



Act Green 2024

Understanding audience attitudes towards the role of cultural organisations in tackling the climate emergency

Benchmark Report – September 2024

86%

of audiences and visitors are worried about the impact of climate change

ONLY

16%

think cultural organisations currently place great importance on tackling the climate emergency



“Cultural organisations have a responsibility to lead and amplify the messages about the societal change needed.”

- Act Green respondent 2024



Indigo Share is the collective approach to audience insight for the cultural sector.

Find out more: indigo-ltd.com/share

Act Green is an [Indigo Share: Hot Topic](#). Hot Topics are designed to respond at pace to current sector challenges and the changing environment.

This report has been prepared by:

Katy Raines, CEO, Indigo-Ltd

Flo Carr, Associate Director, Indigo-Ltd

Ellie Oates, Audience Insight Executive, Indigo-Ltd

Catrin John, Arts Consultant

Please reference any data you quote or publish from this report as follows:

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This research was free for cultural organisations in the UK to take part in thanks to generous support from our research sponsors



Introduction from Indigo



indigo **Katy Raines**
Founder & CEO

This year's *Act Green* has given us the opportunity to continue to build on the body of evidence we have gathered over the past two years about audience and visitor attitudes to the climate emergency.

Whilst some comments suggest an increasing polarisation in our audiences, as we have seen in so many areas of society in recent times, overall, there is consistency with previous years' results. Audiences want organisations to be proactively demonstrating a commitment to sustainability, communicating more effectively about what they are doing, and informing audiences about how they can help.

New areas of questioning have revealed the potential impact of accreditation and given us insight into how audiences expect to see information about sustainability referenced on organisation websites. High proportions of audiences have told us they will support fundraising initiatives which champion sustainability, led by organisations whose values align with their own.

We have been able to build up this picture by working with the 112 curious and committed cultural organisations who took part this year, sharing the survey with their audiences and visitors. We are also so grateful for the support of our partners Supercool, who have sponsored *Act Green* for a second year, enabling us to offer it free to organisations in the UK.

Act Green is one of our Hot Topics, one strand of Indigo Share, the collective approach to audience insight. Powered by the sector, Indigo Share aims to help cultural organisations to bring the audience voice into their decision-making, improve communication and increase audience engagement.

Introduction from our research sponsors: Supercool



Supercool | **Kate Mroczkowski**
Strategy Director

A year on from *Act Green 2023* and it is clear audiences still care deeply about the environment and want to know how you, as cultural organisations, are tackling the climate crisis. As new technologies develop and digital innovation takes place across the sector, it's important to consider the impact you have on the environment, and this includes digital sustainability.

This year new questions were added to the survey to help organisations understand where and how to shout about the work they're doing to reduce their impact on the environment. Audiences expect to see accreditations and information on your website, and they want to see proof points in the purchase path.

The report shows strong links between advocacy, support and purchasing habits with organisations' sustainability initiatives. So using your website to shout about the amazing work you're doing will only ever have a positive impact on your audience relationships.

At Supercool, we take great care in treading lightly on the planet and help our clients to do the same. Supporting this research is a great opportunity for us to have a meaningful impact on the cultural sector. We hope everyone benefits from the findings and resources in the report.

Context

In May 2022, Indigo Ltd released the results of the first *Act Green* survey. Its aim was to understand more about what audiences expected from cultural organisations in tackling the climate emergency, and what part they were willing to play.

Now in its third year, *Act Green* has been used by organisations across the UK to influence their sustainability strategies and shared by the Theatre Green Book. We've spoken about the results at sector events and conferences, working with partners including Arts Council England, the BFI, Association of British Orchestras, Museums Computer Group, GMAST, SAIL and the Association for Cultural Enterprises.

In running *Act Green* for a third year, we aimed to continue to widen the pool of respondents, by working with an even broader range of cultural organisations, including museums, galleries and cinemas in addition to performing arts organisations. We are pleased to have achieved that.

Methodology

Cultural organisations in the UK, including theatres, arts centres, festivals, touring companies, museums and galleries, were invited to participate in the *Act Green* research. The research was open to all cultural organisations in the UK, and it was free for organisations to take part.

Organisations were each provided with a unique link to send out to a recommended sample of around 3,000 - 5,000 of their previous attendees. They were provided with a link to see the results from their own organisation in real time, and the results from all organisations were then aggregated to form the baseline data set.

The survey ran throughout May 2024 and during that month, 17,450 complete responses were gathered through 112 cultural organisations, 26 more organisations than in 2023.

Act Green 2024: Participating organisations

Aberdeen Performing Arts
Almeida Theatre
Anvil Arts
Ayr Gaiety Partnership
Barbican Cinema
Barnsley Libraries
Belgrade Theatre
Birmingham Rep
Birmingham Royal Ballet
Bradford District Museums and Galleries
Bradford Theatres
Bridgwater Town Council
Bridport Arts Centre
Bristol Old Vic
Britten Pears Arts
Bromley Little Theatre Ltd
Brunel Museum
Byre Theatre, University of St Andrews
Campbeltown Picture House
Capital Theatres
Cast
Castlefield Gallery
Cheltenham Festivals
Chichester Festival Theatre
Compton Verney
Corn Exchange Newbury
Depot Cinema
Discover Children's Story Centre
East Street Arts

Eden Court Highlands
English National Opera
Exeter Northcott Theatre
Farnham Maltings
Firstsite
Frantic Assembly
Glasgow Film Theatre
Grand Theatre Blackpool
Hackney Empire
HighTide
HOME
Hope Mill Theatre
Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival
Hull Truck Theatre
Ikon
Kala Sangam
Keswick Alhambra Cinema
Kettle's Yard, University of Cambridge
Leeds Heritage Theatres
Leeds University Library Galleries & Special Collections
Lichfield Arts Fuse Festival
Lichfield Garrick Theatre
Live Art Development Agency
London Coliseum
Love Theatre
Maltings (Berwick) Trust
Manchester Art Gallery
Manchester Craft and Design Centre

Manchester Museum
Mayflower Theatre and MAST
Mayflower Studios
Memo Arts Centre
Merlin Cinemas Limited
Midlands Arts Centre
Museums Northumberland
National Theatre of Scotland
Norfolk & Norwich Festival
Northern Ballet
Northern Stage
Nottingham Playhouse
OperaUpClose
Oxford Playhouse
Pavilion Dance South West
Philharmonia Orchestra
Picturehouse Cinemas
Polka Theatre
Portsmouth Guildhall
Queen's Hall Arts
Reform Radio
RivelinCo
Rose Theatre
Royal Exchange Theatre
Royal Northern College of Music
Royal Opera House
Royal Scottish National Orchestra
Royal Shakespeare Company
Shaftesbury Theatre
Sheffield Museums Trust

Site Gallery
Sonia Sabri Company
Spare Tyre
Stephen Joseph Theatre
Sun Pier House CIC
Sunderland Culture
Super Culture
The Barn
The Bridgewater Hall
The Brontë Parsonage Museum
The Core at Corby Cube
The Glasshouse International Centre for Music
The Lowry Centre
The National Gallery
The Old Town Hall
The Old Vic
The Queens Hall
The Stoller Hall
Theatre Royal Plymouth
Three Choirs Festival Ltd
Turner Contemporary
Vision Redbridge Culture Leisure
Wiltshire Creative
Worthing Theatres & Museum
Yorkshire Sculpture Park
Z-arts

Act Green 2024: Key stats

Survey overview

112 Participating organisations

17,450 Audience responses

Cultural audiences and the climate crisis

86% of cultural audiences are worried about climate crisis

93% have made changes to their lifestyle

The role of cultural organisations

72% think cultural organisations have a responsibility to influence society about the climate emergency

16% think cultural organisations place great importance on the role they play in the climate emergency

Organisations and sustainability initiatives

89% expect organisations to be reducing and recycling waste.

68% expect organisations to provide information to help audiences act more sustainably.

64% expect organisations to work with suppliers who share their values on environmental issues.

49% expect organisations to be joining together to campaign, lobby and influence.

Getting audiences involved

74% said a sustainability accreditation would make them view an organisation more positively.

70% would act more sustainably either to support an organisation or if it was made easy for them.

62% said availability of public transport is the key consideration when thinking about how to travel to an organisation

50% would support a fundraising campaign to help an organisation redevelop outside space to promote biodiversity.

Act Green 2024: Summary findings



- 1 Cultural audiences and visitors are **more concerned about the climate emergency** than the general public, particularly those aged under 35 and those with children.
- 2 Most audiences and visitors **have made changes to their lifestyle** to help tackle the climate emergency, and many are very passionate about these changes. They are **less concerned than the general population about affordability** when thinking about changes which will help the environment.
- 3 Although there is **increasing polarisation** about the role audiences and visitors think cultural organisations should be playing, with a vocal minority telling organisations to 'stick to putting on shows', the majority want and expect organisations to **communicate what they are doing** and **tell audiences and visitors how they can help**.
- 4 Still only a small proportion think cultural organisations are **currently placing great importance on this** and a quarter of them are still **not really sure what we're doing**.
- 5 Audiences and visitors **would support a range of fundraising initiatives**, and sustainability accreditation would make audiences feel **more positive towards organisations** and **more likely to support them**.

Act Green 2024: Three suggestions for communicating with audiences

1

Revisit our Act Green communications pyramid | [Find out more](#)

Developed from the results of Act Green 2023, this model is about building audience trust. It starts by ensuring you are doing what audiences expect of you before moving onto leading by example through innovative sustainability projects, positively challenging audiences to come on the journey with you and eventually using your position as cultural organisations to inspire people to think about a new future.

2

Get your sustainability messaging front and centre

This year's results clearly show that audiences want to see more from cultural organisations. They want you to be leading the way, educating and informing the public, and they want to support organisations whose values align with theirs. Remember though, that if you decide to put sustainability front and centre, it means you then need to think about how that might affect other things you are saying to audiences and will very quickly shine a light on any dissonance between what you say and what you do.

3

Remember you're not alone

The power of collaboration is demonstrated through *Act Green*, the results of which have been shared widely across the sector. Let's keep sharing successes and learnings, collaborating across the sector and outside of it, and hopefully accelerating the much-needed change.



Act Green 2024

Full results



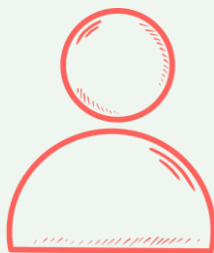
Sections

- **Section 1:** Respondent and organisation profile
- **Section 2:** Cultural audiences and the climate emergency
- **Section 3:** The role of cultural organisations
- **Section 4:** Organisations and sustainability initiatives
- **Section 5:** Getting audiences involved
- **Section 6:** What else did audiences tell us?

Respondent and organisation profile

What types of cultural organisations took part?

Which of their audiences and visitors responded to the Act Green survey?



112 Participating organisations



Location

England - 100
Scotland - 11
Wales - 1



Type

Theatre - 37
Arts Centre - 20
Museum/Gallery - 19
Other - 36

17,450 Audience responses



Age

9% - under 35
28% - 35 to 54
61% - 55 or over



Profile

15% have children aged 8 – 18
14% identify as disabled



Frequency

50% attend at least once a month



Support of culture

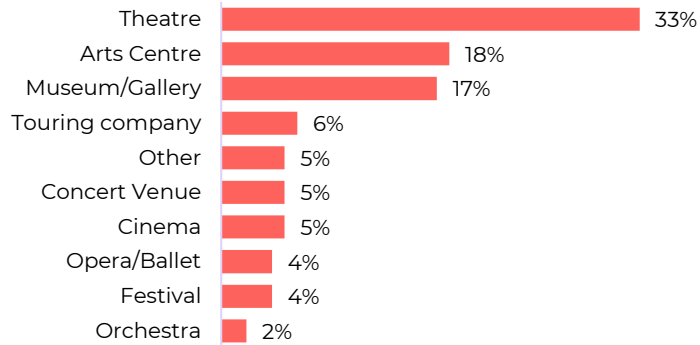
42% give regularly
64% have previously donated

Participating organisations: location and types

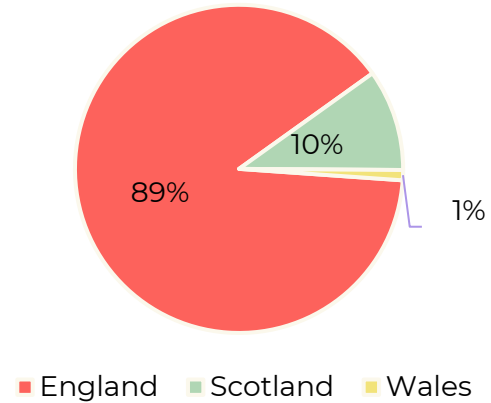
112 Participating organisations

17,450 Audience responses

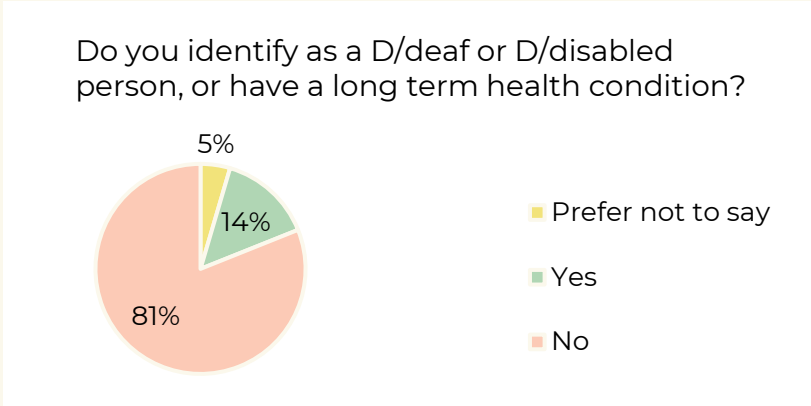
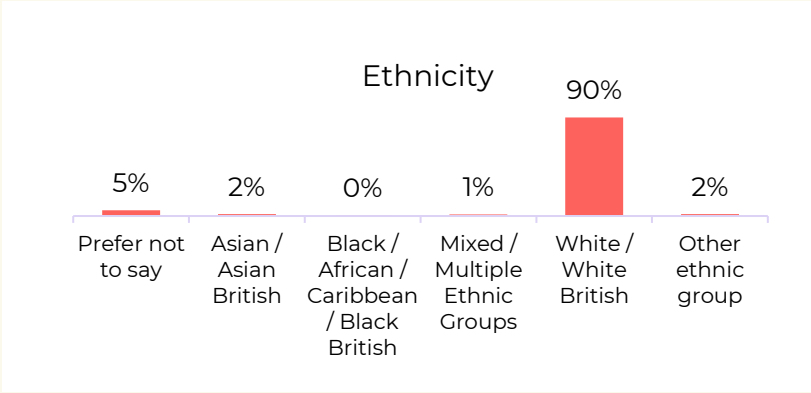
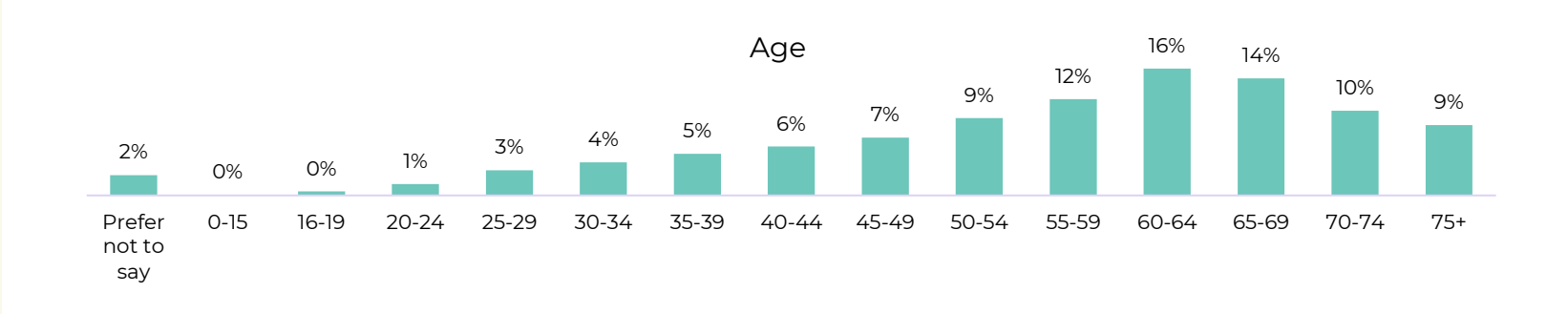
Types of organisation



Location

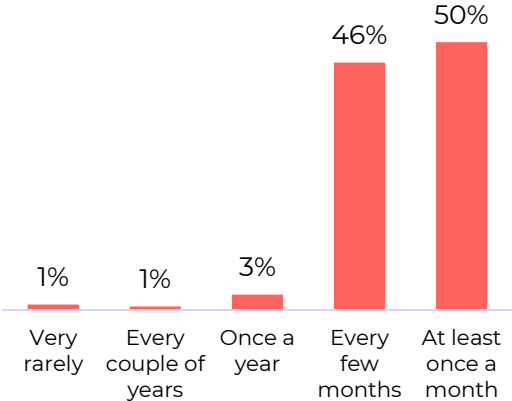


Respondent profile: age, ethnicity and disability

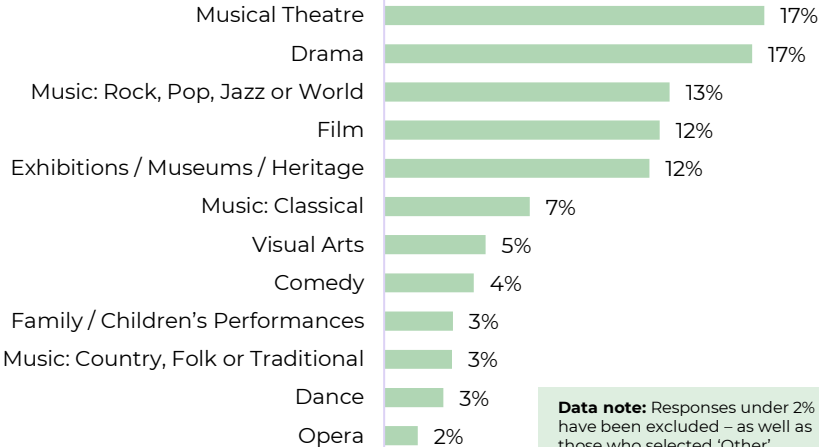


Respondents are frequent attenders who go to a wide range of types of cultural events

How frequently would you say you attend arts and cultural events or venues?



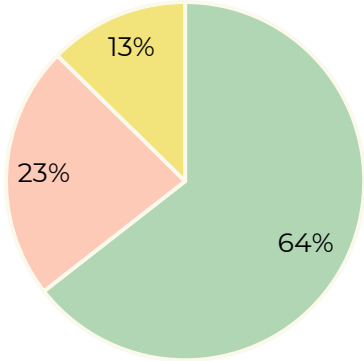
Which artform do you tend to go to most regularly?



Data note: Responses under 2% have been excluded – as well as those who selected 'Other'

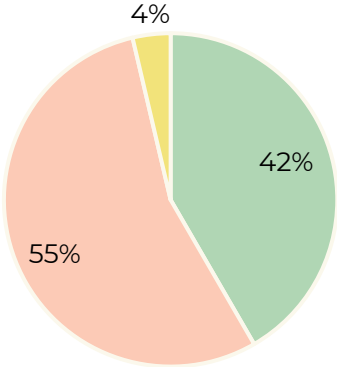
The majority of respondents have made a donation in the past to a cultural organisation and more than a third are regular supporters

Have you ever made a donation to a cultural organisation?



■ Yes ■ No ■ Not sure

Are you a regular supporter of any cultural organisations e.g. through a membership scheme?



■ Yes ■ No ■ Not sure

Section 2

Cultural audiences and the climate emergency

How concerned are cultural audiences about the climate emergency?



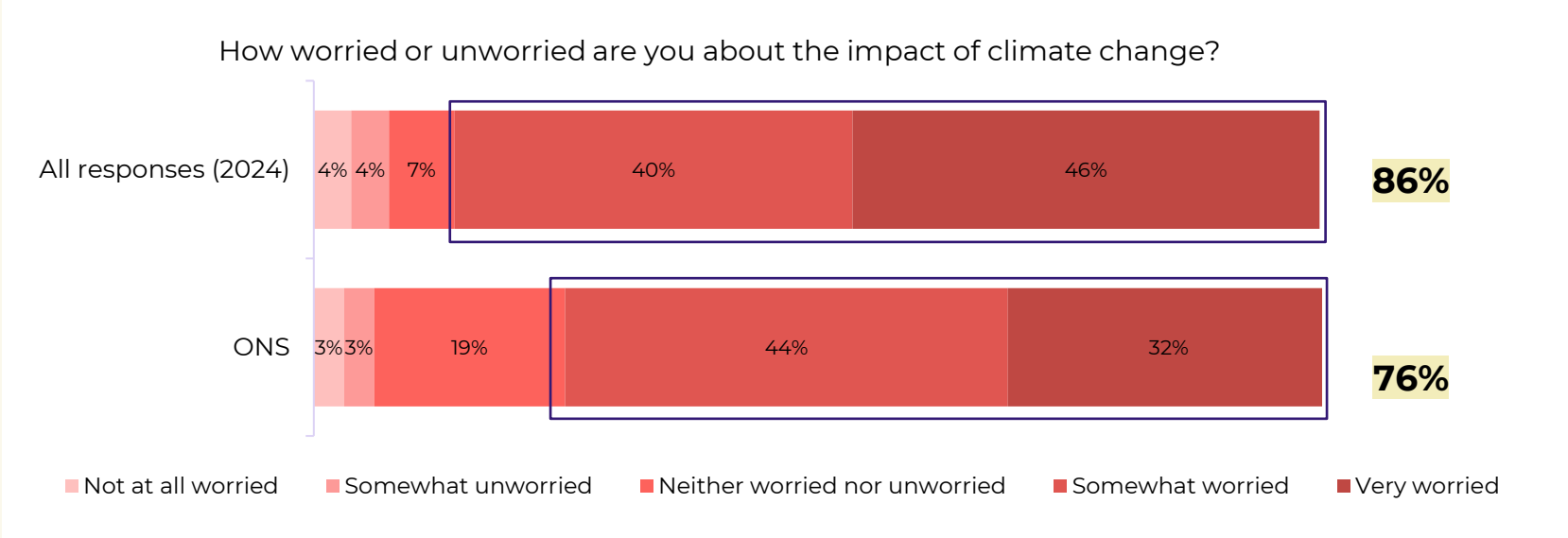
Key findings:

- **86%** of cultural audiences are worried about the impact of climate change, compared to **76%** of the general population.
- **93%** of respondents have made changes to their lifestyle to tackle climate change.
- Cultural audiences are **less concerned than the general population** about affordability when thinking about helping the environment.

Note: Responses in this section are compared with responses to three other pieces of public research:

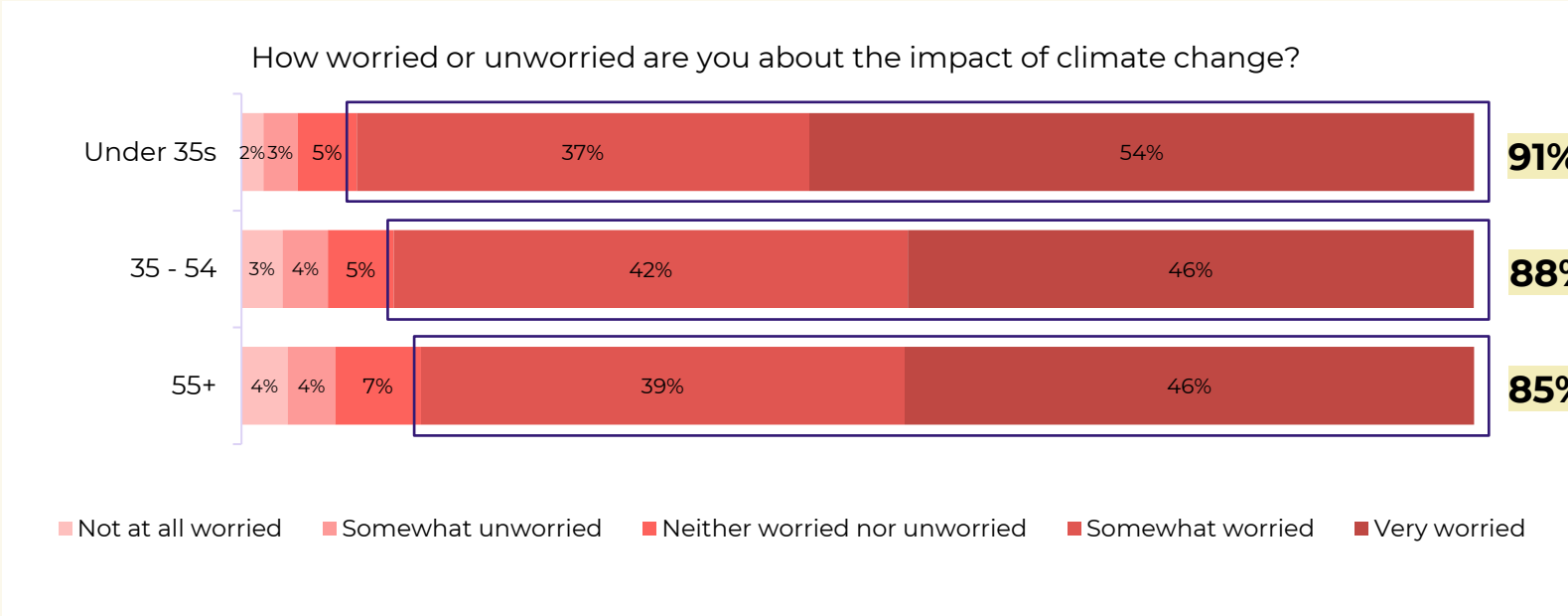
- [ONS: Opinions and Lifestyle survey](#) (October 2021)
- [Ipsos: From the cost of living to sustainable living](#) (December 2022)
- [YouGov: Public Attitudes towards Sustainability](#) (March 2023)

Cultural audiences are **very concerned** about the impact of climate change – this is consistent with last year, and significantly higher than the general population

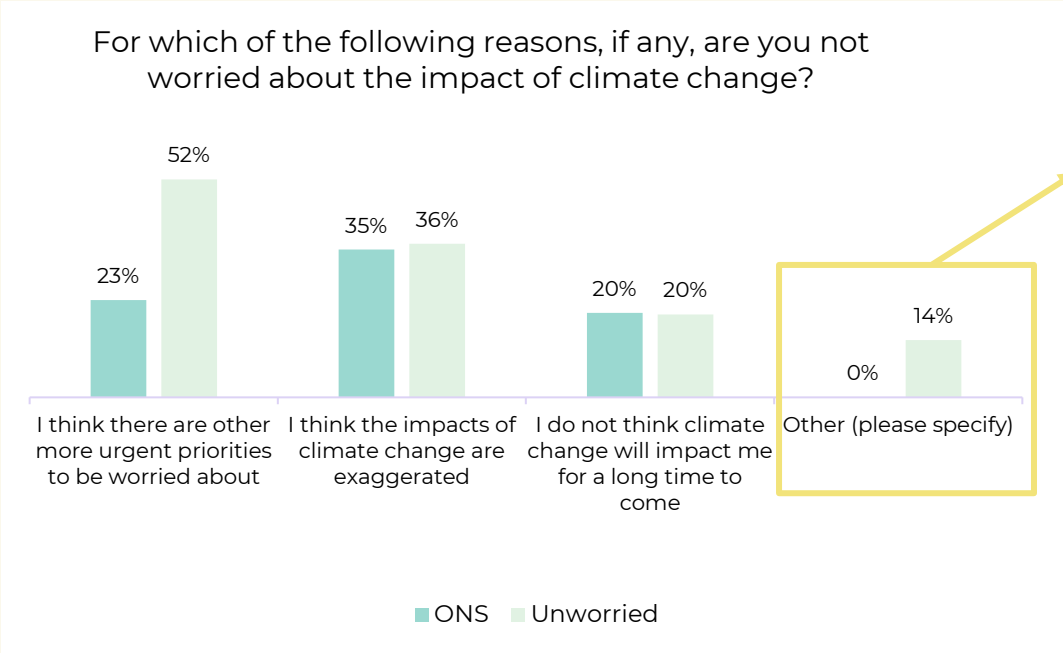


Comparison with [ONS: Opinions and Lifestyle survey](#) (October 2021)

Respondents aged under 35 are most worried – but there are high levels of concern across all age groups, with 85% of over 55s worried



Compared to the general population, Act Green respondents who are not worried (4%) are more likely to think there are more urgent priorities or that the impacts of climate change are exaggerated



“I don’t think I can do much to change it.”

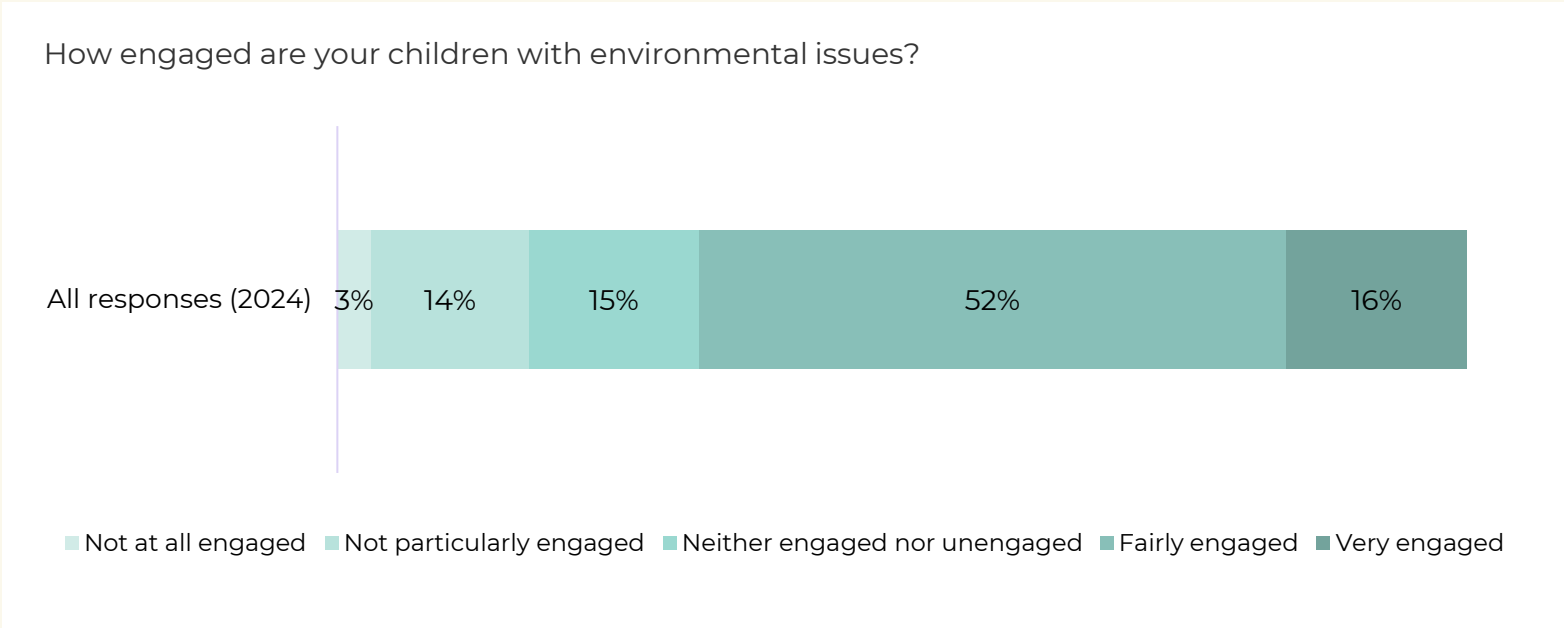
“I don’t think that Climate Change will materially adversely impact me in the long term.”

“Human ingenuity is working hard to overcome some of these issues.”

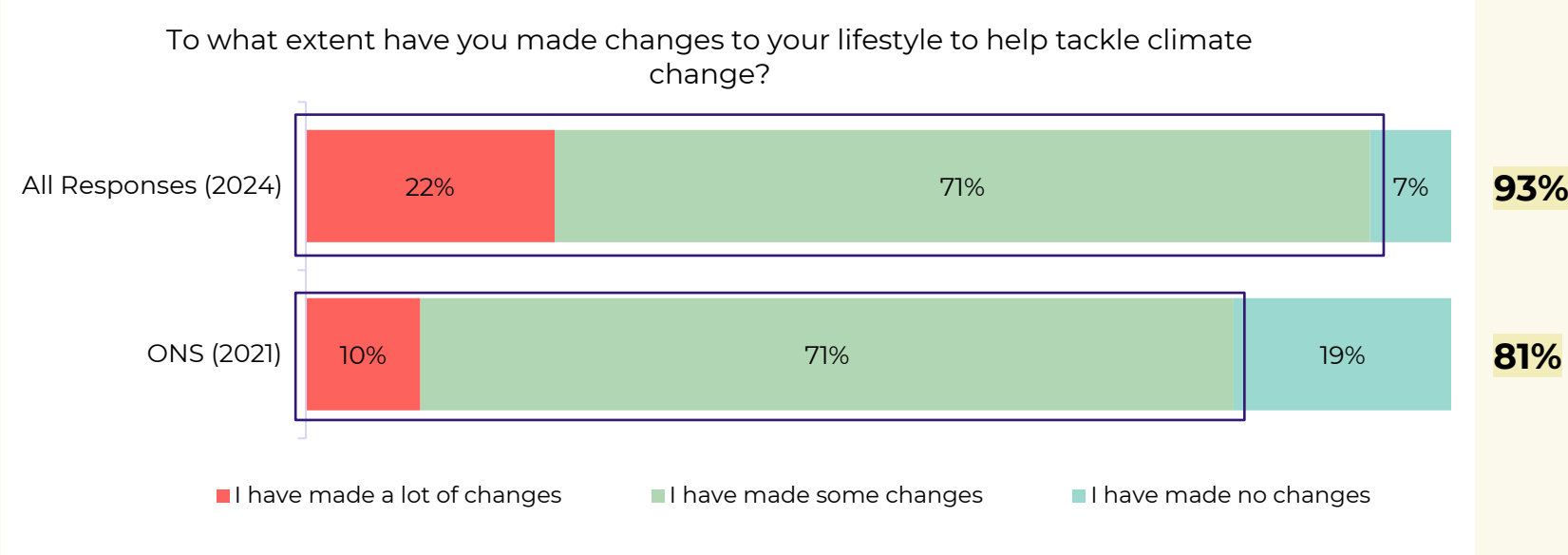
“Technology will solve our climate problems.”

Data note: question only asked to those who are neutral or not worried about the impact of climate change

The majority of those with children aged 8 – 18 (15% of respondents) say that their children are fairly or very engaged with environmental issues



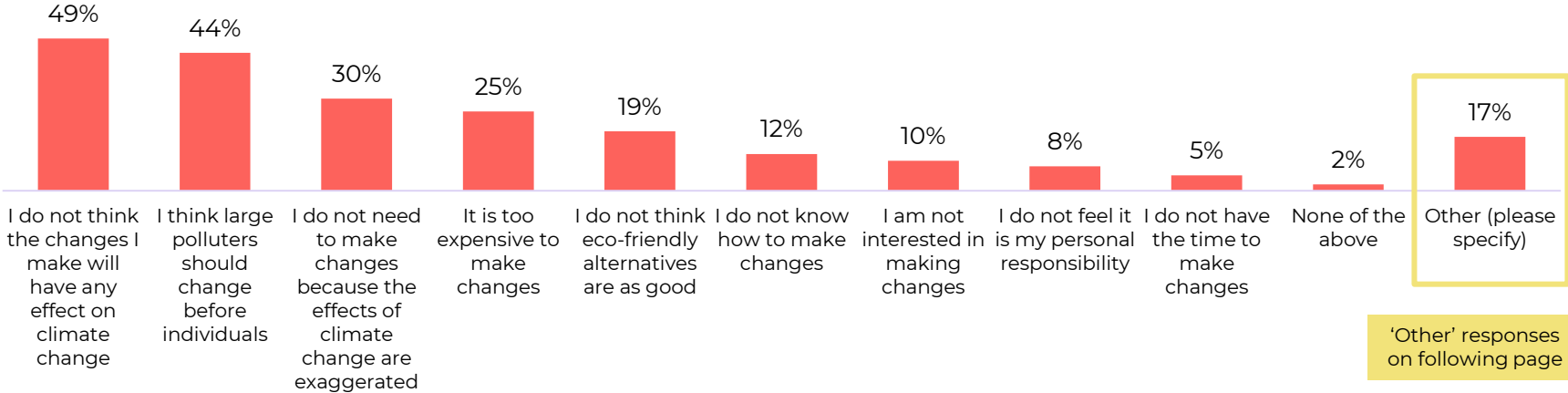
Cultural audiences are more likely than the general population to have made a lot of changes to their lifestyle to tackle climate change



Comparison with [ONS: Opinions and Lifestyle survey](#) (October 2021)

Cultural audiences who have not made changes (7%) think 'large polluters' need to make changes before individuals and their changes would have little impact

Which of the following are reasons you have not made any changes to your lifestyle to tackle climate change?



Other reasons for not having made change included the following:

Some told us they live sustainable lifestyles already:

“ *‘I adapted my lifestyle years ago and cannot adapt further’* ”

“ *‘I’ve always done as much as am able to reduce my impact on the environment’* ”

Or that they think it’s too late:

“ *‘I believe we are way beyond the tipping point and me changing anything will be irrelevant’* ”

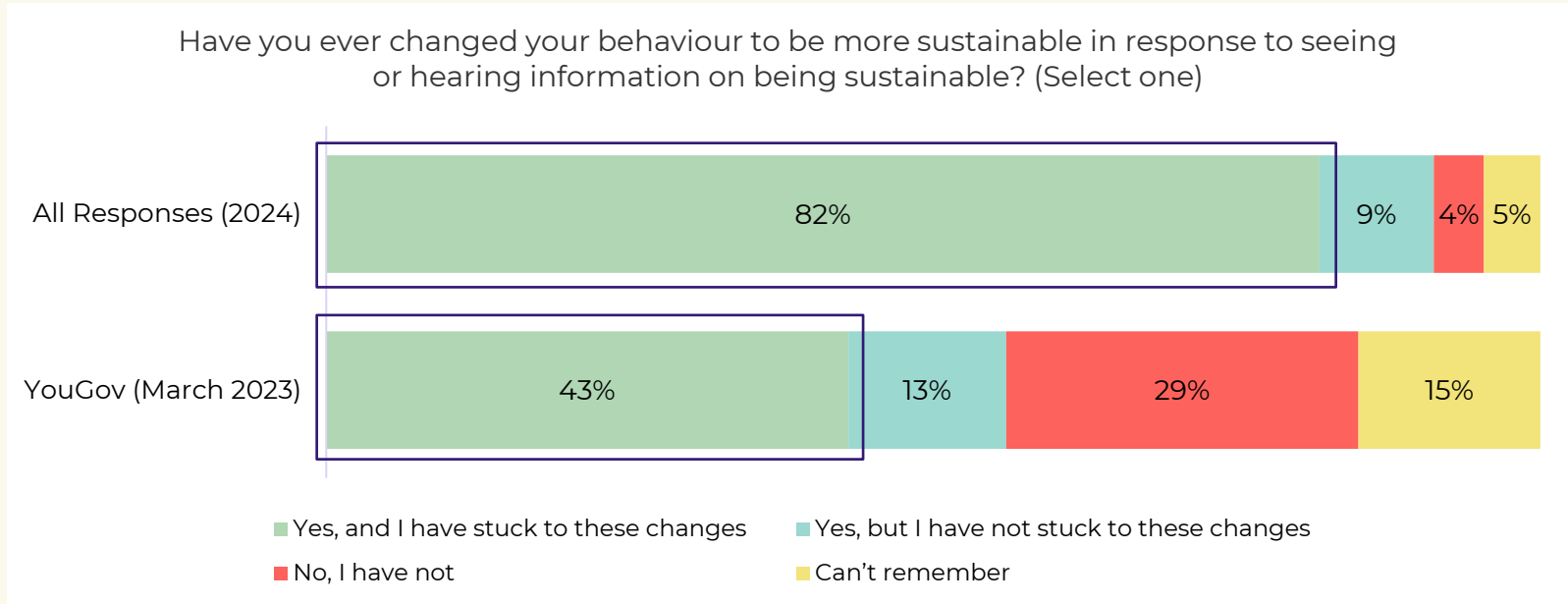
Others feel they cannot make changes as the infrastructure is not there to allow them:

“ *‘The changes needed are societal and there is little individuals can do’* ”

“ *‘Changes have to come through government regulation and government incentives to be truly effective.’* ”

Data note: question only asked to those who are neutral or not worried about the impact of climate change

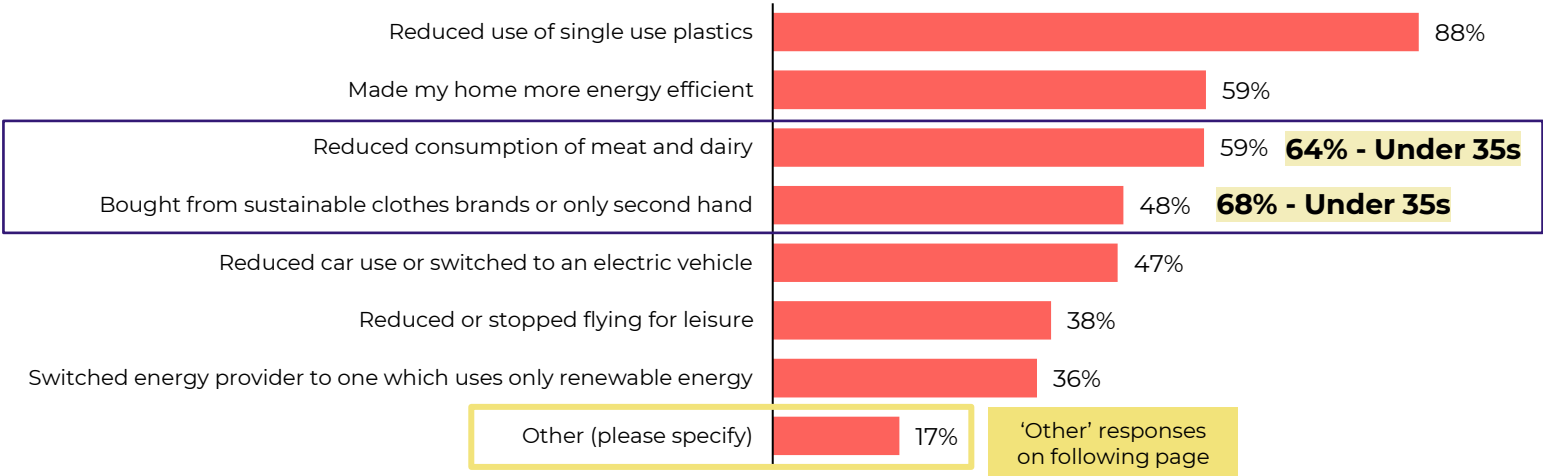
Cultural audiences are more likely than the general population to have made changes to their lifestyle in response to seeing or hearing information on being sustainable



Comparison with [YouGov: Public Attitudes towards Sustainability](#) (March 2023)

Cultural audiences had made a range of changes to their lifestyle in response to the climate emergency

What sort of changes have you made? (Select all that apply)



■ All responses (2024)

Nearly 1 in 5 cultural audiences selected 'Other' and told us about other changes they had made to their lifestyles in order to be more sustainable (1/2)



Many respondents selected 'Other' and told us what they had been doing.

Their behaviour included **actions linked to the circular economy**. Reusing and recycling came out top but interestingly repair was not mentioned much:

“Reuse as much as possible, recycle what cannot be used.”
“Food waste composted.”
“Recycling, reusing, donating to charity.”

There were lots of responses related to **energy efficiency**, but also a significant number referencing saving water:

“Reduced water and energy consumption”
“Switched to more energy efficient appliances.”

Audiences have **changed how they travel**, using more public transport, walking, cycling or stopping flying with a smattering of electrical vehicle references:

“[I only] cycle and [use] public transport, not a car owner.”
“[I only] use the train, don't fly.”
“I switched to a hybrid vehicle as a step to a full EV.”



Audiences are thinking about their **consumption**, from **buying less or not at all**, to **buying locally, fairtrade or second hand**:

“Buy second hand devices and other goods, use B Corp brands for goods and services where possible.”
“Reduced the amount of stuff I buy and changed how I buy gifts for others.”
“I'm careful when shopping to make sure I only buy what's needed, try to buy local/as close to it as possible.”



Nearly 1 in 5 cultural audiences selected 'Other' and told us about other changes they had made to their lifestyles in order to be more sustainable (2/2)



Where food comes from and diet was also important, covering everything from growing their own, buying seasonal and local, to turning vegan, vegetarian or cutting out dairy:



*"Became vegan."
"Grow own veg as much as possible."
"Only purchase food from UK or Europe to reduce travel miles."*

There were a few other themes that stood out including **protecting wildlife and biodiversity** mostly through planting in their own gardens:



*"Planted native wild plants in garden and at work."
"Created wildlife friendly areas in my garden."*

There were **examples of activism** in many forms:

*"Joined a local Plastic Free Group."
"Stood in elections for the Green Party."
"I volunteer to create events that actively encourage others to make changes."*



Many had changed to **ethical banks or pensions**:

*"Changed to a bank that doesn't invest in fossil fuels."
"Reinvested my pension in a green fund."*

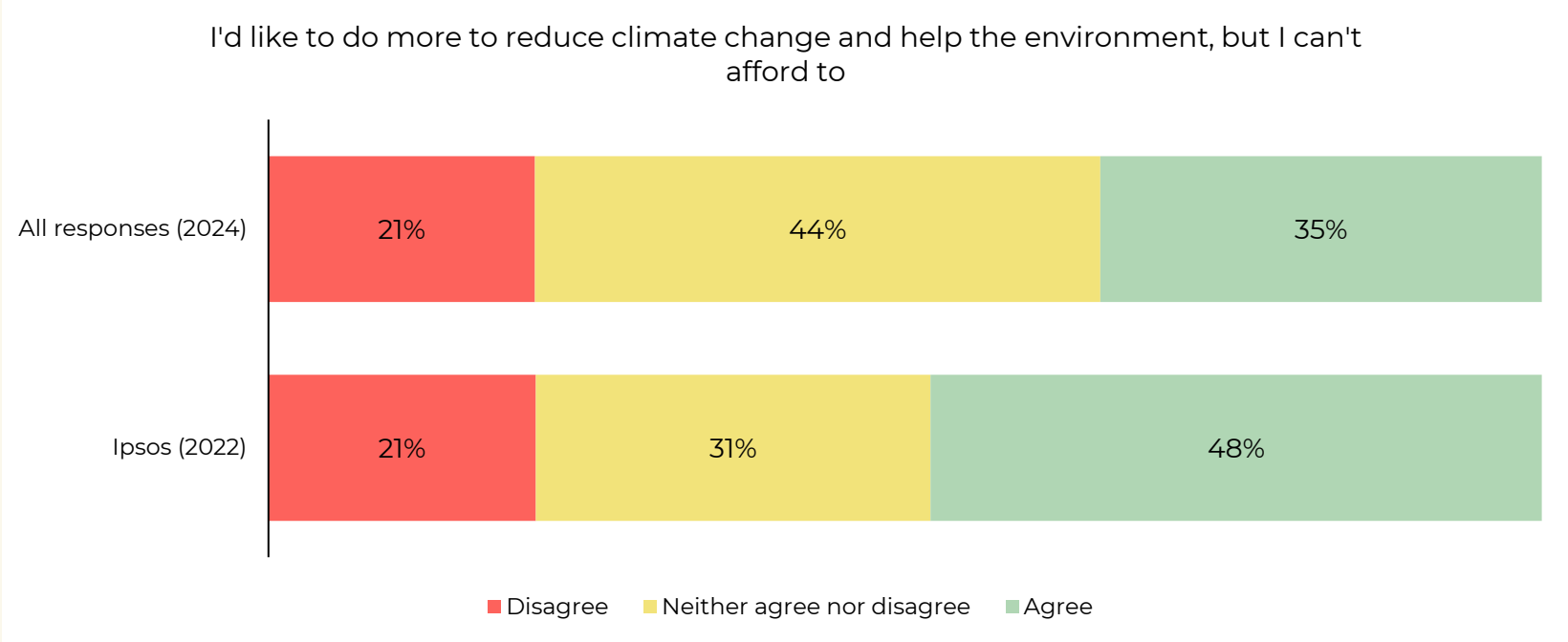


Audiences had also **changed to natural products** from toiletries to cleaning:

*"Reduced chemical cleaning products to zero."
"Make my own eco-friendly cleaning products."*

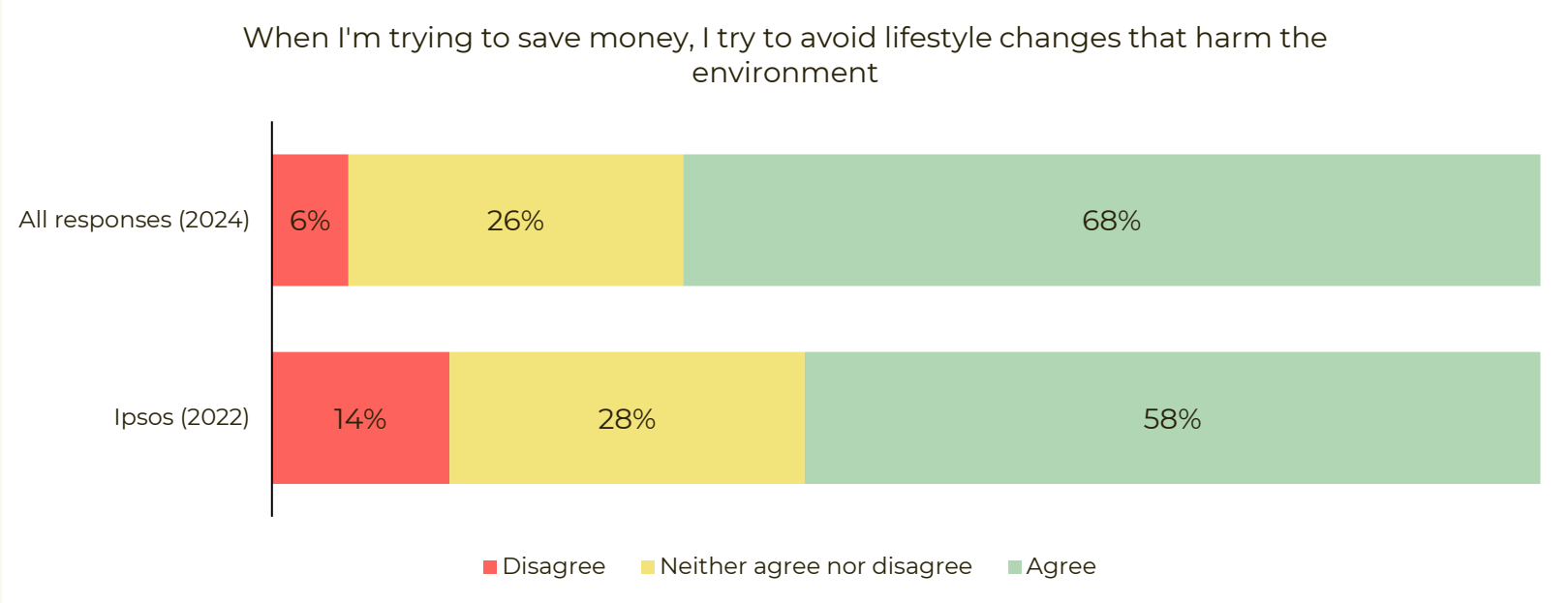


Cultural audiences are less concerned than the general population about affordability when thinking about helping the environment



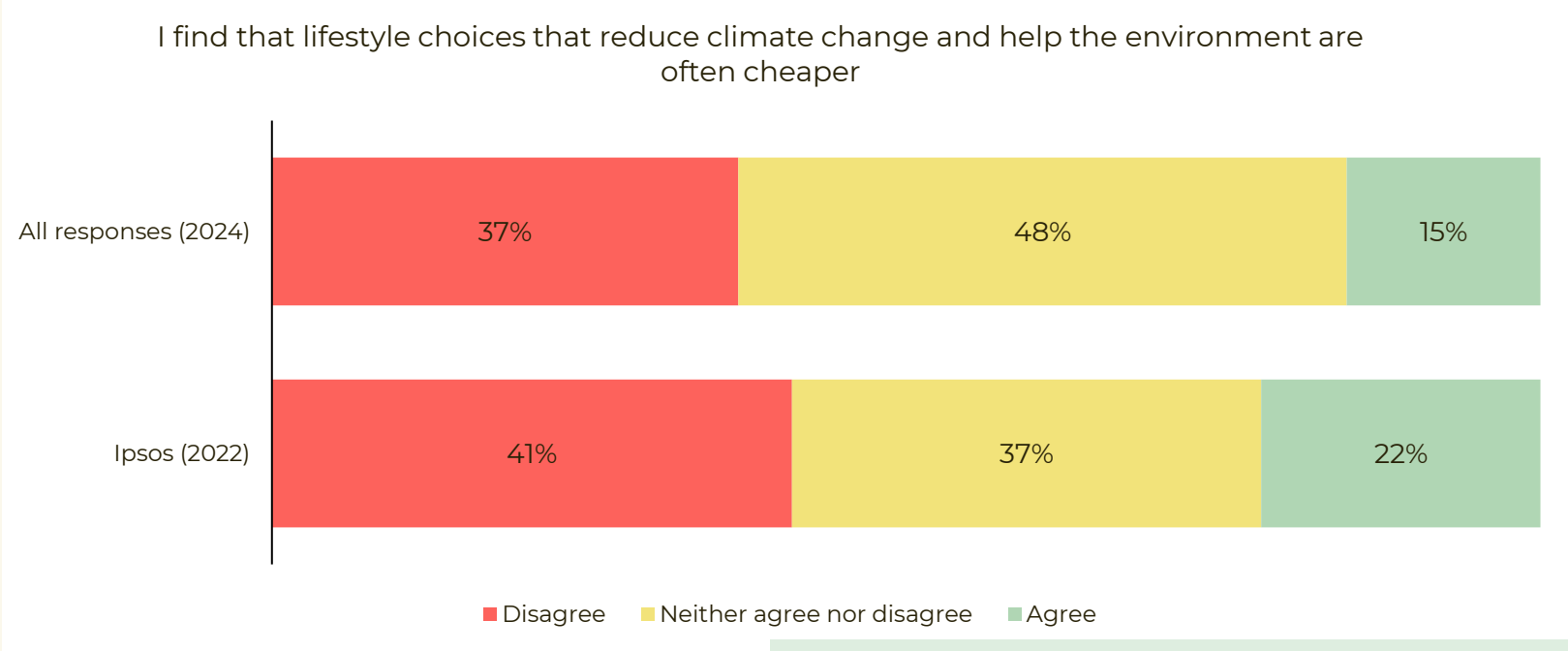
Comparison with [Ipsos: From the cost of living to sustainable living](#) (December 2022)

Cultural audiences are more likely than the general population to consider whether lifestyle changes to save money will harm the environment



Comparison with [Ipsos: From the cost of living to sustainable living](#) (December 2022)

Cultural audiences are fairly aligned with the population on whether environmentally positive choices are cheaper – slightly fewer disagree, but fewer agree as well



Comparison with [Ipsos: From the cost of living to sustainable living](#) (December 2022)

Section 3

The role of cultural organisations

What role do audiences expect the organisations they attend to play in tackling the climate crisis?



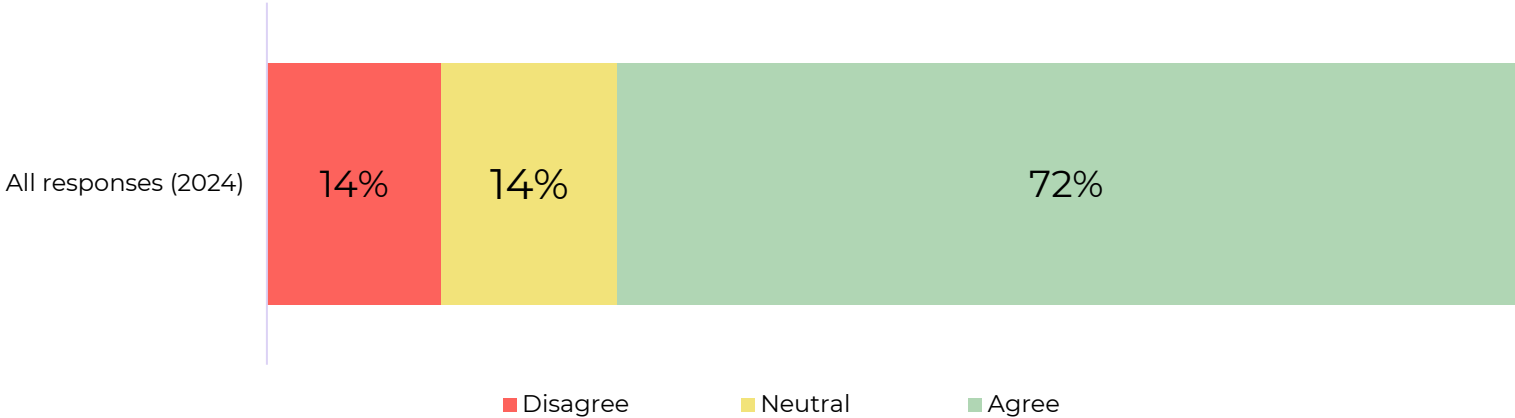
Key findings:

- **72%** of cultural audiences think cultural organisations have a responsibility to influence society to make radical change to address the climate emergency – including **85%** of under 35s.
- **Only 16%** think cultural organisations place great importance on playing an active role in tackling climate change.
- When asked to say how much importance the organisation who sent them the survey places on playing an active role in tackling climate change, **25%** said they don't know.

72% think cultural organisations have a responsibility to influence society to make radical change to address the climate emergency

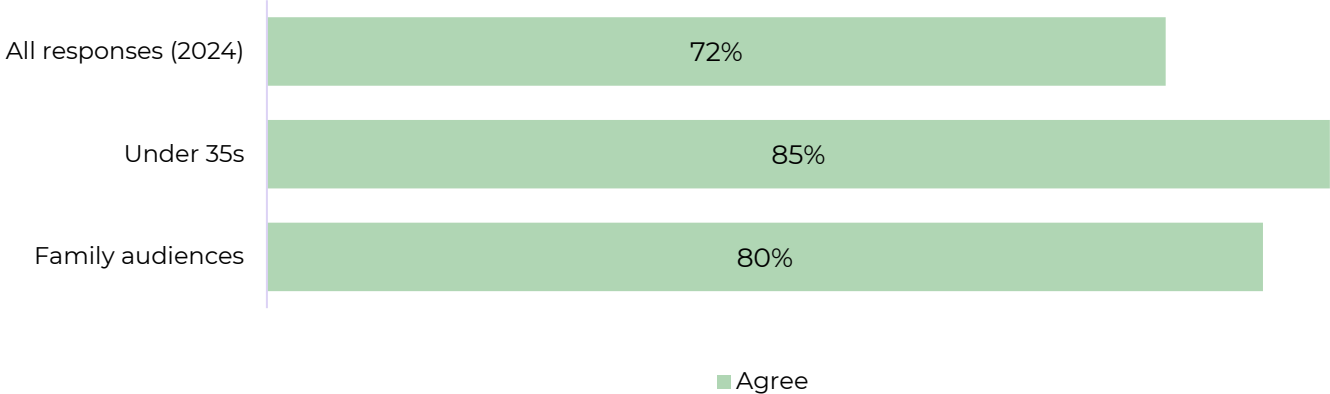
Do you agree with the following statement?

“Cultural organisations have a responsibility to influence society to make radical change to address the climate emergency”



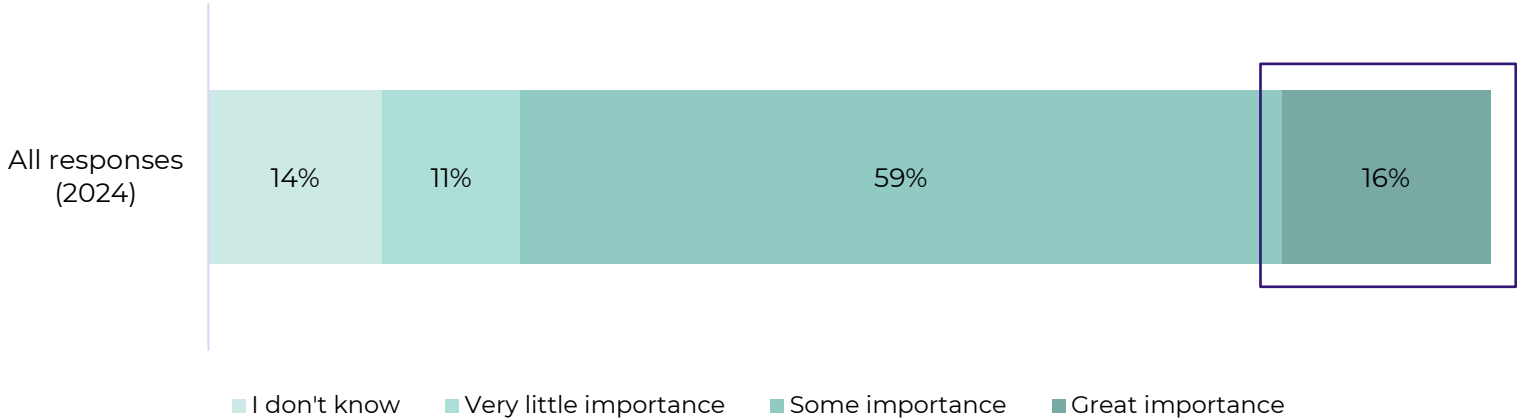
Younger respondents and family audiences are even more likely to think organisations have a responsibility to influence society to address the climate emergency

Do you agree with the following statement?
“Cultural organisations have a responsibility to influence society to make radical change to address the climate emergency”



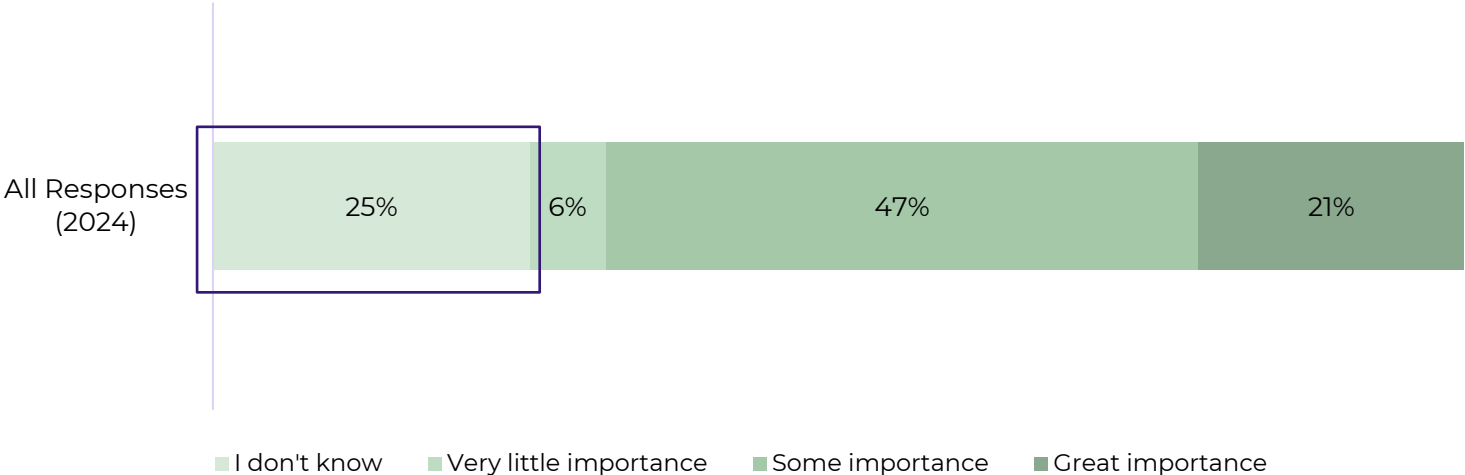
Only 16% of respondents think cultural organisations place great importance on tackling the climate crisis

Thinking generally about the cultural organisations you visit, how much importance do you think they place on playing an active role in tackling climate change?



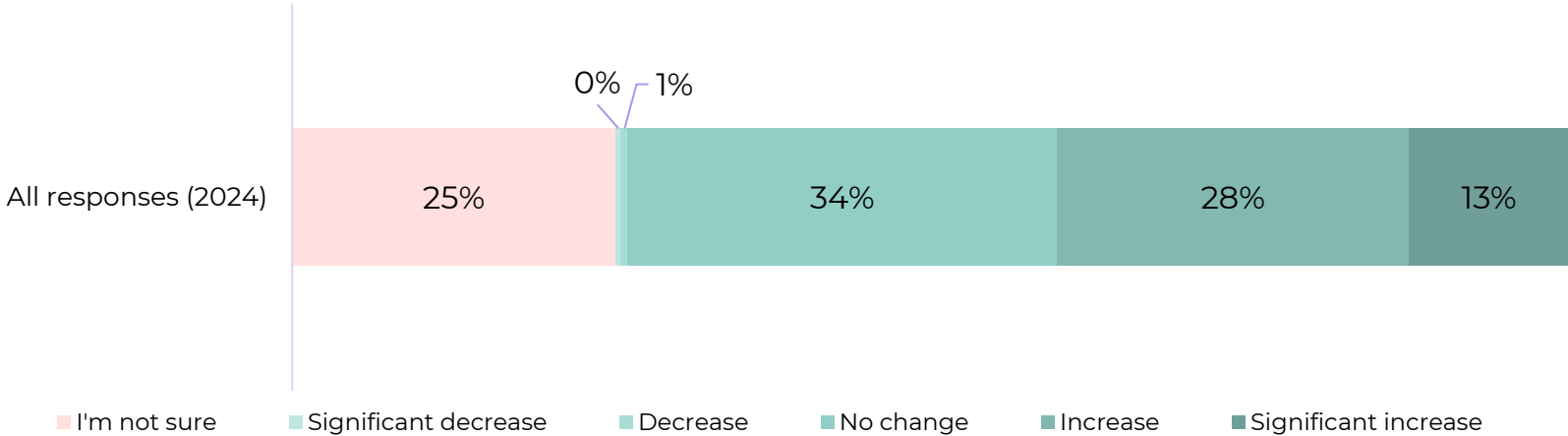
When asked about the specific organisation who sent them the survey, 1 in 4 said they don't know how much importance that organisation is placing on sustainability

Thinking specifically about the organisation who sent you this survey, how much importance do you think they place on playing an active role in tackling climate change?



But – 41% of audiences have noticed an increase in the amount of importance organisations are placing on tackling climate change

Have you noticed any change in how much importance this organisation places on playing an active role in tackling climate change?



Section 4

Organisations and sustainability initiatives

What sustainability initiatives do audience members expect from cultural organisations and which do they think are the most important?



Key findings:

Respondents had high expectations in many areas – in particular:

- **89%** expect organisations to be reducing and recycling waste.
- **89%** expect them to avoid environmentally harmful cleaning products and procedures.
- **68%** expect organisations to provide information to help audiences act more sustainably.
- **86%** think they should minimise food waste.
- **64%** expect organisations to work with suppliers who share their values on environmental issues.
- **49%** expect organisations to be joining together to campaign, lobby and influence.

Note: The questions in this section were structured to match the Theatre Green Book and Arts Green Book.

Theatre Green Book

Arts Green Book

The Theatre Green Book and Arts Green Book brought together practitioners and sustainability experts to create a common standard for making theatre and the arts sustainable. They are free resources for everyone in the cultural sector.

Find out more: theatregreenbook.com / artsgreenbook.com

The questions in the next section were structured to align with the volumes of the Theatre Green Book and Arts Green Book.



Volume One

Sustainable productions

Managing exhibitions or producing events

Curating exhibitions and developing work



Volume Two

Sustainable buildings

Managing cultural buildings or festival sites



Volume Three

Sustainable operations

Engaging with audiences and visitors before and during a visit

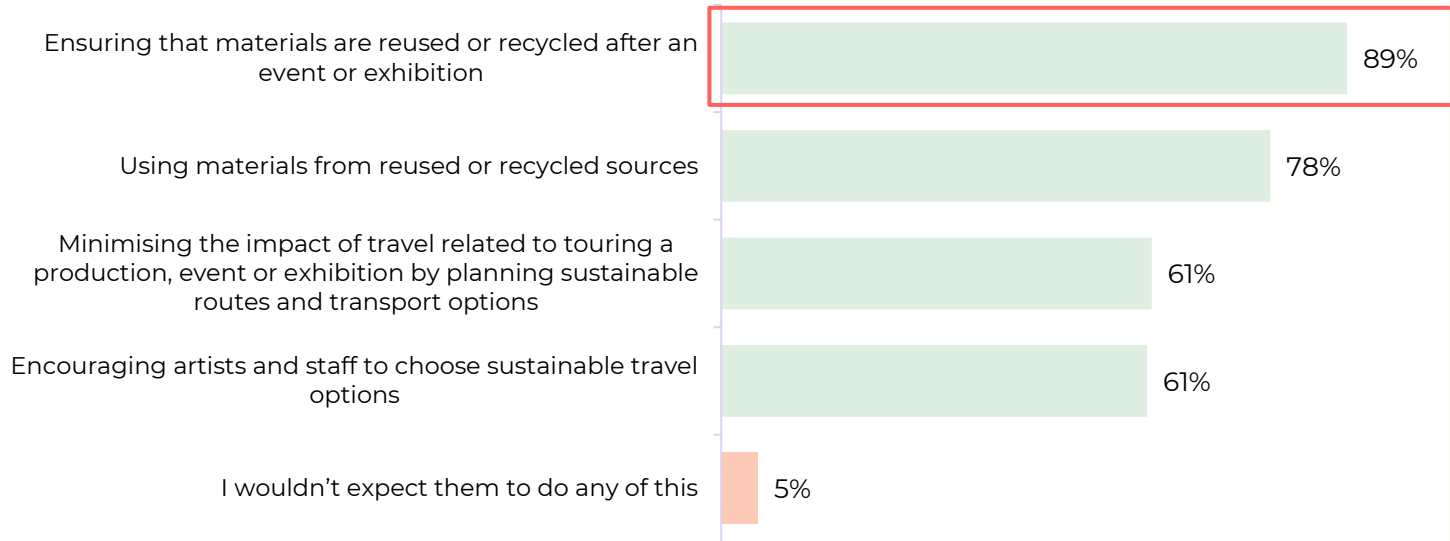
Encouraging sustainable travel

Managing the bar, café or restaurant



Managing exhibitions or producing events: majority of audiences expect materials to be reused or recycled, and significant numbers expect reductions in impact of travel

Which of the following would you expect a cultural organisation to be doing?
(Select all)



57% say this would make them **more likely to attend**



Curating exhibitions and developing work: over half of respondents expect organisations to be engaging with audiences through art and facilitation

Which of the following would you expect a cultural organisation to be doing?
(Select all)

Engaging with audiences and facilitating conversations (e.g. through events and workshops)

53%

65%
Under 35s

Running specific exhibitions, festivals or events to explore the subject of climate change more deeply

51%

65%
Under 35s

Tackling the subject of climate change through the artistic or curated programme

51%

62%
Under 35s

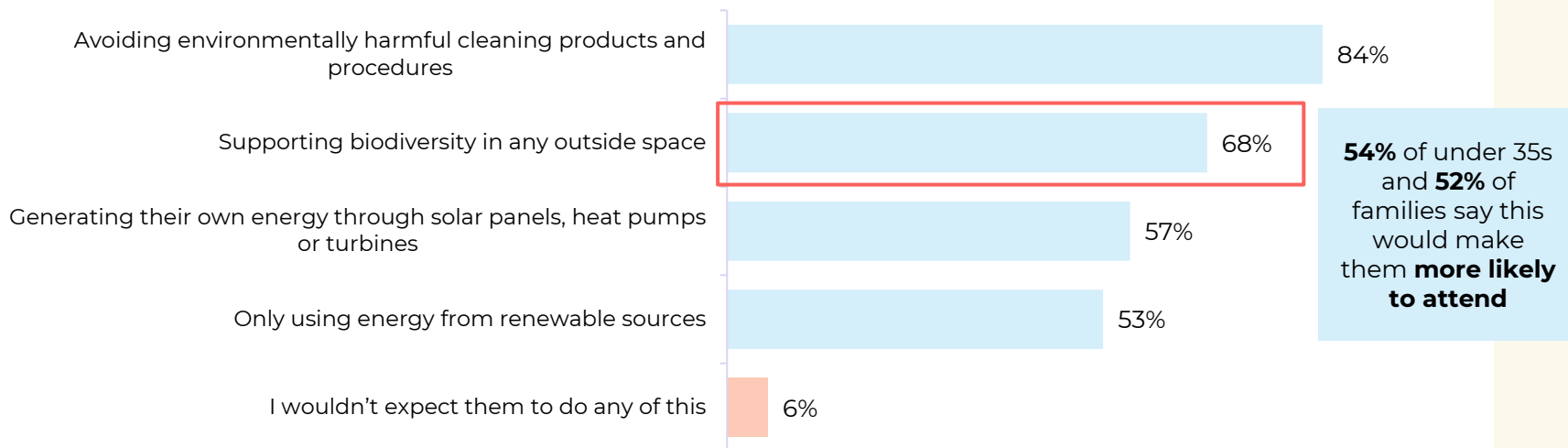
I wouldn't expect them to do any of this

26%



Managing cultural buildings or festival sites: audiences and visitors want cultural organisations to avoid harmful products and support biodiversity

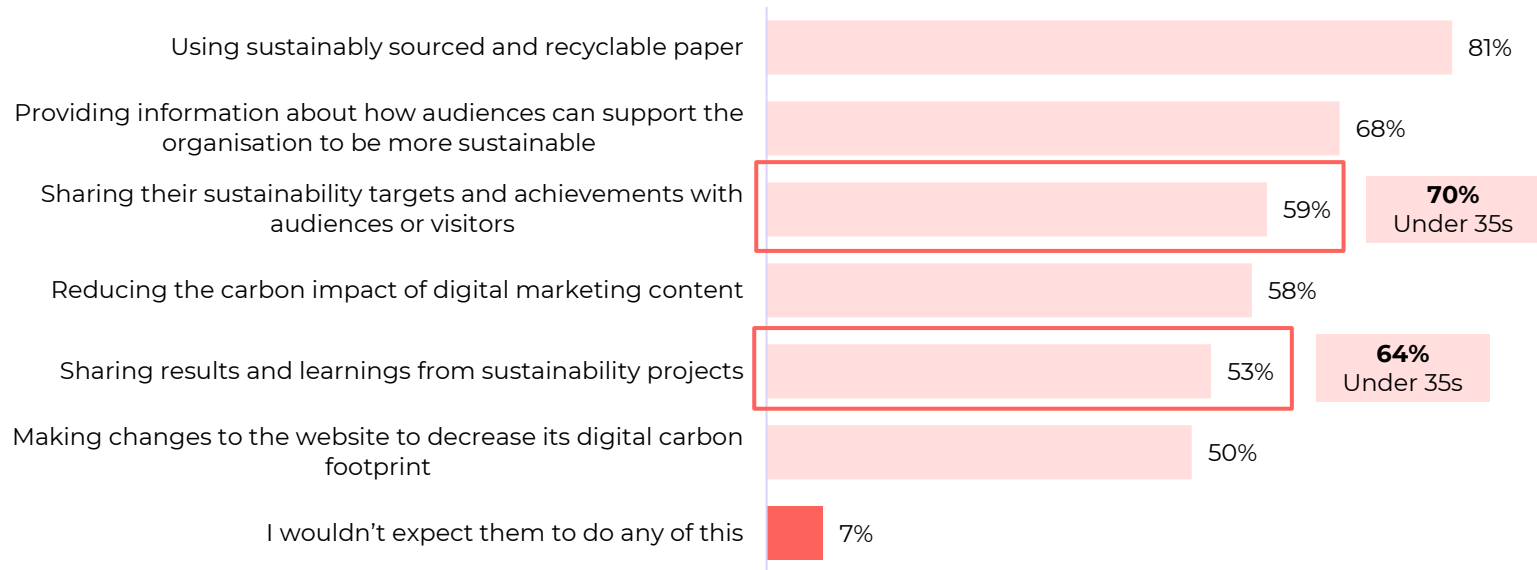
Which of the following would you expect a cultural organisation to be doing? (Select all)





Marketing and communications: audiences and visitors want to see marketing teams giving information about what they can do to help

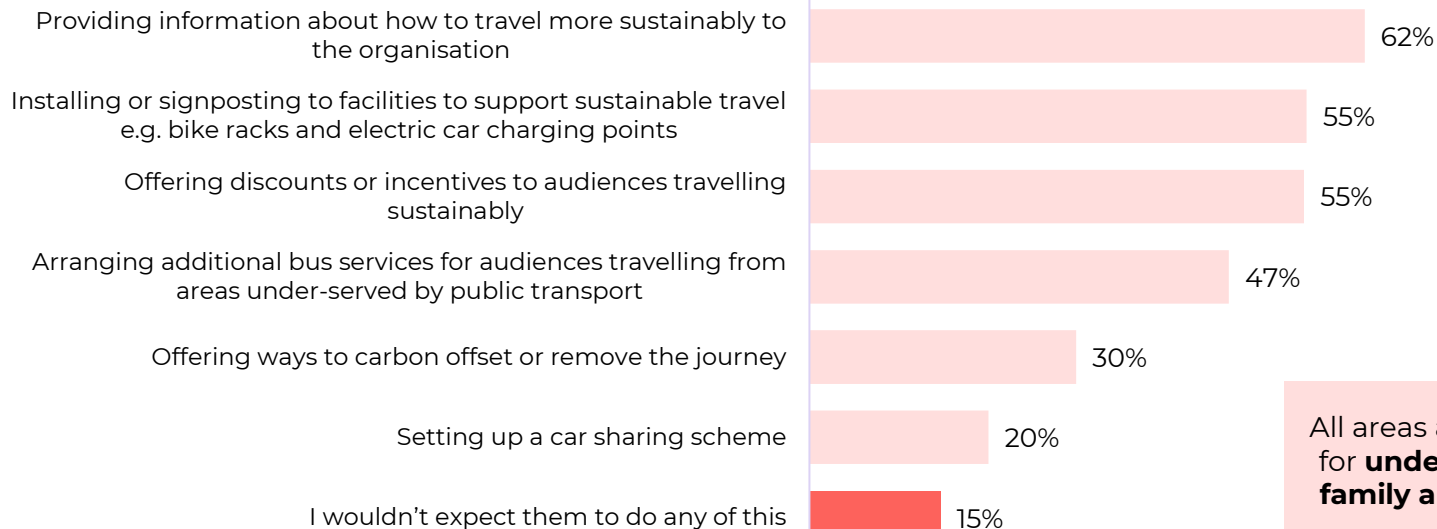
Which of the following would you expect a cultural organisation to be doing? (Select all)





Encouraging sustainable travel: audiences and visitors expect organisations to give them the information and infrastructure required to support more sustainable travel

Which of the following would you expect a cultural organisation to be doing? (Select all)

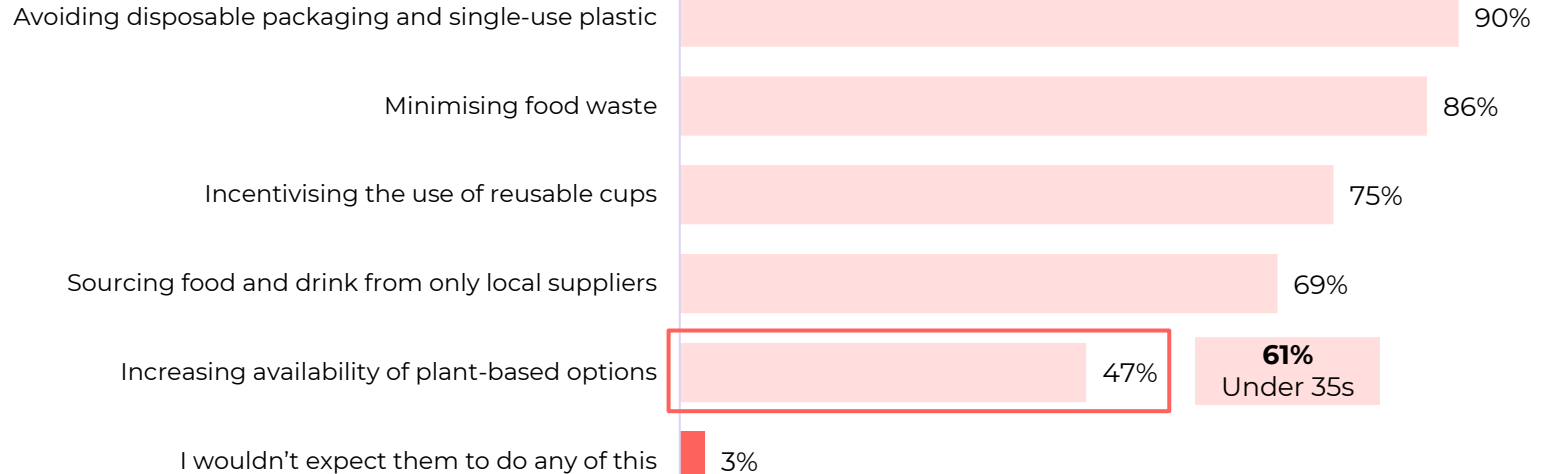


All areas are higher for **under 35s** and **family audiences**



At the bar, café or restaurant: audiences and visitors don't want to see **disposable or single-use packaging** or **food waste**. Under 35s in particular want to see more **plant-based options**.

Which of the following would you expect a cultural organisation to be doing? (Select all)





Partnerships and influence: majority of respondents expect to see organisations working with suppliers who share their values on sustainability and almost half want to see organisations working together to lobby and influence

Which of the following would you expect a cultural organisation to be doing? (Select all)



All areas are higher for **under 35s** and those who said they are **worried**

Section 5

Getting audiences involved

What part are audiences willing to play to support the sustainability initiatives of the cultural organisations they visit?

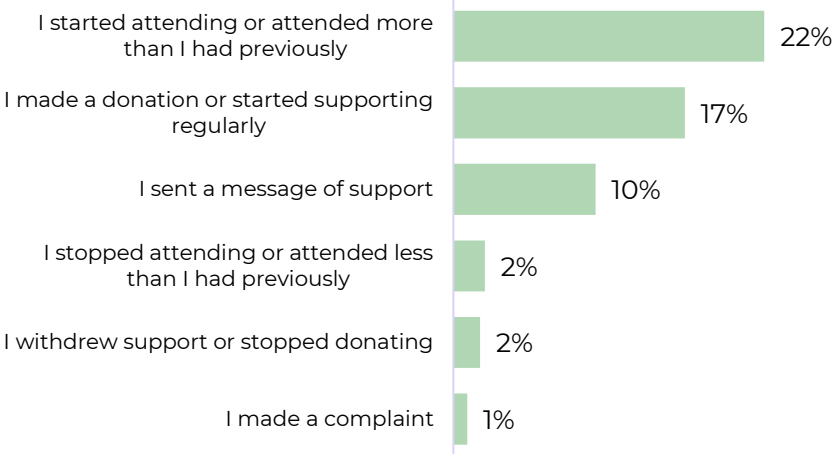


Key findings:

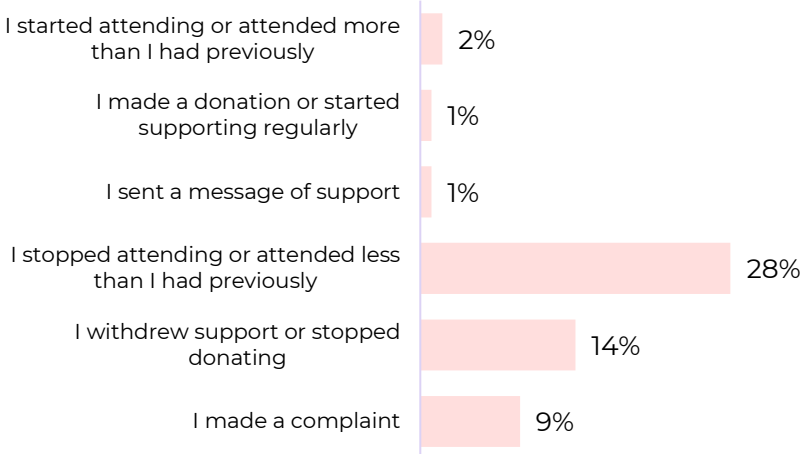
- **28%** of audiences and visitors stopped attending or attended less than they had previously to organisations who showed a lack of commitment to sustainability.
- **74%** said they would view organisations with a sustainability accreditation more positively, and **37%** said it would make them more likely to donate to the organisation.
- When asked whether they would support sustainability focused fundraising campaigns, **50%** said they would support the redevelopment of outside space to promote biodiversity, **49%** would donate towards the improvement of energy efficiency of the venue and **37%** would support the development of artistic projects which explore the climate emergency.

When an organisation shows either an active commitment or lack of commitment to sustainability, audiences mostly respond by changing their level of attendance, and their donations or regular support

Thinking of times when cultural organisations have shown an ACTIVE commitment to environmental sustainability, have you ever responded in any of the following ways?



Thinking of times when cultural organisations have shown a LACK of commitment to environmental sustainability, have you ever responded in any of the following ways?



Many wanted to tell us **other ways in which they had responded** when an organisation had shown an ACTIVE commitment to environmental sustainability

There was a groundswell of positivity when audiences saw a commitment to environmental action.

Audiences and visitor comments suggested that they would repay organisations by **amplifying your message**:



“I supported by promoting these actions amongst friends and via social media.”

“[I have] told people about it and considered supporting financially.”

“[I have] actively encouraged friends, family and colleagues to visit, written positive reviews.”

Others said they would **attend or donate more**:

“I felt good about supporting”

“It meant I was more keen to attend their plays over those elsewhere.”

“Became a member”



Others shared the positive feeling of having **aligned values**:

“Generally feeling a positive sense of identification with organisation because values align”

“It has increased my appreciation of the organisation”

“I felt more connected to the organisation”

“Have an improved view of that organisation”



And others told us other ways in which they had responded when an organisation had shown a LACK of commitment to environmental sustainability

If audiences see organisations not committing to environmental sustainability or acting unsustainably, they will **tell organisations** about what they have seen.

Many were at pains to say they would do this sympathetically and **offer support or advice into how organisations could do better:**



“I raised concerns but not a complaint.”

“I spoke to a member of staff regarding how an improvement could be made.”

“I spoke to folks directly to learn if it was a lack of support or initiative on their part and encouraged them to take the steps they could.”

However, many will **remove their support and not attend:**

“Noted this - and took them off my list of places to go.”

“If I found this, I would withdraw my support.”



And, more damagingly **audiences would actively campaign against organisations**, tell their friends and generally lose respect for the organisation:

“I discussed my disappointment with friends and family and avoided supporting the organisation.”

“I supported protests of that organisation and will not attend shows there in future.”

“I have talked to others about whatever it is, which undermines the reputation of the organisation I guess.”



As Benjamin Franklin said, *‘It takes many good deeds to build a good reputation, and only one bad one to lose it.’*

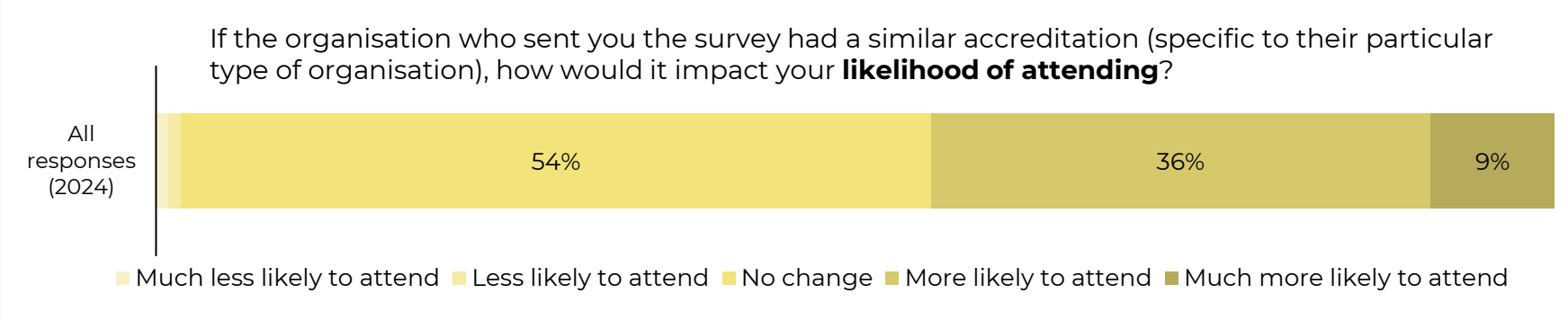
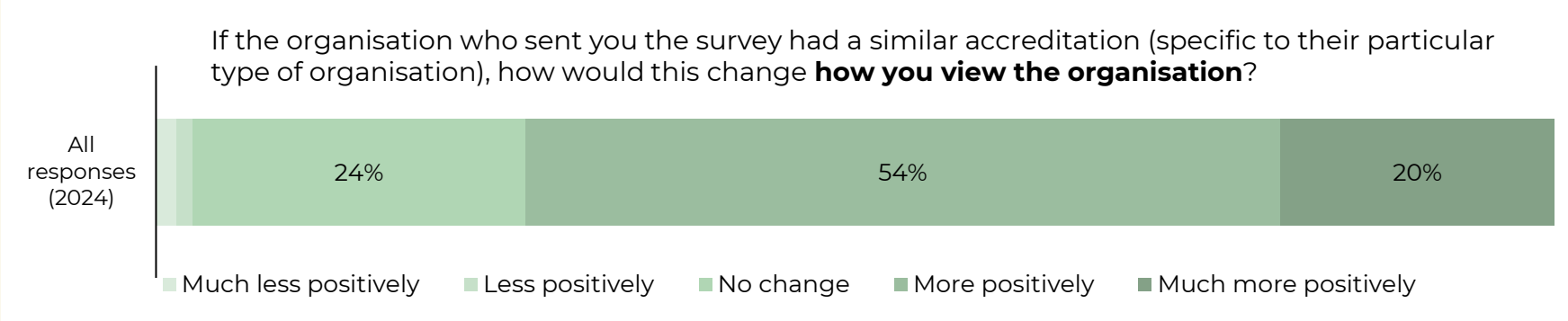
Theatre Green Book: questions on the impact of accreditation



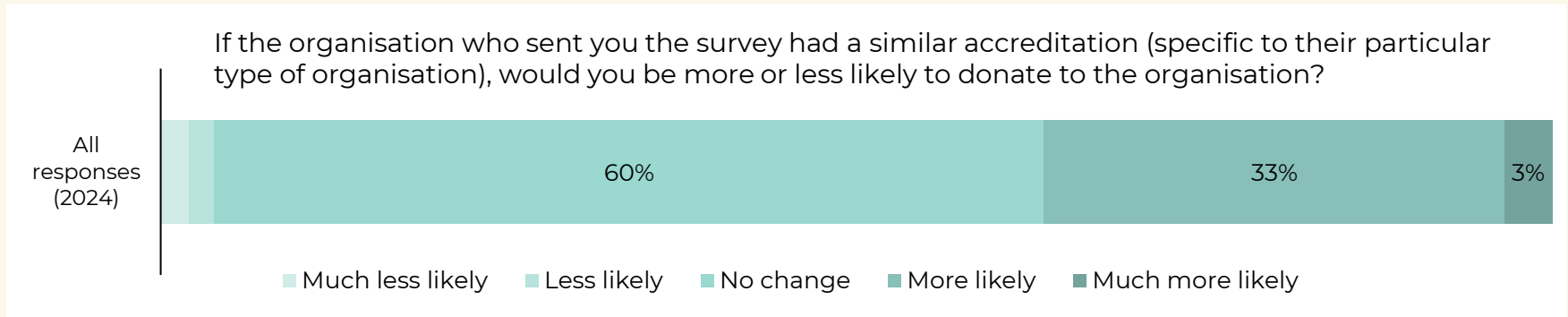
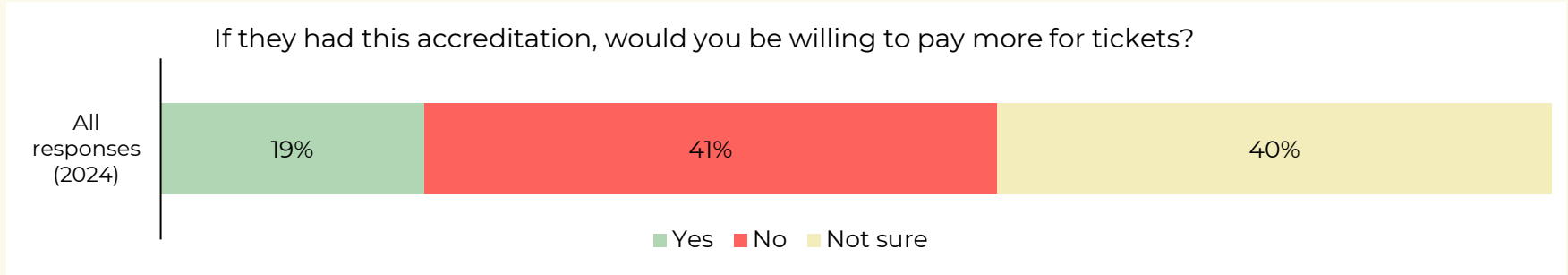
In the following section, respondents were shown an example of the Theatre Green Book's new accreditation (above). The survey explained that it is a new quality mark being introduced for cultural organisations in the UK, accredited by the Theatre Green Book to show they have reached a set of sustainability criteria.

Respondents were then asked a series of questions about how their behaviour might change in relation to the organisations who sent them the survey if they had a similar accreditation (specific to their particular type of organisation).

74% said the accreditation would make them view the organisation more positively, while 45% said it would make them more likely to attend

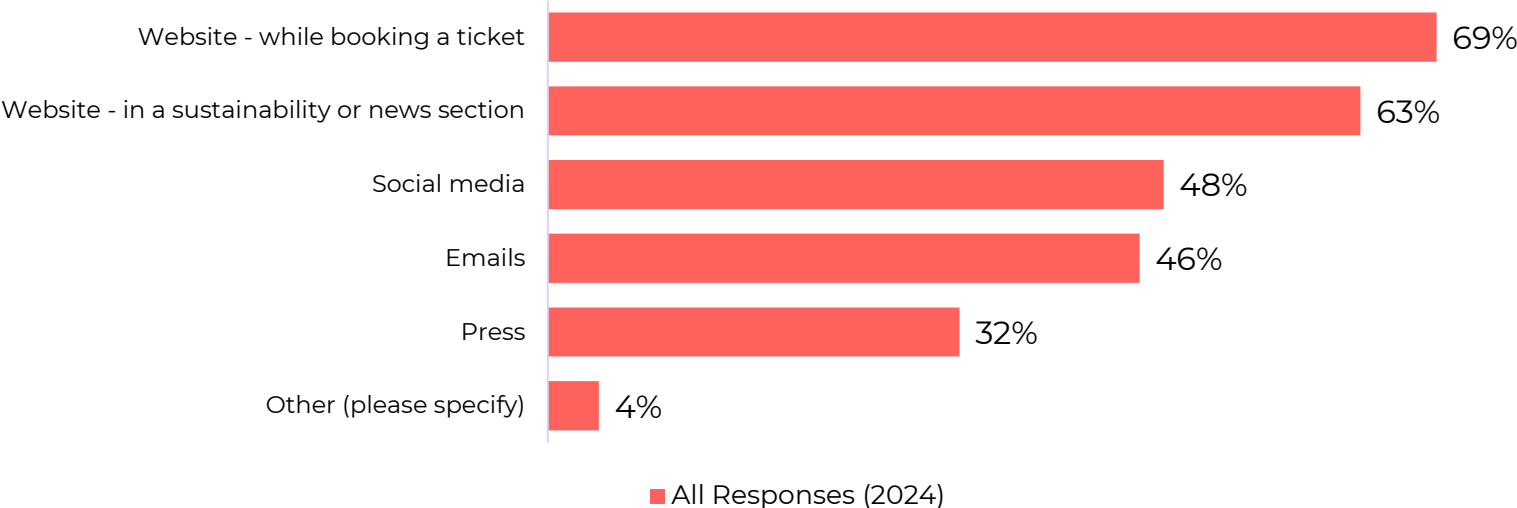


Although only 19% said an accreditation would make them willing to pay more for tickets, 36% said it would make them more likely to donate to the organisation



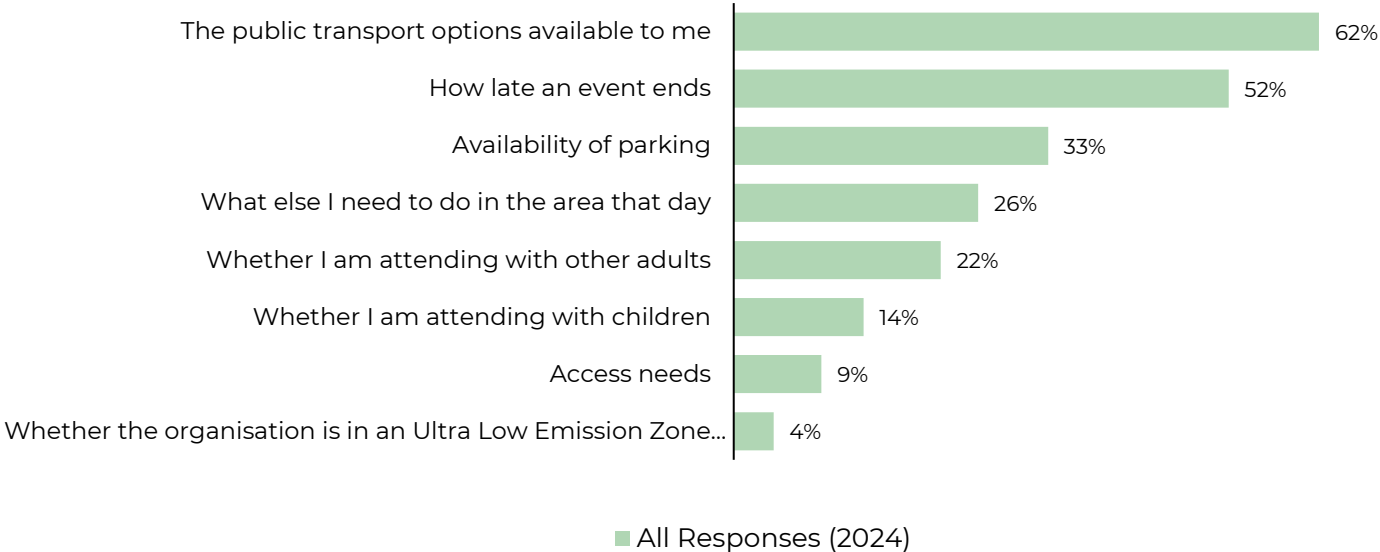
Audiences expect to see information about sustainability credentials while booking their tickets or in the sustainability or news section on an organisation's website

Where do you expect to see information about an organisation's sustainability credentials? (Select all that apply)



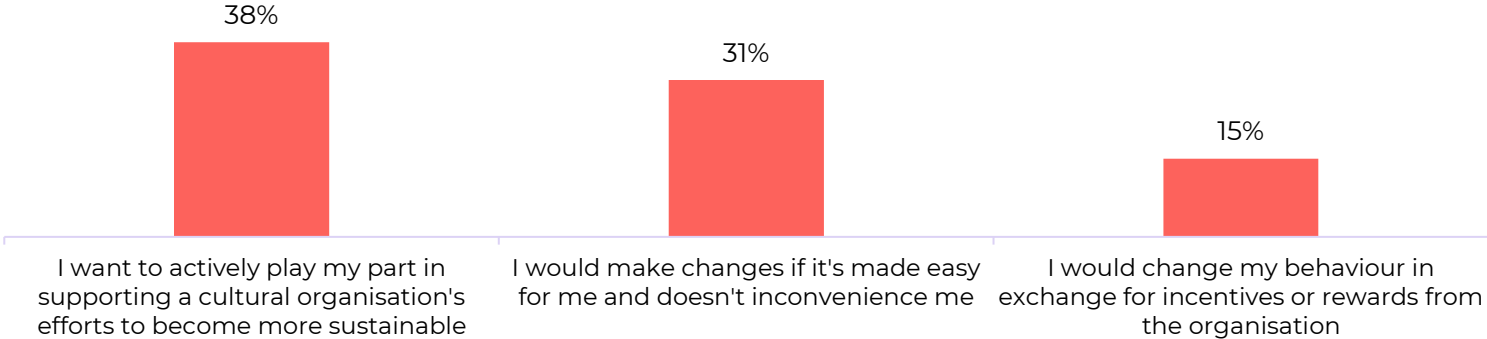
Public transport availability is the key consideration for audiences and visitors when thinking about how to travel to an organisation – as well as how late an event ends

Do any of the following influence the way you travel to an organisation?
(Select all that apply)



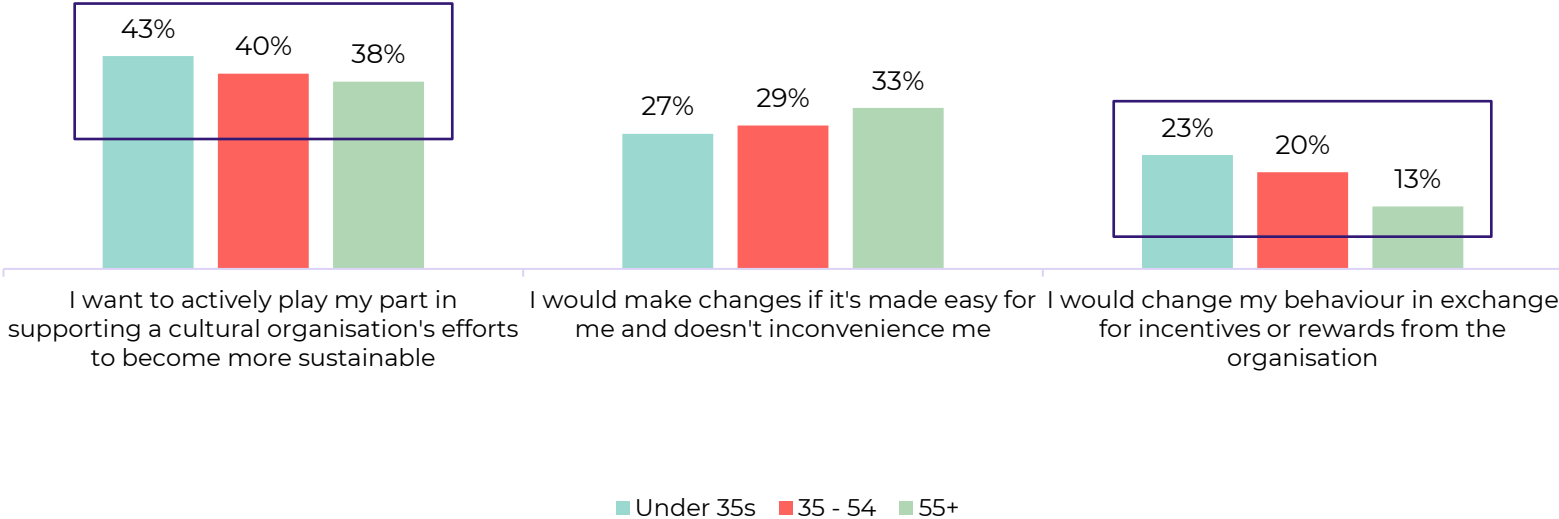
When asked about their motivation to act sustainably, nearly 70% say they would act sustainably either in support of a cultural organisation or if it was made easy for them

Which of the following would best describe your motivation to act sustainably when visiting cultural organisations? (Select one)

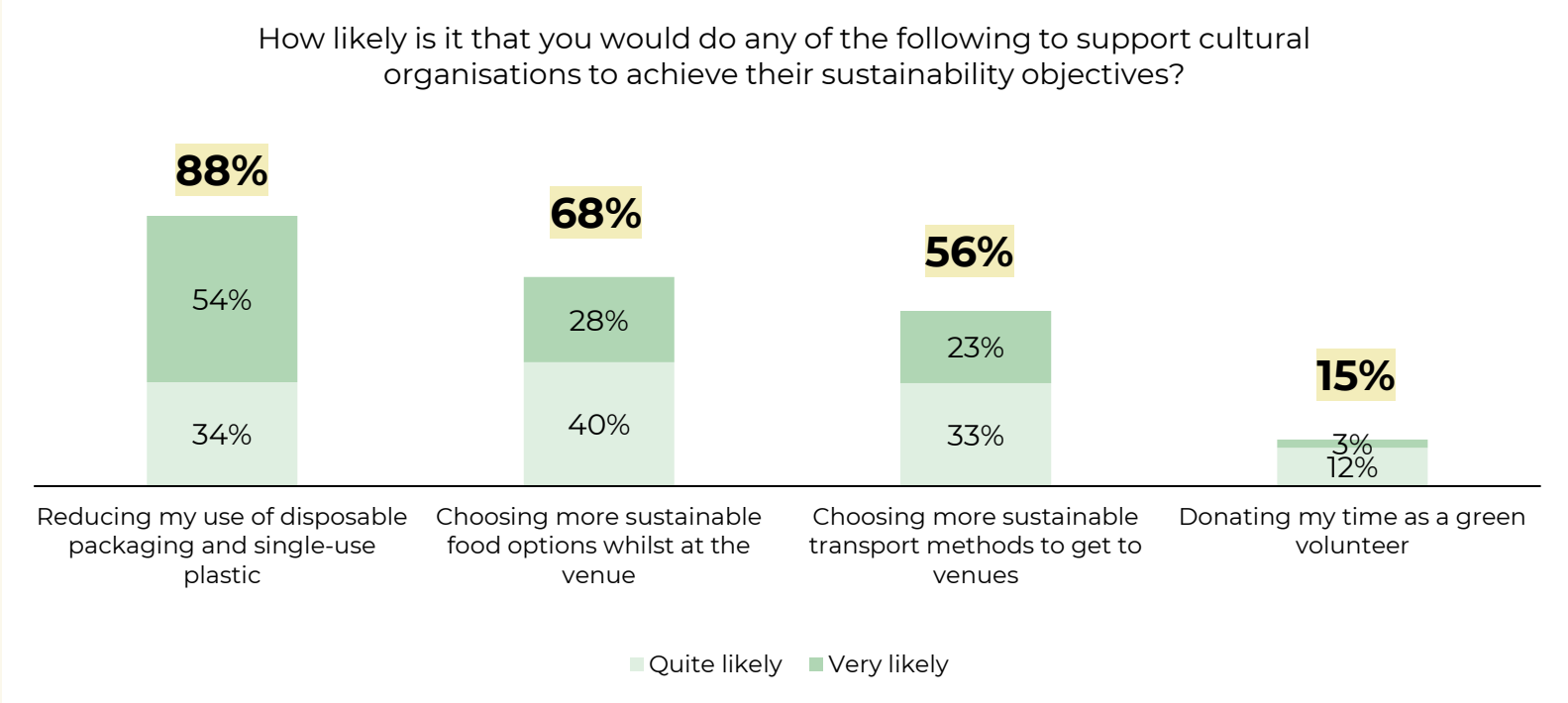


Younger respondents are more interested than other respondents in incentives or rewards to motivate them to act sustainably

Which of the following would best describe your motivation to act sustainably when visiting cultural events? (Select one)

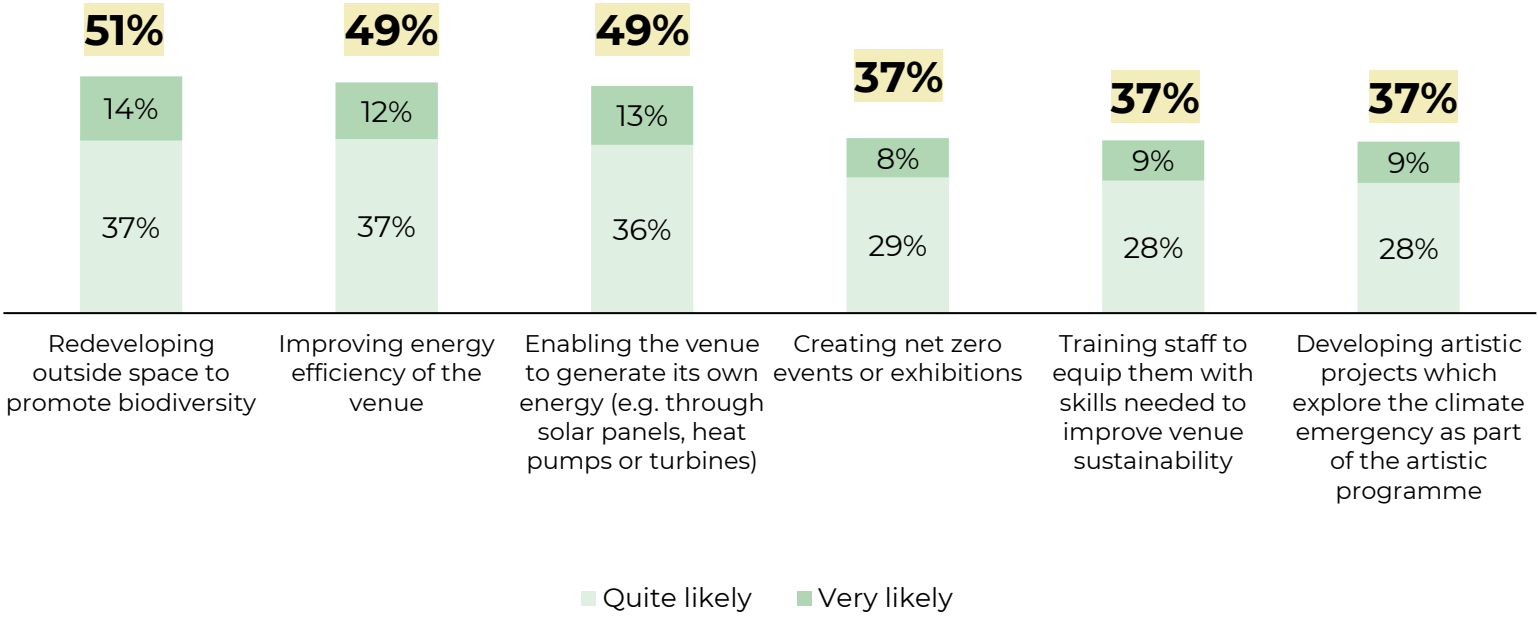


Respondents said they were likely to support the organisations to achieve their objectives in a number of ways



Audiences and visitors are most likely to financially support the promotion of biodiversity, energy efficiency and renewable energy

How likely would you be to support a fundraising campaign run by a cultural organisation to enable sustainability initiatives in the following areas?



Section 6

What else did audiences tell us?

When given the opportunity to tell us any other thoughts or suggestions, how did audiences respond?



Key findings:

- **Increasing polarisation:** Audience responses seem even more polarised than previous years – many passionately want organisations to do whatever they can, whilst others say that tackling the climate emergency is not the role of cultural organisations.
- **A communications dilemma:** Although respondents want organisations to lead the way and use their platforms to raise awareness, they don't want organisations to preach or virtue signal.
- **Positivity towards those organisations trying:** Responses are generally positive towards cultural organisations who are engaging in this topic and trying to make changes.

Other comments (1/6): Audience responses seem even more polarised than previous years – many want organisations to do whatever they can

5,483 people – **31%** of the total survey respondents – gave us their comments and suggestions in response to this broad question about the role of organisations and audiences in tackling the climate emergency.

This year's free text responses highlighted the balancing act that anyone engaging with the climate crisis is faced with, in this ever more polarised world.

On the one hand, one of the most prominent themes in the 2024 survey was that **we're all in this together**:

“We all need to play our part together and look for ways to reduce our impact on the planet and enable others to do so.”

“I believe it's the role of everybody to work together for cultural and natural sustainability.”

“I think it's absolutely necessary that all of us in society adopt a cultural shift and make changes, including arts and culture venues.”

Audiences wanted cultural organisations to **do whatever they can**:

“Please, please, please go big on this!”

“Change is essential. We all need to act.”

“They should be doing everything they can.”



Other comments (2/6): However, other responses showed a tension, with some audiences and visitors saying this is not the role of cultural organisations

But an almost equal number of respondents thought it **wasn't cultural organisation's role** or said **they came to venues to be entertained or to escape** so didn't want to hear about the climate crisis.



"Just make the entertainment entertaining - that's your job."

"The core purpose is to entertain. Stick to that."

"I don't want to have to think about this if I've gone to the theatre to relax and be entertained."



There were also those that thought it was **someone else's role** such as big business, other countries or the government's.

"[Cultural organisations'] role is important, as are all our roles, but insignificant compared with the multinational organisations and countries which are doing the vast majority of the damage."

"I feel the real onus is on big polluting businesses to do this."

"We need governments to listen and act and do the right thing."

"Governments should be addressing these issues"



Other comments (3/6): While some deny the climate emergency, others want cultural organisations to be leading the way and using their platforms to raise awareness

A vocal minority thought there was **no climate emergency**.

“Cultural organisations should not try to influence their audiences about a climate emergency that does not exist.”

However, there were a significant amount of people who expected cultural organisations to be **stepping up and leading the way in environmental action** – by being a role model, raising awareness, influencing and lobbying.

“The arts have a huge role to play in raising awareness.”

“I want to see cultural organisations going above and beyond their statutory obligations and leading the way.”

“This is a great opportunity to influence public opinion for a more positive approach to sustainability.”

“Their influence is huge in getting us to change our habits.”

“They have enormous powers to influence the ‘movers and shakers’; they should use them to the full extent.”

“More advocacy by cultural organisation beyond the cultural sector is needed.”

“Cultural organisations have a responsibility however to lead and amplify messages around the societal change needed.”



Other comments (4/6): But – they don't want to feel organisations are preaching or virtue signalling. They want organisations to educate and inform.

This brings us back to the balancing act, this time the **communications dilemma**.

Audiences wanted you to tell them about your environmental actions, by **being engaging and without fearmongering**.

“Keep sharing information about changes and progress.”
“Provide information and encourage participation in a way that is imaginative and even at times amusing.”
“It needs to be done in a way that empowers people rather than focusing on the negative.”

They want organisations to help to **educate and inform**, showing audiences and visitors how they can help tackle the climate emergency:

“I would like to see the cultural organisations educating about climate change as part of their role.”
“[Organisations] are in an ideal position to help visitors see

what can be done & what they can do for themselves.”

“Would be helpful to have guidance on what everyday people can be doing in their lives.”

”

But equally they don't want any **greenwashing** or **virtue signalling** or for organisations to **preach** or **lecture**:

“The more they are able to influence opinion and change through genuine not greenwashing policies the better.”

“They shouldn't virtue signal or make token gestures.”

”

“Cultural organisations and their audiences should make all efforts to tackle the climate emergency without preaching.”

So how, where and when organisations talk about environmental activities is important and will be different for each organisation – and different audiences within your organisations too.

Other comments (5/6): Audiences are feeling the effects of the **cost-of-living crisis**, when thinking about what they can pay and organisations' budgets

Another theme emerged was the **economic barriers** for audiences and organisations.

Respondents highlighted the difficulty for arts organisations to make environmental changes, due to lack of money or the need for extra funding.



*"This all sounds great, but we all know that **they don't have the money** for big changes..."*

*"I think it must be very hard for them **with all the funding cuts** but I applaud those that try to make a difference."*

"Funding should come from local and central government to support them."

*"I believe cultural organisations have an important part to play and **I would love to see governmental support** to help them do this."*

Audiences emphasised their **inability to pay more for tickets** to cover environmental activity.

The effects of the cost-of-living crisis were apparent, but there were also respondents who would be willing to donate to environmentally focused campaigns or pay an optional green ticket levy.

*"Cultural organisations should try to do things to help tackle the climate emergency as much as possible **without adding to the costs of audiences** who attend these events."*

*"Do more but **don't make the audience pay** for it"*

*"I think **fundraising initiatives** to raise money to improve the sustainability of the buildings used by cultural organisations, as well as their outdoor areas to improve biodiversity is a great idea."*

*"I would pay a **green levy** on my ticket if I knew it was supporting an overt set of green initiatives."*



Other comments (6/6): Finally – they want organisations to remember access, collaborate across the sector and are grateful organisations are engaging with sustainability

Audiences also wanted organisations to consider **access requirements** when asking them to make pro-environmental changes.



“Access requirements also need taking into account so that disabled people can be as involved as possible.”

“Sustainability shouldn't be at the expense of accessibility.”

Similarly, to Act Green 2023, they want organisations to **collaborate across the sector, with other sectors** and proactively within their **communities**.



“Partnership working with other types of organisations is key to implementing changes.”

“Collective action with cultural organisations banding together to affect larger scale change has more impact.”

“Building alliances with like-minded organisations is important.”

And finally, audiences are **grateful organisations are engaging with the climate emergency and making changes**.

“It's great that these organisations are taking the climate emergency so seriously and are considering very practical solutions!”

“The fact you've sent this survey out and wanting to engage in green issues already speaks volumes about your commitment to tackling the climate by engaging with your audience and supporters. It's appreciated and I wish more organisations did this.”





Thank you

For more analysis of *Act Green 2024* including a recording of the results webinar:

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About us

We are award-winning audience specialists.

We work individually with arts and cultural organisations to bring the audience's voice into decision-making, as well as running sector-wide research projects on particular issues and topics.

Our ground-breaking sector-wide research during the Covid-19 crisis included *After the Interval*, the *Culture Restart Toolkit* and *Missing Audiences*. It was used by over 500 cultural organisations and gathered over 500,000 responses, and won us multiple national awards, including a national 'Outstanding Leadership' award for Katy Raines, Indigo's CEO.

You can see all our previous reports, plus the latest articles and insights on our [blog](#).



[Indigo Share](#) offers the cultural sector a collective approach to audience insight:



[Subscription](#) – a flexible annual programme featuring post-visit surveys and an annual survey.



[Hot Topics](#) – FREE ad hoc surveys responding to particular topics and sector challenges.

If you are interested in finding out more about Indigo Share or would like to speak about a potential project, please email us: info@indigo-ltd.com

Or book in a call with one of the team:

Katy Raines, CEO | [Book a 30 minute call](#)

Flo Carr, Associate Director | [Book a 30 minute call](#)

Kerry Radden, Associate Director | [Book a 30 minute call](#)

About our research sponsor

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Kate Mroczkowski, Strategy Director
kate@supercooldesign.co.uk