

# Assembly Hall Theatre Post Refurbishment Satisfaction Survey

2004

Prepared for

**Brian McAteer, Business  
Manager  
&  
Sheila Ryall, Marketing and  
Publicity Manager**

Prepared by

**Simon Davies, Research Officer  
Corporate Marketing & Communications**



**Tunbridge Wells**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL  
[www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk](http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk)

**CONTENTS PAGE**

	<b>Page</b>
<b>1.0 WHAT IS THE RESEARCH TELLING US?</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2.0 WHAT SHOULD WE DO NEXT?</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>4.0 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>5.0 METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6.0 RESPONSES / ORIGIN OF RESPONDENT</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>7.0 ABOUT THE THEATRE</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8.0 AWARENESS OF SHOWS AND PERFORMANCES</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>9.0 SMOKING IN THE THEATRE</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>10.0 METHOD OF BOOKING TICKETS</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>11.0 THE INTERNET</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>12.0 BOOKING PROBLEMS</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>13.0 ABOUT YOUR MOST RECENT VISIT AND SHOW/PERFORMANCE</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>14.0 ABOUT FUTURE SHOWS</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>15.0 ABOUT FUTURE VISITS</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>16.0 PRE-SHOW MEALS</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>17.0 OTHER THEATRES/VENUES</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>18.0 PROFILE INFORMATION</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>19.0 PROFILE OF A TYPICAL VISITOR</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>20.0 FURTHER RESEARCH</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>21.0 FURTHER RESEARCH REQUIRED</b>	<b>47</b>

**APPENDIX I - THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

## 1.0 WHAT IS THE RESEARCH TELLING US?

- Comparing this 2004 survey to the 1999 survey, the majority of requests for improvements were achieved.
- Overall satisfaction with the Assembly Hall Theatre was higher for respondents living outside the borough.
- The majority would like to see a total smoking ban. Fewer problems were experienced with booking tickets compared with the survey conducted in 1999.
- The vast majority were satisfied with the last performance they had seen.
- Awareness of shows varied according to respondents' age; the young were more aware of musicals, pantomimes and West End shows; the middle aged were more aware of rock/pop and family shows, whilst the elderly were most aware of classical concerts/recitals.
- Women were generally more aware of shows available, along with those aged 35-54.
- Booking online was relatively low, yet there is real potential to capitalise on some future growth.
- People in the borough were more likely to use the Assembly Hall Theatre web address, whereas those living outside the borough were more likely to use the Borough Council address.
- Price was the biggest factor deterring people from visiting more often.
- Booking online appeared to be dependent upon special offers being made available.
- Compared with 1999, problems encountered when booking fell significantly.
- Respondents were more likely to book their tickets for the Assembly Hall Theatre immediately on knowing when their favourite artist/show performance was on, followed by receipt of the brochure/mailling through their door.
- The Courier and Kent Messenger were the most read form of printed media, and Invicta FM and BBC Radio Kent, the most listened to.
- Rock/Pop, Musicals and Drama were the most popular shows.
- The variety of shows offered the Assembly Hall Theatre had improved over the last two years.
- Respondents tended to depend upon friends' choice of show/personal recommendation to visit the Assembly Hall.
- The Assembly Hall Theatre brochure was visitors most popular source for show selection and the second most popular source used to make an actual booking.
- Males tended to book immediately following a recommendation or word of mouth from friends whereas females responded more to printed/featured paid advertising.
- Those living in Tunbridge Wells were least likely to eat out before going to the theatre, suggesting those travelling from further afield, such as Maidstone and Sevenoaks preferred to have a full evening out.
- Visitors to the Assembly Hall Theatre, Royal Tunbridge Wells were most likely to visit Trinity over any other venue in the surrounding area. The further away the theatre, the least likely they were to visit. Males were more likely to be the ones that would travel further afield, whereas females visited theatres closer to home.

## **2.0 WHAT SHOULD WE DO NEXT?**

- Consider further the implications of introducing a smoking ban, impact on business/satisfaction of services provided.
- Give consideration to pricing strategies, as this was the main factor deterring people from visiting more often. Also, thought could be given to special offers, combination meal/theatre tickets, and online discounts.
- Capitalise on the potential growth of the Internet as a mechanism for booking tickets and targeting new business.
- A simple improvement would be to reinstate the clock on the stage and improve some signage.
- Thought should be given to the viability of improving the quality of seating, and improving the leg room since these were the two main other improvement areas identified. Further minor improvements may still be required to improve the experience for the disabled and those with pushchairs for example, no steps, wider doorways and keep doors open.
- Improve the marketing and advertising of the online booking facility. This is essential if the Assembly Hall Theatre is to capitalise on the potential growth on pages 17 and 18 of this report. This could also be a means of providing cheaper tickets
- Consideration could be given to improving guidance/help on 'How to book tickets online' to demonstrate the facility in more detail and enable customers to get full potential and reduce the proportion of those concerned about internet security.

### **3.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

#### **OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH THE ASSEMBLY HALL THEATRE**

- 96.1% were satisfied with facilities provided.

#### **SMOKING**

- 82% wanted a complete smoking ban.

#### **SATISFACTION WITH SHOW/PERFORMANCE**

- 95.8% were satisfied with the most recent show/performance.

#### **FUTURE SHOWS**

- 87.9% would attend more often if shows of their choice were available.

#### **PRE SHOW MEALS**

- Almost three quarters (73%) would like to eat out before they go to the theatre.
- However, only 15% have eaten at the Assembly Hall.

#### **AWARENESS OF SHOWS**

- Respondents were least aware of plays for schools, cabaret, craft exhibitions and brass bands.
- Respondents were most aware of musicals, pantomimes, rock and pop and classical concerts.

#### **IMPROVEMENTS**

- 27% believed further improvements were required.

#### **BOOKING TICKETS**

- Phoning the Box Office was the most preferred method of booking tickets followed by personal visits.

#### **ABOUT THE RESPONDENTS**

- The response sample was made up of 27.1% male and 72.9% female.
- 8% had a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity.

## 4.0 INTRODUCTION

The first survey of Assembly Hall Theatre customers was undertaken in 1998/99, identifying various visiting patterns, but most of all identifying a programme of improvements.

Over the past three years, the Assembly Hall Theatre has undergone extensive renovations and improvements, both internally and externally.

Following the successful completion of these works, market research was commissioned in-house with Corporate Marketing and Communications during 2004. Analysis where possible will make comparisons with the 1999 survey to see whether customers' requirements have been fulfilled.

The objectives of this project were to:

- assess whether we have met customers' requirements as outlined in pre-refurbishment research results
- gain additional information from customers to assess whether we are delivering the service they require
- enable comparisons to be made between pre-refurbishment market research conducted in 1998/99 and post-refurbishment
- enable us to update feedback from customers

## 5.0 METHODOLOGY

The survey was carried out during July 2004 to a stratified sample of Assembly Hall Theatre customers who had visited within the last two years. The sample is made up of those that agreed to be listed on the Assembly Hall Theatre database to receive promotional and other marketing activity literature.

The Assembly Hall Theatre Marketing Team and Corporate Marketing and Communications designed the survey to allow returned surveys to be scanned into the computer. The survey was posted week commencing 5 July 2004, with a response time of three weeks.

A copy of the questionnaire is provided in Appendix I.

## 6.0 RESPONSES

4,939 questionnaires were mailed; 1,258 usable completed questionnaires were returned representing a response rate of 25.4%. A sample size of 1,258 is subject to a maximum standard error of +/- 2.8% at the 95% level of confidence.

***It is worth noting at this point that analysis contained in this report excludes non respondents from some of the calculations. Therefore the base sample may vary from question to question.***

### 6.1 ORIGIN OF RESPONDENTS

- Almost three quarters (72.5%) were from Kent towns. (Table 1).
- A further 23.5% came from East/West Sussex towns, with the remaining 4% coming from other areas, of which four came from London.

**TABLE 1: ORIGIN OF RESPONDENTS (TOP 20)**

Town (table sample 1246)	Number	Percentage	Postcode areas
Royal Tunbridge Wells	348	27.9	TN1, TN2, TN3, TN4, TN5
Tonbridge	229	18.4	TN9, TN10, TN11, TN12, ME19
Crowborough	116	9.3	TN6
Maidstone	91	7.3	ME14, ME15, ME16, ME17, ME18
Sevenoaks	46	3.7	TN13, TN14, TN15
Wadhurst	39	3.1	TN5
Cranbrook	30	2.6	TN17, TN18
Uckfield	28	2.2	TN22
Edenbridge	23	1.8	TN8
Ashford	21	1.7	TN23, TN24, TN25, TN26, TN27
Heathfield	21	1.7	TN21
West Malling	14	1.1	ME19
East Grinstead	13	1.0	RH19
Aylesford	11	0.9	ME20
Etchingam	9	0.8	TN19
Chatham	9	0.8	ME5
Rye	7	0.6	TN31
Robertsbridge	7	0.6	TN32
Sittingbourne	7	0.6	ME9, ME10
Hailsham	7	0.6	BN27
Mayfield	7	0.6	TN20
Other towns*	163	13.1	

\* Respondents from towns representing less than 0.5%

- Throughout the report results are presented using three different rating scores:
  - 1-4 for services improved or got worse where 1 is better and 4 is don't know.
  - 1-5 for satisfaction where 1 is 'very satisfied' and 5 is 'very dissatisfied'.
  - 1-5 for frequency of use where 1 is never and 5 is four visits or more.
- Mean ratings will also be given.

## 7.0 ABOUT THE THEATRE

- Based on visits within the last two years, respondents were asked whether the Assembly Hall Theatre had improved, stayed the same or got worse following the renovations.
- The areas identified as most improved were:
  - The main foyer area (71.2%)
  - Refurbishment of the lower foyer toilets (66.8%)
  - New carpets and illuminated steps to the circle (66.0%)
  - Decoration of the main auditorium (64.8%)
  - Box office counters (52.5%)
  - Non smoking lower foyer bar facilities (51.2%)
- The areas identified that had stayed the same were:
  - Assembly Hall façade (external appearance) (56.1%)
  - The foyer entrance doors (44.8%)
  - The acoustics/sound quality (36.6%)
  - Circle/stalls seating (33.7%)
- The areas that respondents couldn't identify whether improvements were made were:
  - Lift for disabled access (73.5%)
  - Level disabled access (65.0%)
  - Access to online booking system (65.1%)
- In comparisons with improvements requested in the 1999 survey, Table 2 identifies improvements made in response to customer requests.

**TABLE 2: IMPROVEMENTS TO THE ASSEMBLY HALL THEATRE (COMPARISONS 1999-2004)**

Area of improvement	% requesting improvements (1999 survey)	% indicating facilities improved (2004 survey)
Disabled access/facilities	20%	49.4%
Seating	46%	48.0%
Toilets	43%	66.8%
Ambience/decoration of auditorium	47%	64.8%
The acoustics/sound system	34%	48.8%
More up to date theatre	62%	96.1%

- Taking everything into account, 96% of respondents were satisfied with the improvements made, of which 41.1% were very satisfied, providing a mean rating of 1.63 out of 5.
- Females tended to be more aware of the improvements compared to males.
- Females were more satisfied than males (96.4% compared to 94.7%).
- Satisfaction with facilities provided increased with age group.
- Respondents living in Crowborough were most satisfied (98.2%), followed by Sevenoaks (97.8%) and Maidstone (96.6%).
- 94.7% from Tunbridge Wells were satisfied with the Assembly Hall Theatre.

- Respondents with a long standing illness, disability or infirmity indicated the following had improved:
  - The main foyer area 69.2%
  - Refurbishment of all lower foyer toilets 68.8%
  - The box office counters 51.1%
  - Lift for disabled access 48.4%
  - Refurbishment of 1<sup>st</sup> floor bar 48.3%
  - Foyer entrance doors 48.3%
  - Level disabled access 47.8%

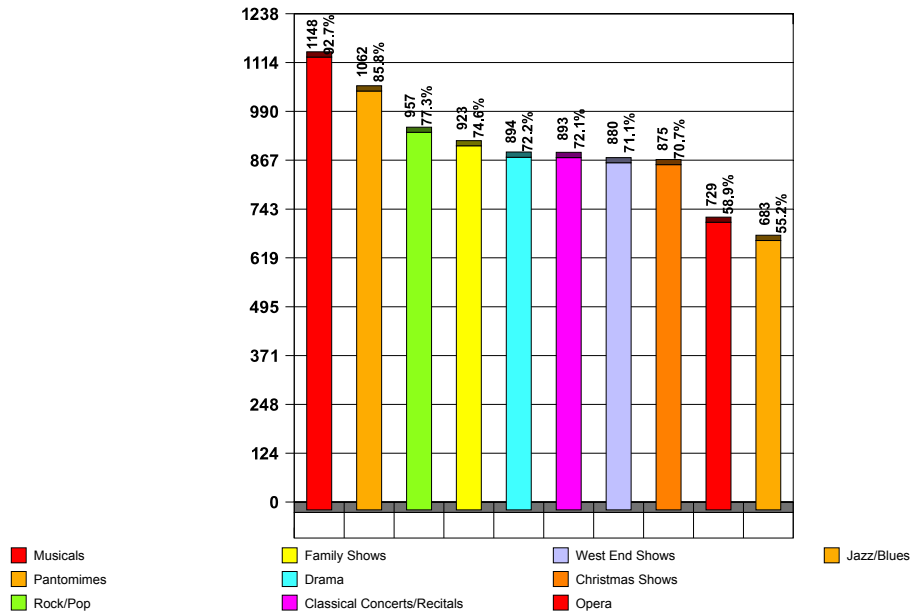
## 7.1 FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS

- Respondents were next asked if we could consider making other improvements.
- Respondents that didn't indicate further improvements could be made (72% or 760 people) were not eligible to answer the next question and therefore have been excluded from the analysis.
- 28% indicated we could, providing 270 comments. As this was an open-ended question, more than one issue could be identified, and coded for ease of analysis.
  - Air conditioning throughout 13.7%
  - Lower temporary seating, better quality, more leg room and numbering 13.3%
  - Improve acoustics in the auditorium 12.2%
  - More seating in the bar, too cramped, open bar longer 11.1%
  - No smoking throughout, better ventilation in smoking areas 10.4%
  - More toilets, children friendly, nearer 10.0%
  - Better training for bar staff, more staff required, better service 8.1%
  - Re-install the clock on the stage 5.6%
  - Better refreshments, cheaper, real ale/draught beer 5.2%
  - Better signs, non-smoking, toilet signs 4.8%
  - Bar area is dull, dirty and scruffy, needs pictures and posters 4.1%

### 8.0 AWARENESS OF SHOWS AND PERFORMANCES

- Respondents were most aware of Musicals (92.7%), Pantomimes (85.9%) and Rock/Pop (77.3%), Family shows (74.7%) and Drama (72.2%) (Figure 1).

**FIGURE 1: TYPE OF SHOWS/PERFORMANCES CUSTOMERS WERE AWARE OF AT THE ASSEMBLY HALL THEATRE**

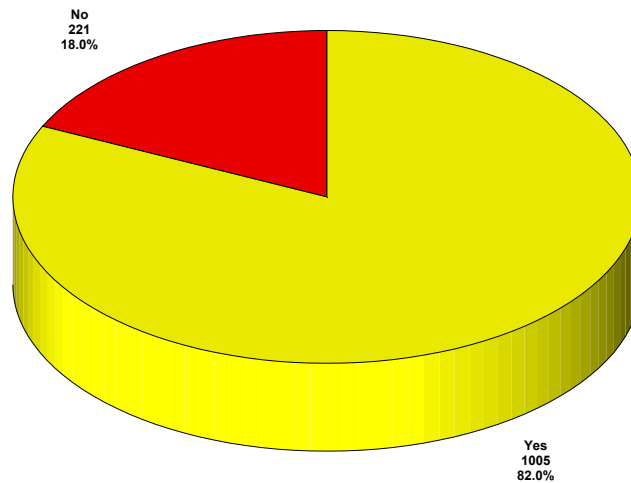


- However, respondents were least aware of Business Workshops (8.9%), Plays for Schools (23.3%) and Craft Exhibitions (25.5%).

## 9.0 SMOKING IN THE THEATRE

- The Assembly Hall Theatre is in the process of reviewing its smoking policy. At present smoking is only permitted in the main upper bar area. All other areas are non-smoking.
- 82.0% however wanted to see a total smoking ban introduced. (Figure 2).

**FIGURE 2 DO YOU THINK THE ASSEMBLY HALL THEATRE SHOULD INTRODUCE A TOTAL SMOKING BAN?**

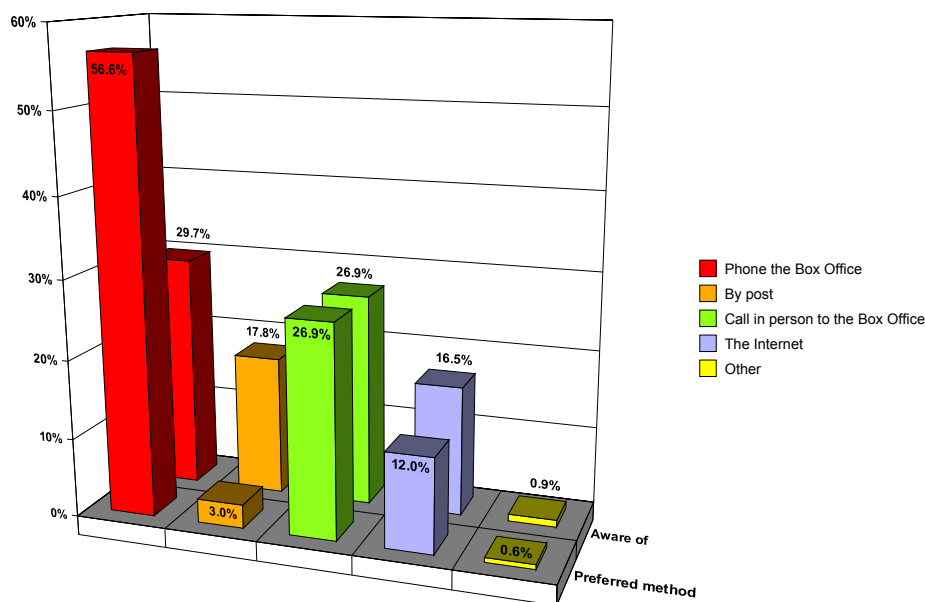


- More females (82.6%) compared to males (79.3%) would like to see a complete ban.
- Support for a total ban increased with age, from 79.5% of those aged 16-24, to 83.3% of those aged over 75 years.
- According to ethnicity, 93.3% of respondents from non-white ethnic backgrounds would like to see a total ban, compared with 82% of those of white European backgrounds.
- More respondents living in Sevenoaks would like to see a total ban (89.1%), compared with Maidstone 86.5%, Crowborough 86%, Tonbridge 83.9% and Tunbridge Wells 75.8%.

## 10.0 METHOD OF BOOKING TICKETS

- Visitors to the Assembly Hall Theatre can book their tickets through a variety of methods, from visiting the Box Office personally, or direct over the Internet.
- Respondents were typically more aware of booking tickets: (Figure 3)
  1. by honing the Box Office (29.6%)
  2. by call in person to the Box Office (26.9%)
  3. by post (17.7%)
- One in six was aware of booking tickets via the Internet.
- In terms of most preferred method of booking tickets:
  1. phoning the Box Office (56.6%)
  2. calling in to the box office personally (26.9%)
  3. using the Internet (12.0%)

**FIGURE 3: WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING WERE YOU AWARE OF AND PREFER TO USE FOR BOOKING TICKETS?**



### PHONING THE BOX OFFICE

- More males (88.4%) compared to females (83%) were aware they could phone, yet more females (72.2%) preferred to book by this means compared with males (63.2%).
- Respondents aged 35-64 preferred this method.
- 85.7% of those with a disability were aware of this method, yet fewer preferred it (63.7%).

### BY POST

- More males were aware and preferred to make a booking by post compared to females.
- Respondents of an older age profile preferred this method; 7% of those aged 55-64, 17% of those aged 65-74, and 15.8% of those aged over 75 years.
- 94.1% of those with a disability were aware of this method, less than one in five (15.7%) preferring it.

### CALL IN PERSON

- More females (89%) compared to males (88%) were aware they could call in person, yet more males (40.8%) preferred to book by this means compared to females (37.8%).
- Almost three fifths (58.8%) aged 16-24 preferred this method, rising to almost two thirds (65.4%) of those aged 65-74.
- 82.2% of those with a disability were aware of this method, with less than half preferring it.

### THE INTERNET

- More females (88.8%) compared to males (84.8%) were aware of Internet booking, yet more males (33.7%) preferred to book by this means compared to females (25.6%).
- Typically, respondents of a younger age profile preferred to book over the Internet; 28% aged 16-24, 27% aged 25-34, and 30.5% aged 35-44.
- 94.9% of those with a disability were aware of this method, whilst 25.6% preferred this method.

**TABLE 3: METHOD OF BOOKING ASSEMBLY HALL THEATRE TICKETS (COMPARISONS 1999-2004)**

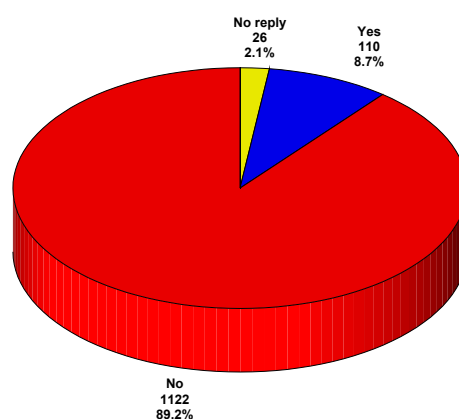
Method of booking	1999 Survey		2004 Survey		
	% Aware	% Prefer	% Aware	% Prefer	Sample
Phone the Box Office	-	72%	29.6%	56.6%	1,165
By post	-	2%	17.7%	3.0%	604
Call in person to the Box Office	-	24%	26.9%	26.9%	1,004
Through a ticket agency	-	-	8.2%	0.9%	278
The Internet	-	-	16.4%	12.0%	620
Other	-	-	0.9%	0.6%	38

- Data presented in Table 3 shows the difference between how customers' preferences have changed when booking their tickets.
- Fewer preferred phoning the Box Office, down 21% from 72% to 56.6% on those using the phone in 1999.
- More people preferred to book tickets by post, up from 2% to 3.0%.
- More people preferred to call in person to the Box Office, up 12% from 24% in 1999 to 26.9% in 2004.
- One in six (12%) preferred to use the Internet.

## 11.0 THE INTERNET

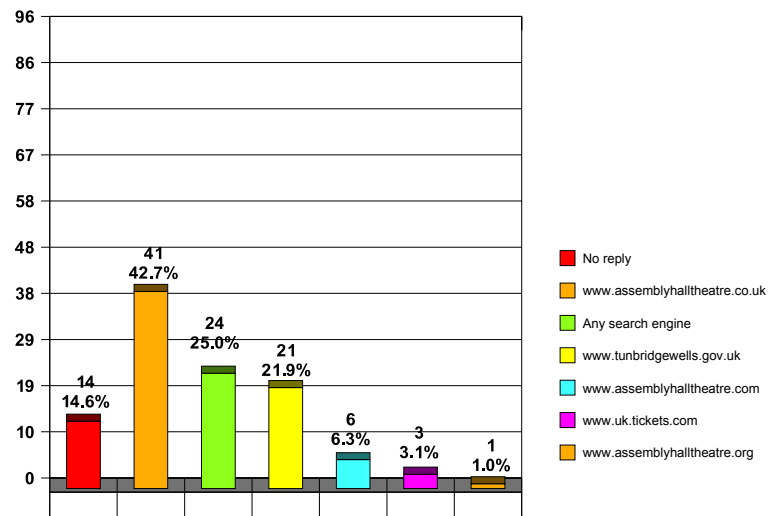
- Having previously identified awareness and preferred method of booking, we found high awareness / preference for the Internet.
- These next series of questions investigated the Internet in more detail, actual booking, reasons for not using the Internet, and which website was used.
- Less than one in ten (8.7%) used the Internet to book their tickets. (Figure 4). The remaining proportion, 89.2% tended to book tickets via other means.

**FIGURE 4: DO YOU USE THE INTERNET TO BOOK ASSEMBLY HALL THEATRE TICKETS?**



- More males (11.7%) compared to females (7.9%) used the Internet to book their Assembly Hall Theatre tickets.
- Almost one in five (17.5%) were aged 16-24. The proportions using the Internet fell with age.
- 7.1% had a long standing illness, disability or infirmity.
- 11.3% lived in Crowborough, 10.9% in Sevenoaks, 10.2% in Tonbridge, falling to 6.5% in Tunbridge Wells.
- Of the proportion using the Internet (8.7% or 110 people), almost half (49%) had used the Assembly Hall Theatre website [www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk](http://www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk) and [www.assemblyhalltheatre.com](http://www.assemblyhalltheatre.com), followed by 21.9% using the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's website [www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk](http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk). (Figure 5).

**FIGURE 5: WHICH WEBSITE ADDRESS DID YOU USE?**



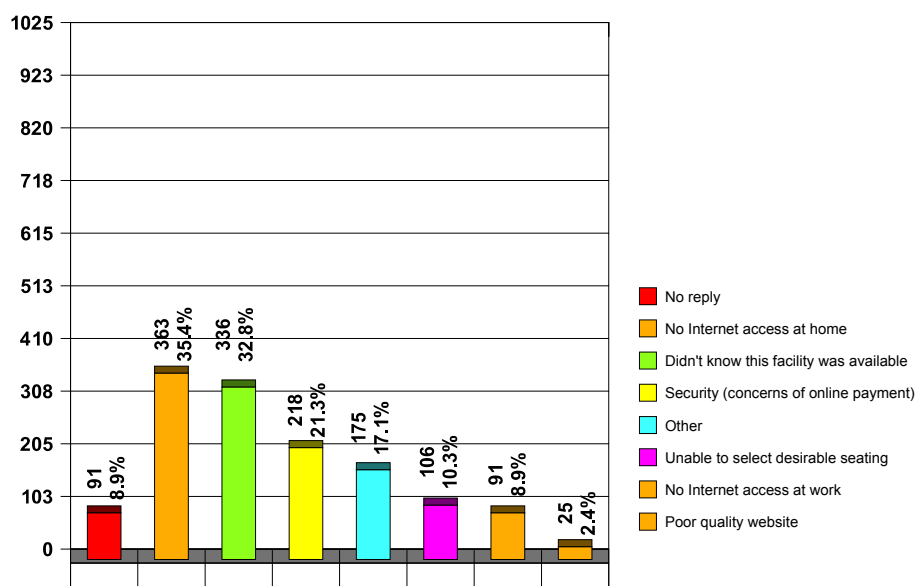
- A quarter (25%) used search engines.
- The majority of respondents in all age groups used [www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk](http://www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk) followed by [www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk](http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk).
- 42.1% of respondents living in Tunbridge Wells used [www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk](http://www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk), followed by 26.3% using [www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk](http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk). Compared to those living in Tonbridge, 36.4% used the Council's main address, followed by 27.3% using the Assembly Hall Theatre's.

- Respondents that used the Internet to book their Assembly Hall Theatre tickets (9% or 110 people) were not eligible to answer the next two questions and therefore have been excluded from the analysis. The results are now based on a reduced sample of 1,116 (91%).

### 11.1 REASONS FOR NOT USING THE INTERNET

- Respondents were eligible to 'tick all that apply' resulting in totals being greater than 100%.
- Over a third (35.4%) did not have internet access at home; their main reason given, followed by almost a third (32.8%) not aware this facility was available, (Figure 6).

**FIGURE 6: REASONS GIVEN FOR NOT USING THE INTERNET**

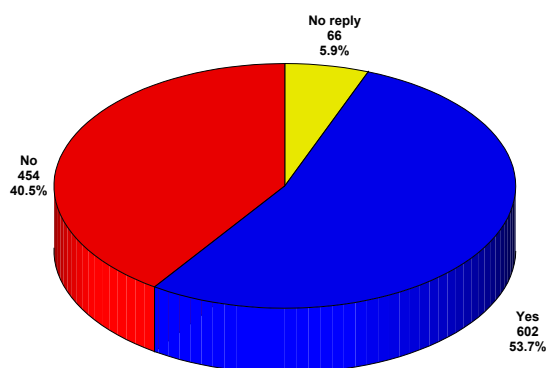


- A further fifth (21.3%) indicated security (concerns of online payment) to be their main reasons, and the lack of facility to select desirable seating (10.3%).
- More males (36.2%) did not have internet access at home, compared to females (34.2%), but females were more likely to be unaware of the facility to book online (33.7%) compared to 30.2% of males.
- Internet security was the biggest issue for those aged 16-24 years (34.4%).
- Having no Internet access at home increased with age, 35+.
- 41.3% of those aged 45-54 did not know the facility was available.
- In section 10 (page 11), it was identified that awareness of booking tickets online was high at 87.7%, yet preference to do so was lower at 27.9%. Assuming the proportion (32.8% above) are now aware that online booking is available, add these to the 27.9% preferring to use this method, there is a potential 60.7% who would use the Internet to book tickets, placing this method second, behind phoning the Box Office.

## 11.2 FUTURE ONLINE BOOKINGS

- When asked if they would consider booking tickets online, almost three fifths (53.7%) indicated they would do so if special offers were provided for specific shows (Figure 7). However, 40.6% would still not use the Internet to book their ticket.

**FIGURE 7: WOULD YOU BOOK ONLINE IF THERE WERE SPECIAL OFFERS AVAILABLE FOR SPECIFIC SHOWS?**



- Combining the proportion of respondents that indicated the Internet was their preferred method at the time (27.9%) and those that would book tickets if special offers were available (53.7%), future use of the Internet could potentially increase to 81.6%.
- Respondents aged 25-34 and 35-44 were more likely to book online if there were special offers for specific shows, 78.5% and 70.2% respectively, as would 34.1% of those with a disability.
- The majority of respondents living outside of Tunbridge Wells Borough would also book online if special offers were available.
- All respondents were eligible to answer the next series of questions.

## 12.0 BOOKING PROBLEMS

- Regardless of method used to book Assembly Hall Theatre tickets, respondents were asked if they had encountered any problems.
- The vast majority (90.8%) had not, leaving a minority of 3.7% or 46 people experiencing problems (Figure 8).

**FIGURE 8: REGARDLESS OF METHOD, DID YOU EXPERIENCE ANY PROBLEMS WHEN BOOKING TICKETS FOR YOUR LAST VISIT?**



- Those of an older age profile tended to experience problems compared to younger respondents.
- The main problems that respondents experienced were (based on 26 respondents):
  - Difficulty getting through on the phone, on hold along time 42.3% or 11 people
  - Problems with Internet booking 7.7% or 2 people
  - Booking fee on credit cards 7.7% or 2 people
  - Confusing seating plan 3.8% or 1 person
- 23% of respondents from the 1999 survey experienced problems when booking tickets, with a further 10% experiencing problems with the Box Office, a combined total of 33%. Four years later and the proportion of customers experiencing problems had fallen significantly, attributable mainly to the improved Box Office facilities and customer services.

### 13.0 ABOUT FUTURE SHOWS/PERFORMANCES

- Thinking about their most recent visit to the Assembly Hall Theatre, respondents were asked to name the show they had last seen.
- One in ten had seen the Turnadot Opera, Rigoletto Opera (9.4%) followed by Saturday Night Fever (8.8%) (Table 4).

**TABLE 4: NAME OF SHOW LAST SEEN**

Name of show last seen (Table sample 1,136)	Number	%
Turnadot Opera, Rigoletto Opera, Sunday Concert	107	9.4
Saturday Night Fever	100	8.8
Joe Pasquale	84	7.4
Tell Me On A Sunday	80	7.0
Pantomime	80	7.0
Joseph	78	6.9
Jools Holland	70	6.2
Snow White	62	5.5
Fine Young Cannibals	54	4.8
Oliver	50	4.4
John Dankworth	49	4.3
Kevin Wilson	47	4.1
Counterfeit Stones	47	4.1
Peter Green and John Mayall	46	4.0
Joe Brown and Marty Wilde	46	4.0
Stones In His Pocket	44	3.9
That'll Be The Day	42	3.7
Ken Dodd	40	3.5
An Evening With Ray Mears	40	3.5
Meat Loaf Story	38	3.3
David Essex	36	3.2
TW Male Voice Choir and Band Concert	34	3.0
Jim Davidson	34	3.0
Richard Thompson	33	2.9
Cinderella On Ice	33	2.9
Dancing In The Streets	32	2.8
Bill Bailey	32	2.8
Norman Wisdom	31	2.7
Abba Tribute - Mamma Mia	31	2.7
Carousel	29	2.6
Vagina Monologues	29	2.6
Lesley Garratt	27	2.4
Billy Fury Story	26	2.3
Spirit Of The Dance	26	2.3
Coppelia	25	2.2
Noddy, Paddington, Postman Pat	25	2.2
Turn Of The Screw	25	2.2
Charlie Landsborough	25	2.2
Fame	25	2.2

- Satisfaction was high for every show last seen, with few being dissatisfied.
- No respondents gave a dissatisfaction rating for the Meatloaf Cover Band, David Essex, Richard Thompson, Coppelia, and Charlie Landsborough.

- Taking the name of the last show seen from Table 4 above has enabled us to code the name of show into a type of show/theme in order to establish which is the most popular.
- Over a quarter (28.2%) last saw a Comedy show, followed by Rock/Pop (28.1%) and West End Shows (27.4%) (Table 5).

**TABLE 5: TYPE OF SHOW LAST SEEN**

Type of show last	Number	%	Awareness rank (section 8, pg 9)
Comedy	319	28.2	-
Rock / Pop	318	28.1	3 <sup>rd</sup>
West End Shows	310	27.4	7 <sup>th</sup>
Opera	218	19.3	9 <sup>th</sup>
Tribute Bands	217	19.2	-
Musicals	172	19.2	1 <sup>st</sup>
Jazz / Blues	157	13.9	10 <sup>th</sup>
Pantomimes	142	12.5	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Classical concerts / Recitals	129	11.4	6 <sup>th</sup>
Family shows	80	7.1	4 <sup>th</sup>
Dance / Ballet	74	6.5	-
Drama	73	6.4	5 <sup>th</sup>
Brass Bands	28	2.5	-
Contemporary Dance	26	2.3	11 <sup>th</sup>

- Correlating this question with that in section 8 (awareness) reveals an interesting pattern to the extent that although awareness of shows may be higher, respondents take-up of shows differs. For example, the majority of people are aware of Musicals, yet in terms of last show seen, Musicals are ranked sixth.
- Satisfaction is high for every show last seen, with few being dissatisfied. However, where a dissatisfaction score is given, it appears highest for Drama (8.2%), and Comedy (4.7%).

## MUSICALS

- According to age band, 19.5% of those aged 55-64 had last seen a Musical, followed by 15.4% aged 16-24.

However, presenting the results by product type shows:

- 30% last watching a Musical were aged 55-64.
- Equal proportions listened to both BBC Radio Kent and Invicta FM (29.4%).
- 58.8% read The Courier and 41.8% read the Kent Messenger.
- 39.4% used the Internet.
- And 17.1% were from Tonbridge and 16.6% from Tunbridge Wells.

## **PANTOMIMES**

- According to age band, 21.2% of those aged 65-74 had last seen a Pantomime, followed by 17.7% aged 25-34, suggesting they are accompanying children/grandchildren.

However, presenting the results by product type shows:

- 32.1% last watching a Pantomime were aged 35-44.
- Just over a third (33.6%) listened to Invicta FM, and 27.1% listened to BBC Radio Kent (27.1%).
- 60% read The Courier and 42.9% read the Kent Messenger.
- 27.9% used the Internet.
- And 13.5% were from Tonbridge and 12.7% from Tunbridge Wells.

## **ROCK/POP**

- According to age band, 34.5% of those aged 55-64 had last seen a Rock/Pop show, followed by 29.3% aged 65-74.

However, presenting the results by product type shows:

- 28.5% last watching a Rock / Pop show were aged 55-64.
- 30% listened to BBC Radio Kent, and 27.4% listened to Invicta FM.
- 54.6% read The Courier and 41.3% read the Kent Messenger.
- 36% used the Internet.
- And 39.1% were from Sevenoaks and 26.7% from Crowborough.

## **FAMILY SHOWS**

- According to age band, 15.4% of those aged 16-24 had last seen a Family Show, followed by 14.6% aged 25-34.

However, presenting the results by product type shows:

- Almost two fifths (37.5%) last watching a Family Show were aged 35-44.
- 32.5% listened to Invicta FM, and 23.8% listened to BBC Radio Kent.
- 57.5% read The Courier and 38.8% read the Kent Messenger.
- 30% used the Internet.
- And 8.2% were from Tonbridge and 6.9% from Crowborough.

## **DRAMA**

- According to age band, less than one in ten (9.8%) of those aged 45-54 had last seen Drama, followed by 6.3% aged 25-34.

However, presenting the results by product type shows:

- 36.1% last watching Drama were aged 45-54.
- 32.9% listened to Invicta FM, and 30.1% listened to BBC Radio Kent.
- 71.2% read The Courier and 53.4% read the Kent Messenger.
- 47.9% used the Internet.
- And 14.6% were from Sevenoaks and 8.2% from Tonbridge.

## **CLASSICAL CONCERTS**

- According to age band, 27.3% of those aged 75+ had last seen a Classical Concert, followed by 19.2% aged 65-74.

However, presenting the results by product type shows:

- 22% last watching a Classical Concert were aged 55-64.
- 26.8% listened to BBC Radio Kent and 20.5% listened to Invicta FM.
- 59.8% read The Courier and 41.7% read the News in Focus.
- 35.4% used the Internet.
- And 16.8% were from Crowborough and 13.4% from Tunbridge Wells.

## **WEST END SHOWS**

- According to age band, 41% of those aged 16-24 had last seen a West End Show, followed by 38.5% aged 25-34.

However, presenting the results by product type shows:

- 26.5% last watching a West End Show were aged 35-44.
- 31.4% listened to Invicta FM, and 23.6% listened to BBC Radio Kent.
- 59.9% read The Courier and 43.7% read the Kent Messenger.
- 40.5% used the Internet.
- And 29.8% were from Tonbridge and 27.7% from Tunbridge Wells.

## **COMEDY**

- According to age band, 46.2% of those aged 16-24 had last seen a Comedy, followed by 35.4% aged 25-34.

However, presenting the results by product type shows:

- 28.3% last watching a Comedy were aged 45-54.
- 28.2% listened to BBC Radio Kent, and 27.9% listened to Invicta FM.
- 54.9% read The Courier and 44.5% read the Kent Messenger.
- 38.2% used the Internet.
- And 32.7% were from Crowborough and 30.7% from Maidstone.

## **TRIBUTE BANDS**

- According to age band, 38.5% of those aged 16-24 had last seen a Tribute Band followed by 20.8% aged 25-34.

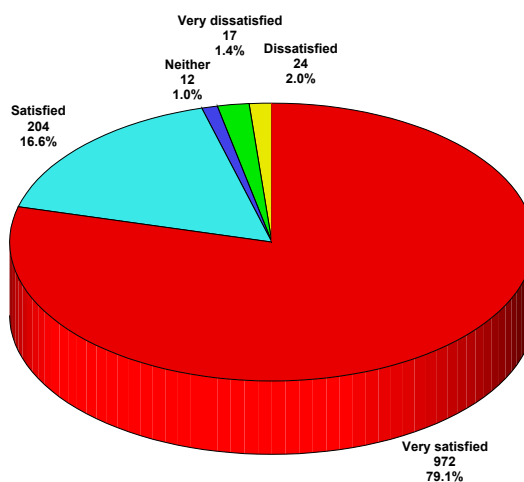
However, presenting the results by product type shows:

- A quarter (25%) last watching a Tribute Band were aged 45-54.
- Equal proportions listened to both BBC Radio Kent and Invicta FM (30.2%).
- 60% read The Courier and 43.3% read the News in Focus.
- 37.2% used the Internet.
- And 22.6% were from Tonbridge and 19.8% from Crowborough.

### 13.1 SATISFACTION WITH THE LAST SHOW

- The vast majority of respondents (95.7%) were satisfied with their last show/performance seen, of which 16.6% were satisfied, giving a mean rating of 1.29 out of 5.00. (Figure 9).

**FIGURE 9: HOW SATISFIED WERE YOU WITH THIS PERFORMANCE?**

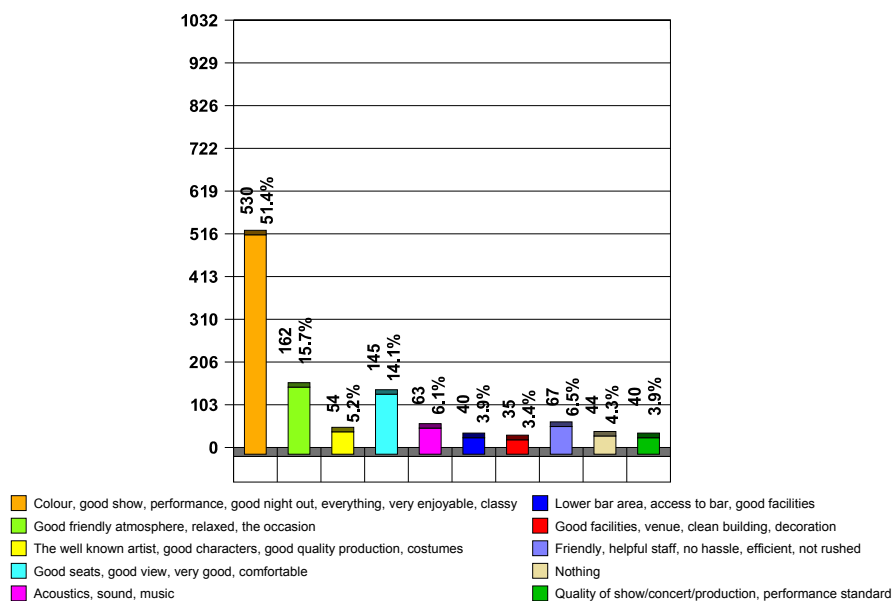


- Satisfaction is highest amongst those aged 25-34 (99%), followed by those aged 16-24 (97.5%), with a steady decline in older age groups.
- Respondents from Sevenoaks were most satisfied with their last show (97.8%), followed by Tonbridge (95.5%), Tunbridge Wells (95%), Crowborough (94.7%) and Maidstone (94.5%).
- For those that were dissatisfied (3.4%), 31 respondents gave reasons for dissatisfaction, which have been identified below.
  - Poor talent, crude jokes and sketches, not best performance 29.1% or 9 people
  - Poor direction, poor production 9.7% or 3 people
  - Mis-read performance criteria 6.5% or 2 people
  - Not good for children 6.5% or 2 people
  - Changed style 6.5% or 2 people
  - Too loud 6.5% or 2 people
  - Audience standing, blocking the view for disabled 6.5% or 2 people
  - Other (all individual comments received) 35.4% or 12 people

### 13.2 LIKES ABOUT YOUR VISIT

- All respondents were given an opportunity to write what it was they liked most about their last visit. Comments received were then coded into a structure of alphabetical codes, to enable easier analysis. The table below lists these comments in descending order of what people liked the most. (Figure 10).
- Just over half (51.4%) stated they most liked the show, the performance, a good night out, followed by 15.7% stating good, friendly atmosphere, relaxed occasion.

**FIGURE 10: WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR LAST VISIT?**



- Females were more likely to state they liked the show, the performance, a good night out (52.2%), compared to males (48.3%).
- However, males were more likely to state they liked the good, friendly atmosphere and the relaxed occasion (17.4%), compared to females (15.2%).
- More females (14.5%) compared to males (13.6%) stated they liked the seats, good view, and comfort, whilst males were more complimentary about the staff, stating friendliness, helpful, no hassle, and efficient (9.1%), compared to 5.5% of females.
- According to age profile the majority were all complimentary about the performance, a good night out, ranging from 45.7% aged 75+ rising to 62.7% aged 16-24.

### 13.3 DISLIKES ABOUT YOUR VISIT

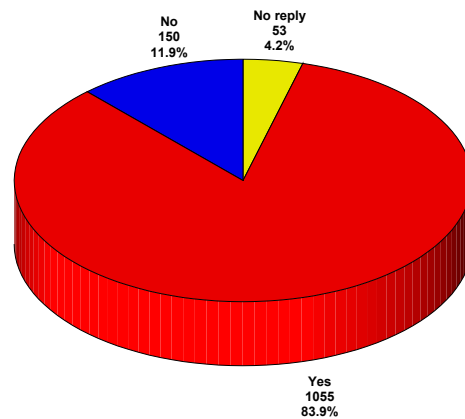
- Following on from what respondents liked, they were again all given an opportunity to write if anything what it was they disliked, if anything about their last visit. As before, comments received were then coded into a structure of alphabetical codes, to enable easier analysis.
- 333 respondents provided comments about what they disliked about their last visit. The main issues are listed on the following page.

■ Long time waiting at the bar	15.3% or 51 people
■ Lower seating very poor quality, not comfy	12.6% or 42 people
■ Smoky, crowded bar	12.6% or 42 people
■ Toilet facilities, flooded, queues, size	5.3% or 31 people
■ Tea/coffee arrangements, cold, poor taste, limited choice of ice cream	7.8% or 26 people
■ Too hot in auditorium, poor temperature control	7.8% or 26 people
■ Sound too loud, poor quality	6.3% or 21 people
■ Timing of interlude	5.7% or 19 people
■ Crude jokes, poor talent and sketches, not best show	5.1% or 17 people
■ Drinks too expensive, flat, out of date	4.8% or 16 people
■ General appearance, lacks atmosphere	3.9% or 13 people
■ Smoking in bar	3.0% or 10 people
■ Children, difficulty seeing in stalls	3.0% or 10 people
■ Blackout curtain on sound desk	3.0% or 10 people
■ Front stalls empty	3.0% or 10 people
■ Parking	3.0% or 10 people
■ Open bar earlier	2.7% or 9 people
■ No queue systems	2.7% or 9 people
■ Poor view, difficulty seeing show people	2.7% or 9 people
■ Unhelpful bar staff, serve in order	2.4% or 8 people
■ Noise, chatter from audience	2.4% or 8 people
■ To go down to toilets	2.1% or 7 people
■ Overcrowding in the foyer, too busy	2.1% or 7 people

#### 14.0 ABOUT FUTURE SHOWS

- 83.9% would visit the Assembly Hall Theatre more often if shows they wanted to see were available (Figure 11).

**FIGURE 11: WOULD YOU ATTEND MORE OFTEN IF SHOWS YOU WANTED TO SEE WERE AVAILABLE?**

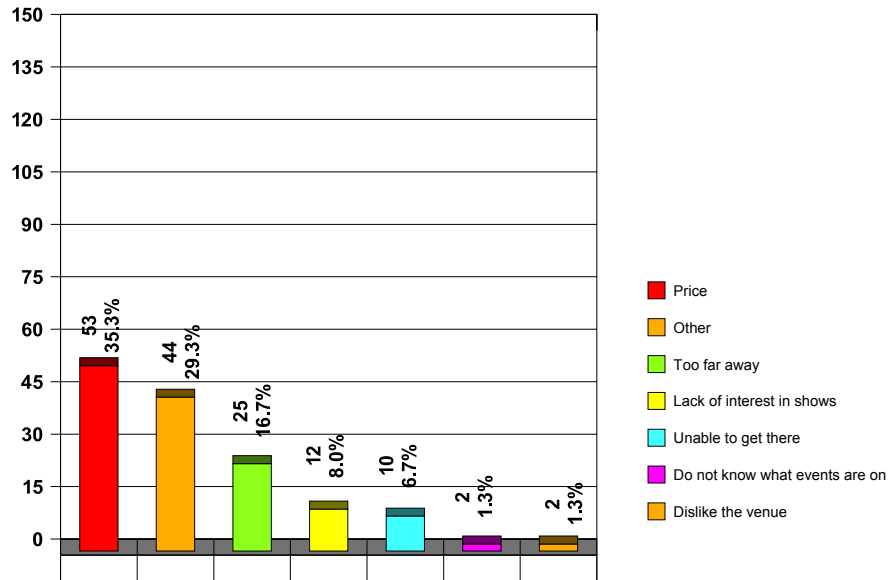


- Just over one in ten (11.9%) would not visit more often.
- More males, 91%, compared to females, 86%, would attend more often.
- Initially analysis by age shows a decline in those indicating they would attend more often from 89.5% aged 16-24 down to 84.5% aged 35-44.
- The proportions begin to rise again for those aged 45-54 up to 92.0%, where they fall again to 87.2% for those aged 55-74, before peaking at 93.2% of those aged 75+.
- The majority (92.5%) with a disability would also visit more often.
- More would attend from Maidstone (92.1%), compared to Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells, 85.5% and 85.6% respectively.

### 14.1 REASONS FOR NOT VISITING MORE OFTEN

- Of those that would not visit more often (12.4% or 150 people), 35.3% (53 people) indicated price as their reason for not visiting more often, and 16.7% (25 people) indicating too far away (Figure 12).

**FIGURE 12: WHAT ARE YOUR REASONS FOR NOT VISITING MORE OFTEN?**

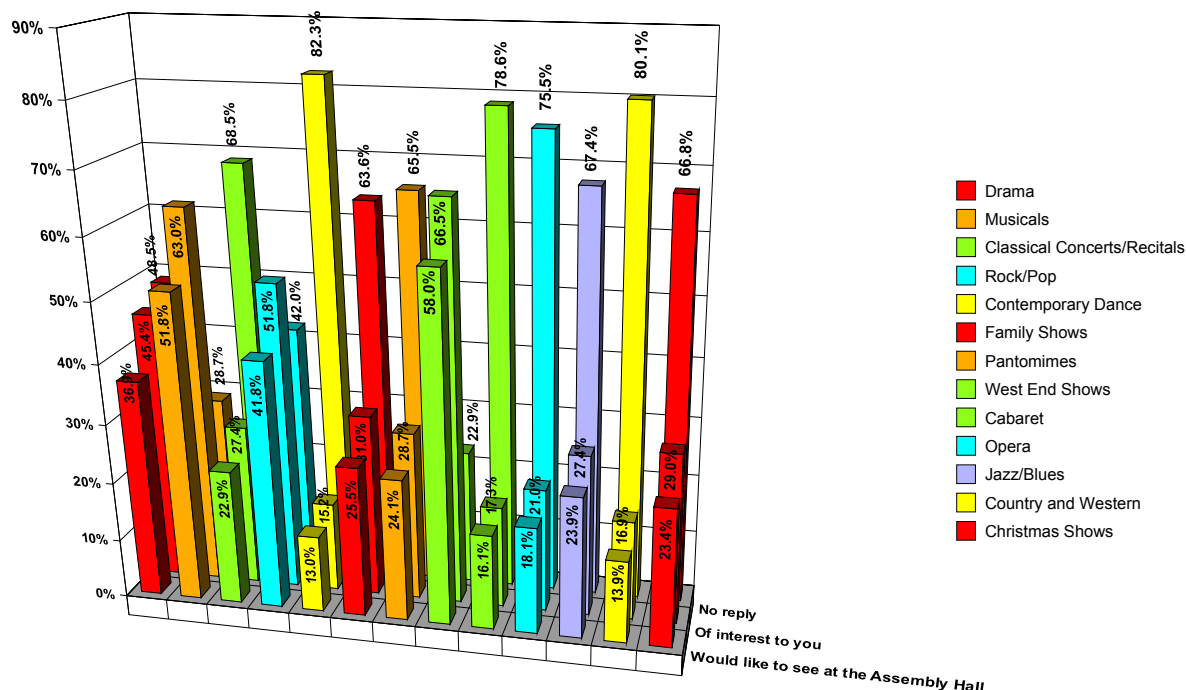


- 8% (12 people) indicated lack of interest as their reason for not visiting more often.
- The next question looked at the type of show(s)/entertainment that were of interest and whether they would like to see them shown at the Assembly Hall Theatre. Therefore those that would not visit more often (12.4% or 150 people) were not eligible to answer this question and have been excluded from the analysis.
- Analysis of the next question is based on a reduced sample of 1,055 with respondents providing more than one answer. Therefore totals may be greater than 100%.

### 14.2 TYPE OF SHOW(S)/ENTERTAINMENT OF INTEREST AND WOULD LIKE TO SEE

- The majority indicated that West End Shows 66.5%, Musicals 63.0%, Rock and Pop, 51.8% and Drama, 45.4% were of most interest to them. (Figure 13).

**FIGURE 13: WHAT TYPE OF SHOW(S)/ENTERTAINMENT IS OF INTEREST TO YOU AND YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE IN TUNBRIDGE WELLS?**



- In terms of what people would like to see at the Assembly Hall, the type of shows remains in the same sequence, albeit proportions vary slightly; more would like to see West End Shows 58.0%, Musicals 51.8%, Rock and Pop 41.8% and Drama 36.9%.

**TABLE 6: SHOWS OF INTEREST AND WOULD LIKE TO SEE IN TUNBRIDGE WELLS**

Name of show (table sample 1,055, multiple choice)	Of interest to you		Would like to see at the Assembly Hall		Table Statistics			1999 comparisons
	Number	%age	Number	%age	Base	No reply	+/- diff	Preferred
West End Shows	702	66.5%	612	58.0%	813	242	-8.5	-
Musicals	665	63.0%	546	51.8%	752	303	-11.2	58%
Rock/Pop	546	51.8%	441	41.8%	612	443	-10.0	56%
Drama	479	45.4%	389	36.9%	543	512	-8.5	52%
Family Shows	327	31.0%	269	25.5%	384	671	-5.5	48%
Pantomimes	303	28.7%	254	24.1%	364	691	-4.6	41%
Christmas Shows	306	29.0%	247	23.4%	350	705	-5.6	46%
Jazz/Blues	289	27.4%	252	23.9%	344	711	-3.5	28%
Classical Concerts and Recitals	289	27.4%	242	22.9%	332	723	-4.5	29%
Opera	222	21.0%	191	18.1%	258	797	-2.9	24%
Craft Exhibitions	193	18.3%	171	16.2%	232	823	-2.1	28%
Cabaret	183	17.3%	170	16.1%	226	829	-1.2	26%
Country and Western	178	16.9%	147	13.9%	210	845	-3.0	23%
Contemporary Dance	160	15.2%	137	13.0%	187	868	-2.2	14%
Art Festivals	118	11.2%	112	10.6%	153	902	-0.6	17%
Visual Art Exhibitions	104	9.9%	106	10.0%	135	920	+0.1	27%
Educational Workshops	85	8.1%	93	8.8%	121	934	+0.7	39%
Plays for Schools	100	9.5%	85	8.1%	120	935	-1.4	36%

- Data presented above demonstrates that there are high levels of interest for all shows at the Assembly Hall Theatre, but in all cases the numbers are not sustained for those wanting to see that type of show at the venue. Shows that are of most interest and want to be seen at the Assembly Hall are shaded in grey.

## **MUSICALS**

- Identical proportions of male (87.8%) and females (88.7%) found Musicals of interest, yet more males would like to see this type of show at the Assembly Hall (75.1%) compared to females (71%).
- 92.8% of those aged 55-64 were interested in this type of show, followed by 89.5% aged 35-44.
- 79.7% aged 65-74 were most likely to want to see this type of show provided.
- Those most interested in Musicals lived in Sevenoaks 96.4%, Crowborough 91.7%, and Tunbridge Wells 87.7%. However more people living in Tonbridge (80.4%) would like to see Musicals at the Assembly Hall than respondents do from any other town.

## **PANTOMIMES**

- More females were interested in pantomimes (83.9%) compared to males (80.0%), yet more males would like to see this type of show at the Assembly Hall (74.7%) compared to females (69.5%).
- 93.1% of those aged 55-64 were interested in this type of show, followed by 91.7% aged 16-24.
- 80.8% aged 65-74 were most likely to want to see this type of show provided.
- Those most interested in Pantomimes lived in Maidstone 90.3%, Sevenoaks 86.7% and Crowborough 82.6%. However more people living in Sevenoaks (80%) would like to see Pantomimes at the Assembly Hall than respondents do from any other town.

## **ROCK/POP**

- More males were interested in Rock/Pop (92.3%) compared to females (88.1%), yet more females would like to see this type of show at the Assembly Hall (73.0%) compared to 69.8% males.
- 92.4% of those aged 55-64 are interested in this type of show, followed by 90.3% aged 25-34.
- 88.2% aged 65-74 are most likely to want to see this type of show provided at the Assembly Hall.
- Those most interested in Rock/Pop lived in Sevenoaks 95.5%, Maidstone 93.1% and Tunbridge Wells 92.1%. However more people living in Sevenoaks (81.8%) would like to see Rock/Pop at the Assembly Hall than respondents do from any other town.

## **FAMILY SHOWS**

- More males were interested in Family Shows (86.0%) compared to females (84.9%), yet more males would like to see this type of show at the Assembly Hall (75.6%) compared to 68.5% females.
- 93.4% of those aged 55-64 were interested in this type of show, followed by 90.8% aged 35-44.
- 74.0% aged 25-34 were most likely to want to see this type of show provided here at the Assembly Hall.
- Those most interested in Family Shows lived in Maidstone 96.7%, Sevenoaks 92.3% and Crowborough 85.2%. However more people living in Tonbridge (82.9%) would like to see Family Shows at the Assembly Hall than respondents do from any other town.

## **DRAMA**

- Marginally more females were interested in Drama (88.6%) compared to males (87.1%), yet more males would like to see this type of show at the Assembly Hall 79.3%, compared to 68.5% females.
- 94.1% of those aged 16-24 were interested in this type of show, followed by 91.3% aged over 75 years.
- 79.8% aged 55-64 were most likely to want to see this type of show provided at the Assembly Hall Theatre.
- Those most interested in Drama lived in Sevenoaks 95.2%, Maidstone 89.5%, and Tunbridge Wells 88.0%. However more people living in Tonbridge (77.6%) would like to see Drama at the Assembly Hall than respondents do from any other town.

## **CLASSICAL CONCERTS AND RECITALS**

- More females were interested in Classical Concerts (87.6%) compared to males (84.8%), with marginally more females wanting to see this type of show at the Assembly Hall (72.1%) compared to 71.7% males.
- 95.7% of those aged over 75 years were interested in this type of show, followed by 90.3% aged 55-64.
- 88.9% aged 16-24 were most likely to want to see this show provided at the Assembly Hall.
- Those most interested in Classical Concerts lived in Maidstone 94.1%, Sevenoaks 90.9% and Tunbridge Wells 86.1%. However more people living in Maidstone (82.4%) would like to see Classical Concerts and Recitals at the Assembly Hall than respondents do from any other town .

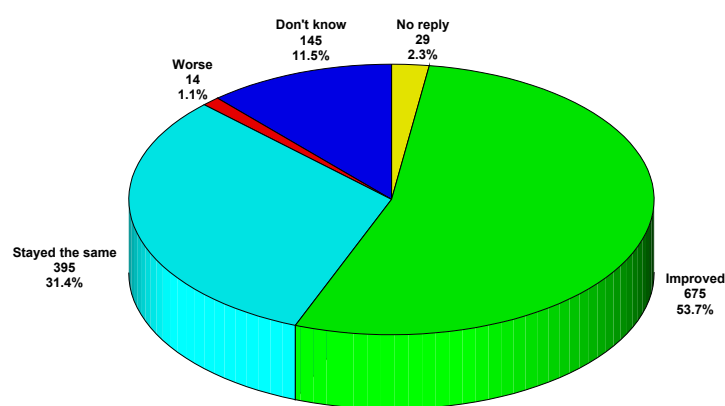
## **WEST END SHOWS**

- Identical proportions of males (86.1%) and females (86.7%) were interested in West End Shows, yet more males would like to see this type of show at the Assembly Hall (79.1%), compared to 73.9% females.
- 88.5% of those aged 55-64 were interested in this type of show, followed by 88.1% aged 35-44.
- 85.2% aged 16-24 were most likely to want to see this type of show provided at the Assembly Hall.
- Those most interested in West End Shows lived in Maidstone 88.7%, and Tunbridge Wells 88.7%, Sevenoaks 83.9%. However more people living in Tonbridge (83.1%) would like to see West End Shows at the Assembly Hall than respondents do from any other town.
  
- All respondents were eligible to answer the next three questions.

### 14.3 QUALITY OF SHOWS

- Considering the types of show shown over the last two years, all respondents were asked to indicate in their opinion whether they had improved, stayed the same or got worse.
- Just over half (53.7%) indicated the quality of shows had improved, (Figure 14).
- About a third (31.4%) indicated they had stayed the same, with less (1.1%) indicating they had got worse.

**FIGURE 14: OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS, IN YOUR OPINION HAS THE QUALITY OF SHOWS IMPROVED OR GOT WORSE?**

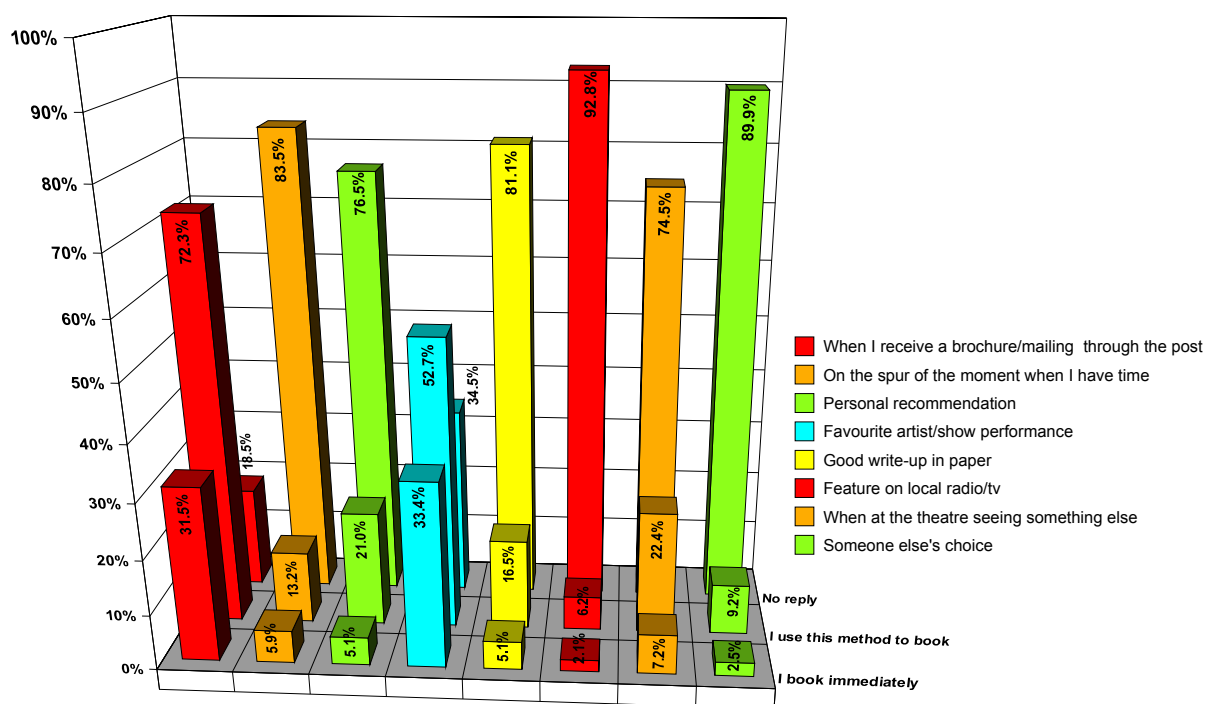


- A further 11.5% did not know.
- Females were more likely to acknowledge that the quality of shows had improved (55.7%), compared to males (53.4%).
- Almost two thirds (65.5%) aged 65-74 had noticed improvements over the last two years, along with 64.1% of respondents aged 16-24, the two highest proportions.
- Those least likely to have noticed improvements were aged over 75 years (45.8%), with this group most likely to have indicated the quality stayed the same.
- Almost three fifths (57.9%) of those with a long-standing illness, disability, or infirmity indicated shows had improved.
- More respondents living in Crowborough (61.1%), followed by those living in Tunbridge Wells (59.9%), had noticed improvements in the quality of shows, compared with less than half (47.8%) of those living in Sevenoaks.

### 15.0 ABOUT FUTURE VISITS

- To ascertain the booking habits of visitors to the Assembly Hall Theatre, respondents were given a selection of situations that may occur when deciding on how and when to book their tickets.
- The majority indicated that it was 'When I receive a brochure/mailling through the post' that influences their decision to come to the Assembly Hall (72.3%), followed by a 'Favourite artist/show performance', 52.7%.
- The third most popular reason for deciding to visit the Assembly Hall was 'Seeing a poster/advert', 39.0%, (Figure 15).

**FIGURE 15: HOW DO YOU DECIDE TO VISIT THE ASSEMBLY HALL THEATRE?**



- However, in terms of which source they use to book immediately, the proportions vary quite significantly. There was more of a shift towards when they knew their 'Favourite artist/show performance' was on 33.4%, followed by the use of the Assembly Hall Theatre brochure 31.5%.
- Table 7 overleaf provides a breakdown of the data in the above chart and makes comparisons with visitors' habits from the 1999 survey.

**TABLE 7: HOW DO YOU DECIDE TO COME TO THE ASSEMBLY HALL THEATRE?**

Method used for decision making (table sample 1,258, multiple choice)	I use this method to book		I book immediately		Table Statistics		1999 comparisons	+/- diff
	Number	%age	Number	%age	Base	No reply	Source used	
When I receive a brochure/mailling through the post	909	72.3%	396	31.5%	1025	233	69%	+3.3
On spur of the moment when I have time	166	13.2%	74	5.9%	208	1050	10% (on-spec)	13.2%
Personal recommendation	264	21.0%	64	5.1%	296	962	12%	+9
Favourite artist/show performance	663	52.7%	420	33.4%	824	434	66%	-13.3
See poster/advert	490	39.0%	167	13.3%	560	698	57%	-18.0
Good write up in paper	207	16.5%	64	5.1%	238	1020	21%	-4.5
Feature on local radio/tv	78	6.2%	26	2.1%	90	1168	4% (not tv)	+2.2
When at the theatre seeing something else	282	22.4%	90	7.2%	321	937	26%	-3.6
Someone else's choice	116	9.2%	31	2.5%	127	1131	6%	+3.2
Word of mouth	312	24.8%	85	6.8%	343	915	-	-
Other	18	1.4%	10	0.8%	22	1236	-	-

**WHEN I RECEIVE A BROCHURE/MAILING**

- Marginally more males (90.0%) compared to females (88.3%) used this method to book their tickets, yet more females would book immediately using this method (39.0%) compared to males 36.8%.
- 92.8% of those aged 25-34, followed by 91.6% aged 35-44 would use this method, whilst 49.8% of those aged 55-64 would book immediately.

**ON THE SPUR OF THE MOMENT**

- Identical proportions of male and female respondents (78.2% and 78.4%) used this method to book their tickets, yet more males would tend to book on the spur of the moment, 41.7% compared to 34.8% of females.
- Respondents of a younger age profile (16-24) tended to book more on the spur of the moment, 88.9%, with those of an older age profile least likely to.

**PERSONAL RECOMMENDATION**

- Marginally more males (89.7%) compared to females (88.8%) used this method to book their tickets, yet more females would tend to book immediately, 22.4% compared to 20.6% of females.
- All respondents over 75 years would use this method to book, yet only one in five would book immediately. 96.3% of those aged 35-44 would also use this means, yet a third (32.2%) aged 55-64 would tend to book immediately.

**FAVOURITE ARTIST/SHOW**

- There is a marginal difference between males and females that would use this method to book (79.3% and 80.7%) and those that would book immediately (51.7% and 50.7%).
- However, according to age, 90.3% aged 65-74 would use this method, but 70.8% of those of a younger profile aged 16-24 would book immediately.

**SEE POSTER/ADVERT**

- Males tended to decide to book when seeing a poster/advert (89.5%), yet females were more likely to book immediately (30.1%).
- Those aged 16-24 (91.3%), 65-74 (91.4%) and those aged over 75 years (91.7%) decided to book on seeing poster/adverts, with almost half (45.7%) aged 65-74 booking immediately.

### **GOOD WRITE UP IN PAPER**

- Males tended to decide to book when seeing a good write up in the paper (90.4%), compared to females 85.6%, however, more females, 29.4%, are more likely to book immediately, 29.4%.
- 94.1% aged 24-34 used this method to decide, whilst almost two-fifths (38.8%) booked immediately.

### **FEATURE ON LOCAL RADIO/TV**

- Males tended to decide to book when seeing a feature on local radio/tv (95.0%), compared to females, 85.5%, however, more females, 31.9%, were more likely to book immediately.
- Two fifths (40.0%) aged 45-54 and 65-74 tended to book immediately.

### **WHEN ALREADY AT THE THEATRE**

- More males tended to decide to book when already at the theatre seeing something else (93.7%), compared to females, 86.6%, however, marginally more females, 28.3% were more likely to book immediately, compared to males 27.0%.
- 91.5% aged 35-44 used this method to decide, whilst almost two-fifths (39.4%) booked immediately.

### **SOMEONE ELSE'S CHOICE**

- More males tended to decide to book when influenced by someone else's choice (96.0%), compared to females, 90.1%, with almost a third of males, (32.0%) more likely to book immediately, compared to females 22.8%.
- 91.5% aged 35-44 used this method to decide, whilst almost two-fifths (39.4%) booked immediately.

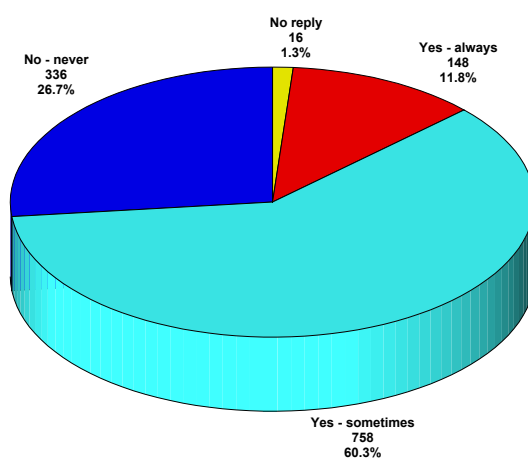
### **WORD OF MOUTH**

- There is little difference between males and females deciding to book by word of mouth recommendation, 91.1% compared to 91.4% respectively. However, almost a quarter of males book immediately, compared to less than a fifth (18.2%) of females.
- Those of a younger age profile, 16-24, and those aged over 75 years tended to decide upon word of mouth, yet just less than a third aged 55-64 booked immediately.

### 16.0 PRE SHOW MEALS

- The Assembly Hall Theatre has two bar areas, and one restaurant area. The restaurant area is located at the end of the first floor smoking bar, and available for pre-show meals, ordered prior to events. The second bar is non-smoking, downstairs from the main foyer.
- In general, one in eight (11.8%) liked to always eat out before they went to the theatre, with a further 60.3% occasionally eating out before. (Figure 16).
- Combined, this provides a potential catering audience of 72.1%.

**FIGURE 16: DO YOU LIKE TO EAT OUT BEFORE YOU GO TO THE THEATRE?**



- Almost three in ten (26.7%) of respondents never ate out before going to the theatre.
- Marginally more females (73.6%) compared to males (71.9%) were likely to want to eat out before going to the theatre.
- The proportions that liked to eat out reduced with age.
- 71.4% of those with a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity, liked to eat out before going to the theatre.
- Over four fifths of those living in Maidstone (83.3%) liked to eat out before going to the theatre, followed by 73.4% of those living in Sevenoaks.

**TABLE 8: DO YOU LIKE TO EAT OUT BEFORE GOING TO THE THEATRE? (COMPARISONS 1999-2004)**

Eat Out (table sample 1,242)	1999 Survey	2004 Survey		
	%age	Number	%age	+/-%
Yes - Always	22%	147	11.9	-46%
Yes - Sometimes	54%	757	61.1	+13%
No - Never	23%	335	27.0	+17%

- Data presented in Table 8 shows the difference between how customers' preferences regarding whether they eat out before going to the theatre have changed.
- Fewer prefer always eating out, down 46% from 22% to 11.9% on the 1999 survey.
- More people, however, may sometimes eat out, up 13% from 54% to 61.1%.
- More people in 2004 never wanted to eat out before the theatre, up from 23% in 1999 to 27% in 2004.

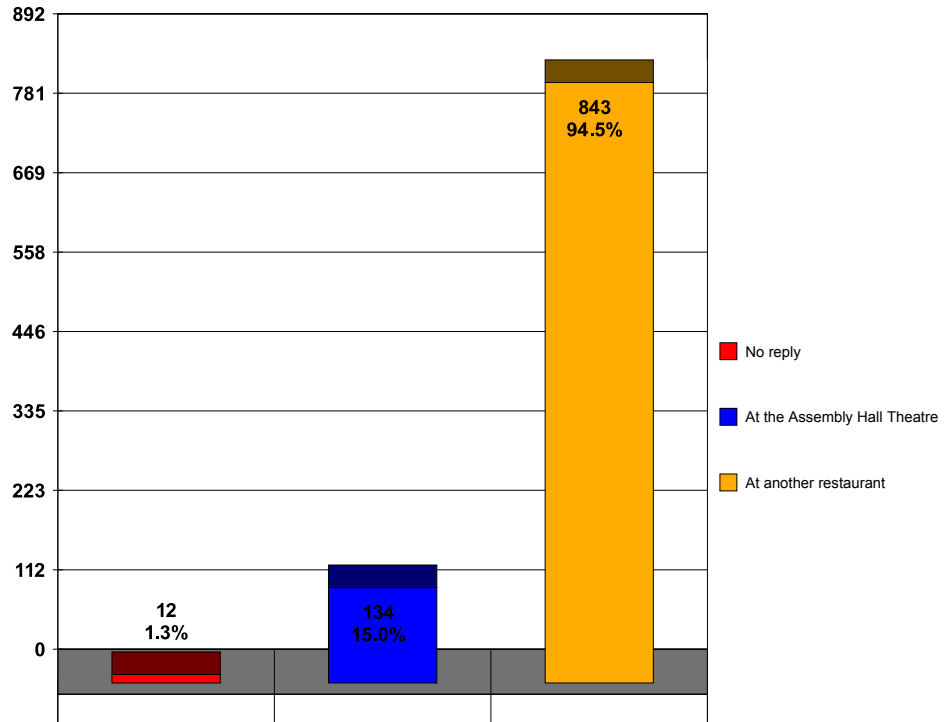
**TABLE 9: DO YOU LIKE TO EAT OUT, ACCORDING TO TYPE OF SHOW (COMPARISONS 1999-2004)**

Form of Entertainment	1999 Survey			2004 Survey			Yes (total) +/- diff
	Yes - always %	Yes - sometimes %	No - never %	Yes - always %	Yes - sometimes %	No - never %	
Drama	26	54	19	16.7	59.7	23.6	-4%
Musicals	21	54	24	11.7	63.2	25.1	-
Classical Concerts / Recitals	25	52	23	7.9	63.8	28.3	-7%
Rock / Pop	24	53	26	9.8	56.2	34.1	-14%
Brass Bands	22	47	26	10.7	67.9	21.4	+14%
Contemporary Dance	21	56	21	7.7	50.0	42.3	-25%
Family Shows	24	55	21	8.9	67.1	24.1	-4%
Pantomimes	22	60	17	10.7	65.0	24.3	-8%
West End Shows	-	-	-	11.8	62.1	26.1	-
Cabaret	25	54	21	-	71.4	28.6	-10%
Opera	25	51	23	12.1	58.1	29.8	-8%
Jazz / Blues	19	58	22	11.5	64.7	23.7	-1%
Folk	19	48	33	-	-	-	-
Country and Western	22	47	32	-	-	-	-
Country and Western Folk	-	68*	-	-	70.0	30.0	+3%
Comedy	-	-	-	13.5	60.0	26.4	-
Dance / Ballet	22	54	23	5.5	69.9	24.7	-1%
Tribute Bands	-	-	-	12.1	64.7	23.3	-
Disco	-	-	-	-	-	100	-

\* Please note: this figure is generated as a mean score from the 1999 'folk' and 'Country and Western' category.

- Data presented in Table 9 shows the difference between how customers' preferences regarding eating out before going to the theatre have changed, according to the type of show shown.
- An increase of 14% more people would eat out before going to see a 'Brass Bands' show compared to 1999, followed by an increase of 3% for those seeing a 'Country and Western' show.
- The proportions eating out before seeing 'Jazz/Blues' and 'Dance Ballet' fell by 1%, with the biggest fall in pre show meals for 'Contemporary Dance' shows, down 25% on 1999.
- Respondents that never eat out before the theatre (27% or 335 people) were not eligible to answer the next four questions. Analysis of these questions is therefore based on a reduced sample of 906.
- For the 72.1% that ate out (always or occasionally), 15.0% ate at the Assembly Hall Theatre or one in 4.8 people. The majority went to other restaurants (94.5%). Respondents were eligible to provide more than one answer, hence totals being greater than 100%. (Figure 17).

**FIGURE 17: IF YOU LIKE TO EAT OUT, WHERE?**

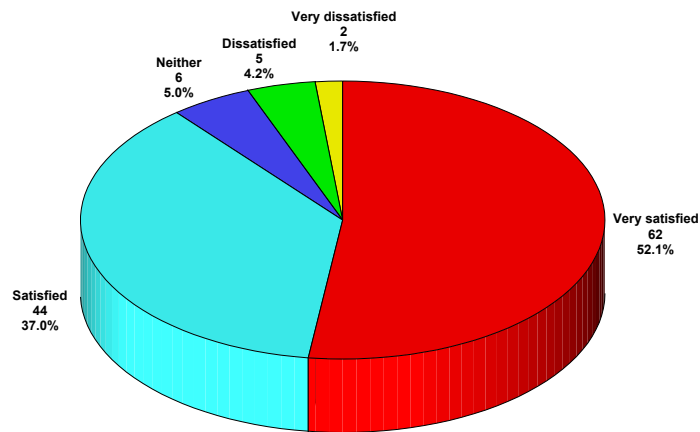


- Marginally more females liked to eat out at either the Assembly Hall Theatre (14.8%) or another restaurant (95.2%), compared to males, 13.6% and 93.2% respectively.
- Respondents of an older age profile tended to want to eat at the Assembly Hall Theatre as well as other restaurants.

### 16.1 SATISFACTION WITH PRE-SHOW MEALS

- Of those that ate at the Assembly Hall Theatre (15.0% or 134 people), the majority were satisfied with their meal (89.1%), of which 52.1% were very satisfied providing a mean rating of 1.66 out of 5 (Figure 18).

**FIGURE 18: HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE ASSEMBLY HALL THEATRE'S PRE-SHOW MEALS?**



- A small minority of customers (5.9%) were dissatisfied with the meal.
- Male respondents were more satisfied with their pre-show meal at the Assembly Hall Theatre compared to females (86.8%).
- Respondents that ate at other restaurants (94.5% or 843 people) were asked if they were aware that the Assembly Hall Theatre provided pre-show meals.
- A third (33.0%) were aware, whilst the majority were still unaware (67.0%).

## 16.2 FUTURE PRE-SHOW MEALS

- Of the 27% or 335 people that never eat out before going to the theatre, they were finally asked in this section, 'If anything, what would encourage you to have a pre-show meal at the Assembly Hall Theatre?' Comments received were then coded into a structure of alphabetical codes, to enable easier analysis. The table below lists these comments in descending order.
- Over a quarter (28.4%) would be encouraged to eat a pre-show meal at the Assembly Hall Theatre if it was cheaper, better value for money and more competitive (Table 11).
- A further 21.3% indicated that it depended upon the menu choice, snacks, freshly cooked, vegetarian etc and the quality of the food (16.2%).

**TABLE 11: IF ANYTHING, WHAT WOULD ENCOURAGE YOU TO HAVE A PRE-SHOW MEAL AT THE ASSEMBLY HALL?**

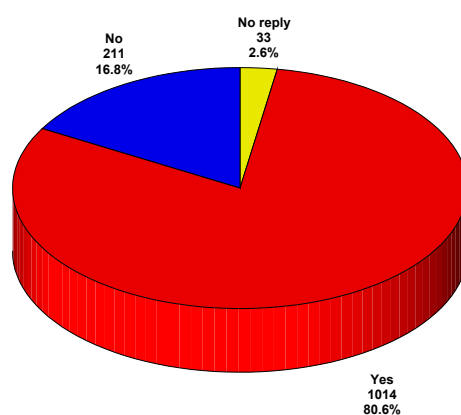
Factor to encourage pre show meals (Table sample 718)	Number	%
Price, cheaper, value for money, more competitive	204	28.4
Snacks, afternoon teas, menu choice, vegetarian, freshly cooked	153	21.3
Quality food	116	16.2
Include menu/prices in brochure, wider advertising, preview online	90	12.5
More time, better organised	87	12.1
Combined meal/theatre tickets, special offers	86	12.0
Nothing not interested	46	6.4
Availability, space, bigger/separate dining area	38	5.3
Suitable for families, children's meals	33	4.6
Less formal, more relaxed, better atmosphere, ambience	31	4.3
Quick service, good service	23	3.2
No smoking	19	2.6
Open it to public, didn't know about it	16	2.2
Recommendations, word of mouth	14	1.9
Convenience	10	1.4

- Aside from the food, people would be encouraged if there was wider advertising, menu and prices in the brochure and online (12.5%), with 12% potentially being encouraged if there were special offers or combined meal/theatre tickets.

## 17.0 OTHER THEATRES/VENUES

- Having taken a look at the views, opinions, perceptions and visitor habits of Assembly Hall Theatre, patrons one final objective of this research was to establish visit patterns to other theatre venues in the surrounding area. The purpose was to identify who the Assembly Hall was competing against in terms of type of show(s) shown.
- The first question was to identify the proportion that visited other theatres.
- Over four fifths (80.6%) visited other theatre venues (Figure 19).

**FIGURE 19: DO YOU VISIT OTHER THEATRE VENUES?**

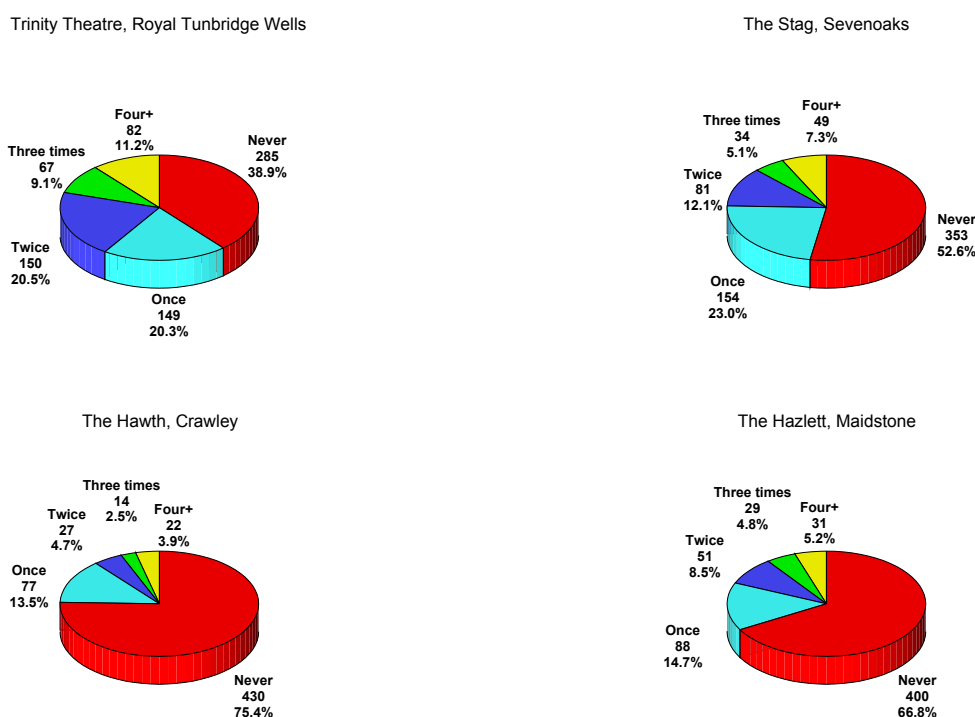


- Marginally more males (84.1%) compared to females (82.3%) visited other theatre venues. These proportions rose to 83.6% and 86.5% of those aged 35-44 and 45-54 respectively.
- More respondents of a non white European ethnic origin visited other theatre venues (86.7%) compared to respondents of a white European background (82.5%).
- Just over four fifths (81.9%) of those with a disability visited other theatre venues.
- 95.6% living in Sevenoaks visited other theatre venues, followed by 94.4% of those living in Maidstone.
- Respondents that did not visit other theatres (16.8% or 211 people), were not eligible to answer the next two questions. Analysis of these questions is therefore based on a reduced sample of 1,014.

### 17.1 FREQUENCY OF VISITS TO OTHER THEATRE VENUES

- Eight theatres are within a one and a half hour drive of Tunbridge Wells. The next series of questions looked at frequency of visits to these venues, and the typical visitor/type of show seen. These theatres are:
  - Trinity Theatre, Royal Tunbridge Wells (page 42)
  - The Stag, Sevenoaks (page 42)
  - The Hawth, Crawley (page 42)
  - The Hazlett, Maidstone (page 42)
  - The Orchard, Dartford (page 44)
  - The Marlowe, Canterbury (page 44)
  - The White Rock, Hastings (page 44)
  - Central Theatre, Chatham (page 44)

**FIGURE 20: HOW OFTEN HAVE YOU ATTENDED THE FOLLOWING THEATRES IN AREAS SURROUNDING THE ASSEMBLY HALL?**



#### TRINITY THEATRE, ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS - TYPICAL VISITOR

- A typical visitor to Trinity is a female of White European origin, aged between 35-34 and does not have a disability or long term illness. She lives in Tunbridge Wells, and listens to Invicta FM and reads the Courier.

#### THE STAG, SEVENOAKS - TYPICAL VISITOR

- A typical visitor to The Stag is a male of White European origin, aged between 45-54 and does not have a disability or long term illness. He lives in Sevenoaks and listens to BBC Radio Kent and reads the Courier.

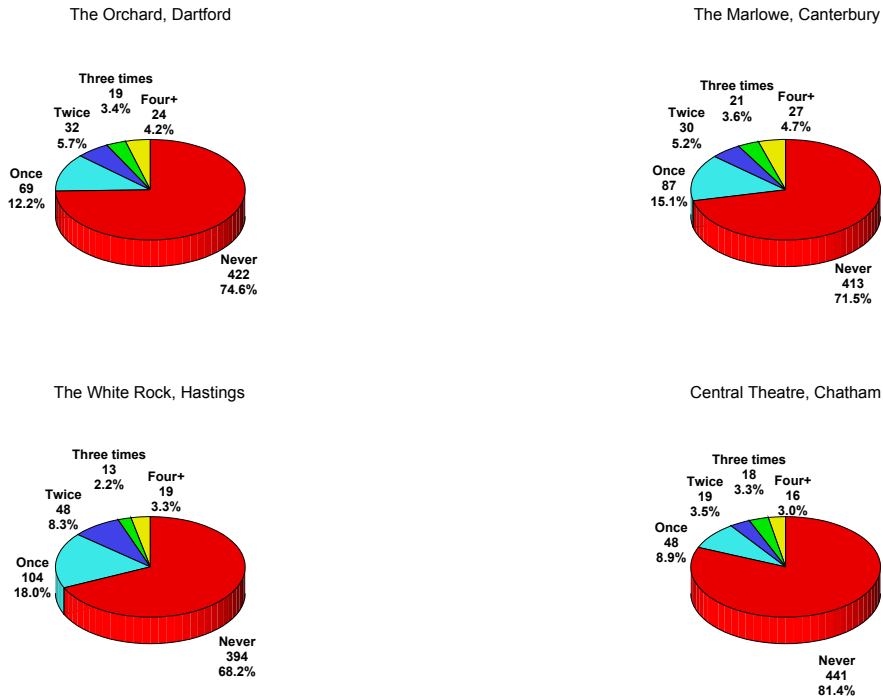
#### THE HAWTH, CRAWLEY - TYPICAL VISITOR

- A typical visitor to The Hawth is a female of White European origin, aged between 45-54 and does not have a disability or long term illness. She lives in Crowborough and listens to Invicta FM and reads the Courier.

**THE HAZLETT, MAIDSTONE - TYPICAL VISITOR**

- A typical visitor to The Hazlett is a male of White European origin, aged between 45-54 and does not have a disability or long term illness. He lives in Sevenoaks and listens to BBC Radio Kent and reads the Kent Messenger/Extra.

**FIGURE 21: HOW OFTEN HAVE YOU ATTENDED THE FOLLOWING THEATRES IN AREAS SURROUNDING THE ASSEMBLY HALL?**



**THE ORCHARD, DARTFORD - TYPICAL VISITOR**

- A typical visitor to The Orchard is a male of White European origin, aged between 45-54 and does not have a disability or long term illness. He lives in Maidstone and listens to BBC Radio Kent and reads the Kent Messenger/Extra.

**THE MARLOWE, CANTERBURY - TYPICAL VISITOR**

- A typical visitor to The Marlowe is a male of White European origin, aged between 45-54 and does not have a disability or long term illness. He lives in Maidstone and listens to BBC Radio Kent and reads the Kent Messenger/Extra.

**THE WHITE ROCK, HASTINGS - TYPICAL VISITOR**

- A typical visitor to The White Rock is a male of White European origin, aged between 45-54 and does not have a disability or long term illness. He lives in Tunbridge Wells and listens to BBC Radio Kent and reads the Courier.

**CENTRAL THEATRE, CHATHAM - TYPICAL VISITOR**

- A typical visitor to The Central Theatre is a male of White European origin, aged between 45-54 and 65-74. They do not have a disability or long term illness. He lives in Maidstone and listens to BBC Radio Kent and reads the Kent Messenger/Extra.

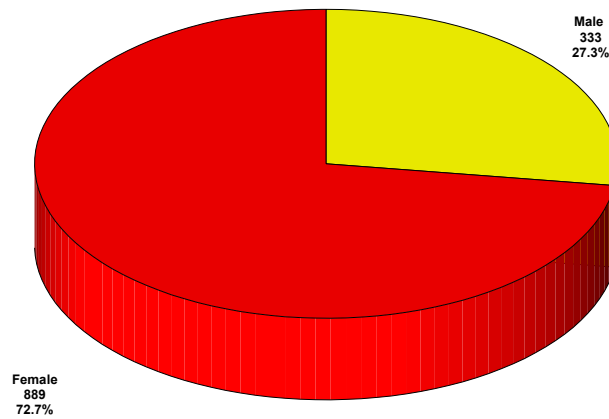
## 17.2 OTHER SHOWS/PERFORMANCES

- Having identified other venues respondents may travel to, it was interesting to identify whether there would be any connection to their interest in the type of shows shown at these venues compared to the Assembly Hall Theatre.
- According to venue the main type of show/performance last seen at these venues was:
  - Trinity, Royal Tunbridge Wells                      Drama                      50.5%
  - The Stag, Sevenoaks                                      Musicals                      52.7%
  - The Hawth, Crawley                                      Musicals                      49.6%
  - The Hazlett, Maidstone                                Musicals                      55.3%
  - The Orchard, Dartford                                 Musicals                      59.0%
  - The Marlowe, Canterbury                             Musicals                      58.2%
  - The White Rock, Hastings                            Musicals                      52.6%
  - The Central Theatre, Chatham                      Musicals                      55.4%

## 18.0 PROFILE INFORMATION

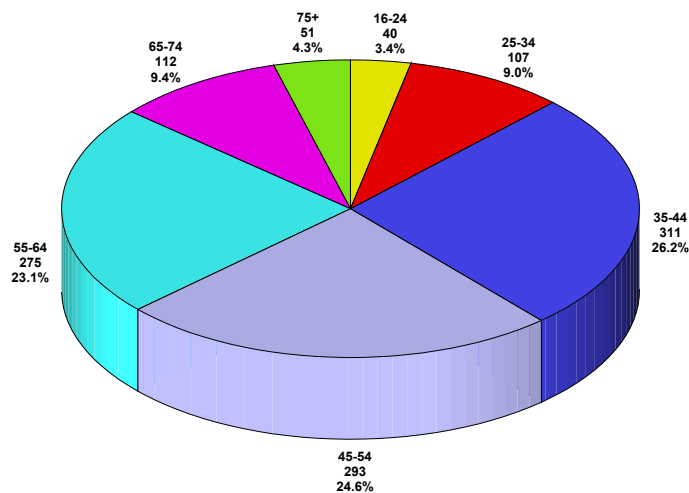
- The response sample is made up of 27.3% male and 72.7% female (Figure 22).
- It is worth noting that the survey was distributed to named contacts in the Assembly Hall Theatre Customer Database, and more female contact details may have been given.

**FIGURE 22: RESPONDENT GENDER**



- In the 1999 survey sample males represented 31% and females 69%.

**FIGURE 23: RESPONDENT AGE PROFILE**



- A quarter of male respondents were aged 45-54 (25.2%), followed by 24.3% aged 55-64. In comparison to the age of female respondents, the profile differs slightly insofar as female respondents were slightly younger, 27.7% were aged 35-44, and 22.8% aged 45-54.
- 8% of respondents had a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity.
  - Of this proportion 9.3% were male and 7.2% are female.
- Just over two fifths (41.6%) felt access to the Assembly Hall Theatre had stayed the same, whilst 39.7% felt it was more accessible.
- 98.7% described themselves as White - European, with 1.3% as Non White - European Background.
- 13.9% felt access to the Assembly Hall Theatre could be improved.
- Of this proportion:
  - 21.5% or 23 people mentioned disabled parking, free drop off area
  - 19.6% or 21 people mentioned improve entrance doors, front foyer doors, doors to stay open
  - 11.2% or 12 people mentioned ramps, no steps, wider access ways
  - 6.5% or seven people mentioned direct wheelchair access at front
  - 6.5% or seven people mentioned easier access for wheelchairs and pushchairs
  - 5.6% or six people mentioned a lift to the circle
- 27.7% of respondents had occupants aged under 13 years old living in their household; 31.9% live in Tonbridge, 31.4% live in Sevenoaks and 28.3% live in Crowborough.
- 21.1% of respondents had occupants aged between 14 and 21 years old living in their household; 25% live in Sevenoaks, 23% live in Tonbridge and 21.1% live in Maidstone
- Three fifths (60.8%) read The Courier newspaper, followed by 44.2% who read the Kent Messenger/Extra.
- 29.5% listened to Invicta FM and 28.3% listened to BBC Radio Kent
- Almost two fifths (37.6%) visited the Internet.

## 19.0 PROFILE OF A TYPICAL VISITOR

The typical visitor to the Assembly Hall Theatre is a middle aged female, she doesn't have a long standing illness, disability or infirmity, and is unlikely to have children under the age of 21 living at home.

She has noticed the improvements made over the last three years and is more than satisfied. She is most aware that the Assembly Hall Theatre offers Contemporary Dance Shows.

She believes the Assembly Hall Theatre should have a complete smoking ban, although others may disagree.

When it comes to booking her tickets, she prefers to book her tickets over the telephone, but may sometimes consider calling in person to the Box Office for that bit of personal contact. Booking tickets online would not necessarily be her favourite option, with security being her biggest concern and a lack of knowledge that this facility was provided. However, she would become interested in booking online if special offers were available.

If she overcame the issue of Internet security, she would most likely book using the web address [www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk](http://www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk).

The last type of show she was likely to have seen was a Contemporary Dance, or a West End Show. She was satisfied/very satisfied with this. Unfortunately she would not necessarily visit more often if shows she wanted to see were available. Over the last two years, in her opinion, the quality of shows has improved.

When visiting the Assembly Hall Theatre, she does not always want to eat out and is more likely to make this an infrequent occasion/special occasion. When she does though, she is satisfied.

Other than visiting the Assembly Hall Theatre, she is likely to visit others. This is more likely to be Trinity, as it's closer to home.

## **20.0 FURTHER RESEARCH**

- Further research can be carried out on all data presented in this report to provide you with more detailed information according to respondents' demographic profile, origin and other characteristics such as ethnicity and disability/illness. It should be noted at this point that analysis by these sub groups could be less representative and not as statistically significant due to lower sample numbers and therefore may not provide value, and/or require health warnings on their reported values. If this is required, please contact the Research Officer to discuss your requirements in more detail.
- Please note any additional analysis will have to be built into the work programme and may not be available immediately.

## **21.0 FURTHER RESEARCH REQUIRED**

- It is worth bearing in mind that research may on some occasions generate further research to identify and answer specific issues raised from a particular piece of work.
- Issues raised in this research that could require further investigation are:
  - Arrange through a series of discussion/focus groups the issue(s) surrounding a complete smoking ban and potential impact on the visitor profile and future business.
  - Consider in detail a means of developing the potential benefits of the internet as a 'Pull' factor marketing mechanism and how this could be used to target/segment specific user groups.