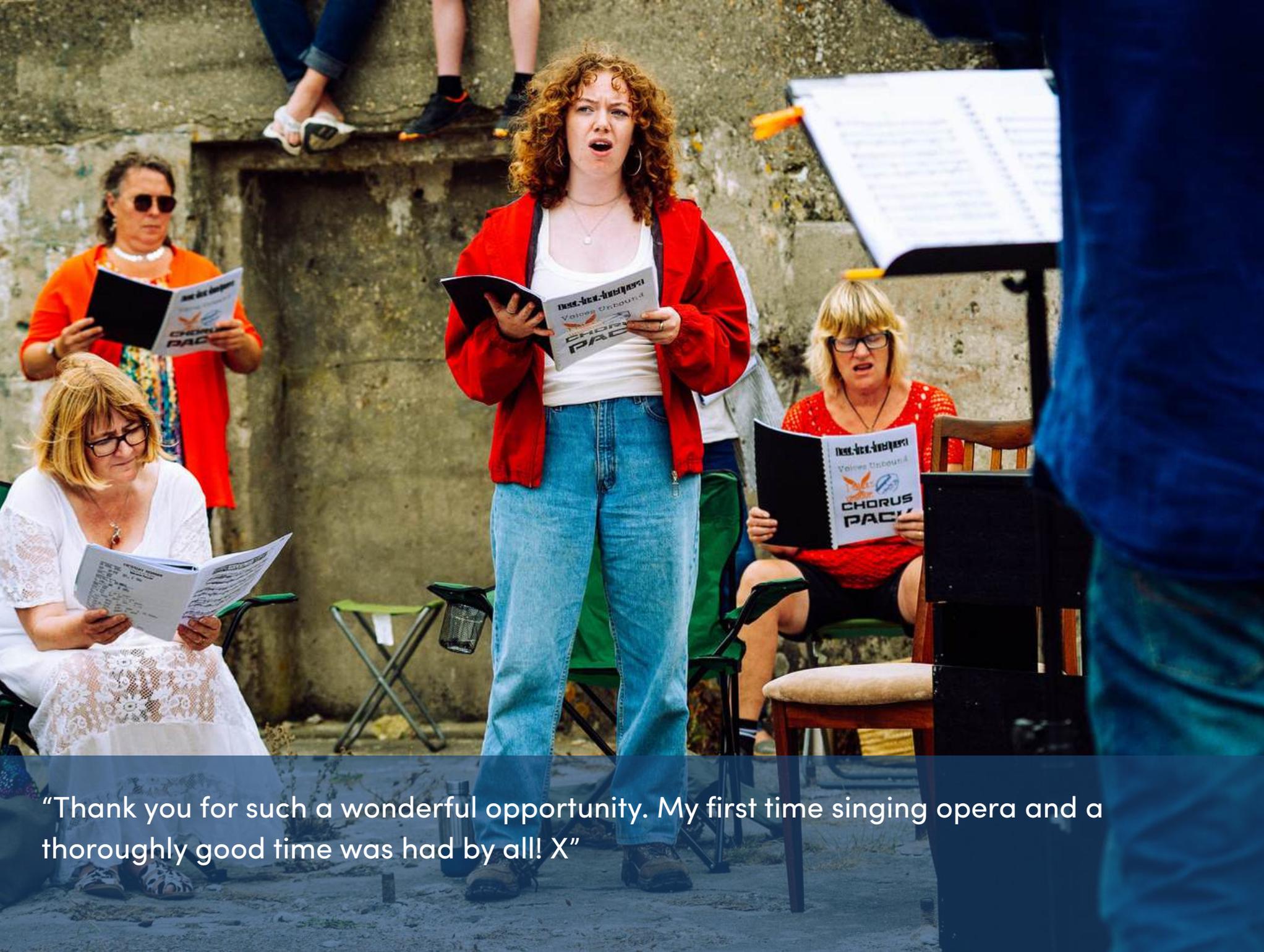
VOICES UNBOUND

Destination Opera



“Wonderful use of this amazing location. Brilliant idea!”

Image: Voices Unbound by Destination Opera Photo Pete Millson



“Thank you for such a wonderful opportunity. My first time singing opera and a thoroughly good time was had by all! X”

“Utterly fabulous, always been a little afraid of opera but this has spiked my interest - opera here we come!”



Image: Voices Unbound by Destination Opera Photo Pete Millson



BIG FLINGER

Emerald Ant



"I liked it because I done a lot of jobs and it was funny!
Thankyou!"

Big Flinger participant

Image: 'Big Flinger' Emerald Ant Photo Pete Millson



- The event
- I often attend b-side events
- I didn't plan to come I was just passing
- I had heard about the High Angle Battery and hadn't been before
- I know the site and wanted to see the improvements
- Other (please specify)



WHAT MADE YOU VISIT THE HIGH ANGLE BATTERY TODAY?

Answers could be multiple, the most popular is the largest circle - the events were the main pull, coupled with the high % of first-time HAB visitors, the cultural programme brought lots of new audiences to HAB



MAS(S)

Concrete

'We feel so strongly about all this in the world, and don't know what we can do...we feel like you've given us a place to feel and vent our frustrations and feelings..!'

Visitor to MAS(S) sound installation

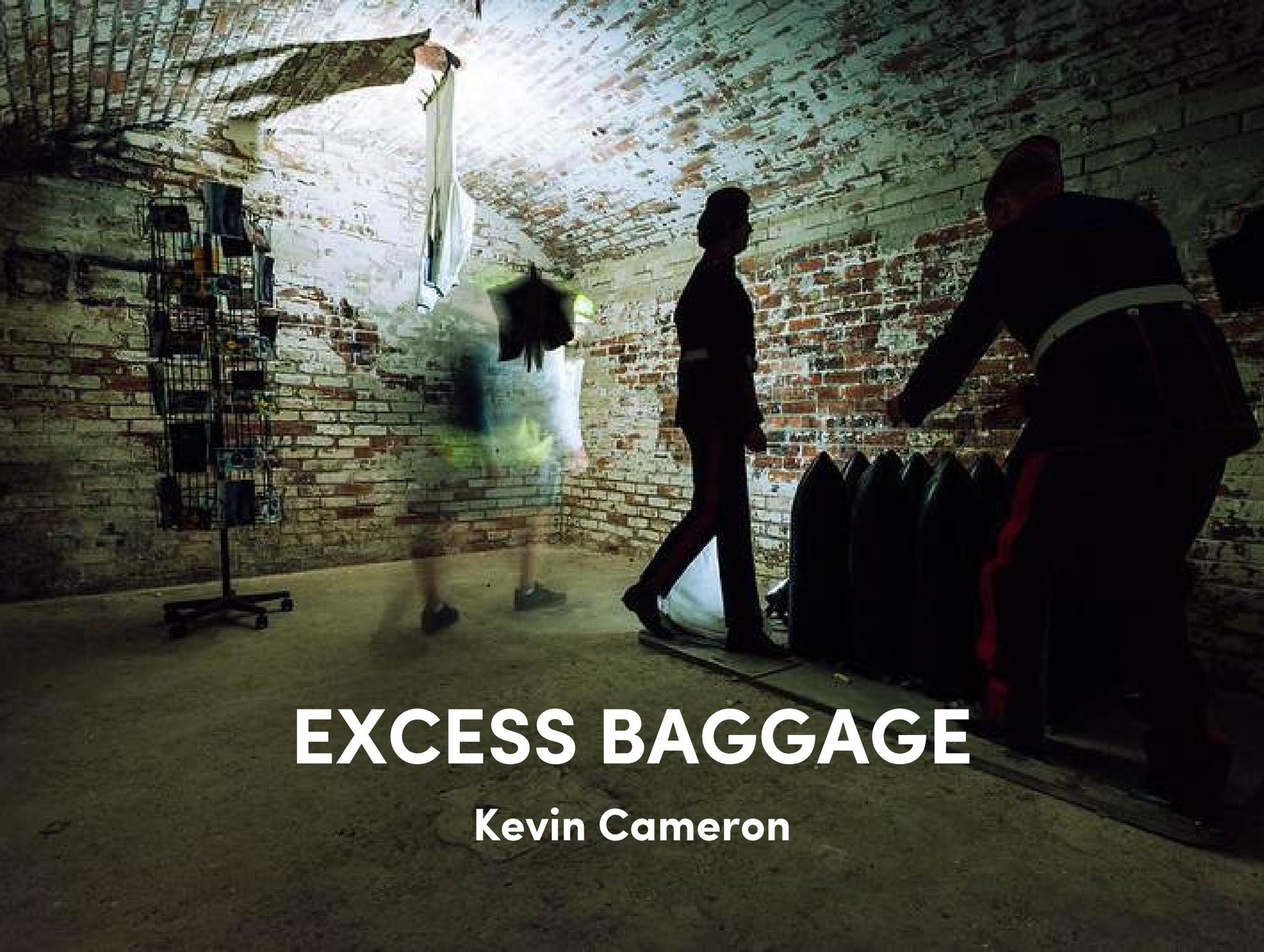


Image: MAS(S) by Concrete Photo Pete Millson



'The use of sound and acoustics in the High Angle Battery tunnels is excellent. The machines are beautiful and the voices throughout this sound piece are very moving'

Image: MAS(S) by Concrete Photo Pete Millson



EXCESS BAGGAGE

Kevin Cameron

The Royal Navy helped rich people in Britain get richer by using ships to take land, labour, and goods from other parts of the world.



"The final film was so interesting and so life affirming"

Image: Excess Baggage by Kevin Cameron Photo Pete Millson



51

Volunteers supported events



“I loved volunteering this year for the HAB history and herbal walks. You do great stuff and I love being able to be a part of it all through volunteering”

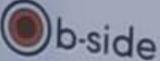


WELCOME

Take care around
the artworks.

Enjoy the artwork -
look closely
but please do not touch.

Many thanks

 b-side

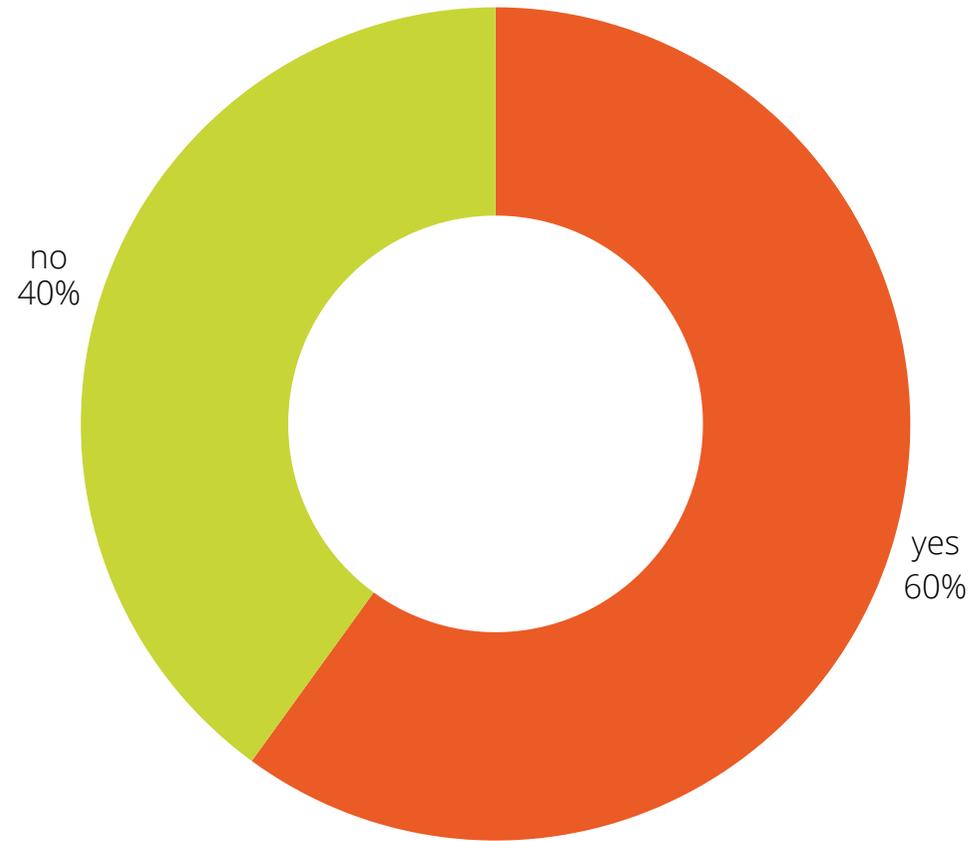
Word cloud showing the most used words to describe the programmed events

Interesting
Inspiring
Community
Fun Amazing
Fascinating Creative
Thought provoking

Source: 309 visitor surveys



WHO CAME TO THE
EVENTS?

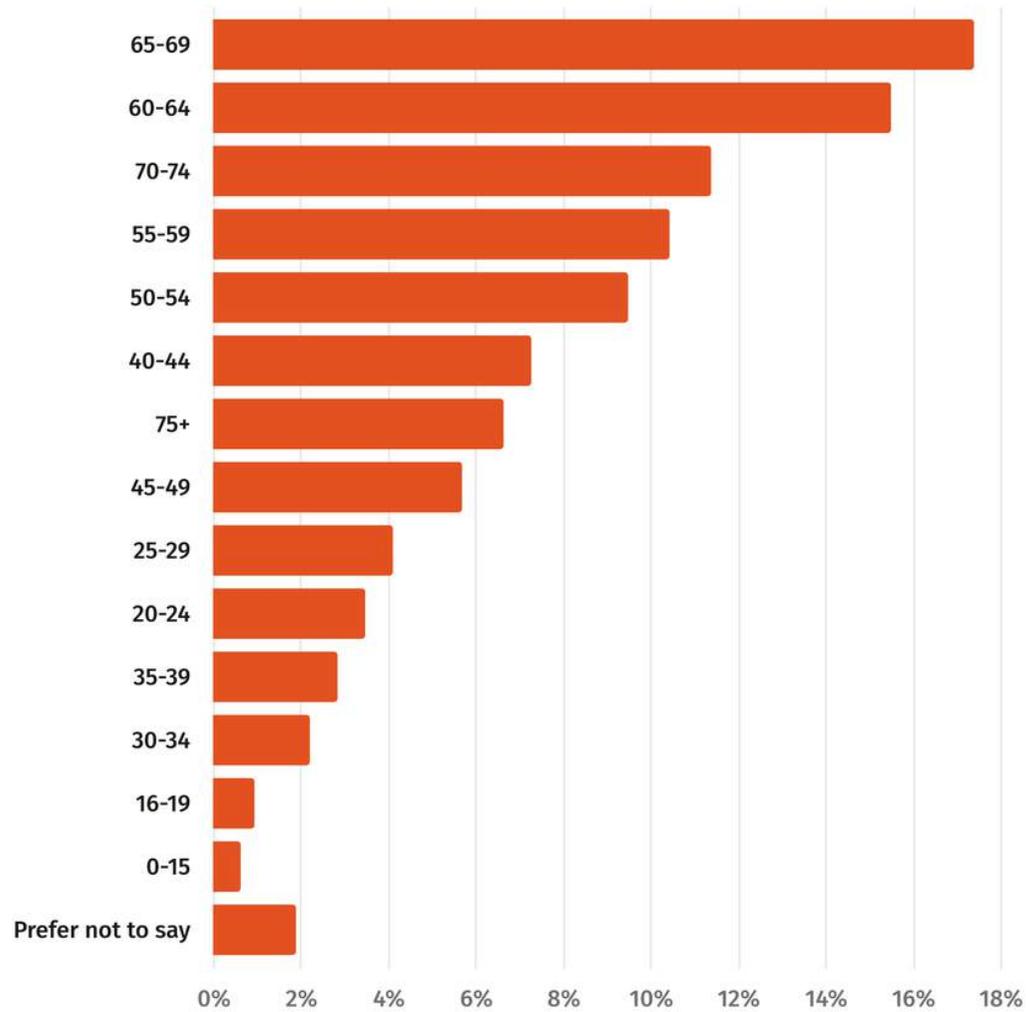


ATTENDANCE - FIRST TIME VISITORS

Have you visited the High Angle Battery before?

84 responders

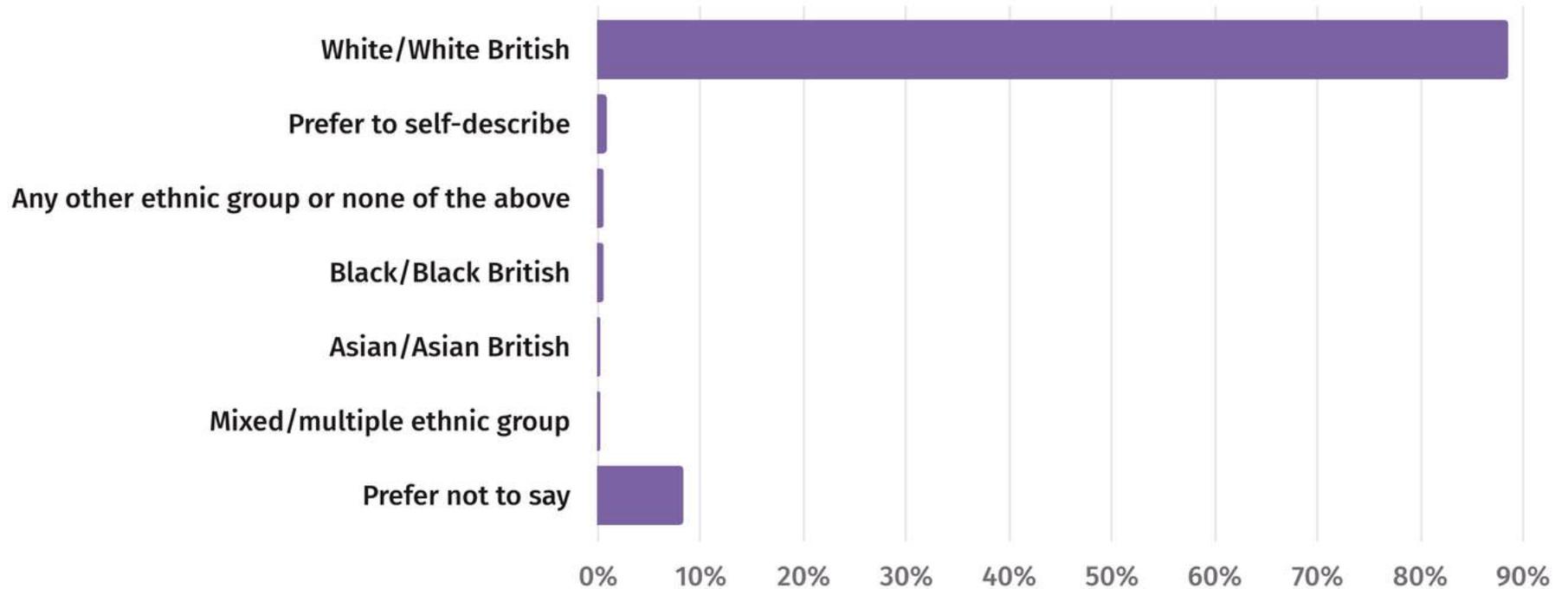
What is your age?



Responses: 316

WHO CAME TO EVENTS AT HIGH ANGLE BATTERY?
Age range of survey respondents

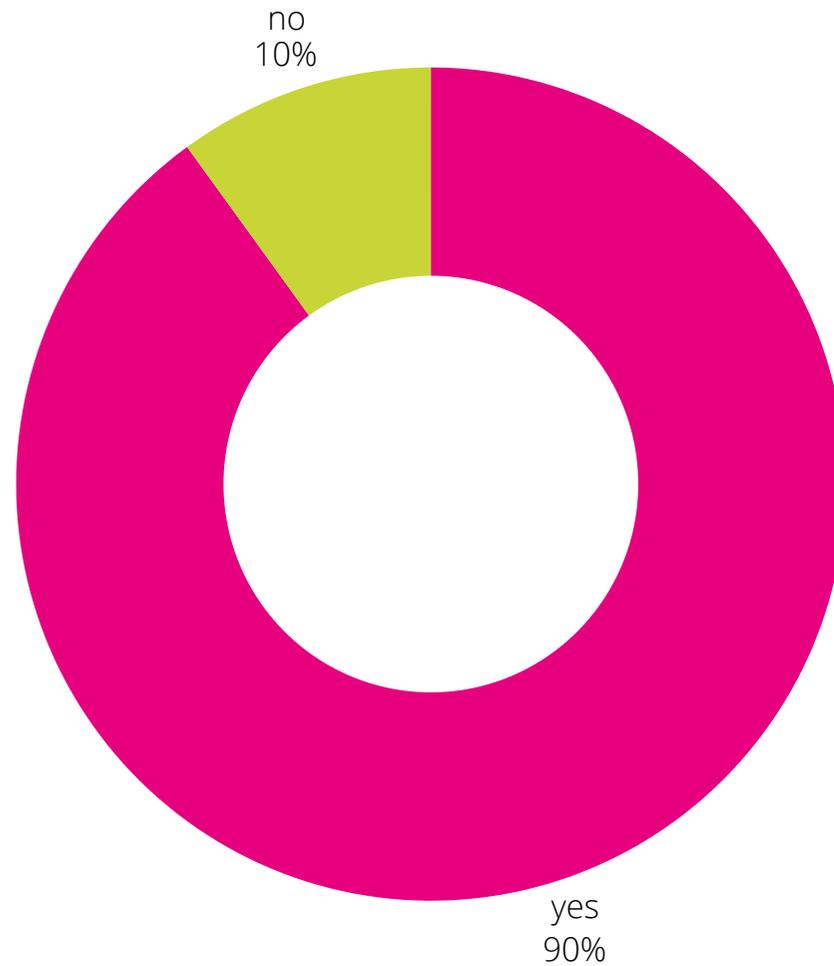
With which ethnicity do you identify?



Responses: 309

WHO CAME?

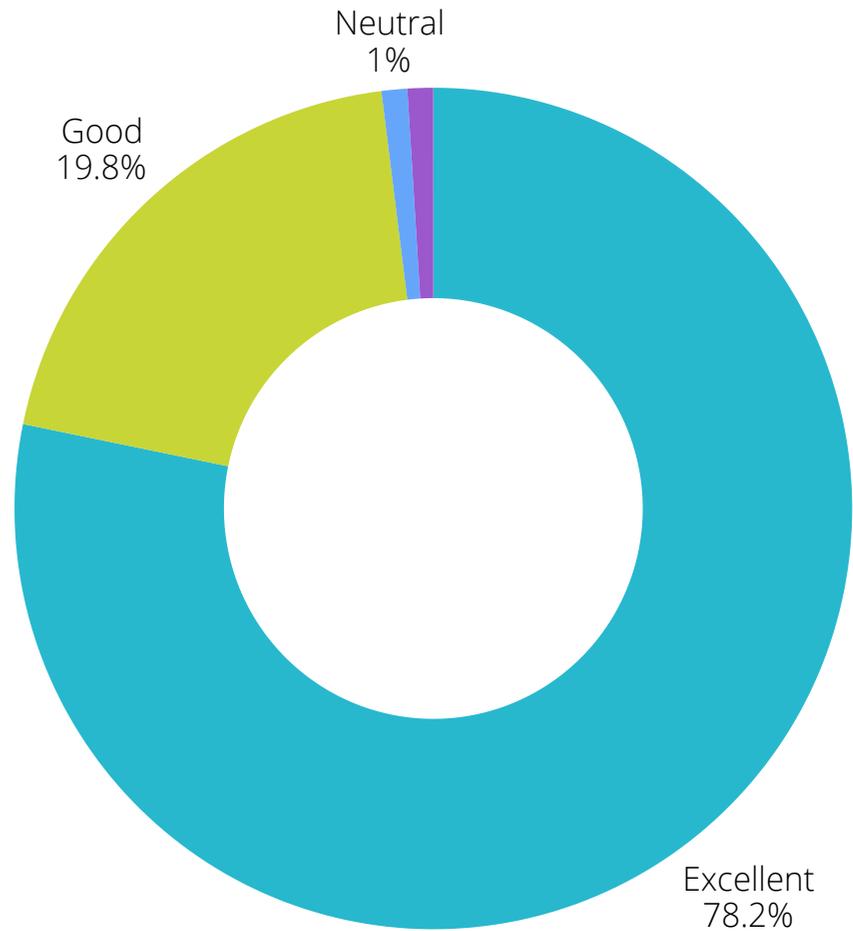
Ethnicity of survey respondents



EXPERIENCE

Has this experience encouraged you to visit other heritage sites?

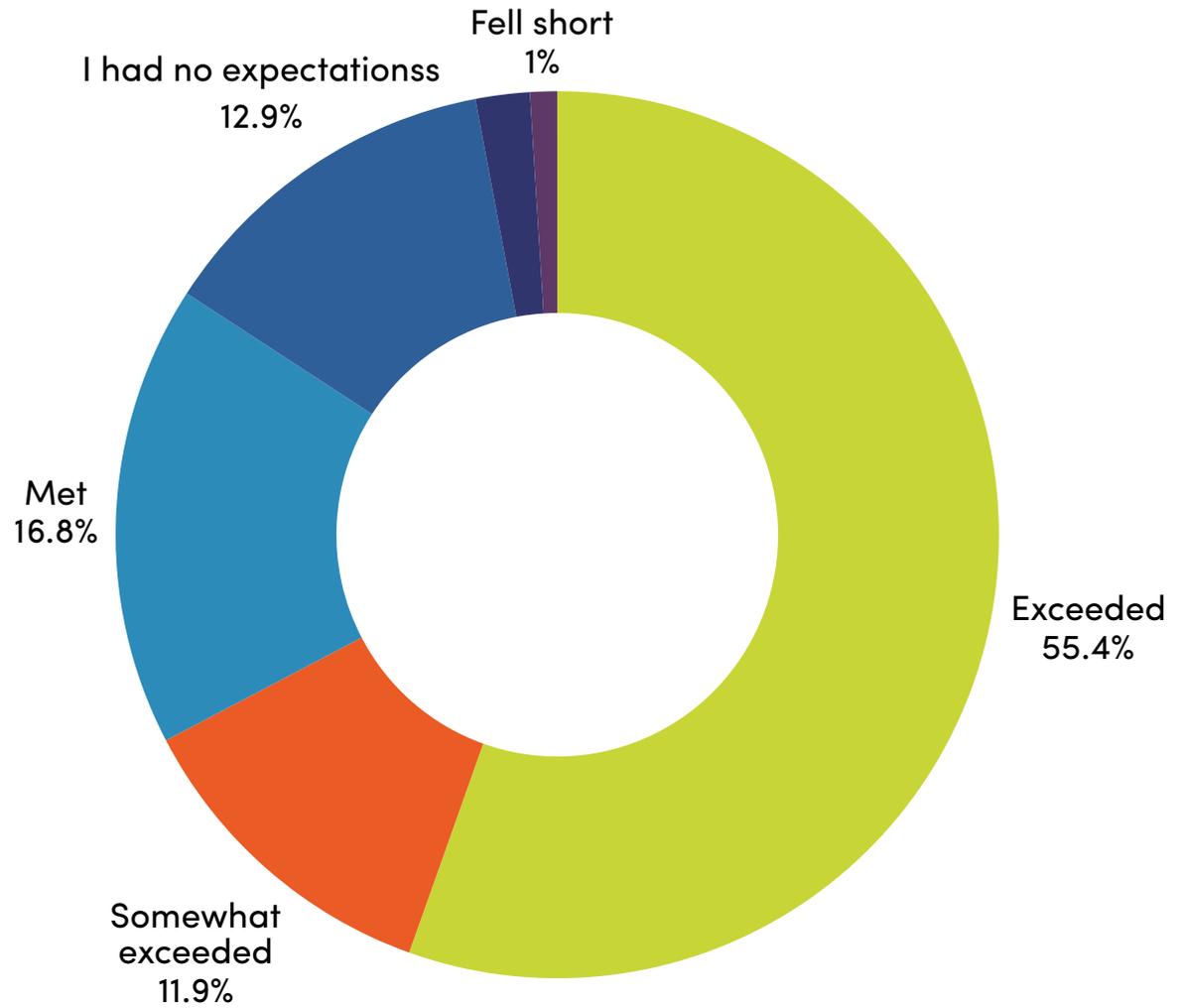
84 responders



ABOUT YOUR VISIT

How would you rate your experience overall?

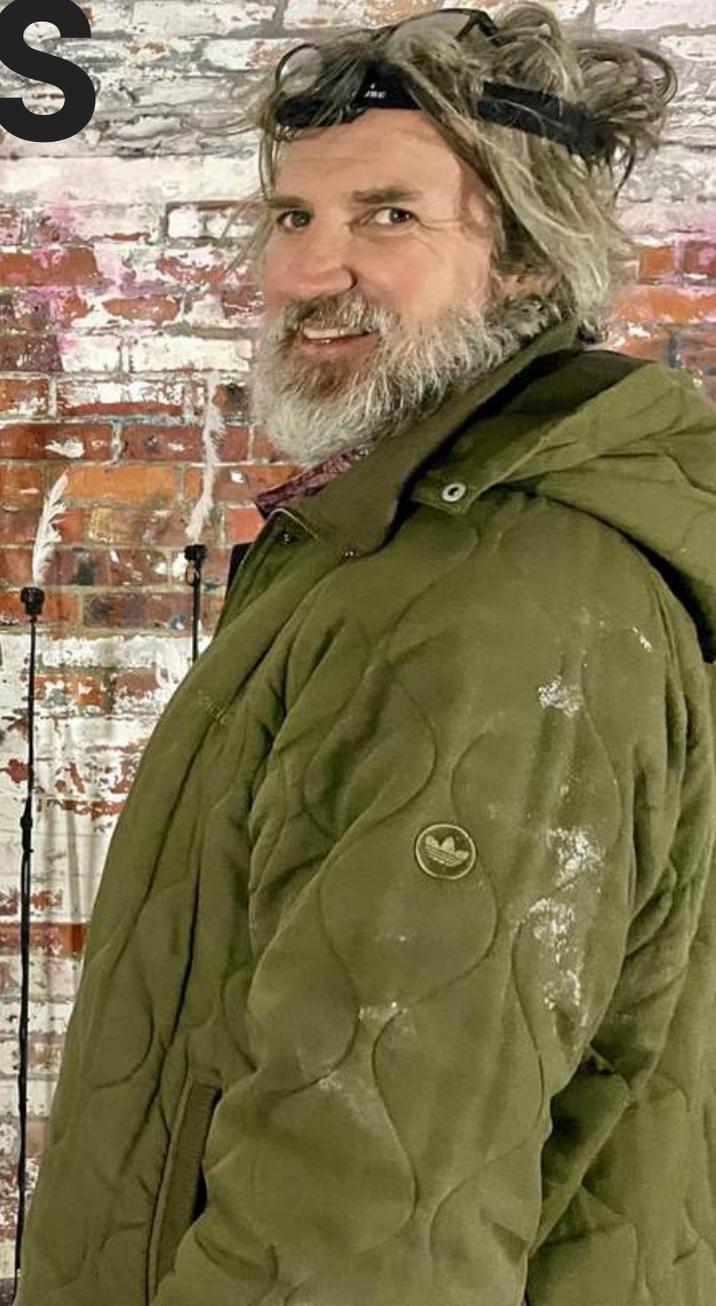
316 responders



EXPECTATION

How did the event compare to your expectations?

ARTISTS





32

Artists made work and delivered events for the Re-discovering High Angle Battery cultural programme

27

Days of events and exhibitions between April and Sept 2025



“It's taken me a little time to get around to writing, but wanted to just say a massive thank you to you all and everyone involved. Everything from the space, production, accommodation, show dates and audience... was just perfect. Was an absolute pleasure working with you all, individually and as a whole team, through to each volunteer on the day.

The whole process went so smoothly and everybody on the team has been so friendly, welcoming and helpful. It a very special event indeed.

Artist: Liam Walsh 'State of Alarm' Photo Jayne Jackson

“Watching our work unfold for the first time and seeing audiences respond to it, seeing it highlighting and opening discourse, and also collecting more humbling stories from local refugees, feeling honoured for being trusted to hold their words and having a space where we can let them be heard.”

Concrete (Rae Champion and Tristan Shorr)



Concrete artists Photo Pete Millson



ACCESS



EASY READ GUIDE

We produced a downloadable Easy Read Guide for exhibitions and shared with community groups

ACCESS GUIDE

A downloadable Access Guide that highlighted the physical aspects of the site e.g. steps, uneven ground etc

TALKING LABELS

Audio explanations of artworks recorded by the artists were available on artwork signage

SENSORY BAGS

FREE sensory bags for adults and children to accompany their visit. These included torches, headphones, fidget toys and soft comfort toys.

DIGITAL WALK

We commissioned local Portland resident Sylvia Webster to create a digital walk. Sylvia regularly takes walks on Portland and documents her exploration on Facebook. Her stories are a great way for those unable to take the walk themselves to experience Portland through her eyes. Here's an excerpt:

"My boys, along with their mates, all frequented The Ghost Tunnels when they were in their teens and it fascinated me, so one day I told them I would have to go up there and have a look. They were mortified and all chorused 'No, you don't want to go up there mum, it's not a place for mums' so I was a good mum and took them at their word, at the same time many 'pictures' came to my mind - need I say more. However, today it is a peaceful and quiet place to visit - I was so impressed I will be going again at some point for further exploration..... watch this space."

Sylvia's walk will soon become a downloadable pdf available on the b-side website.

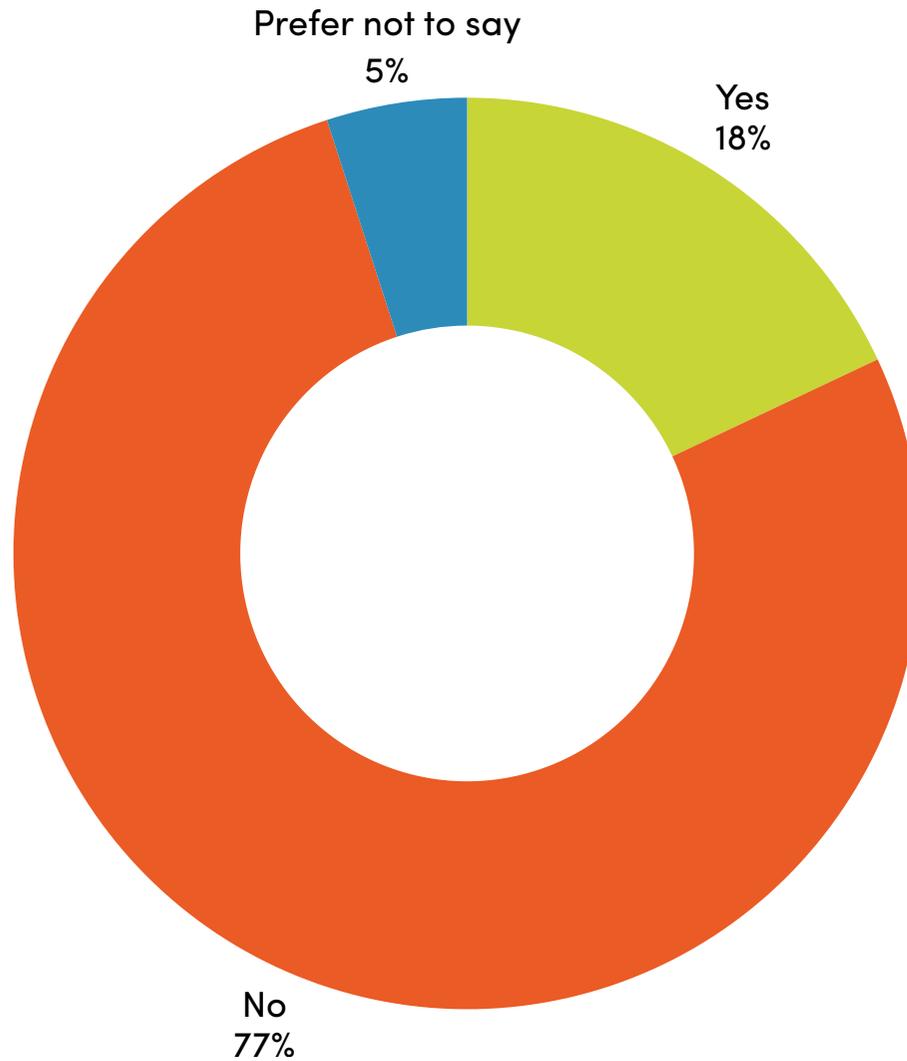
MUNTSY'S STROLL

Our Community Coordinator, Catherine Bennett spent time with Muntsy's Community Group (a day service for adults with additional support needs or learning disabilities) and led a walk with them around High Angle Battery, considering access and introducing them to the heritage site.

'Nothing could have been better, I am disabled, in a wheelchair and saw everything and it was amazing!'

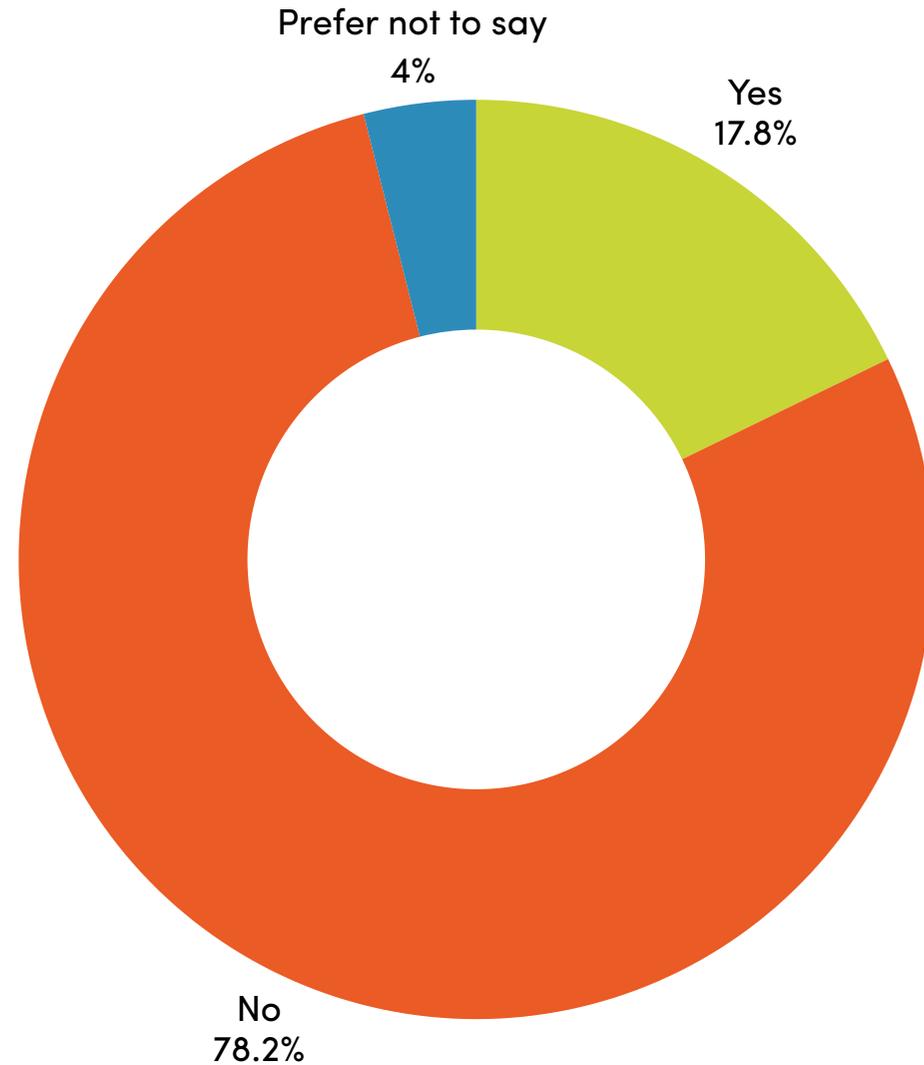
Visitor to 'State of Alarm'





ACCESS HIGH ANGLE BATTERY

Do you identify as a D/deaf and/or disabled person, or have a long term health condition?



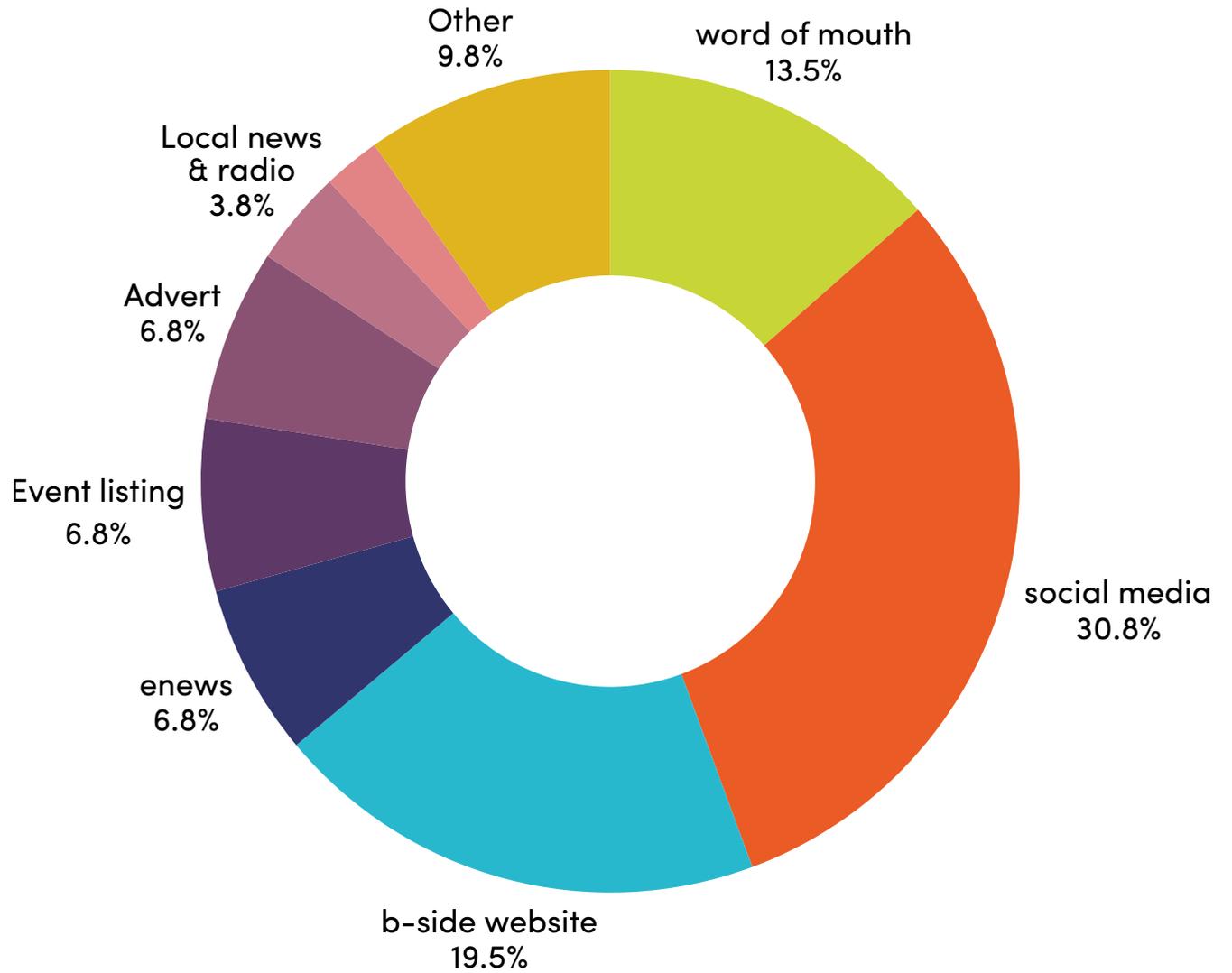
ACCESS HIGH ANGLE BATTERY

Do you identify as neurodivergent?

Being Neurodivergent could include Dyslexia, ADHD etc.



MARKETING

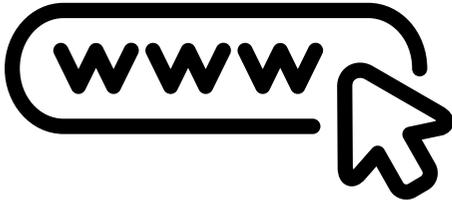


WHERE DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THIS EVENT?
311 responders



95K

Estimated social media reach March 1st to 21st October 2025. Figs from Meta Insights



29K

Page views of the b-side website April - Sept 2025 (the length of the project)



20,000

Printed Programme Guides were distributed across Dorset and beyond in March and June 2025. High Angle Battery was also included in the new Towns of Culture Portland and Weymouth Heritage trail promotion.



PRESS

The project benefited from Towns Of Culture 2025 focus and recieved extensive media coverage reach through local and regional press, print and radio as well as BBC broadcast coverage. Full coverage log available.

NEWS

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England | Local News | Dorset

Battery set to host torchlit photo exhibition



Gil Muslem-Doron's work forms part of the torchlit exhibition at the battery

26 June 2025

A torchlit photography exhibition exploring themes of otherness, the marginal and the overlooked is set to open at a historic military site.

Portland's High Angle Battery is the setting for the exhibition, which has been co-curated by b-side, a Dorset-based arts organisation.

An LGBT+ side group b-side helped set up and British-Israeli artist Gil Muslem-Doron have also helped to coordinate it and they appealed for submissions from around the world.

The exhibition, which showcases work from 21 international artists, opens on Thursday and runs until Sunday.



Top stories

Train hero who saved passengers during attack named

1 hour ago

LIVE Reeves refuses to rule out tax rises in Budget as she says she will make 'necessary choices'

18k viewing

Could Reeves break a 50-year taboo by raising income tax in her Budget?

1 hour ago

More to explore



Could Reeves break a 50-year taboo by raising income tax in her Budget?



He made his money selling camels and gold. Now this warlord controls half of Sudan



At least three dead as typhoon causes devastation in the Philippines

TRAVEL

Europe > UK > Worldwide > Citybreaks > Hotels > Cruise > Ski > Advice >

The 40 best family days out for the Easter holidays

From an egg hunt in Wonderland to an open-air archaeology museum, these are the best Easter activities happening across the nation

Sophie Dickinson

Related Topics: United Kingdom, Children, England, Scotland, Easter, Easter bank holiday

08 April 2025 11:45am EDT

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Bridport NEWS

News Sport Photos Your Say What's On Notices Hero Awards

Sunday, August 24

Big Flinger



A Big Flinger event is taking place on Portland (Image: Supplied)

A cannon at a historic Portland site will send teddies flying in a quirky event.

Families are invited to experience The Big Flinger- an eccentric event which will see teddies dazzle the Portland skies above the High Angle Battery.

The event is run by b-side and will see Emerald Ant performers take military occupation of High Angle Battery.

The High Angle Battery is a 1890s Victorian gun battery that was built to help defend Portland Harbour against invasion.

PRESS



THANKYOU

Re-discovering High Angle Battery Feedback 2025 compiled from:
300+ Visitor surveys, visitor comments books, emails and social media posts, Artist surveys, volunteer
feedback surveys. Documentation by photographers Pete Millson, Jayne Jackson and b-side team.