



# The Big Survey 2022

## Topic 6 – Events and audiences

### SUMMARY – events and audiences

*Making Music members* (performing and promoting groups) **feature in or promote around 21,600 performances annually and organise or are invited to deliver another 6,100 other types of events**, such as workshops, school or care home visits and a wide range of other activities.

Making Music represents around 29% of the total sector (DCMS/ACE Our Creative Talent report 2008). **Thus, scaled to the whole leisure-time music sector from the Making Music member data, this means around 95,000 local music events annually are delivered by volunteer promoters or leisure-time music groups.**

**Total audiences for Making Music members annually** (performing and promoting groups) **are around 800,000, and for the whole sector around 2.7 million.**

These are significant numbers – and these events and audiences are everywhere in the UK where there are communities, large, small, rural or urban, **meaning that it is volunteer promoters and leisure-time music groups which ensure every community in the UK has live music on their doorstep.**

**Note** – all data in this report refer to information gathered in late **2022** about the previous 1-3 years which were still Covid-impacted. That means that, if anything, **figures would be/will be higher for most data sets by this year, 2025.** There are regular reminders of this throughout the report.

### SUMMARY – tickets and concessions

Half of **performing groups** charge for all their events; of those, half charged £11-15 for tickets (2022). More **promoters** charge for all performances, and many still operate a subscription model which has traditionally been a way to generate the cashflow to book artists; but with changed audience behaviours, these days more audience members pay per concert or on the door. A quarter of their subscribers attend concerts for free, a third paid £11-15 (2022), but half of non-subscribers paid £16+ per ticket (2022).

**Performing and promoter groups** focus concessions on Under-18s (two thirds/half) and full-time students (one third/half). Family discounts and concessions for people aged 60+, on benefits or disabled and their carers are infrequent, and developing these may represent an opportunity to attract more and new people to their concerts.

Only 7% of promoters and 1% of performing groups, however, know their audience demographics or collect information on their audiences, so this may be good place to start: to work on understanding their current audiences, to facilitate future growth through various means, including targeted concessions.

## SUMMARY – planning timelines and days/times for events

**Over 70% of performing groups and promoters plan their events 6-18 months in advance**, with promoters generally at 12+ months and a fifth of performers planning less than 6 months ahead, having more flexibility than the professionals booked by promoters. This question is always worth asking, as Making Music often finds that potential project or event partners are surprised that leisure-time music groups plan that far ahead and therefore perhaps need longer lead-in times than anticipated to plan participation in a new activity.

**Far more promoters than performing groups host events on a weekday evening (42% vs 17%)** – understandable that performing groups focus on Saturday and Sunday in particular, as they usually have a pre-event rehearsal which they would be unable to schedule during the week due to participants' work and other commitments.

**A large percentage of performing (34%) and promoting (38%) groups host events on a weekend afternoon** – this is positive in terms of accessibility for families and for the 60+ demographic which often does not like to travel during darkness and represents a significant increase for both types of groups since the 2016 survey.

*Note – in some parts of this report we distinguish between data gathered from our performing groups (where participants are usually hobby musicians, led by a professional music director) and promoting groups which are groups of volunteers who programme one or several events presenting professional musicians.*

## FULL REPORT

### 1. Number of performances and events

Note: data collected in October 2022 – Covid still affecting groups in the year leading up to survey.

Many of our **performing group members** organise and run their own performances and other events; others perform only by invitation or booking by promoters (e.g. by local authority for civic event like Remembrance Sunday, by a charity for their summer event, by bandstand organisers etc.). Even if they mostly organise their own events, they are also likely to perform at some by invitation – e.g. carol singing in the station or the care home; conversely, even if they usually perform by booking/invitation, they often still organise at least one or two concerts a year themselves.

The two tables below show the percentages of performing groups taking part in different types of events and how many they took part in per year; first self-organised events, then events by invitation.

The 'other' category, which is quite substantial, is mixed self-organised and booked events, and those types of performances are listed between the two tables.

### Performing groups – self-organised events

Type of event	Total yes	0	1-2	3-4	5-8	9+	Actual number, scaled to all MM members**
Performances	94%	6%	33%	50%	10%	1%	10,160
Workshops (any age)	59%	41%	50%	5%	2%	2%	1,220
Workshops (under-18s)	21%	79%	15%	3%	0%	3%	407
School visits	20%	80%	7%	7%	3%	3%	400
Other visits, eg care home, hospital etc	50%	50%	42%	5%	0%	3%	720
Open rehearsals/ Come and Sing/Play	80%	20%	67%	9%	3%	1%	1,500
<b>Total number self-organised events</b>							<b>14,407</b>

\*note – rounding means figures don't always add up to 100%

\*\*all MM performing group members at time of the 2022 Big Survey (3,572)

**‘Other’ self-organised events or events to which performing groups were invited included** carols in public spaces (31% of ‘other’ events), weddings/funerals (11%), competitions (8%), church services (6%), recording sessions (3%), monthly club nights, busking, charity events (5%), summer schools, huge range of civic and community events (20%) including Remembrance Sunday, Commonwealth Games, Make Music Day, Xmas lights, Queen’s Jubilee, High Sheriff dedication, City Livery company event, church events, unspecified community events, open rehearsals for friends and family, bell ringing rallies.  
**Actual numbers:** (extrapolated to full membership): **798 other events (mixture of self-organised and by invitation)**

### Performing groups – events they perform at by booking or invitation

Note: the ‘other’ event list above covers both self-organised events and events by invitation. The events listed below are the types of events that performing groups might get booked for or invited to perform at. In some cases, there may be a payment to the group – more information below.

Type of event	Total yes	0	1-2	3-4	5-8	9+	Actual number, scaled to all MM members**
Performances	87%	13%	49%	15%	14%	8%	5,967
Workshops (any age)	10%	90%	5%	3%	0%	2%	100
Workshops (under-18s)	8%	92%	5%	3%	0%	0%	33
School visits	15%	85%	13%	0%	0%	2%	180
Other visits, eg care home, hospital etc	58%	42%	49%	4%	4%	0%	513
Open rehearsals/ Come and Sing/Play	21%	79%	15%	5%	0%	0%	93
<b>Total events by invitation/booking</b>							<b>6,886</b>

\*note – rounding means figures don't always add up to 100%

\*\*all MM performing group members at time of the 2022 Big Survey (3,572)

In total, performing groups perform in 16,127 concerts a year, deliver 1,760 workshops, make 1,813 visits to educational or residential establishments and institutions, and run 1,593 Open Rehearsals or Come and Sing/Play events, giving (including other types of events) **a total of 22,091 public-facing events, an average of 4.5 concerts per group per year (up from 3.8 in 2016) and an additional 1.7 other events (up from 1.3 in 2016) per group annually.**

As Making Music membership only represents 29% of the sector, this means that **all leisure-time performing music groups together promote around 55,600 concerts and 20,500 other public-facing events a year in the UK, a total of 76,000.**

Two thirds of events are self-organised and one third by booking or invitation.

### **Performing groups – payments for performances**

39% of respondents report being paid a fee for booked events/by invitation, for a total of 676 events (these figures are not scaled up to full membership, as not easily transferable to all members).

Payments per engagement (figures from 2022):

- highest £5,600
- **average fee is £260**
- 9% earn £1,000+ per engagement
- 22% between £400-£900
- 33% are paid between £200-£350
- 36% were paid between £10-£150
- THIS MEANS **two thirds of engagements were remunerated at or below £350.**

### **Promoting groups – self-organised events**

This is what our promoting groups do – they create, produce and promote events themselves, presenting concerts with professional musicians in their locality.

<b>Type of event</b>	<b>Total yes</b>	<b>Average number this type of event per promoter per year</b>	<b>Actual number, scaled to all MM promoter members</b>
Performances	92%	14	5,433
Workshops (any age)	12%	9	443
Workshops (under-18s)	12%	5	251
School visits	11%	3	121
Other visits, eg care home, hospital etc	1%	2	8
Festivals -see definition*	15%	1	65
Other events	11%	3	154
<b>Total events incl. festivals</b>			<b>6,475</b>

\*Festival – a number of events within a fixed limited time frame, e.g. weekend, month; one festival might include 6 performances, or 14 etc.

'Other' events are... concert excursions, summer school, young performers platform, club nights, education events, fundraising quiz nights/parties.

Thus, our volunteer promoters put on 5,433 concerts and 65 festivals, as well as 977 other types of events, **a total of 6,475 public-facing events a year.**

**Average number of concerts per promoter is 14 a year, and they also produce an average of 2 other types of events each, annually (up from an overall average of 12.5 events per year in 2016).**

**Scaled up to the sector (of which Making Music membership 29%), this would mean volunteer promoters create around 22,000 events in their localities all over the UK every year.**

## 2. Audience sizes per event

Note – these figures will be higher in 2025 than the ones reported below from 2022, when activity had still been restricted in many part of the UK in the year leading up to this survey.

### Performing groups – self-organised events

<b>Type of event</b>	<b>1-75</b>	<b>76-125</b>	<b>126-250</b>	<b>251-500</b>	<b>501+</b>	<b>Actual number, scaled to all MM members***</b>
Performances	32%	33%	24%	9%	2%	425,590
Workshops (any age)*	77%	6%	1%	0%	0%	22,470
Workshops (under-18s)*	45%	3%	0%	0%	0%	3,184
School visits*	40%	4%	4%	0%	0%	3,974
Other visits, eg care home, hospital etc*	71%	2%	2%	0%	0%	8,669
Open rehearsals/ Come and Sing/Play*	76%	10%	3%	0%	1%	34,809
'Other' events**	30%	13%	4%	0%	4%	9,551
<b>Total audiences self-organised events</b>						<b>508,248</b>

\*Apart from performances, for all other types, a significant number of respondents ticked '0' for audiences, meaning they did not count participants as audience/considered the event a 'closed' one, not open to the public. Figures therefore do not add up to 100%, except for performances.

\*\* As outlined in relation to the previous question, 'other' events all very different, e.g. recording sessions will have no audience, whereas carol singing will, even if a passing and difficult to quantify audience

\*\*\*all MM performing group members at time of the 2022 Big Survey (3,572)

## Performing groups – audiences for events by booking or invitation

<i>Type of event</i>	<b>1-75</b>	<b>76-125</b>	<b>126-250</b>	<b>251-500</b>	<b>501+</b>	<b>Actual number, scaled to all MM members***</b>
Performances*	44%	23%	18%	5%	6%	175,332
Workshops (any age)*	18%	0%	9%	0%	0%	1,327
Workshops (under-18s)*	10%	10%	0%	0%	0%	1,151
School visits*	31%	8%	0%	0%	0%	1,595
Other visits, eg care home, hospital etc*	79%	3%	0%	0%	0%	6,720
Open rehearsals/ Come and Sing/Play*	38%	8%	0%	0%	0%	1,504
'Other' events**	43%	18%	4%	7%	4%	17,599
<b>Total audiences invited/ booked events</b>						<b>205,228</b>

\*For all types of events, a significant number of respondents ticked '0' for audiences, meaning they did not count participants as audience/considered the event a 'closed' one, not open to the public. Figures therefore do not add up to 100%

\*\* As outlined in relation to the previous question, 'other' events all very different, e.g. recording sessions will have no audience, whereas carol singing will, even if a passing and difficult to quantify audience

\*\*\*all MM performing group members at time of the 2022 Big Survey (3,572)

Performing groups' concert audiences total 600,922 a year, and their audiences for all other types of public-facing events are a total of 112,554. Altogether, ***Making Music performing groups reach 713,476 audience members per year, and the whole sector (of which our membership represents 29%) attracts around 2.46 million audiences annually.***

***Making Music performing groups reach an average audience of 168 per concert, and of 32 for all other types of events (workshops etc.)*** (2016: average across all events 150).

## Promoting groups – audiences

<i>Type of event</i>	<b>1-75</b>	<b>76-125</b>	<b>126-250</b>	<b>251-500</b>	<b>501+</b>	<b>Actual number, scaled to all MM promoter members</b>
Performances	54%	31%	13%	0%	1%	37,356
Workshops (any age)	83%	17%	0%	0%	0%	1,528
Workshops (under-18s)	89%	0%	11%	0%	0%	2,528
School visits	43%	14%	14%	29%	0%	5,178
Other visits, eg care home, hospital etc	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	111
Festivals (entire festival audience)	25%	13%	0%	0%	62%	27,111
'Other' events	67%	17%	16%	0%	0%	2,722
<b>Total audiences</b>						<b>76,534</b>

**Promoting groups' audiences total 76,534 annually**, of which 37,356 for standalone performances and a further 27,111 as part of festivals, and the remaining 12,067 attend workshops and other events.

**Promoters' average concert and festival audience is 149 and 52 for all other events.**

As **our membership only represents 29% of the total sector, in total volunteer promoters in the UK reach 263,910 audiences annually.**

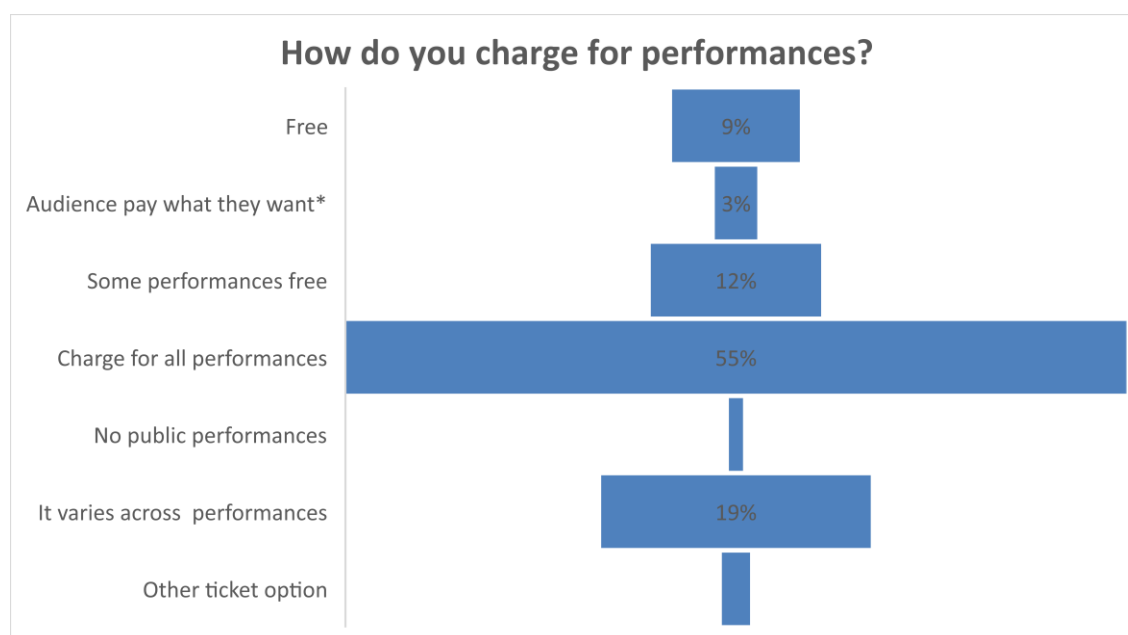
### 3. Tickets and pricing

#### Performing groups

##### How do you charge for tickets to your performances?

Free	Audience pay what they want*	Some performances free	Charge for all performances	No public performances	It varies across performances	Other ticket option
9%	3%	12%	55%	1%	19%	2%

\*Includes free admission but audience donations

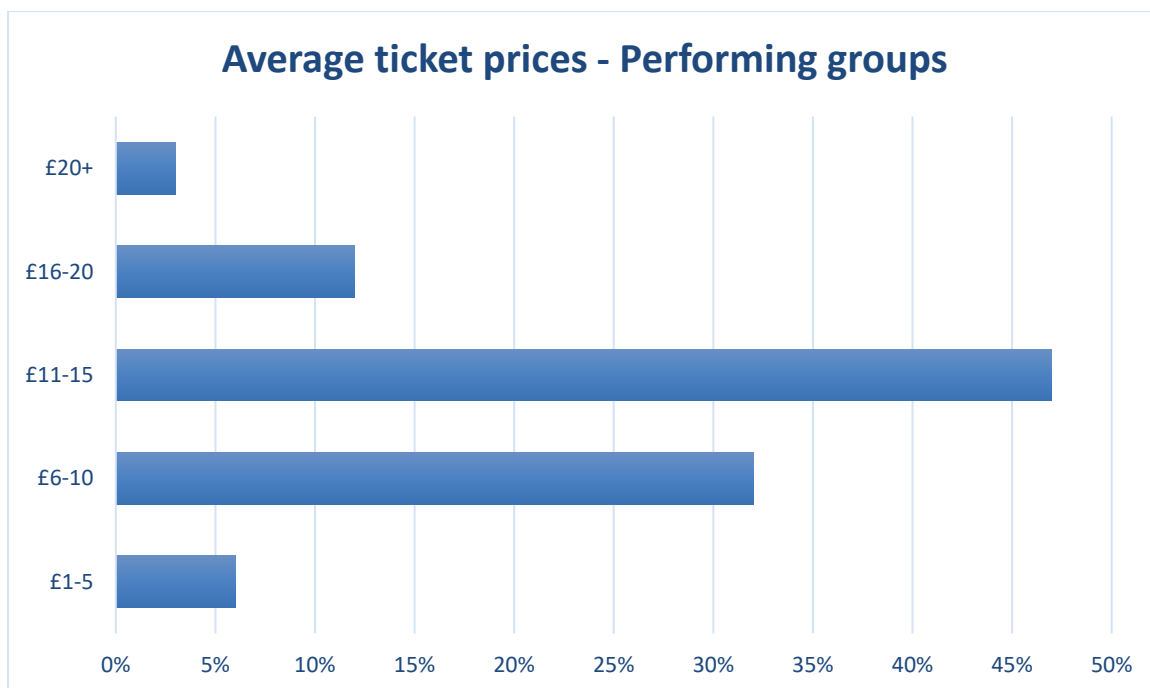


Of groups opting for 'other' ticket options, mostly they are paid for performing and therefore the promoter takes the ticket income, and there are some mixed scenarios where ticket income is shared, or bucket collections are for another charity.

##### Average ticket prices (note: 2022 data)

£1-5	£6-10	£11-15	£16-20	£20+
6%	32%	47%	12%	3%

Four fifths of groups charged between £6 and £15 for tickets to their events; about half charged £11-15; and over a third charged £10 or less.



Concessions	Percentage offering this
For under-18s	69%
For full-time students	36.5%
For young people, e.g. under 26	10%
For families	7%
For people 60 or over	16%
First time attendees	0.5%
Unwaged/on benefits etc.	10%
For disabled people	4%
For the carers accompanying disabled people	10%
<b>We don't offer concessions</b>	<b>16%</b>
Other type of concession	5%

84% of performing groups offer concessions of some kind, two thirds offer concessions or free tickets to under-18s, and a third to any kind of full-time student (ie school, college or university).

Noticeably, only 16% give concessions to the over 60s, and even fewer groups have reductions in place for those on benefits, for families, for disabled people and their carers.

'Other' types of concessions, in order of frequency, are reductions for Friends/members/ family of members, group discounts, early bird/advance ticket discounts, specially highlighted groups (Ukrainian refugees, NHS), and a capped number Pay-What-You-Can scheme.



## Promoting Groups

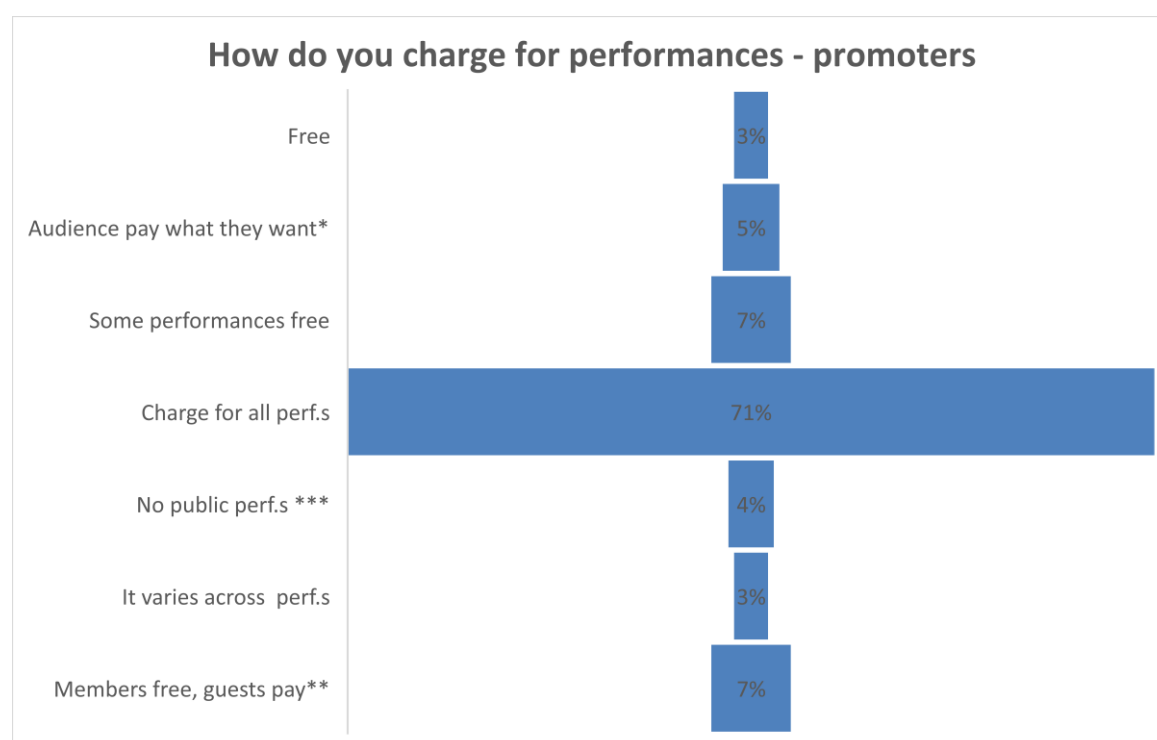
### How do you charge for tickets to your performances?

Free	Audience pay what they want*	Some performances free	Charge for all perf.s	No public perf.s	It varies across perf.s	Members free, guests pay**
3%	5%	7%	71%	4%***	3%	7%

\*Includes free admission but audience donations

\*\*Many promoter groups operate a membership/subscription model, with members making an annual subscription which guarantees free access to all concerts; but one off guests purchasing for one concert pay for their ticket

\*\*\* Activity instead might be, eg, workshops that the group charges for, either to individuals or to 'hirers', say, schools for example



More promoters charge for all performances – unsurprising, as they have to make sure their income covers fees for the professionals their hire. Many promoters still operate subscription models, reflected here in the ‘members free/guests pay’ column – the subscription model has traditionally been a way for volunteer promoters to generate the cashflow enabling them to book artists with confidence; but the hybrid model described here reflects that subscriptions are less prominent these days and more audience members pay per concert or on the door.

Fewer promoters therefore offer free concerts, too, but perhaps it is unexpected that there are not more experimenting with donations/audience pay what they can, seeing that case studies have shown these models can often generate as much income as more usual ticket pricing.

## What proportion of your audience, on average, is comprised of members/subscribers?

100%*	0%**	1-25%	26-50%	Over 50%
1%	17%	14%	19%	49%

\*'We don't admit non-members/non-subscribers'

\*\*'We don't have subscribers'

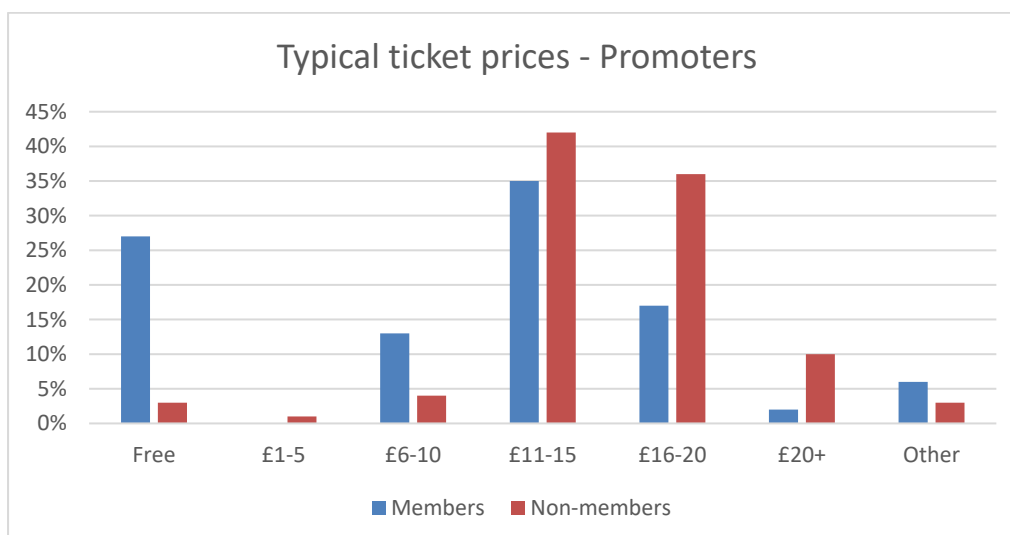
Clearly, a large proportion of promoters still have subscription schemes.

## Typical ticket prices for members/subscribers and non-members/one-off guests

	Free	£1-5	£6-10	£11-15	£16-20	£20+	Other
<b>Members</b>	27%	0%	13%	35%	17%	2%	6%
<b>Non-members</b>	3%	1%	4%	42%	36%	10%	3%

'Other' includes NOT distinguishing between members and non-members; different prices for different types of events; and the annual subscription price

Two thirds of members/subscribers, where they pay, are charged between £6 and £20, whereas 90% of non-members pay between £11 and £20+ for tickets. 40% of subscribers' tickets are free or below £10, whereas only 8% of non-subscribers' are.



Concessions	Percentage offering this: promoters	Percentage offering this: performing groups
For under-18s	49%	69%
For full-time students	56%	36.5%
For young people, e.g. under 26	26%	10%
For families	3%	7%
For people 60 or over	7%	16%
First time attendees	1%	0.5%
Unwaged/on benefits etc.	14%	10%
For disabled people	9%	4%
For the carers accompanying disabled people	11%	10%
<b>We don't offer concessions</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>16%</b>
Other type of concession	3%	5%

'Other' types of concession are Early Birds, and for members of other local music clubs.

Yellow = top concession, blue = next most frequent concession, green = third most frequent

Pink = 3 least used concession types for promoters/performing groups

Clearly, both performing and promoter groups focus their concessions on Under-18s and full-time students as priorities. This may explain why Family discounts are less frequent – if children are already free or heavily discounted, the adults in the party will presumably pay full price.

Nonetheless, seeking – as many groups do – new audiences from a younger generation, the numbers offering concessions to families (7%/3%) are surprisingly low.

Discounts offered are also less frequent for people aged 60+ (16%/7%), on low income (10%/14%), disabled people (4%/9%) and their carers (10%/11%). It would seem there is a significant opportunity here to attract more and perhaps new people to their concerts by offering more targeted concessions to those groups.

However, given that all these groups are run on extremely tight, often very small, budgets by volunteers and are generally almost entirely unfunded, they of course need to ensure they break even, whilst juggling accessibility to the widest number of potential audiences in their community.

#### 4. Audience demographics

*Very few groups report collecting information about their audiences or knowing their audience demographics – only 7% of promoters and 1% of performing groups.*

Given that concerns about the size and breadth of their audiences are high amongst Making Music members, there is clearly work for us to do, to encourage groups as a first step to understand who their current audiences are, eg through surveys and other audience research, in order to understand where they could or want to build from and to.

#### 5. Planning and programming timelines

##### *Performing groups & promoters*

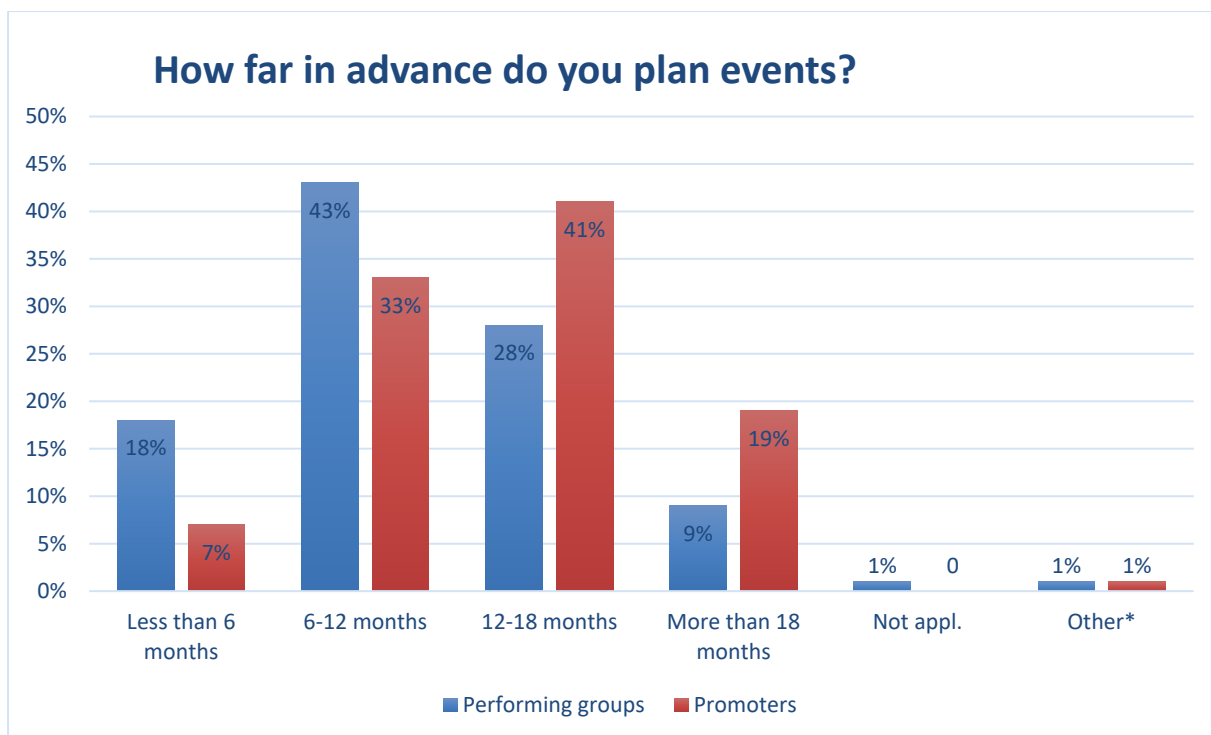
**How far in advance do you plan your events?**

	Less than 6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	More than 18 months	Not appl.	Other*
<b>Performing groups</b>	18%	43%	28%	9%	1%	1%
<b>Promoters</b>	7%	33%	41%	19%	n/a	1%

\*'Other' for performing groups is articulated by responders in the comments as meaning that it varies for different types of events – larger ones being planned further ahead, smaller informal ones at quite short notice

'Other' for promoters relates to not having returned to 'usual' pattern post-Covid

Yellow – most frequent planning timeline, blue – next most frequent, green – third most frequent



**Over 70% of performing groups and promoters plan their events 6-18 months in advance.**

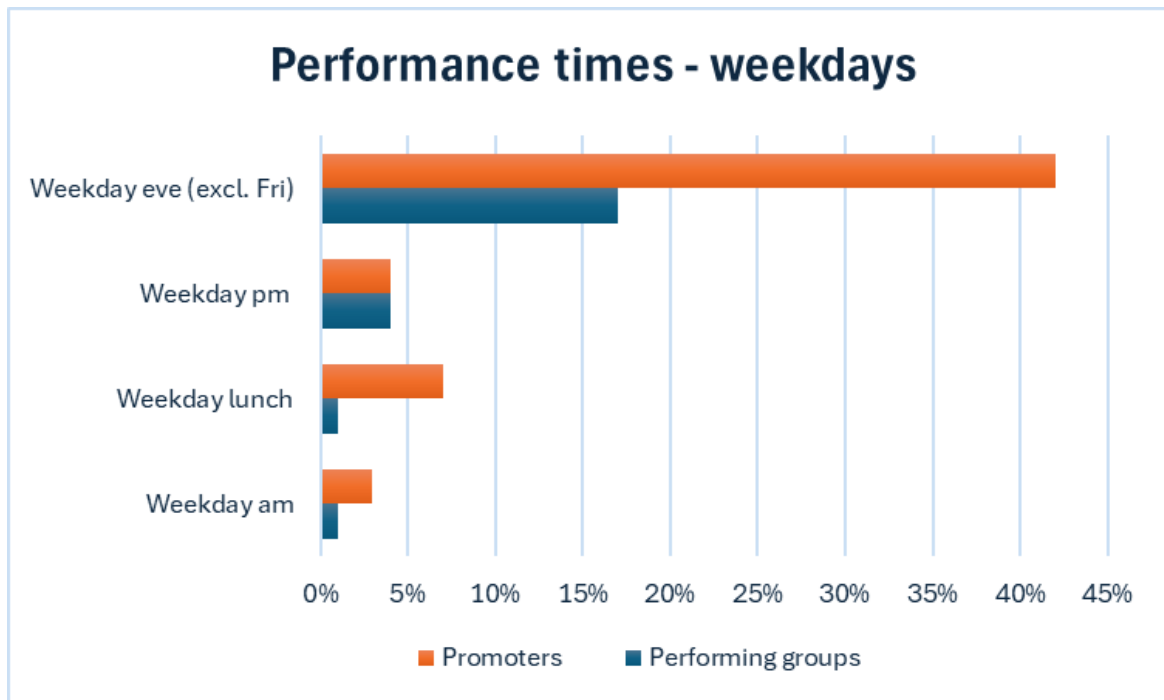
However, **timelines are longer for promoters – two thirds plan more than 12 months ahead** – 19% of them plan more than 18 months ahead, unsurprising, seeing that they need to book some artists well in advance to ensure their availability. **Nearly a fifth of performing groups plan their events less than 6 months in advance.**

**Comment:** This question is always worth asking, as Making Music often finds itself discussing special offers, events or projects with potential partners who are invariably surprised (and need hard data to believe) that leisure-time music groups plan that far ahead and are therefore perhaps need longer lead-in times than they had anticipated in order to be able to participate or access a new activity.

## 6. Times/days of performances

### Performing groups & promoters - weekdays

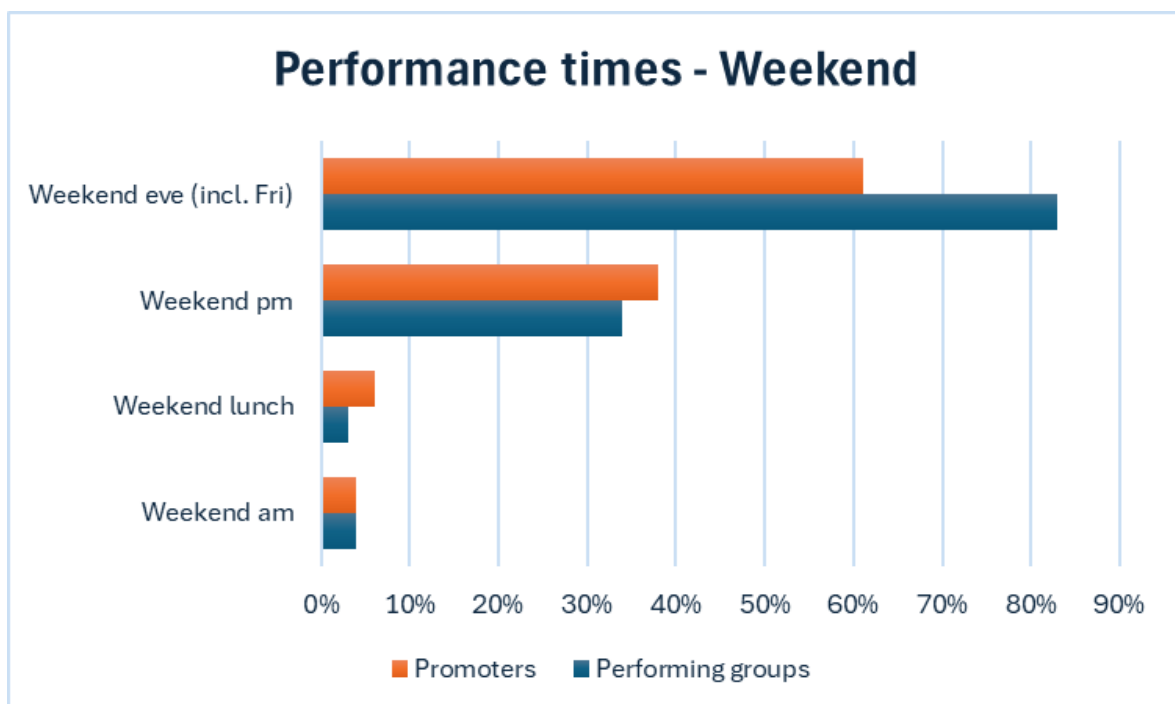
	Weekday am	Weekday lunch	Weekday aft	Weekday eve (excl. Fri)
Performing groups	1%	1%	4%	17%
Promoters	3%	7%	4%	42%



***Performing groups & promoters – weekends incl. Friday evenings***

	Weekend am	Weekend lunch	Weekend aft	Weekend eve (incl. Fri)
<b>Performing groups</b>	4%	3%	34%	83%
<b>Promoters</b>	4%	6%	38%	61%

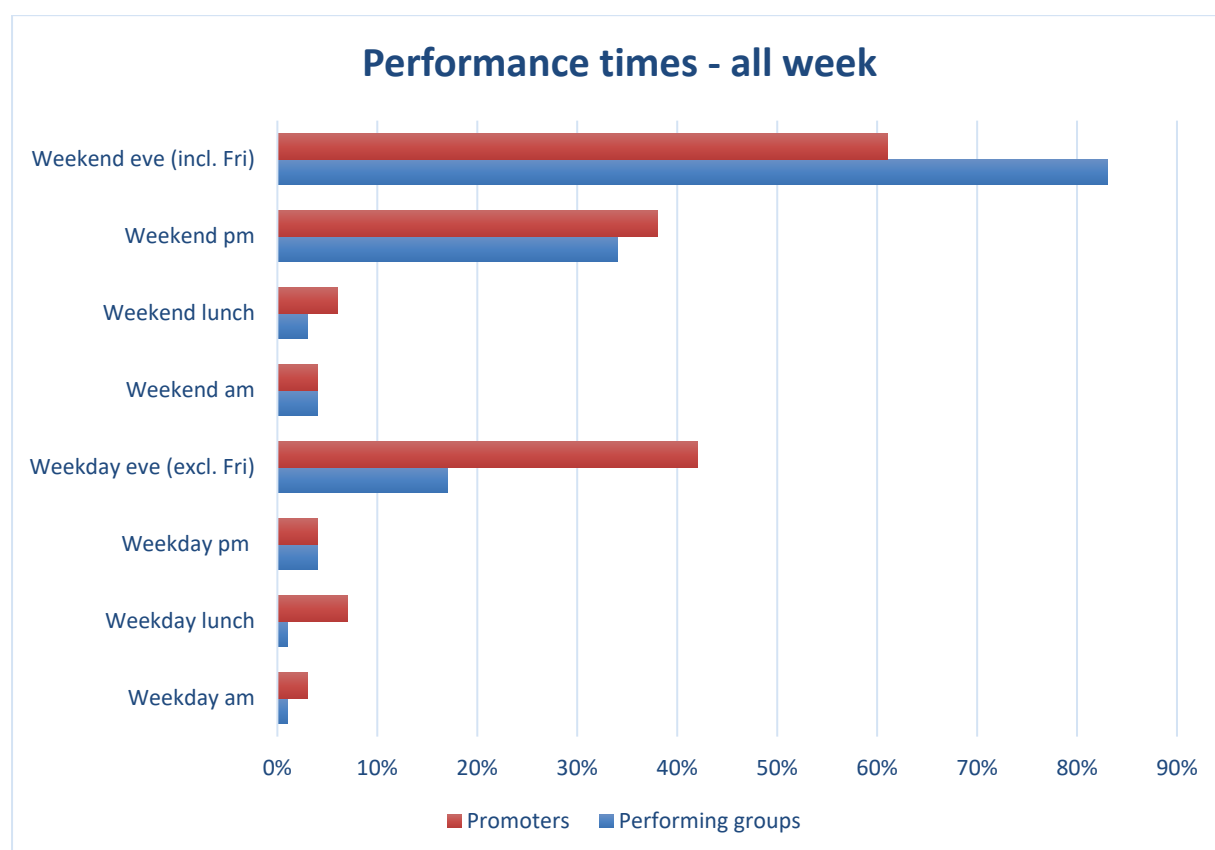
The numbers in this and the previous table do not add up to 100% as many performing and promoting groups mix and match event times, as comments explicitly reference.



**Far more promoters than performing groups host events on a weekday evening (42% vs 17%)** – perhaps not surprising, as professional artists will be more readily available during the week than the hobby musicians in performing groups who often have day jobs and family and other commitments.

**There is an unexpectedly large percentage of performing (34%, up from 10% in 2016) and promoting (38%, up from 25% in 2016) groups hosting events on a weekend afternoon** – this is positive in terms of accessibility both for families and for the 60+ demographic which often does not like to travel, especially in winter and more so in rural areas, during darkness.

Finally, interesting to see that **promoters are less likely to programme for a Friday, Saturday or Sunday evening than performing groups (61% versus 83%)**. However, it is understandable that performing groups focus on Saturday and Sunday in particular, as they usually have a pre-event rehearsal which they would be unable to schedule during the week due to participants' work and other commitments.



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