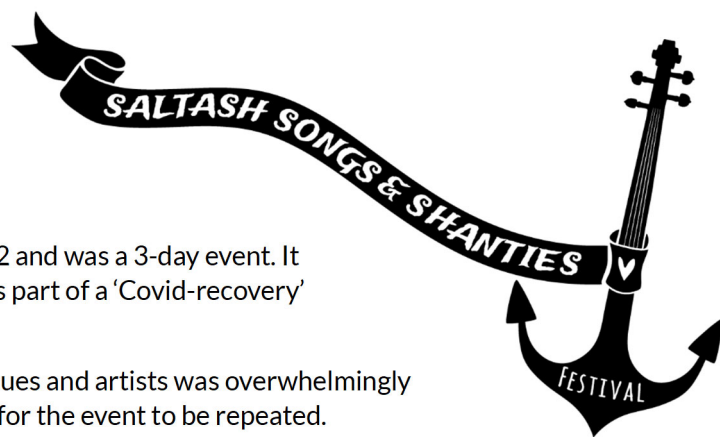


EVALUATION 2023



Saltash Songs & Shanties Festival was launched in 2022 and was a 3-day event. It was originally intended to be a one-off project that was part of a 'Covid-recovery' programme for Cornwall and was run by volunteers.

The response to the 2022 Festival from audiences, venues and artists was overwhelmingly positive and there was a great enthusiasm in the town for the event to be repeated.

Saltash Songs & Shanties Festival 2023 took place 18-24 June with 18 events in 10 historic and community venues and spaces around central Saltash. The music celebrates the people, heritage and environment of South East Cornwall and the Tamar Valley and features both superb professional musicians and fantastic local musicians from the region's rich amateur music scene. Events included concerts and workshops featuring a strong folk music programme, complimented by classical, jazz and early music events. The Festival also installed a community street piano which was decorated by local school children.

OBJECTIVES

The 2023 Festival aimed to build on the 2022 event to establish an annual Festival that is:

- Renowned for its excellent and original music programme.
- Highly sociable, educational, entertaining and a source of local pride.

The Festival aims to achieve this by:

- Employing professional artists who have links to, or perform work that reflects the local environment, culture and heritage.
- Establishing an inspiring and high-profile platform to showcase the town's wealth of amateur music groups.
- Weaving workshops and 'joining in' events into the programme to create new music, inspired by and made with local people.
- Unleashing the latent potential of the town's many historic venues, bringing them into use as spaces for live arts events.

The Festival was funded by:



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



Saltash Town Council
Working for the People of Saltash

The Festival also received help-in-kind support from:



L-R: Femmes de la Mer at Saltash Social Club, Pop-Up Piano on the Waterside, Shanty workshop at Isambard House.

WHAT WE DID:

We held 18 public events which included:

3 workshops
1 film
14 concerts
Plus 1 children's art activity.

These were held in partnership with 10 venues in Saltash:

Church of St Nicholas & Faith
Isambard House (Saltash Station)
Livewire Youth Music
Mary Newman's Cottage
Saltash Library

Saltash Social Club
Saltash Swimming Pool
The Railway
The Two Bridges
The Union Inn

We also used two outdoor public spaces:

The Waterside
Victoria Gardens

These events featured a total of 111 performers including:

53 paid musicians from Cornwall and Devon.
62 amateur musicians.
1 professional visual artist.

The Festival employed 2 professional staff.
The venues employed 14 professional staff.

The events involved 9 volunteers working directly with the Festival and 8 volunteers working at venues.

*"Marvellous
entertainment in a
wonderful setting on a
beautiful day. Perfect."*

*"Genuinely interesting
event that could only
happen at this festival."*

WHO CAME TO THE FESTIVAL?

1,766 audience and participants attended in 2023 (a 105% increase on 2022):

769 tickets sold to audience members.
715 attended free events (no booking required).
282 took part in an activity or workshop.

Ticket prices ranged from free to £7.

71% of tickets were full standard price.
23% of tickets were 'Pay-what-you-can' concessions (minimum £1)
6% of tickets were 'Pay extra to support live arts in Saltash'.

*"Lovely introduction to
Cornish culture."*

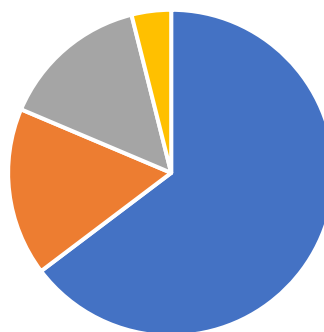


L-R: Sirinu at St Nicholas & St Faith Church, Lyndon Forster at Saltash Swimming Pool, Temps Clar Ensemble at Mary Newman's Cottage

Where did the audience come from?

We collected postcode data for ticketed events:

- Saltash 66%
- Wider Devon/Cornwall 17%
- Plymouth 15%
- Locations outside of Devon/Cornwall 4%



How did they find out about the Festival?

31%	Leaflet	5%	Press
24%	Word of Mouth	5%	Poster
12%	Social Media	4%	Website/online events listing
7%	Venues	4%	Email
6%	Performer	1%	Through club/society

Online reach:

www.songsandshanties.co.uk visits 3,200 (average engagement time 1m07s)

Facebook page reach 61,393
Facebook engagement 1,600
Facebook page visits 5,737

Instagram page reach 343
Instagram page visits 57

The Festival was also promoted through the online channels of Great Western Railway, Arts Council England, FEAST, Destination Plymouth, Plymouth Culture and Creative Kernow – creating a total estimated online reach of over 1,000,000 people.

WHAT DID EVERYONE THINK OF THE FESTIVAL?

The following data is from 117 feedback forms returned by audience members.

100% felt that the quality of the event was Good or Excellent (81% Excellent)
100% felt that their experience of the event was Good or Excellent (82% Excellent)

The reasons the audience attended:

85%	Entertainment and enjoyment	27%	To try something new
47%	Interesting content	7%	To learn a new skill
29%	To socialise and meet people	9%	Other reasons



L-R: Saltash Town Band at Isambard House, Pop-Up Piano on the Waterside, audiences at St Nicholas & St Faith Church.

77% said that the Festival was their main reason to visit Saltash that day.

Of this group, 61% (c.700 people) said that they also visited a local business.

69% visited a café, restaurant or pub

31% visited a shop or another business

37% spent ≤£15

42% spent £16-£25

13% spent £31-£50

3% spent £51-£100

5% spent £100-£200 (this included two visiting boats who paid mooring fees)

The estimated income to the local economy from additional spending by audiences is £17k-£22k.

100% of responders said they would like to attend more arts events in Saltash.

90% Music

53% Theatre

50% Exhibitions

47% Film

41% Comedy

37% Dance

23% Spoken Word

A SELECTION OF AUDIENCE COMMENTS:

Well organised, welcoming, interesting and unusual for this town.

We've come over from Plymouth. Great sense of community here!

Genuinely interesting event that could only happen at this festival.

I learned something today.

Excellent quality in the performance.

Excellent singing and entertainment.

Great music. Very well organised.

Beautiful singing. Friendly atmosphere and smoothly organised.

Good venue and great group.

Lovely music and very friendly. An amazing session for children.

Pitched perfectly. My 16 month old enjoyed it as much as her 76 year old Grandad.

Lovely introduction to Cornish culture.

Everything has been great - performers are really good.

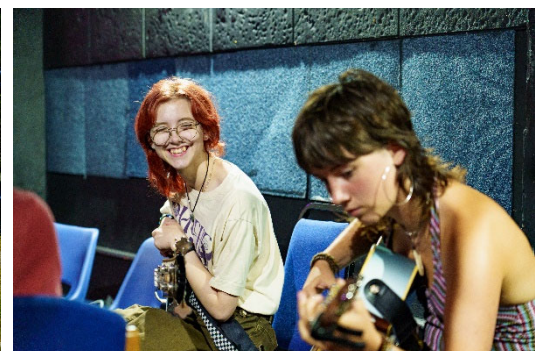
This musical collection gives Saltash a distinct identity, rather than as an adjunct of Plymouth.

Marvellous entertainment in a wonderful setting on a beautiful day. Perfect.

Mary Newman's in the sun was a fabulous venue.

Wonderful well attended event.

Lovely atmosphere.



L-R: Audiences at Saltash Social Club, Saltash Town Band in Victoria Gardens, Girls Rock workshop at Livewire

It was relaxing, unusual, fun, musically eye-opening and a great choice alongside water.

Very interesting sound and lovely music

Very relaxing and a unique experience.

It was the most hypnotic sound I have ever heard and so relaxing.

All events excellent in their different ways.

Content was excellent for all events.

Lovely people with a nice range of different pieces.

Really lovely to see such a great range of performers and some super talented people.

Great local event, reasonable price, great venue, talented performers.

Great bands, lovely venue, amazing staff!

Was just fab to be able to come and listen to people of all ages playing the piano in a beautiful setting.

Enjoyable and everyone joined in.

Hope to come to more next year.

It was a great mix of variety and cross generational.

The atmosphere was very friendly and great music scene. Very varied.

Excellent quality of performances and evident love of Cornwall.

Great singers and musicians in lovely venues.

Carnival atmosphere - good music

ARTIST COMMENTS

I loved playing for you all, such a lovely gig. Lyndon Forster

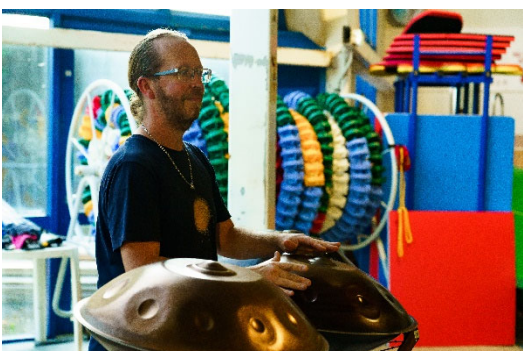
From all of us a big thank you for inviting us to that wonderful place and thanks for the opportunity. It was a pleasure to meet so many beautiful people today. Temps Clar Ensemble

Well, what a brilliant weekend! Such lovely feedback from so many people, a huge well done to you for organising! Femmes de la Mer

I just wanted to take the opportunity to thank you for having myself, Amber and Oli onboard for this project. We really enjoyed capturing the content and we're very grateful to have had the chance to lend our skills. Mostly Film Productions

We really enjoyed the gig and the audience were fantastic! We do hope the festival continues to grow, it seems such a wonderful thing to be happening so close to home. Windjammer

This festival is bringing some fantastic culture to Saltash - thank you. Barrett's Privateers



L-R: Lyndon Forster at Saltash Swimming Pool, Girls Rock workshop at Livewire Youth Music, Pop-Up Piano on the Waterside.

DID WE MEET OUR OBJECTIVES?

Employing professional artists who have links to, or perform work that reflects the local environment, culture and heritage.

YES:

- All the artists either had a personal local link or performed music inspired by the region.
- We exceeded the targets set with funders for the number of musicians performing at the Festival.
- A number of artists had written or arranged music especially for the Festival.
- 77% of the events featured music by living composers.

Establishing an inspiring and high-profile platform to showcase the town's amateur music groups.

YES:

- Four events featured performances by local amateur musicians and music groups including Saltash Town Band, members of Plymouth Symphony Orchestra and musicians from Livewire Youth Music.
- Conversations were also started/continued with a number of other groups about performing in future years.

Weaving workshops and 'joining in' events into the programme to create new music, inspired by and made with local people.

YES:

- Three workshop events were held and several other events incorporated opportunities to join in with the performance.
- A number of other events featured music that had been specifically written for the Festival performance.

Unleashing the latent potential of the town's many historic venues, bringing them into use as spaces for live arts events.

YES:

- The Festival presented music in 10 venues of which 8 are historic, listed or otherwise architecturally significant buildings.
- 6 of the spaces currently have no regular (or a very limited programme of) live music events.
- Artists reported that they had "no idea" these venues were in Saltash before this event.

OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- We exceeded the target audience and participation figure by 16%.
- We signed up to support the Keychange Pledge for music and 70% of the professional performers were female.
- 4 local primary schools encouraged their pupils to get involved with the piano-design competition, including several setting it as a classroom art activity.
- The Festival piano was a huge hit and definitively disproved local theories that "everything on the Waterside gets vandalised by local boys". One video of a (local young male) pianist has been



L-R: Barrett's Privateers at St Nicholas & St Faith Church, Rue at Livewire Youth Music, Blow Your Own Trumpet workshop at Isambard House.

viewed 10,000+ times – and still counting. The piano will now be installed on the Waterside for the rest of the summer.

- Great Western Railway supported the Festival by sharing our trailer film with 875,745 social media followers – significantly raising the profile of the Festival.
- We have launched a Festival Patron Scheme and now have two patrons.
- We launched Salt Arts CIC as an umbrella organisation to manage the Festival.
- Income from ticket sales and business help-in-kind made up 17% of the total budget – an increase from 14% in 2022.

CHALLENGES

Aging population of amateur musicians:

Working with some local amateur music groups was challenging due to reliance on volunteers and elderly participants. One group had to pull out due to ill health of members and another closed during the programming process.

Scheduling:

Avoiding clashes with other events was much more challenging this year. This resulted in us spreading over two weekends in order to avoid clashes with Falmouth Shanty Weekend and Glastonbury Festival which both made it difficult to programme specific local artists. Clashing with Armed Forces Day will also be avoided in the future.

Coordinating with commercial establishments:

Coordinating with local pubs for the 'Tunes in the Town' night was difficult because of changing management at the pubs. Management at several venues were initially suspicious of the whole proposal – feeling sure that they were going to be charged money somewhere in the project. While some then became very enthusiastic about the idea, it was then difficult to pin down commitment or obtain details of musicians who had been booked.

Audience development:

The Festival faced a two-layered audience-development challenge of (1) launching a new event in (2) a town where there is currently very little live arts programming. There are no established mailing lists, events communications, box office or distribution services and residents are not in the habit of looking for arts events communications. Reaching a wide range of local residents required a Royal Mail leaflet-drop to every household, extensive social media communications, free events and low ticket price options.

Venue capabilities:

Knowledge amongst venue staff of the technical specification of venues for hosting live events is limited. We worked with venues to create floor and seating plans and brought in production equipment.



L-R: Windjammer at Saltash Social Club, Saltash Town Band in Victoria Gardens, Temps Clar Ensemble at Mary Newman's Cottage.

KEY LEARNING

All the venues worked well for the programmed events and audiences were keen to visit them again in the future.

We are building a clearer picture of the capacities, accessibility and capabilities of venues across the town – including identifying a new venue with a grand piano which we will definitely aim to use in the future.

Much earlier scheduling is required to avoid clashes and book first-choice artists.

A number of audience members wanted to also eat locally and found it difficult to find out which bars/cafes were open – particularly on Sunday.

Feedback suggests that there is significant demand for year-round live arts events in Saltash.

Increasing numbers of audience members (particularly tourists) require information about whether they can bring dogs to events.

While there is enthusiasm about the idea of family workshops – it is difficult to schedule these. School nights definitely don't work for family events.

The name of the Festival is causing confusion with new attendees – many expecting a traditional 'shanty festival' rather than a more eclectic regional music festival.

CONCLUSION

The Festival is now becoming established in Saltash, with a growing reputation for quality events and an enthusiastic core audience. We are also building a reputation within the local musical community for providing well-supported events and great audiences.

A clearer picture is forming of the types of events that will cover their costs through ticket sales, the areas of programming for which an audience can be developed over time and some events which need reconsidering in future years. This will help to shape and refine the programme in the future to build audience attendance, while also developing the musical and cultural scene in the region.

Overall, this year's Festival exceed expectations and we feel that it has the potential to become a significant and valuable cultural event for the region and for the South West.





Saltash Songs & Shanties Festival is produced by Salt Arts CIC, who work with artists, performers, venues and organisations to make creative productions in the South West.

From tiny seeds of ideas to full-blown ambitious productions reaching thousands of people – if it sparks the imagination we will nurture, support and shape to bring that vision to life. www.saltarts.org

ALL PHOTOS WITH THANKS TO MOSTLY FILM PRODUCTIONS.

APPENDIX 1: BUDGET

Income

Funders	£20,200
Tickets	£3,558
Refreshments	£169
Help-in-kind	£500
Total	£24,427

Expenditure

Artist fees & expenses	£9,050
Marketing	£6,733
Management/Producing	£6,021
Admin & insurance	£783
Venue hire	£263
Concert costs	£1,077
Help-in-kind	£500
Total	£24,427

APPENDIX 2: COMPARING 2022 AND 2023

	2022	2023	
Number of events held	8	18	+125%
Workshops	1	3	
Performances with participation	2	0	
Concerts	5	14	
Film	0	1	
Children's art activity	0	1	

Venues:

Venues used	6	10	+200%
Public spaces used	0	2	

Performers/artists:

Total number of performers	34	111	+226%
Professional musicians from Devon/Cornwall	2	26	
Professional musicians with links to Saltash	4	4	
Local amateur musicians	29	81	
Visual artists	0	1	

Staff:

Festival paid staff	0	2
Festival volunteers	7	9
Venue staff	0	14
Venue volunteers	0	8

Attendance:

Tickets sold	376	769	+105%
Attendance at free events	0	715	
Participation in workshops/activities	30	282	

Tickets:

Standard price tickets sold	67%	71%
Pay extra tickets	11%	6%
Pay what you can tickets	22%	23%

Geography of audience for ticketed activities:

Audience from Saltash	66%	66%
Audience from Plymouth	21%	15%
Audience from wider Devon/Cornwall	11%	17%
Audience from locations outside of Devon/Cornwall	4%	4%

APPENDIX 3: FULL LIST OF EVENTS AND VENUES FROM 2023

Sunday 18 June, 3pm
Livewire Youth Music

Girls Rock workshop

The Eyelids, a 4 piece all female, double-bass driven, garage rock band from Cornwall, run a fun workshop in all things rock.

Sunday 18 June, 7pm
Livewire Youth Music

The Eyelids + Rue + The Other Woman

A night celebrating Cornish women who rock.

Wednesday 21 June, 6.30pm
Isambard House

Blow Your Own Trumpet

Saltash Town Band invite you to have a go on their brass instruments.

Wednesday 21 June, 8pm
Isambard House

Film: Son of Cornwall

The moving biopic of John Treleaven, who left his home in Cornwall to become an international opera star.

Thursday 22 June, 7pm
Saltash Swimming Pool

Water Music

Take a relaxing dip accompanied by lovely handpan music combining West African technique with Celtic rhythms.

Friday 23 June, 10.15 & 11.15am
Saltash Library

Tipil: Music for little people

Family band Tipil perform a session of Cornish traditional and contemporary tunes, with opportunities for mini-musicians to sing, dance and join in.

Friday 23 June, 7.30pm
Isambard House

Sea Shanty Workshop

Learn traditional and contemporary sea shanties.

Saturday 24 June, 11am & 12.15pm
Mary Newman's Cottage

Temps Clar Ensemble

Music from medieval and renaissance Europe performed in full period costume.

Saturday 24 June, 1.30pm
Church of St Nicholas & St Faith

Barrett's Privateers

Local shanty stars who blend male and female voices in lively and hugely entertaining performances.

Saturday 24 June, 3pm
Victoria Gardens

Saltash Town Band

The award-winning Saltash Town Band entertain with classics, jazz and contemporary favourites.

Saturday 24 June, 6pm
Church of St Nicholas & St Faith

Sirinu's Songs for Saltash

A concert of beautiful ballads and tunes of the Tamar Valley and moors of East Cornwall, written in the 1960s and 70s and celebrating local stories, landmarks and characters.

Saturday 24 June, 8pm
Church of St Nicholas & St Faith

Music for the Night Sky

Abbey Brass Quintet are joined by Cornish musicians to perform music inspired by the night sky and written by Judy Whitlock.

Sunday 25 June, 3pm
Saltash Waterfront

Pop-Up Piano Session

Local pianists take centre stage with the Festival's street piano.

Sunday 25 June, 6pm
Saltash Social Club

Femmes de la Mer

A 15 strong group of women+, hailing from across Cornwall who share stories of inspirational Cornish women and are passionate about singing traditional shanties and folk songs of the sea.

Sunday 25 June, 7.30pm
Saltash Social Club

Windjammer

An up-and-coming trio who blend self-penned songs and instrumentals with original versions of music drawn from the best traditions of British folk.