



Platform Assessment 2016

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The Purpose of this report

This assessment has been produced to help inform the review of the Platform. It is focused on providing factual information about the Platform and issues that affect it.

As an assessment it is designed to give an overview rather than be a comprehensive study.

The information in this assessment has been extracted from the following sources:

- Platform Monitoring Spreadsheet 2014/15
- Platform Monitoring Spreadsheet 2015/16
- Authority Financials - General Ledger
- Patronbase (Platform Show/Ticket Management System)
- Audience Agency Finder Survey 2015/16
- Platform Marketing Pilot 2015/16

1. The Platform

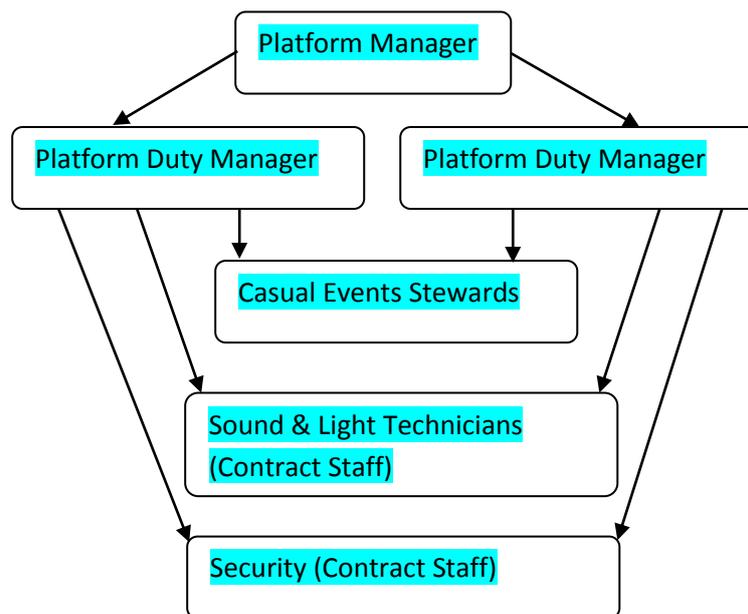
The Platform is located in a converted Edwardian railway station and offers flexible space as all seating and the main stage can be removed. The main auditorium has a seating capacity of 350 (theatre style), it can also be set up cabaret style or standing only or a mix of seating/standing.

The Platform is used for a variety of events and activities including live music, talks, comedy, children's shows, festivals, conferences, weddings, celebrations and community events such as tea dances and a flower club.

The Platform bar in the auditorium offers a selection of hot and cold drinks, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages and a small selection of cold snacks. The Platform is within easy walking distance of Morecambe's railway station, bus station and is situated next to a large car park (pay and display).

Morecambe's Visitor Information Centre is also located in the Platform and the building is situated in a prominent position on Marie Road.

2. Staff Structure



3. Programme

The programme at the Platform offers mainly live music including rock, folk, rock & roll, blues and classical, some talks, comedy, children's shows and is used a main venue for large scale annual festivals such as Vintage by the Sea and Steampunk.

In addition to this the Platform is hired for the following types of community events; flower club, tea dance, weddings, charity events, graduation balls and craft fairs.

In 2015/16 the Platform had 142 events, 55% of these were shows and 43% community use, however 70% of the Platform audience attend shows and only 30% attend community events (excluding festivals).

The Platform generates income via ticket sales from Platform presented shows where a deal is agreed with an agent or promoter and this could include a requirement for a guarantee to secure an artist/show, it might also include a % of the ticket sales above the guarantee, it could be a straight % split of the total ticket income (industry norm. 70/30 to the artist), it could be first call of a fixed amount to the artist or venue. The type of deal will depend on the type and profile of artist/show and the level

of risk that the Platform is willing to take, although less ticket income is generated from % splits, these deals carry much less risk than a guarantee.

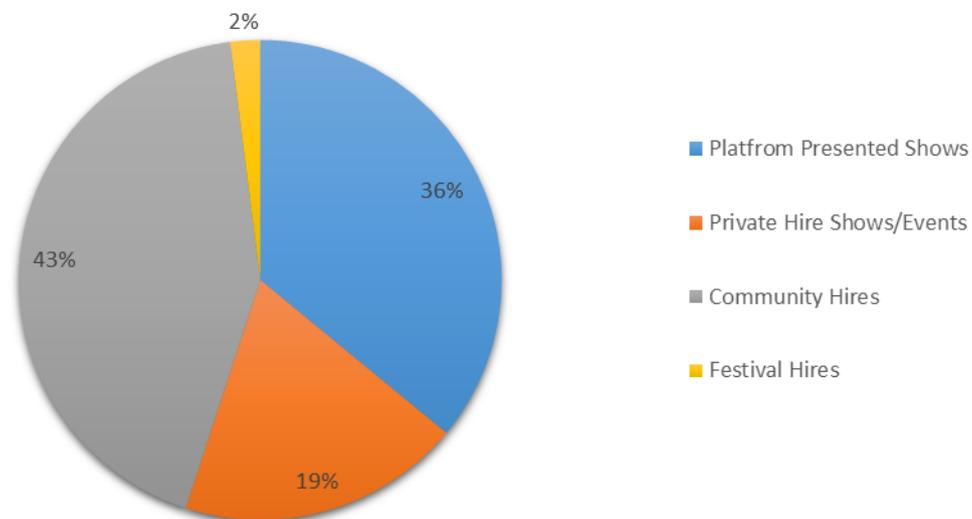
The artists and shows that the Platform are able to book is affected by the venue's capacity, location, tour dates of the artists or show, where else the artists or show is performing, available dates in the Platform programme, what else it taking place locally at other venues, relationship with agents and promoters, the venue's reputation and history it terms how shows have performed, the potential audience for the artist or show (aimed at existing or new audiences), marketing capacity, the deal with the agents or promoter and the production costs.

Income is generated via hires from agents/promoters or artists, bands and performers who want to hire the Platform to run their event, although advertised in the Platform brochure and via our website etc. the ticket income taken through the Platform box office is passed to the hirer.

The Platform is also hired by local community groups and organisations, schools and individuals for weddings and other functions, clubs, balls, dances, most of these are one-off hires however the Platform has a few regulars such as the flower club and tea dance.

These shows, events and hires also generated income for the Platform from the bar and catering offer.

Platform Programme Profile 2015/16



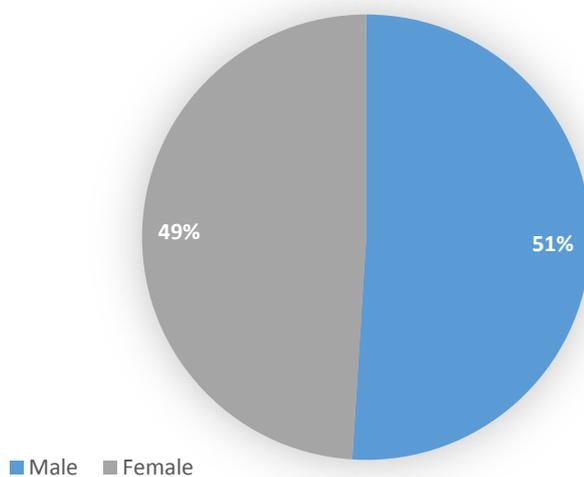
Top 5 Most Profitable Shows in 2015/16

Show	Genre	Private Hire	Platform Presented
<i>Rock back the clock</i>	<i>Rock & roll</i>	√	
<i>King King</i>	<i>Blues</i>		√
<i>Les Mckeown</i>	<i>Rock</i>		√
<i>Club Tropicana</i>	<i>Mix of the 80's</i>		√
<i>The Young'uns</i>	<i>Folk</i>		√

Note. Platform presented shows above were % splits x 4 and guarantee x 1

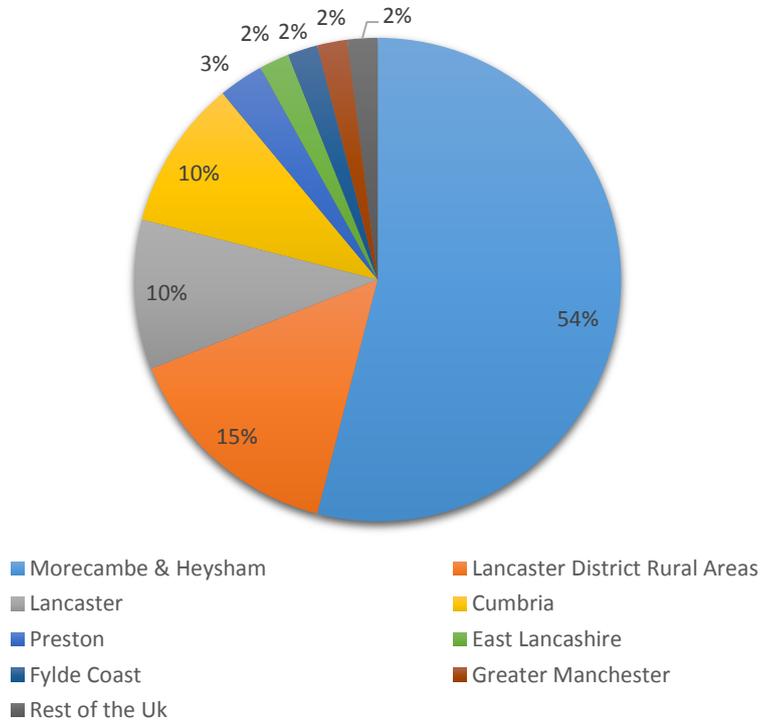
4. Audience

Gender of Platform Audience 2015/16

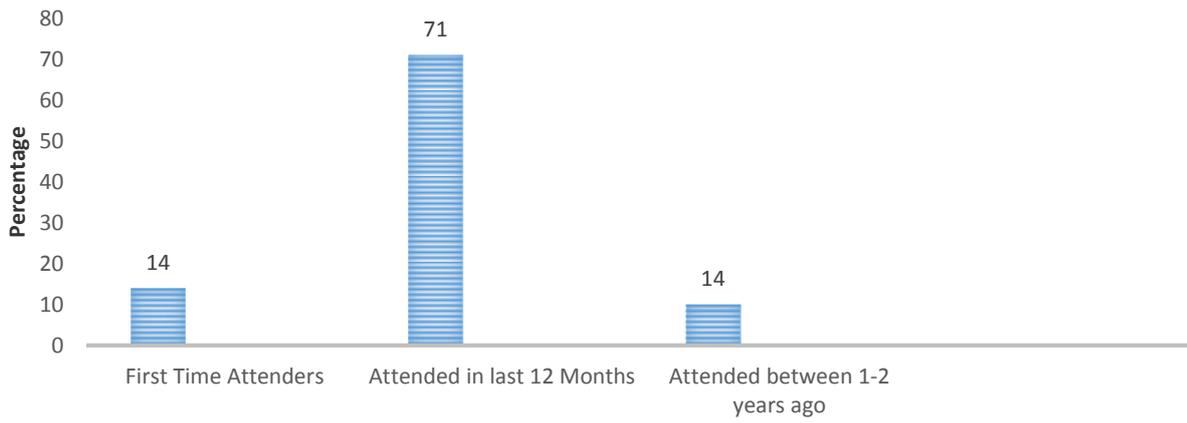


Note. The average age of the Platform audience is 45+

Platform Catchment Area 2015/16 (audience approximatley 20,000 per year)



AUDIENCE VISIT PROFILE



Note. The Platform visit profile is similar to the average of other participating venues (Brewery Arts Centre in Kendal, Lancaster Arts at Lancaster University, The Dukes Theatre, Theatre by the Lake in Keswick) in the Audience Agency Finder survey

Other findings from the Audience Agency Finder Survey

Visit rating – Platform 77% very good (cluster average 64%)
 Value for money – Platform 57% very good (cluster average 48%)
 Planned visit to the venue – Platform 39% (cluster average 31%)
 Overnight stay other than your own home – Platform 16% (cluster average 18%)
 Also visited a restaurant/cafe – Platform 25% (cluster average 27%)
 Also shopped - Platform 35% (cluster average 22%)
 Also visited a pub/bar - Platform 33% (cluster average 21%)
 Also visited an historic site – Platform 7% (cluster average 5%)
 Also participated in other arts/cultural activity - Platform 11% (cluster average 5%)

5. Marketing

PLATFORM MARKETING FUNCTION

Currently consists of approximately 11 hours per week (0.3 FTE) of dedicated officer time and £11,000 marketing budget.

Between December 2015 and March 2016 additional resources were allocated to market the Platform as part of a small pilot scheme in order to contribute to this assessment. Dedicated officer time increased by approximately 12 hours per week and the dedicated marketing budget was increased by £1,000.

Marketing activity increased included additional Facebook adverts and more regular newspaper adverts, target marketing linked to specific shows, increased the content on social media channels, support for uploading events onto google calendar and websites, 3 competitions on Bay Radio, increased display boards outside council venues and provided a lead officer for weddings.

Results of Marketing Pilot

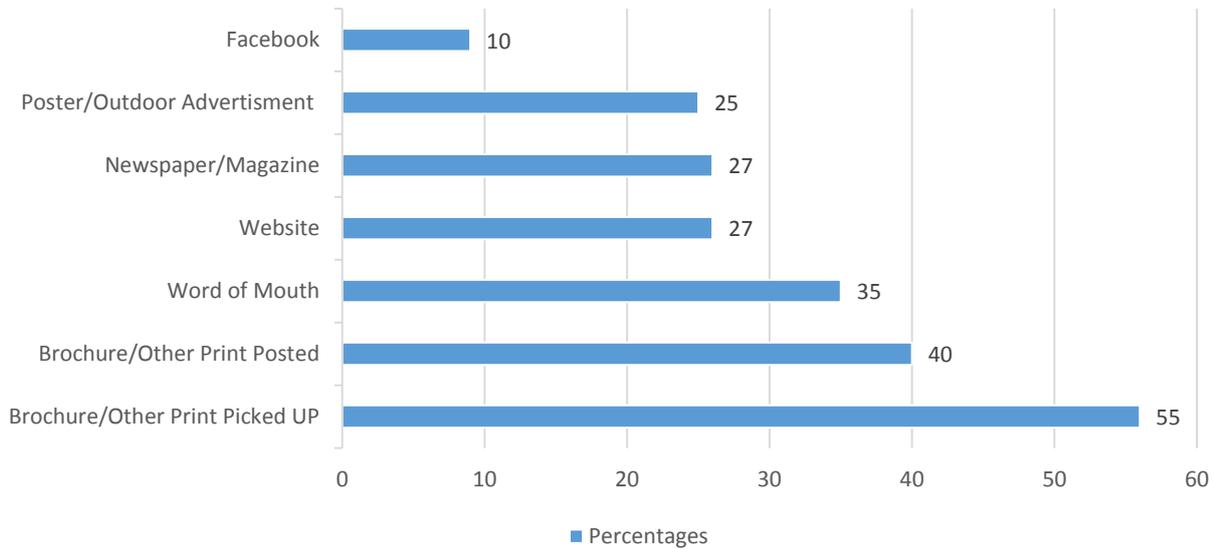
- 2 schools purchased 70 tickets for a children's show
- Ticket sales for a number of the target shows significantly increased following the above
- Additional enquiries about wedding reception hires

Below is a 3 year comparison of ticket admission income during period 9-12 (December to March). Ticket income and bar income has increased during this period compared to the previous two years. The admission figures include ticket income taken for shows in the following year.

Detail Code	Description	Actual2015/2016	Actual2014/2015	Actual2013/2014
I8391	Admission Fees	-33,016.10	-30,070.34	-30,289.22
I9532	Bar	-12,651.17	-10,141.25	-10,533.87

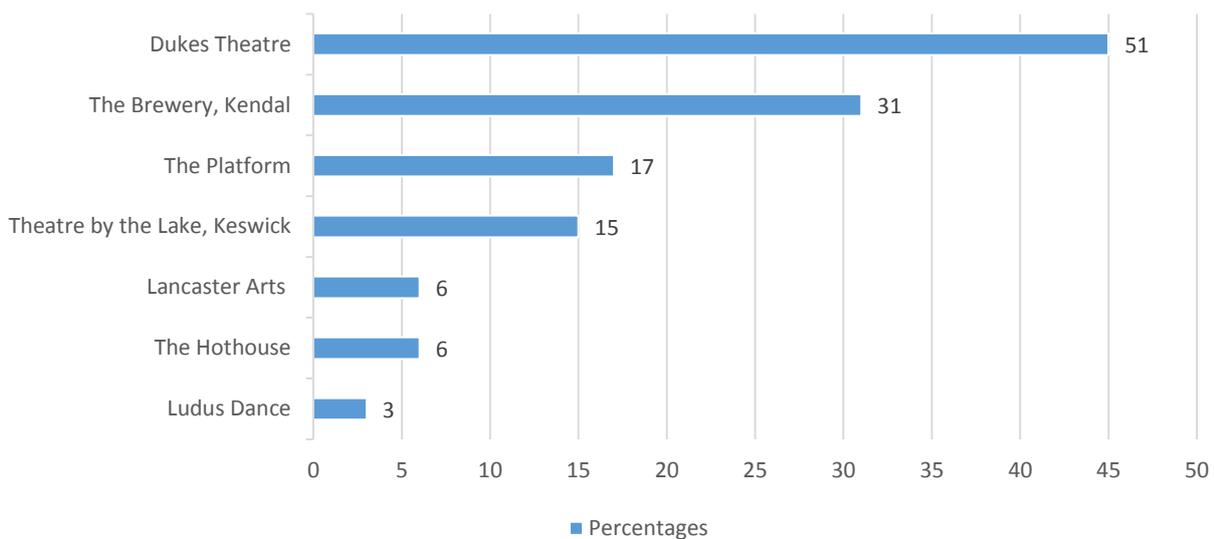
Audience agency survey results – which of the following had you seen or heard before your visit?

Platform Promotion



64% of the Platform audience surveyed stated that they do not use social media to follow the Platform and the cluster average was also high 62%

Venue Crossover



The above is the percentage of surveyed audiences from all the participating venues that have also attended one or more of the other venues.

6. Finances

NET BUDGET (excluding support re-charges and notional capital charges)

PLATFORM	2013/2014		2014/2015		2015/2016	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
Net Budget (exc. service charges)	86,700	79,581	75,400	79,999	74,300	77,150

PRICING POLICY (hires)

A new pricing policy for hires was introduced in 2015/16 that has contributed to an increase in income from venue hires in 2015/16 (see venue hire table below) even though the Platform had only one additional hire than in the previous year. The new pricing policy allows the hirer to discuss their requirements with the Platform and the hire fee reflects this and the hirer can see exactly what the fee covers, whereas the previous policy was more ridged and in the main set fees for full or half day hires only, it wasn't exactly clear what the fee covered.

TICKET SALES 2015/16

PLATFORM PRESENTED SHOWS	2013/2014		2014/2015		2015/2016	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
Admission Income	87,500	90,001	91,300	81,394	102,300	92,666

Ticket sales (Platform presented shows) has increased significantly (13.5% increase) in 2015/16 from the previous year.

SHOWS THAT HAVE HIRED THE PLATFORM	2013/2014		2014/2015		2015/2016	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
Private Hire Income	30,800	26,533	31,400	19,824	31,800	29,353

Ticket sales (from shows that have hired the Platform) have increased significantly (48%) in 2015/16 from the previous year.

Current & Projected Ticket Sales (Platform presented shows)

Approximately 16,800 tickets available for all shows in 2015/16 (based on 350 max seating capacity) However at the moment it's unrealistic to expect that shows will reach full capacity, in most cases a more realistic capacity is around 200 based on current data. Therefore for the purpose of this

assessment and in the short to medium term it's estimated that 9,600 ticket sales are achievable (i.e. 200 per show). Based on these figures current occupancy is on average 69% (i.e. 6,661 tickets overall for Platform presented shows in 2015/16). Of the 2,939 tickets potentially still available, based on £15 per ticket the following additional income could be achieved:

- 25% - £11,021
- 50% - £22,043
- 75% - £33,064
- 100% - £44,085

A 50% increase in ticket sales equates to an additional 31 tickets per show.

Ticket Sales In advance.

From 2012/13	Ticket Sales Sold In advance	£14,905	In the 2013/14 budget
From 2013/14	Ticket Sales Sold In advance	£10,458	In the 2014/15 budget
From 2014/15	Ticket Sales Sold In advance	£14,570	In the 2015/16 budget
From 2015/16	Ticket Sales Sold In advance	£17,317	In the 2016/17 budget

VENUE HIRE INCOME 2015/16

PLATFORM	2013/2014		2014/2015		2015/2016	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
Venue Hire Income	32,000	26,560	26,500	26,184	32,400	34,024

CATERING SALES 2015/16

PLATFORM	2013/2014		2014/2015		2015/2016	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
Bar Income	45,900	47,065	47,000	39,858	42,500	50,921
Café Income	5,300	2,699	2,500	594	1,500	1,792

2013/14	Bar Income £47,065 - Bar Supplies £21,654 =	£25,411
2014/15	Bar Income £39,858 - Bar Supplies £16,690 =	£23,168
2015/16	Bar Income £50,921 - Bar Supplies £22,600 =	£28,321

The above excludes staffing and building costs.

