

CULTURE • HERITAGE • ARTS

# CHArts Festival 2026

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Festival outcomes, audience insights & future opportunities

September 2026

# Festival at a glance

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**45**

events

**31**

days

**2,818**

attendances reported

**151**

competition entries

Events took place across Smithton, Stanley, Rocky Cape and Redpa.

Attendance figure is reported by the festival; it is not necessarily a count of unique individuals.

\*Youth art entries were down due to previous years art work being lost at McCain Foods, this has now been rectified

# Local economic & creative impact

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**28**

paid local businesses,  
organisations and artists

**15**

visiting artists and musicians from  
outside Circular Head

**692**

pop-up gallery visitors

- Accommodation, hospitality and other businesses also benefited indirectly.
- The festival created paid opportunities and a platform for local creative work.
- Pop up gallery visits were comparative to other years despite gallery being open less

# Beyond the numbers

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- Social connection and opportunities to come together
- A stronger sense of place and local cultural identity
- Wellbeing through participation in arts and culture
- Community capacity built through artists, organisers and volunteers

# Survey results: positive overall

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**26**

survey respondents

**4.20 / 5**

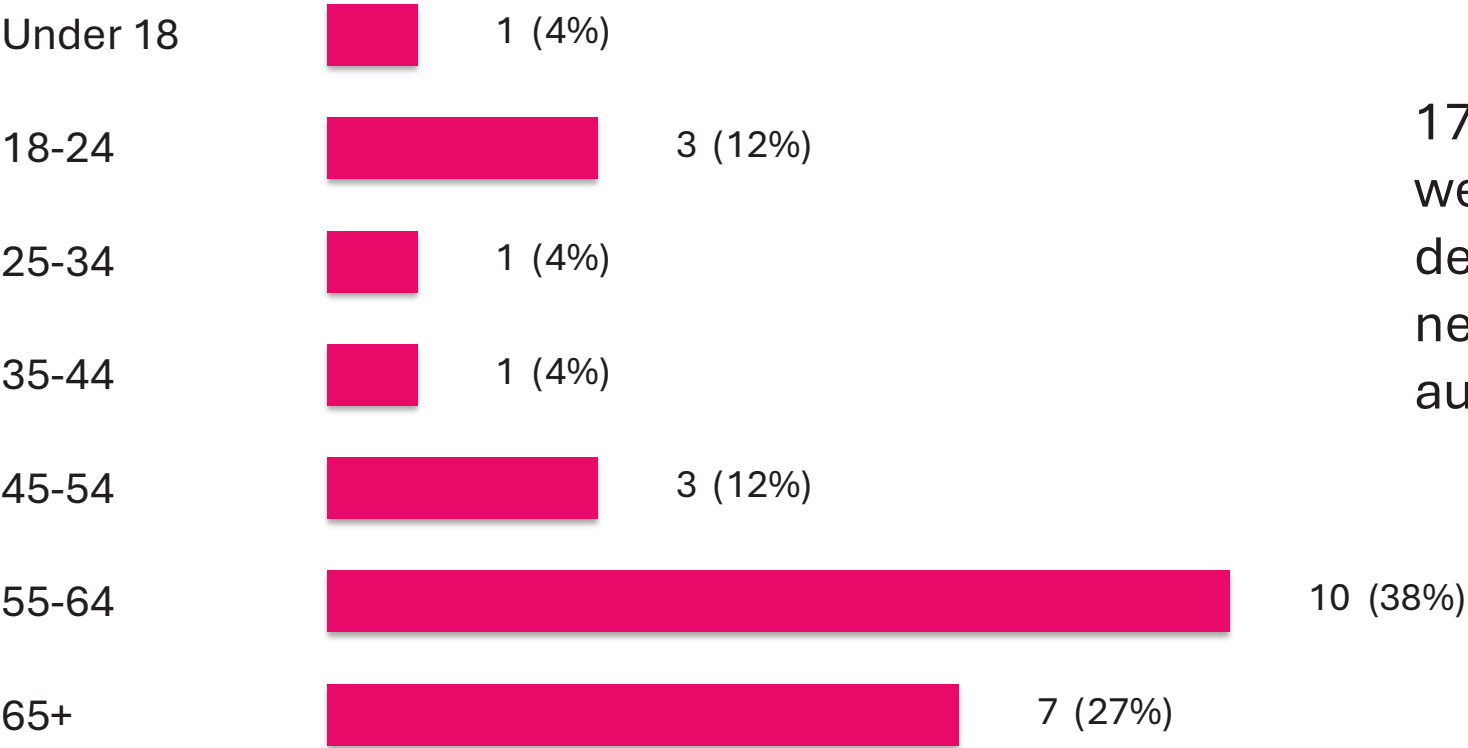
average event rating (25 ratings)

**19**

responses on improvements

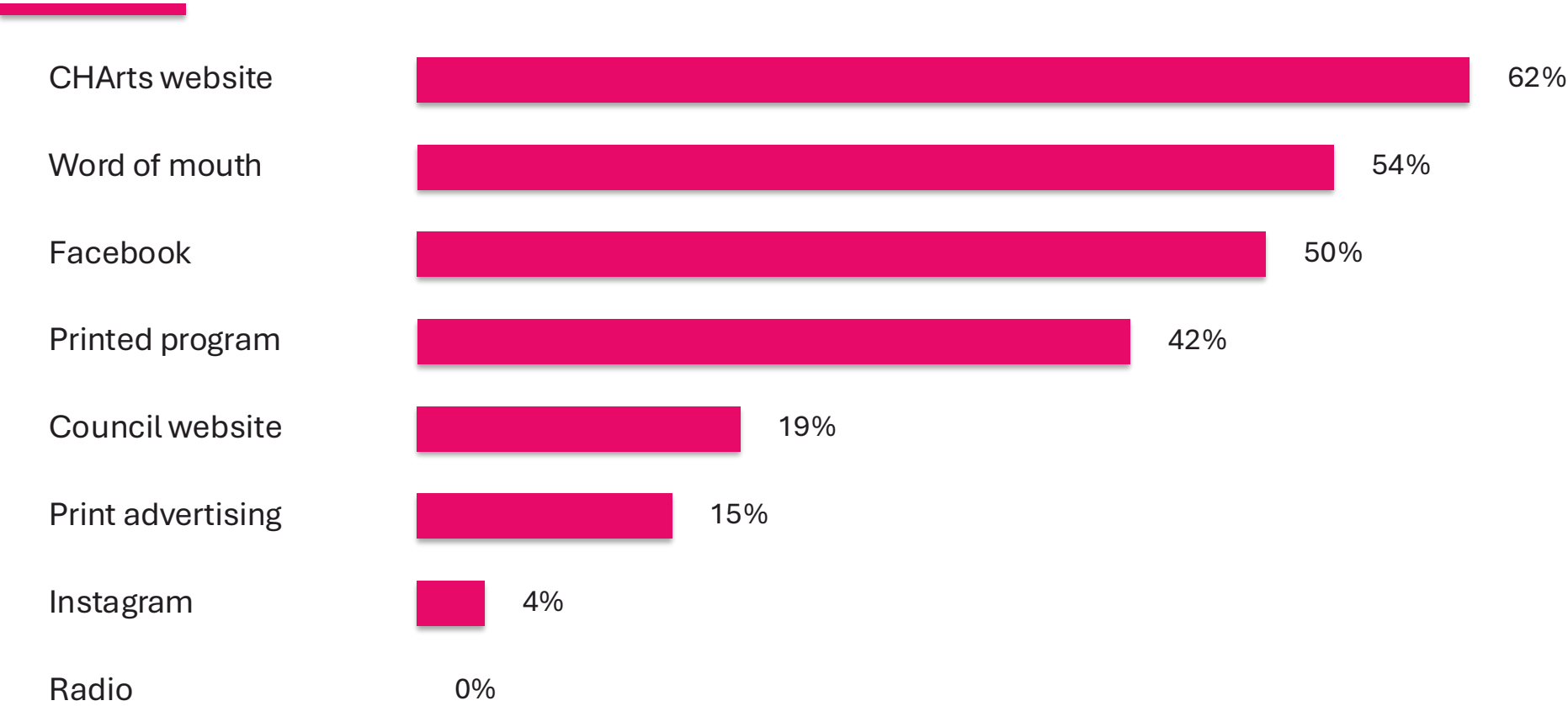
The survey is a small self-selected sample, so findings should be treated as directional rather than representative of all festival attendees.

# Who responded?



17 of 26 respondents (65%) were aged 55 or over. This describes respondents, not necessarily the full festival audience.

# How audiences heard about CHArts



Approximate percentages; multiple channels could be selected.

# What attendees valued

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- Music and performance quality, including varied musical styles
- Welcoming atmosphere and opportunities for community connection
- Food, venues and a diverse program across the region
- Hands-on workshops, art exhibitions and learning new skills
- Friendly organisation and a mix of free and paid experiences

Themes summarised from the raw survey comments (n=25).

# Opportunities for improvement

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- Reduce scheduling clashes; consider repeating popular sessions
- Offer more evening workshops for working attendees
- Improve sound audibility at talks and performances
- Strengthen workshop preparation, instructions and value for money
- Review gallery layout, venue capacity and accessibility
- Engage schools earlier and consider more exhibitions

Themes reflect individual comments, not a ranked or representative vote.

# Recommended priorities for 2027

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- PROGRAM: stagger similar events and pilot repeat sessions
- ACCESS: test after-hours workshops and inclusive venue planning
- QUALITY: provide facilitator checklists and audio checks
- MARKETING: prioritise website, referrals, Facebook and printed program
- MEASUREMENT: collect event-level feedback and attendance consistently

# Measurement & interpretation

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- Festival headline figures come from the supplied 2026 festival report.
- Survey results cover 26 respondents; 25 supplied event ratings.
- The raw Excel survey provides written comments absent from the PDF export.
- Channel percentages are approximate; respondents could select multiple options.
- Economic benefits and community outcomes are described, not financially quantified.

# Closing perspective

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**A month of creativity, participation and local connection.**

The next opportunity is to preserve what audiences value while improving access, scheduling, delivery and evidence of impact.