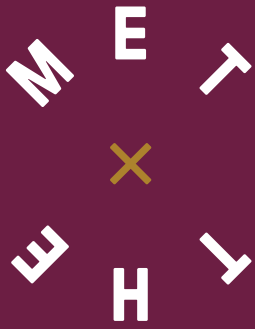


2018/19



themet.org.uk
0161 761 2216

The Met

Annual Report 2018/19



The Met Annual Report 2018/19

Our Vision sees...

The Met as the go-to arts and music venue in the North West for our users, partners and funders. Building trust, delivering quality, achieving sustainability and being accessible to everyone.

The Met enhancing the wellbeing of the diverse communities we work with and strengthening their sense of social cohesion and pride in their local place.

The Met having the right people to deliver what we do best; supporting and growing the local arts and culture ecology.

To make Bury a better place to live and work.

Our Mission is...

To build The Met as the leading cultural brand for north Greater Manchester, building a strong tone of voice and more positive awareness of our brand.

The Met exists to lead as an ambassador and advocate for high quality arts throughout our communities – particularly in Bury and regionally, celebrating and sharing our success and values.

Thanks to

Our core funders – Arts Council England for funding towards our artistic programme, talent development and core staff; Bury Council for the use of our building and funding towards our workshop programme; Garfield Weston for their funding towards a Development Officer; Oglesby Charitable Trust for their funding towards our Education Manager; Children in Need for funding towards the running of Aiming High; Zochonis charitable Trust for their funding towards our Youth Theatre group.

Our corporate Members – Manchester Airport, Avovira, Contained Air Solutions, Barclays, Mackenzie Financial Planning, PM+M, The Rakem Group, WHN Solicitors, Don't Panic Event Management, Recruitment Solutions and Instruct.

Our Patrons – Tony Walsh, Noreen Kershaw, Mark Potter, Ian Warburton and John Banbury.

Our key supporters – Shefali Henry, Julie Halliwell, Jim Hurst, Lawrence Johnson, Ken Punshon and Jean Tarry.

All of our regular donors and everyone who donated money while buying tickets or in the building. Thank you! Your money ensures we can continue to run our wide range of workshops for all ages and abilities.

What we have achieved

We attracted

50,000

people from across the country to events in Bury in 2018/19: **52% were first-time visitors.**

According to Audience Finder, a survey tool used nationwide by the arts sector to capture audience feedback, The Met top-scored across all Greater Manchester venues for **quality of performance, value for money and overall visitor experience.**

In November 2018 we won **Cultural Venue of the Year** at the inaugural This is Manchester awards.

200

events
presented

500

hours of
recorded material

2 festivals attracting

8,000

people

3

projects delivered

500 workshops attracting

10,000

people of all abilities

Busiest week?

Independent Venue Week in January attracted

1350

people for gig events and workshops



Projects

Our second Independent Venue Week in February 2019 welcomed Richard Hawley, The Delines and up and coming band Dantevilles. The developing relationship with IVW has continued to welcome high profile artists to the venue, bringing with them new audiences and national profile for The Met.

In January we delivered a song writing project with Heritage Learning Lancashire. The Schools Linking project was an artistically strong project which incorporated local heritage and folk music made possible through the unique combination of our outreach work, recording studio and professional programme.

Our work with Bury Pride continues to develop into an inspiring event for the town. Most recently this has included assistance to draft and submit a successful Arts Council application to help with the artistic and audience development starting with a research project and subsequent analysis.

We have supported Brighter Sound's Both Sides Now project campaigning for gender equality in music since its inception. We've presented highlighted shows at The Met and a commissioned procession with Stealing Sheep at Head for the Hills festival running alongside a high profile media campaign.

Festivals

Big Whistle Festival in 2018 was a one day event attracting international audiences featuring new artists and a rare full band concert with Michael McGoldrick launching his new album.

Head for the Hills Festival (formerly known as Ramsbottom Festival) took place in September 2018, for the eighth year attracting audiences of over 7,000. Festival-goers discovered new artists, families engaged with the arts, and new audiences were identified for The Met and future festivals.

The Big Whistle and Head for the Hills festivals also gave opportunities for our audiences to participate through workshops, and performances aimed at communities new to these artforms. Both festivals need investment financially, but continue to contribute to our audience development plan and allow us to push our programme to include diverse and emerging artists.

Workshops

Our workshops currently focus on aspects of our community in need including children with autism and adults with disabilities. We aim to promote understanding of marginalised groups and work hard to integrate these groups into our organisation.

Met Express is a workshop for adults with disabilities focussing on developing key skills which allows a fuller life outside of the group. We continue to work with Proud and Loud as a wider network of disability arts to develop develop workshops for adults with disabilities into artists in their own right.

Aiming High works with children with autism to develop skills which enable the children to live a fuller life outside the group and now has 3 years funding from Children in Need. Older members of the group are being trained as mentors and helping to lead the workshops continuing their personal development.

Engage2stage is a multi generational group of adults with visual impairments who work on drama shows to present to live audiences. This group ran a training session for Met staff focussing on working with VI audiences which was very well received. The group are shortlisted for an award with RNIB for their work here and the Chair of Bury Blind Society now sits on our board.

Uniquely Us is a group for women over 18 with autism. The group meets weekly and works to build confidence.

Alfa Education run a number of workshops including two choirs and a ukulele group all of which perform to a high standard and tour on a regular basis.

The Met runs three music workshops which meet weekly learning harmonica, guitar and our jazz band Metrojazz. All groups focus on developing talent, increasing confidence and encouraging team work.

We also run a training workshop on Pro Tools three times per year from Edwin Street Creative Hub focussing on developing skills in all ages to record and produce music of their own.

In 18/19 we ran over

500 workshops.

This is set to increase in 2019/20.



Case Study

Billy, Aiming High attendee, 12

Most young people in Aiming High have Autism Spectrum Disorder, which means listening and focussing are difficult in a group situation. Following instructions are difficult. There can be many things that have upset someone with ASD. This can make some members opt-out of an activity, or become argumentative. We have to take time to understand their issues and slow down activities to appease a member, or work one-to-one with someone.

Billy started the year being very withdrawn. He was engaging in his own way but in a very introverted way. He would do the smallest amount possible to join in without bringing too much attention to himself, making small movements and speaking quietly.

As we rehearsed the summer show, he started to put forward ideas whilst working in a small group of friends. He enjoyed the story and his parts in the show, especially those that he'd help to create. Every time we rehearsed he showed more commitment and more confidence. Performing the show, he really started to enjoy himself. He wasn't keen on the idea of family watching him at first, but then he loved the attention and applause of the audience on the day.

The Christmas performance showed greater improvement. He volunteered to tell a story that was used as a main scene in the show. He agreed to be the main character in that scene. He had lines, which he spoke loudly and he followed direction. He is now fully participating in the workshops and is able to make the most of the sessions. He will keep improving and he has more work to do, but he is exhibiting increased levels of participation, confidence, communication, and engagement.

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Volunteering

Volunteers continue to be an integral part of the organisation and crucial to our success. Volunteers range from school age to retirees and are an important part of The Met programme supporting us with delivery of events. We worked with BIMM to recruit placements in stage management, artist liaison and digital marketing across 3 festivals including Head for the Hills, Just So and Cloudspotting.

In 2018/19 2,700 volunteer hours were given by 111 volunteers.

Case Study

Karen McIntosh, Met volunteer, 61

I have been a volunteer at The Met for over 7 years now. Mostly this involves working as an usher at events in the theatre and I am part of the friendly welcome that the Met is known for. This is enjoyable as you are meeting people in a good mood (mostly!) and they are looking forward to being entertained. It's so nice to be part of The Met team. I am always thanked and made welcome when I come in and leave at the end of the night.

I have gained so much more confidence since starting at The Met. This was something that was very much in need of after a stressful end to my NHS job. I've certainly broadened my horizons culturally since coming to The Met and seen so many types of music and theatre - overall a wonderful experience. It's been a pleasure!





Recording quality and digital projects

Edwin Street Recording Studio continues to work with vulnerable young adults through partnerships with the Greater Manchester Youth Music Network, CHANT Productions, Bury Community Choir and Bury Blind Society. Our workshop groups bring in young people of all abilities to participate in music and drama, with opportunities for learning and for performance.

Our ability to live record has enabled two live radio broadcasts in the past year. The Studio recorded The Drift radio show "as-live" for BBC Radio Lancashire with Police Dog Hogan and Adam Holmes and the Embers which featured a full live band along with interviews.

Edwin Street's work includes a You Got The Love cover for the UEFA Super Cup final in Tallinn featuring children from a Burnley choir; a collaboration between Manchester Mind and We Are Willow, focussing on male mental health and an audio description for Island of the Hungry Ghosts which won best documentary at the 2018 Tribeca film festival.

Case Study

The Slow Readers Club

The Slow Readers Club formed in 2009 releasing their self-titled first album in 2011. The band got in contact to record a potential single at Edwin Street Recording Studio in May 2013.

The recording of 'Forever in Your Debt' was a successful session and the band were enthused, particularly after an unsatisfactory recording process for their first album, recorded elsewhere.

The band juggled day jobs with gigging and recording, leading to quite a protracted recording schedule but eventually culminating in the release of their second album 'Cavalcade' in April 2015. The lack of time meant that songs would come to the studio in a skeletal form, so the recording process become as much about production and generating ideas as capturing performances. As a result, Phil Bullement, our Recording Studio Manager received a credit as producer as well as engineer.

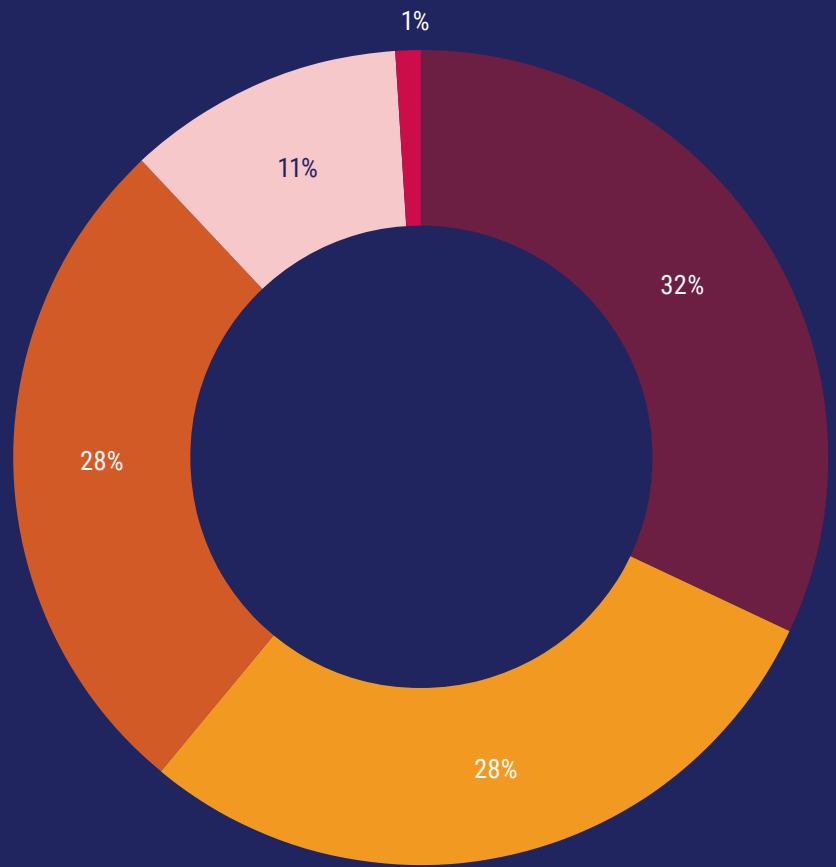
The album release along with the single releases and with a heavy gigging schedule meant a steady increase in momentum and following. The singles received airplay on BBC 6music and XFM. A support slot with the band James introduced them to many new fans and they performed a headline slot in September 2015 on the second stage at our Head For The Hills festival, packing the tent out. Their clout grew further, selling out gigs at first the 700 capacity Gorilla in Manchester then the 1500 capacity Ritz in 2016.

A strong relationship with the band had formed and recording sessions for the third album started in October 2016. Again, the recording process was drawn out over many months and the songs were generally more skeletal than the previous album, but a trust had built with the band and studio knowing that the eventual recorded results would be good. The album "Build A Tower" was released in May 2018 on the label Modern Sky who they had recently signed to. The singles had received a fair amount of radio play including being playlisted on several stations and the album landed at an impressive number 18 in the UK album charts. A considerable feat for what was essentially an unsigned band and self-funded album.

Momentum grew further resulting in sell out shows at Manchester's Albert hall, 2300 capacity and Manchester Apollo, 3500 capacity along with selling out venues around the country. They headlined the main stage this time on the Friday night of Head For The Hills festival.

The momentum and monetary build were sufficient that in December 2018, the band went full-time, leaving their day jobs. Throughout this period Phil also worked as live sound engineer for the band, building on the relationship formed through the recording process. Plans for the 4th album are in discussion, which will hopefully be recorded at Edwin Street.

The Met 2018/19 Statistics

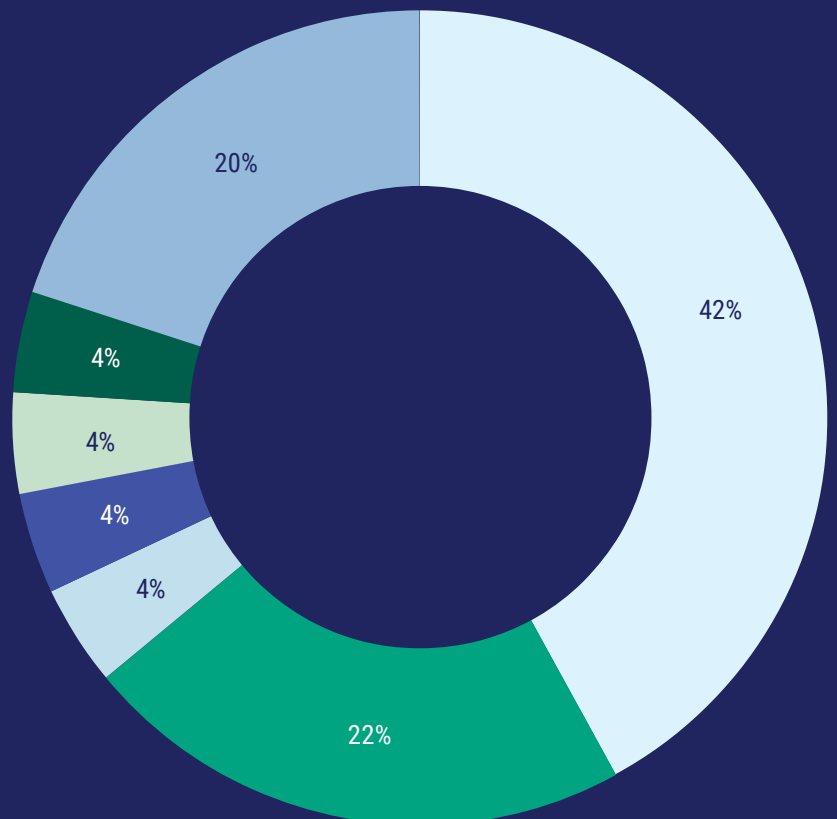


Expenditure Sources

- Artist costs
- Staff costs
- Head for the Hills
- Outreach and education
- Refurbishment

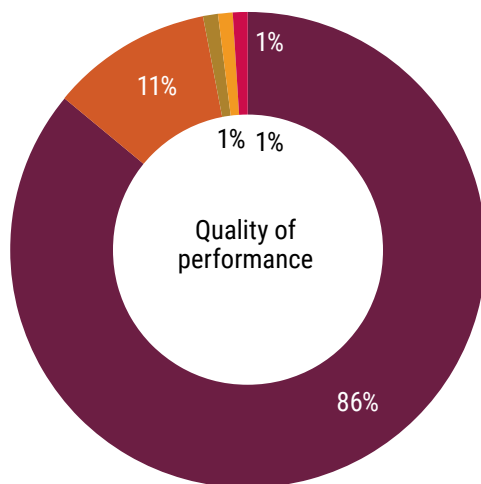
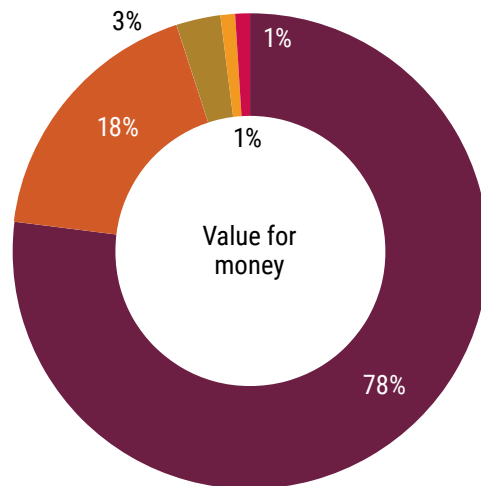
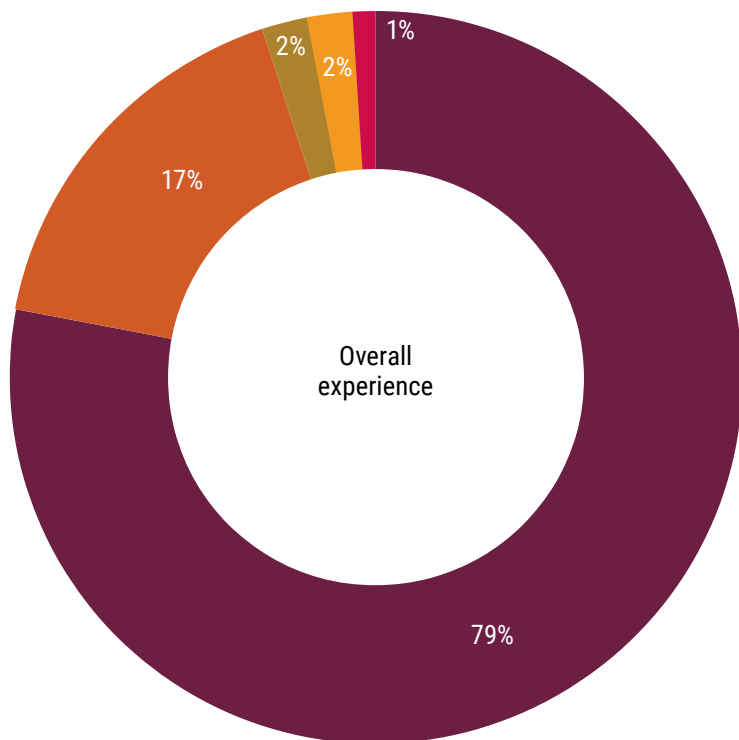
Income Sources

- Ticket income & hires
- Head for the Hills
- Donations
- Sponsorship
- Catering
- Outreach and education
- Grants

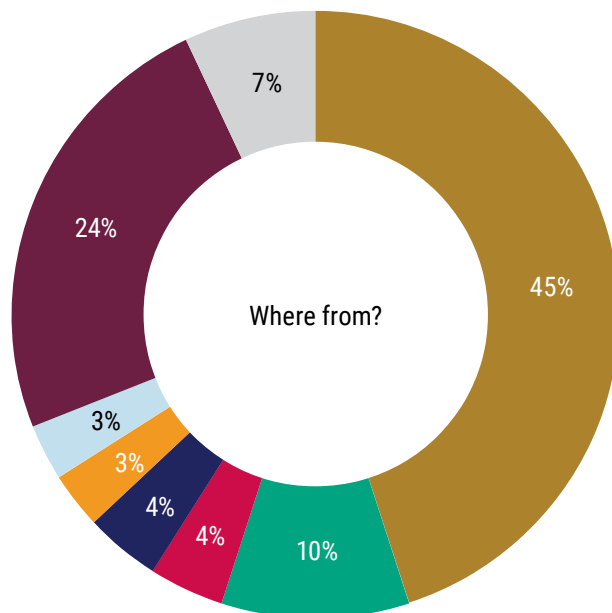
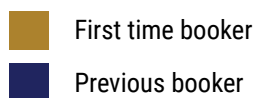
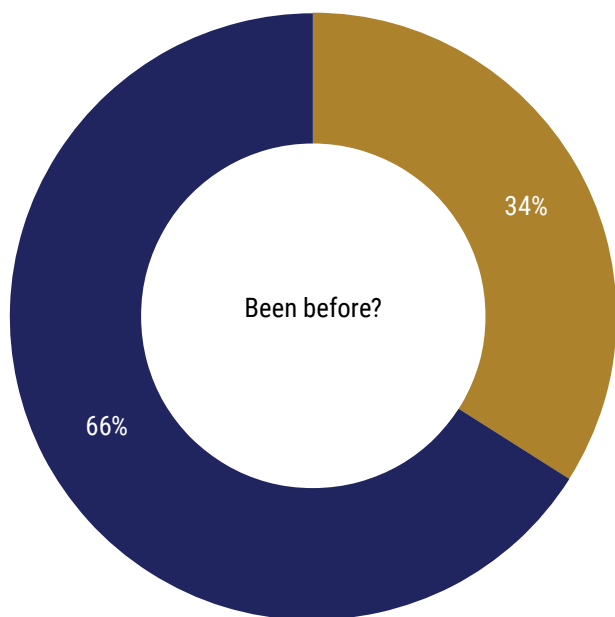


All percentages are approximate.
Source: Audience Finder 2018/19 audience survey report, The Met box office data.
Includes Head For the Hills bookers

Audience Experience



Who booked tickets?



Our Funders



Principal sponsor



Gold sponsors



Silver sponsors



Bronze sponsors



Learning programme funders



Learning programme partners



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