

Citizen Curators in Cornwall

Democratising museum collections
and knowledge

Diversity and Inclusion 2018/19



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**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



**Esmée
Fairbairn
Collections
Fund**



Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Monitoring of Citizen Curators 2018/19

Background

The Citizen Curators programme is an introductory work-based curatorial training and museum awareness course aimed at volunteers from our community. It comprises a six-month experiential learning course on the fundamentals of curating and museums and project-based volunteering supported by host museums. The programme was piloted as part of our ACE-supported Change Makers programme in 2017/18. Our collective commitments to the three-year programme are:

1. To diversify and democratise the voices that interpret our museum collections
2. To be the start of a credible alternative pathway into museum work.¹

Citizen Curators is provided by Cornwall Museums Partnership and led by Tehmina Goskar of the Curatorial Research Centre, in a collaboration with seven diverse (in terms of collections and location) museums in Cornwall.² Citizen Curators is also an active research project which is studying how offering a different way to volunteer in museums shapes the diversity of people who participate, and also looking at its effect on the understanding of cultural democracy within our museums. As part of this research we will be reporting annually on diversity and inclusion. For more information on outcomes, please refer to the Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund Annual Report on Citizen Curators (August 2019).

Summary

This report is provided as a data report with minimal comparison and analysis at present. As we complete the programme in 2021 we will have collected diversity and inclusion data for all three cohorts and will be in a position to compare this with diversity and inclusion data collected by Cornwall Museums Partnership and participating NPO museums in a more meaningful and evidential way. This information and data will be made available to external evaluators for this purpose. It is recommended that some baseline D&I data be collected from Cornwall Council and bodies such as Inclusion Cornwall to compare the Citizen Curators cohorts with the resident Cornish population.

Overall the response rate was high, in large part due to the participatory nature of how we collected the data: in an open and safe/confidential environment that

¹ These aims respond to Arts Council England's *Creative Case for Diversity and Character Matters* respectively.

² Wheal Martyn Clay Works, near St Austell, Cornwall's Regimental Museum, Bodmin, Royal Cornwall Museum, Truro, Falmouth Art Gallery, Museum of Cornish Life, Helston, Penlee House Gallery and Museum, Penzance and Telegraph Museum Porthcurno.

provided some meaning as to why these questions were being asked. There was some resistance against the perceived intrusive nature of the questions, particularly regarding sexuality and financial situation. “What does this have to do with being a curator?” “Is it any of the museum’s business?” What this forum (see below) was able to do was respond to those questions to both provide reassurance and reconfirm our commitment to Citizen Curators that ultimately the decisions they made about their participation is up to them. We would have expected an emailed survey to have a far lower completion rate. Some key findings:

- Gender balance of cohort significantly biased towards women, making up 71% of participants
- Age range of participants seems to be broader than regular museum volunteers (not tied to a particular programme) with over 40% under 30
- 38% identified as Cornish, and of those, 64% simultaneously identified as English and British, while 55% self-identified simultaneously as European; 10% self-identified as Cornish and Welsh, and 10% self-identified as Cornish only
- 39% identified as working class, while 10% did not ascribe to any social labelling
- Nearly 60% reported a condition that affected their daily life or relationships, from physical disabilities to health conditions such as diabetes. Most responses pointed to unseen disabilities or conditions that most people deal with without comment or notice, such as mental ill health especially anxiety, dyslexia and dyspraxia and challenges with words and language
- The financial situation of participants varied across the cohort with 35% of the cohort reporting financial independence
- Travel preferences varied with 37% owning their own car and the majority of the cohort relying on public transport, car shares or lifts
- Both the above demonstrate the impact of this programme on Cornwall’s ‘time and cost of travel’ barrier to cultural participation
- 42% held degrees at Masters level highlighting the entrenched situation of museums tending to be attractive to those with significant experience of formal higher education.

Method

The method of capturing data was through a wide-ranging survey developed by the Curatorial Research Centre specifically for the Citizen Curators programme. The survey (see appendix 1) used open question style queries permitting a number of different combinations of response. We adopted a tick-box response system while inviting free additional information at every stage. Respondents could skip questions they preferred not to answer or use free text to offer an additional perspective. Submission was optional, entirely anonymous and unidentifiable with individuals.

The surveys were completed during core session 4: Curators in the Community, so participants could explore and understand the context around why diversity and

inclusion monitoring was important, e.g. to ensure we were working with and offering training to people from a wide range of backgrounds and diverse life experiences, and to raise their own awareness of perceiving difference. While we also stated that collecting this data was important to ensure we were not inadvertently excluding people because of how they self-identify, their living situation or access requirements, we also know that this data will highlight gaps in our provision and in particular, the method and targeting of recruitment.

Sample size and responses

This analysis includes responses received from the pilot group of 2017/18 and the Year 1 cohort of 2018/19.

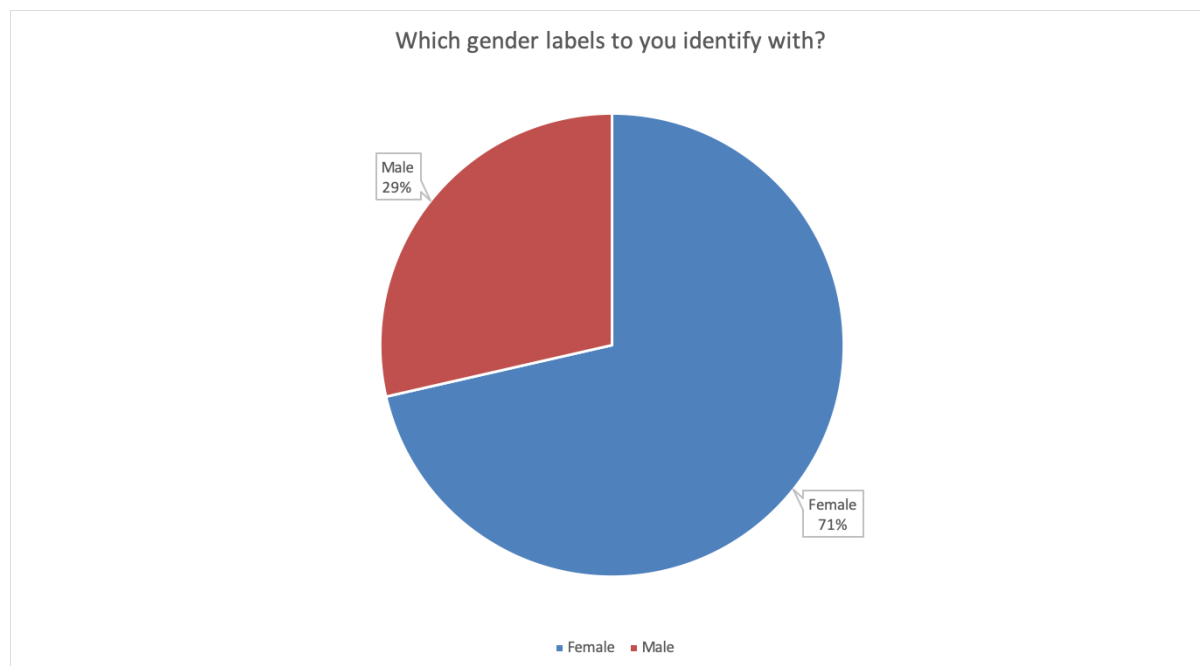
- Sample size: 29
- Total eligible participants pilot+Year 1: 32
- Responses received: 90%

Survey aims

We wanted to know a bit more about how volunteers self-identify themselves and their needs, with particular reference to those volunteers attracted to their museum and/or joining because of the opportunities of the Citizen Curators programme. We assume all responses are given in good faith but we cannot rule out a small element of mischievous or protest misreporting. We suspect that elements of one or two respondents' surveys are misreports resulting in a margin of error of 6%.

The results provide data on diversity governed by the Equality Act 2010 Protected Characteristics, in addition to social scientific data about the background and life experience of Citizen Curators, such as health conditions or neurodiverse differences that may affect daily life or relationships, financial and household situation. This data directly demonstrates how Citizen Curators responds to Arts Council England's Creative Case for Diversity. The purpose of this data is to highlight the often hidden diversity of museum volunteers, and that appearances can be deceptive.

Gender identity



The cohort was predominantly female with over one-third of participants (71%) identifying as female. This is broadly reflective of the wider museum workforce in Cornwall (including volunteer-run museums and auxiliary organisations). However, this comparison requires better statistics than currently available to confirm. ACE's Diversity Report 2018 shows a 52% female: male gender balance in MPM museums.³ We need a clearer picture of diversity in volunteering across Cornish museums and indeed volunteering more generally in Cornwall.

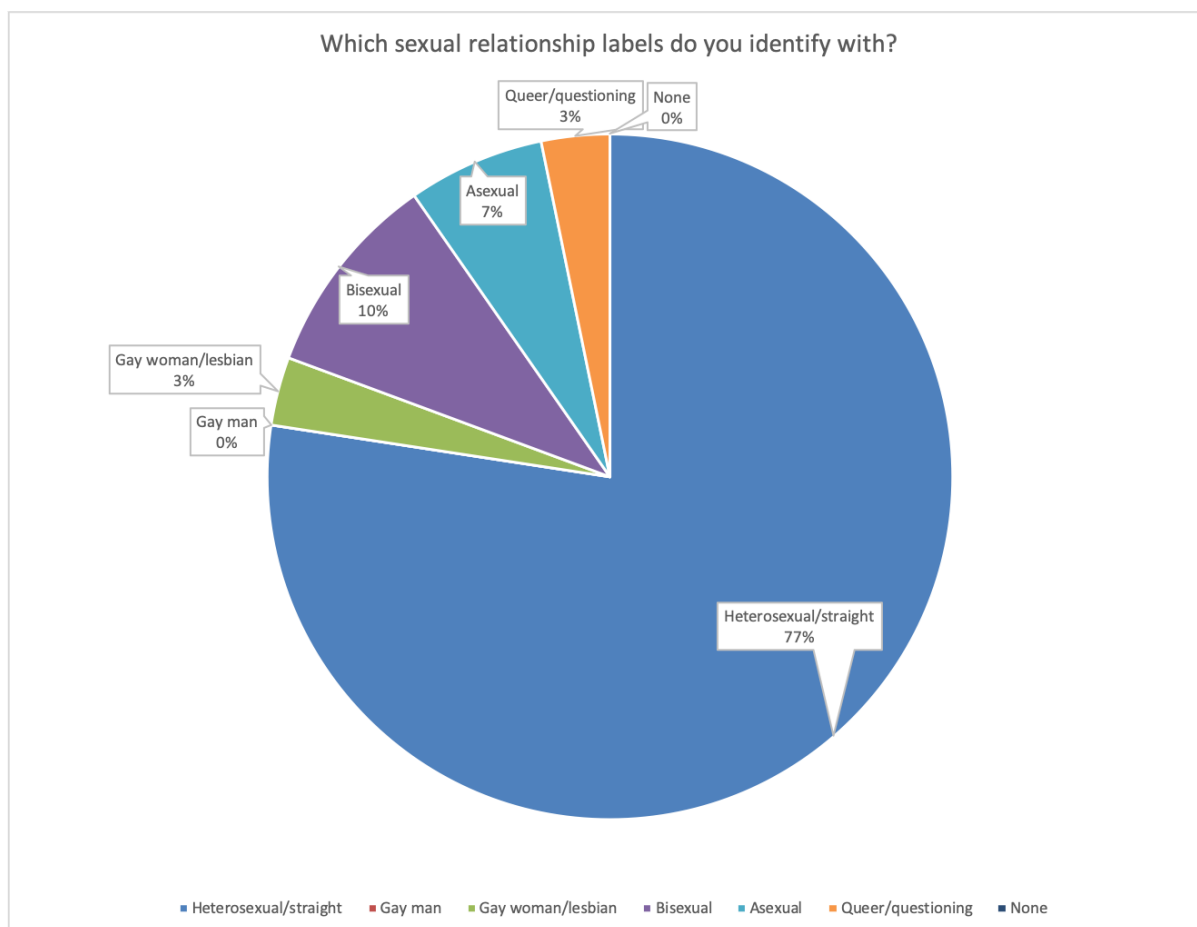
(Q1. Response rate: 97%)

100% of respondents that answered question 2 on gender assignment at birth reported that their gender identity today is the same as they were assigned at birth.

(Q2. Response rate: 93%)

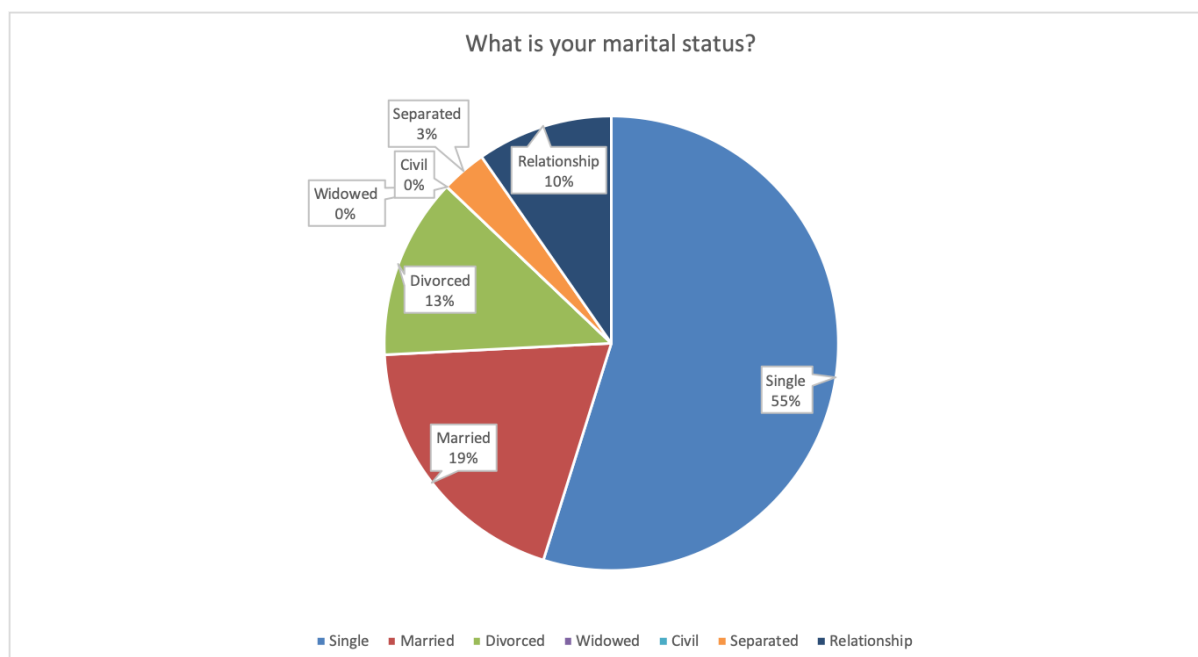
³ Equality, Diversity and the Creative Case. A Data Report 2017-2018.
https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Diversity_report_1718.pdf

Relationship identities



Over three-quarters (77%) of participants identified as heterosexual or straight. 23% of participants identified as bisexual, queer or questioning, asexual or lesbian. No participants identified as a gay man.

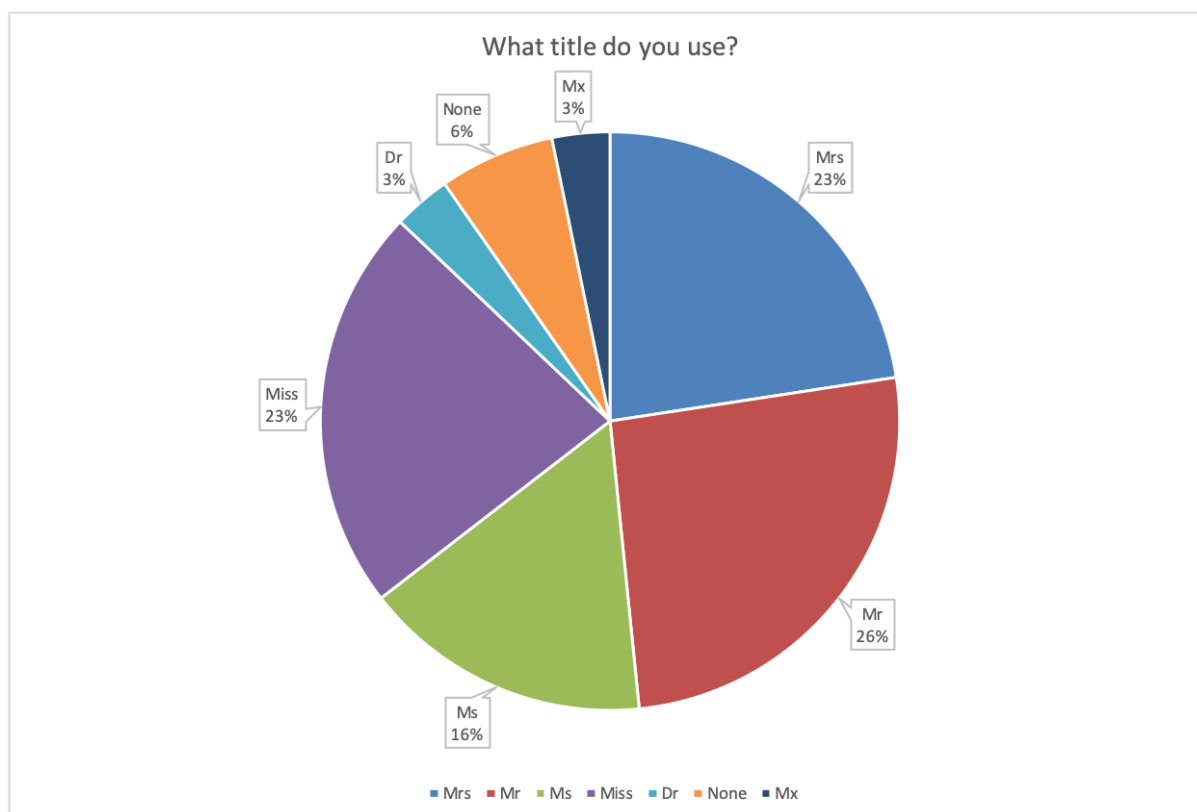
(Q3. Response rate: 100%)



We asked the cohort about their marital status. We would now recommend rephrasing the question to ask about relationship status, removing the bias towards married being a norm. Nearly one-fifth (19%) reported being married. The majority of the cohort (55%) reported being single. This perhaps suggests the value that volunteering in a meaningful way may bring to those who live on their own. In a region like Cornwall where many experience isolation, not just physically but intellectually, programmes like Citizen Curators and meaningful volunteering in a museum can make a difference to their lives. In the CMP film, *Pathways to the Profession*, one participant speaks about the experience being her “sanctuary.”⁴ 13% were divorced, with 10% being in a relationship.

(Q4. Response rate: 100%)

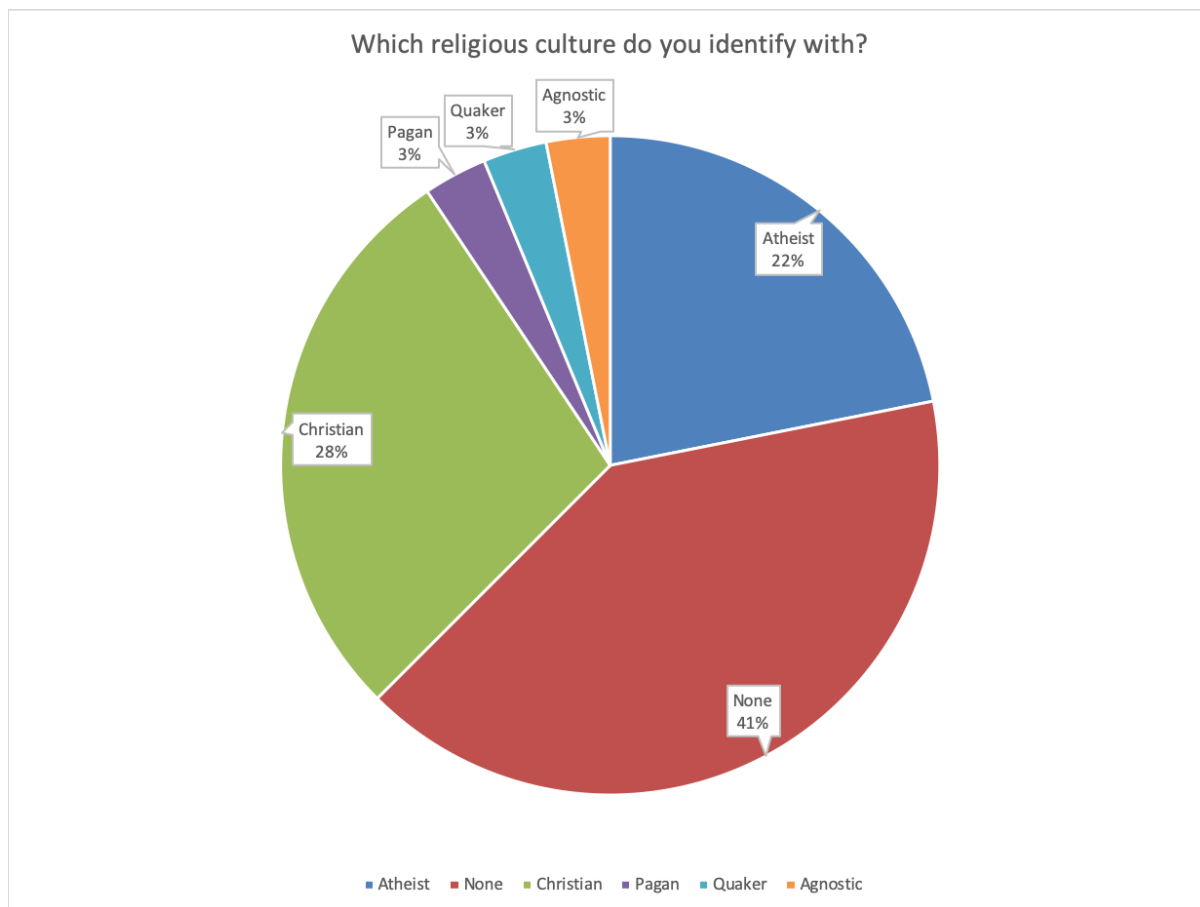
⁴ Cornwall Museums Partnership, *Pathways to the Profession*, 2019: <https://youtu.be/yBV6YVV0wo>.



We asked participants about the title they preferred (or not) to use to compare with gender identity and relationship data. About one-quarter of the cohort reported using Mr as a preferred title (26%). This is broadly contiguous with male identity although slightly over, possibly indicating a skewed result caused by misreporting. Amongst those identifying as female, 23% use the title Miss, 23% use Mrs and 16% use Ms. 3% use their academic title Dr and the same percentage opt for Mx, while 6% prefer not to use any title.

(Q5. Response rate: 100%)

Religious culture



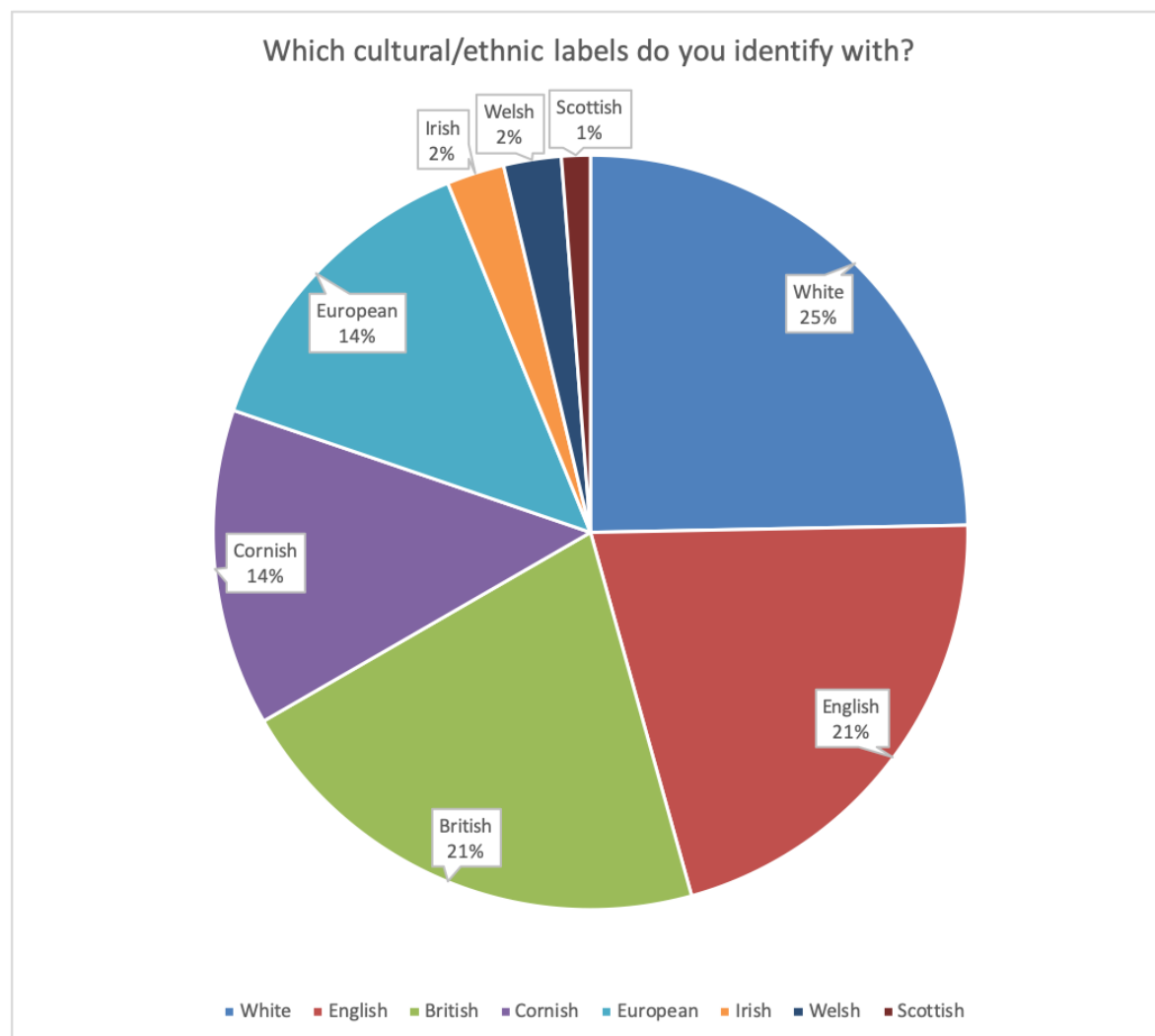
The majority of respondents in the cohort do not identify with any religion or religious culture (41%). Over one-quarter (28%) identify as Christian with some respondents providing more specific information on their religious cultures (see below). Near one-quarter (22%) report identifying as Atheist. The remaining religious culture labels represented in the cohort are Agnostic at 3%, Quaker at 3% and Pagan at 3%.

Additional information provided on identity with religious culture:

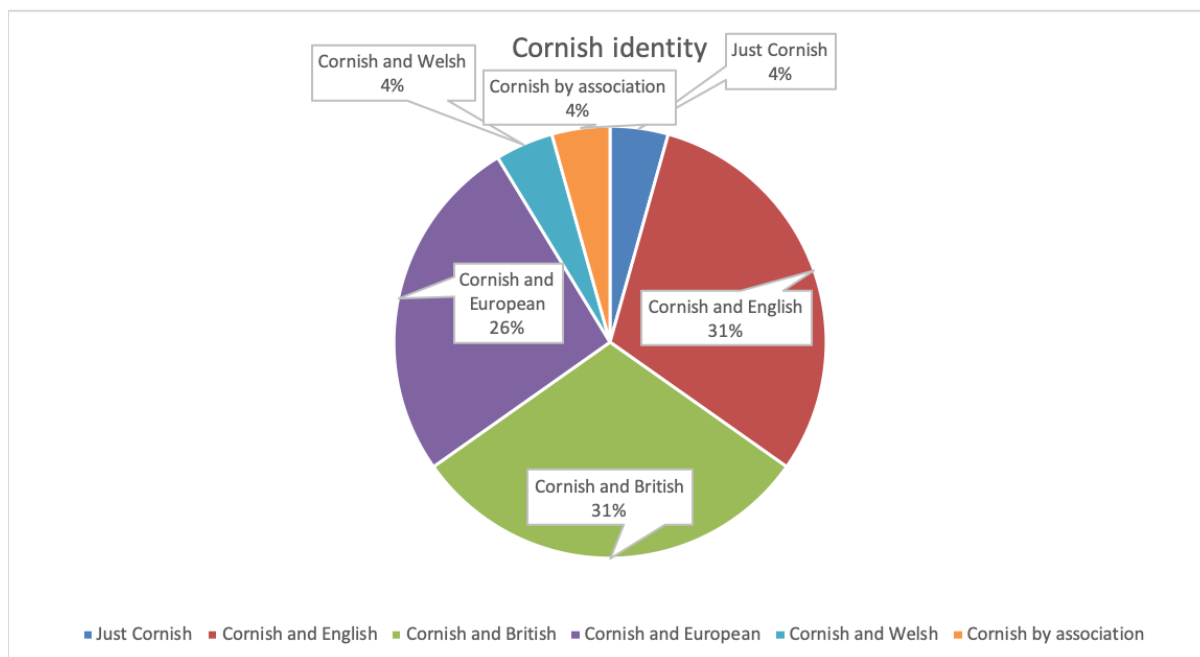
Non-practising/Catholic	2
High church CoE	1
Non-practising/CoE	2
*Agnostic, Christian learned behaviour	1

(Q6. Response rate: 100%)

Ethnic and cultural identities



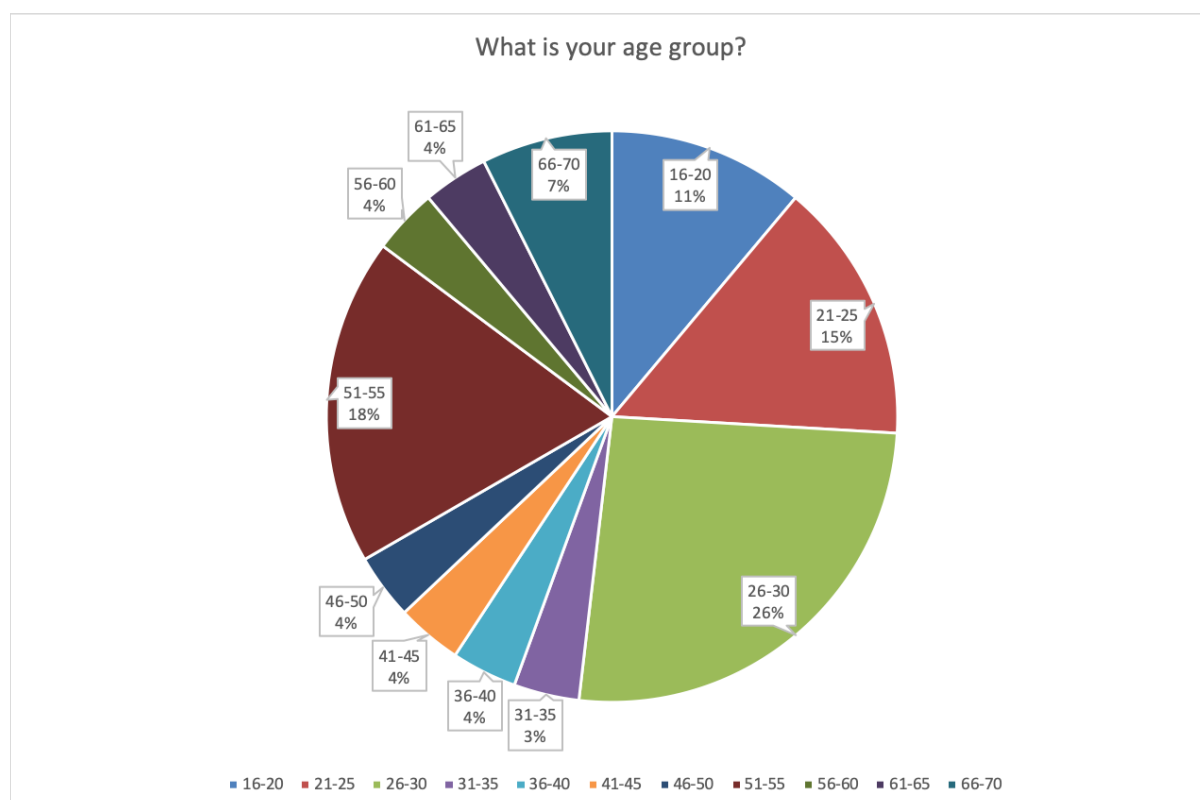
The cohort identifies with a variety of ethnic and cultural/ancestry labels that are broadly reflective of Cornish society today. We need to compare this data with current data held on the wider population, and in particular the museum volunteering population of Cornwall. The responses permitted a range of labels relating to skin colour, ethnicity and nationality. Most of the cohort (69%) chose to identify as White. No other racial/skin colour labels were identified with. Within the cohort, 59% identify as English, and 59% identify as British. 38% identify as Cornish, and 38% identify as European. All these labels were tick-box options and we expect the results might have been different if the question response was entirely free range or had a very limited set of options.



Of those respondents that self-identified as Cornish, 64% simultaneously identified as English and British. 55% self-identified simultaneously as European. 10% self-identified as Cornish and Welsh and 10% self-identified as Cornish only. This suggests that amongst the cohort a sense of Cornishness exists, but not in isolation to other felt identities. 10% cited a Cornish identity by association with family, such as through marriage. These statistics suggest the very complex nature of how Cornish identity is felt by the cohort. Given Cornish identity is formally recognised as one of Britain’s Celtic identities (with Welsh, Irish and Scots) it may be a surprise that such a large proportion of those identifying as Cornish also identify as English. The nature of these combinations deserves far greater scrutiny. By contrast, when dual Cornish-European and Cornish-British identity is taken together, over half of those identifying as Cornish choose to associate themselves with non-English geography and politics.

(Q7. Response rate: 100%)

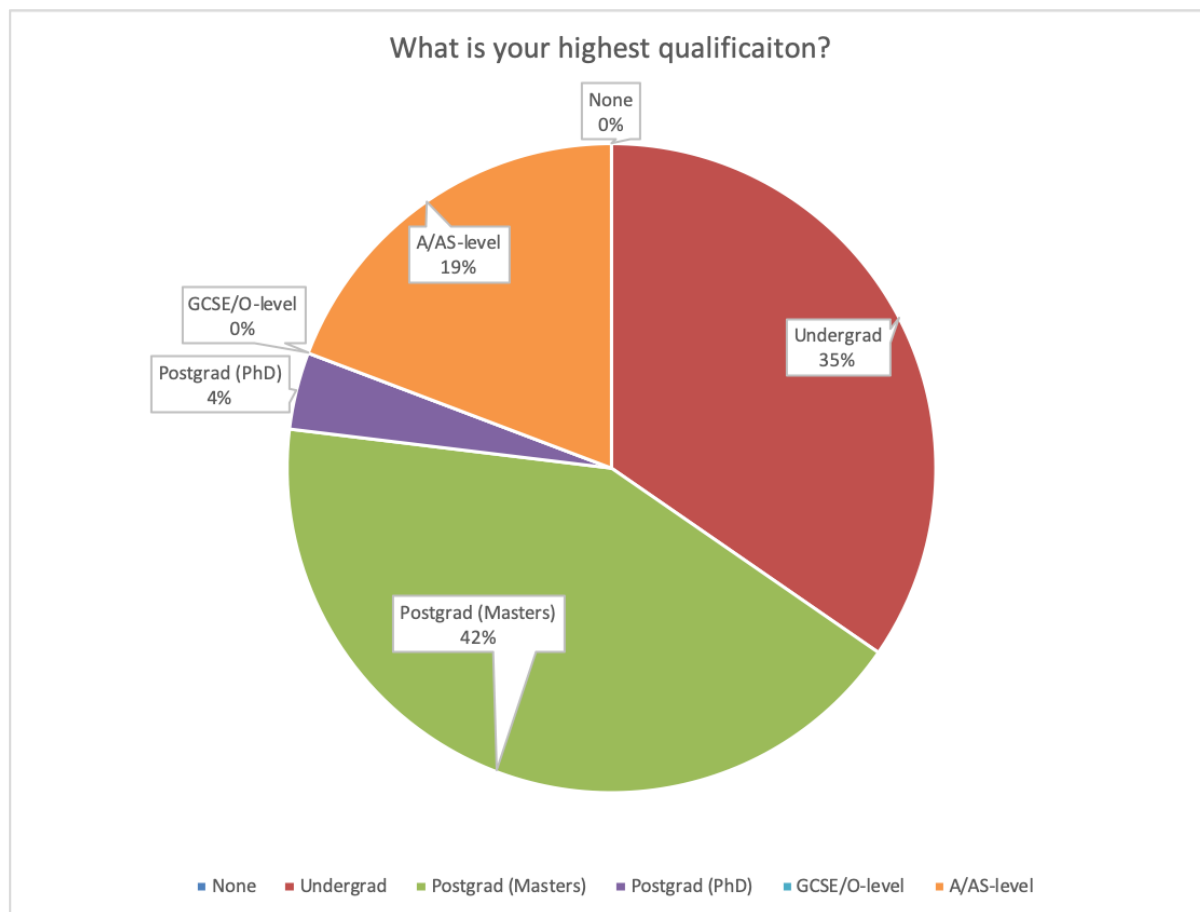
Age



The most frequent age group of the cohort is 26-30 years and represented by 26% of the respondents. The next highest age group frequency is represented by the 51-55 age group at 18%. Taken together the age groups under 50 (thought to be the least common age group of museum volunteers) represent 67% of the cohort. This statistic significantly bucks the trend of the older, retired museum volunteer, corroborated further when we look at the cohort's financial situation.

(Q8. Response rate: 93%)

Qualifications

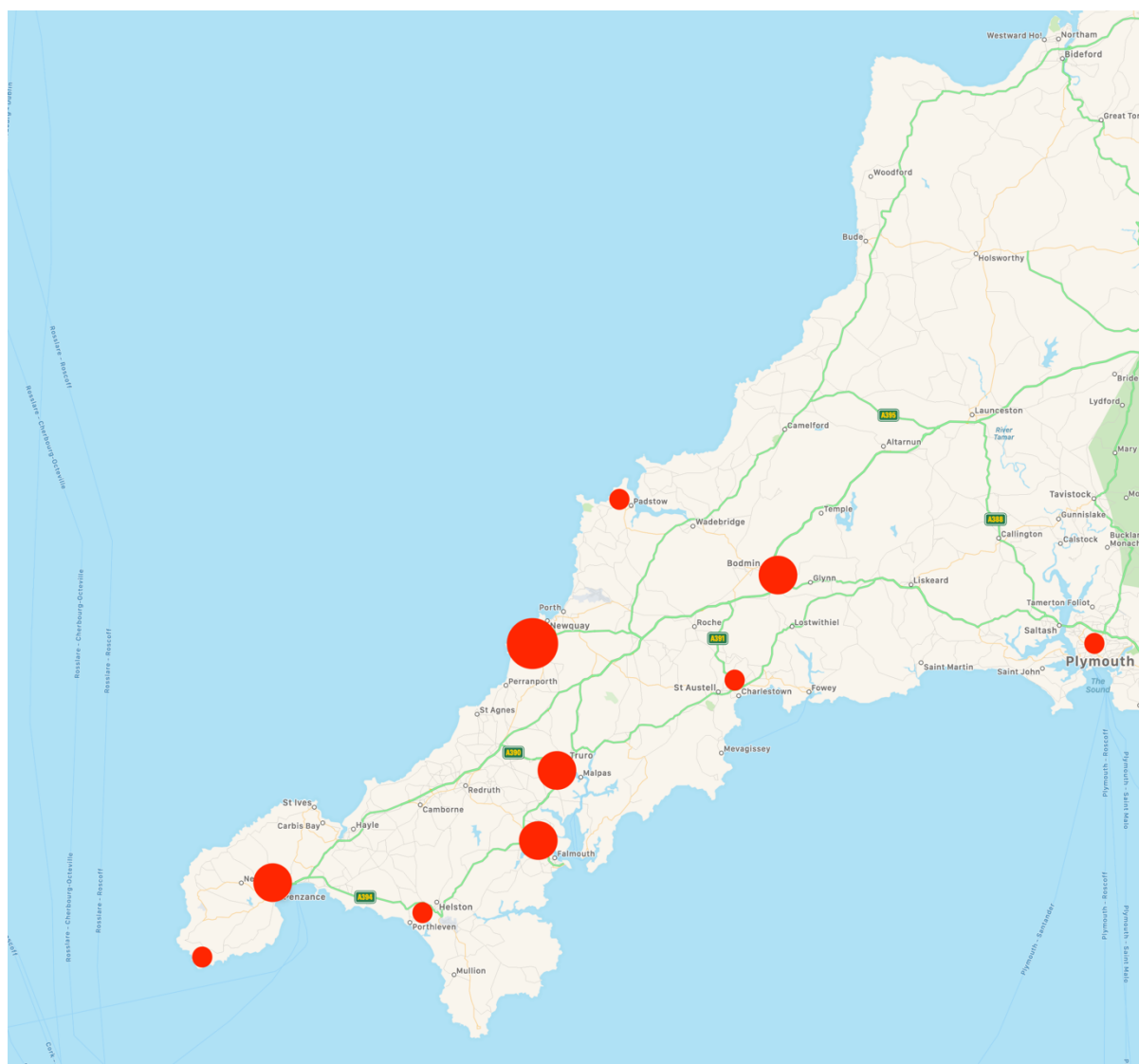


The majority of the cohort hold some kind of university degree, 35% at undergraduate level and 42% (the highest proportion) at Masters level. None of the cohort held no qualifications at all. 19% of the cohort held A/AS level qualifications as their highest academic attainment. The range of these responses shed light on the entrenched situation whereby those who have significant formal educational experiences are attracted to museums and museum volunteering (with exceptions at industry-led museums). It also points to challenges in recruitment faced by museums wishing to build relationships with those who have not engaged in higher education. Given Citizen Curators is framed as an alternative pathway into museums and museum work, these statistics may seem alarming. However, it should be noted that the variety of subjects learned by the cohort did vary (although we did not formally ask this in the survey) from fine art to computer science. Other qualifications cited were:

Professional Finance
RGN
BTEC Higher National Dip
PG Dip

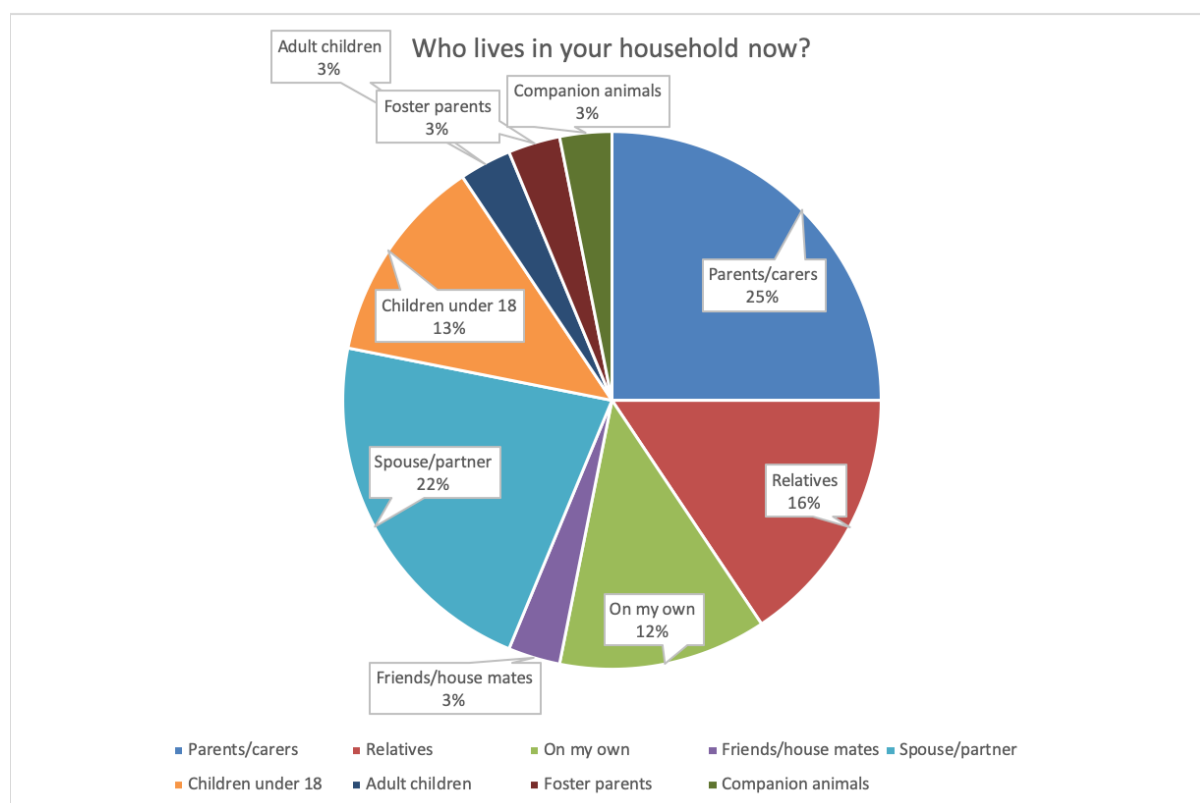
(Q9. Response rate: 100%)

Home and household



The survey requested the home postcodes of participants to gain a sense of the geographic reach of the Citizen Curators programme relative to the locations of participating museums. The larger the marker the higher the concentration of participants reporting their home location in that postcode area. Two participants responded with postcodes outside Cornwall: LE2 (Leicester) and SN25 (Swindon). These may have been responses of students only temporarily living in Cornwall. Overall it's remarkable that the geographic spread of participants relative to their host museums is much greater than we may have anticipated, and would be worth comparing with broader museum volunteer data i.e. how far is the reach of the museum when it comes to participatory practice? And to what extent are we attractive to those people who live on our doorstep? The highest concentration of the reported home areas is from the Newquay-Perranporth area, followed by Penzance, Falmouth, Truro and Bodmin. Citizen Curators travelled in from as far as Plymouth and Padstow. Naturally it should be noted that only two-thirds of respondents offered their home postcode in reply.

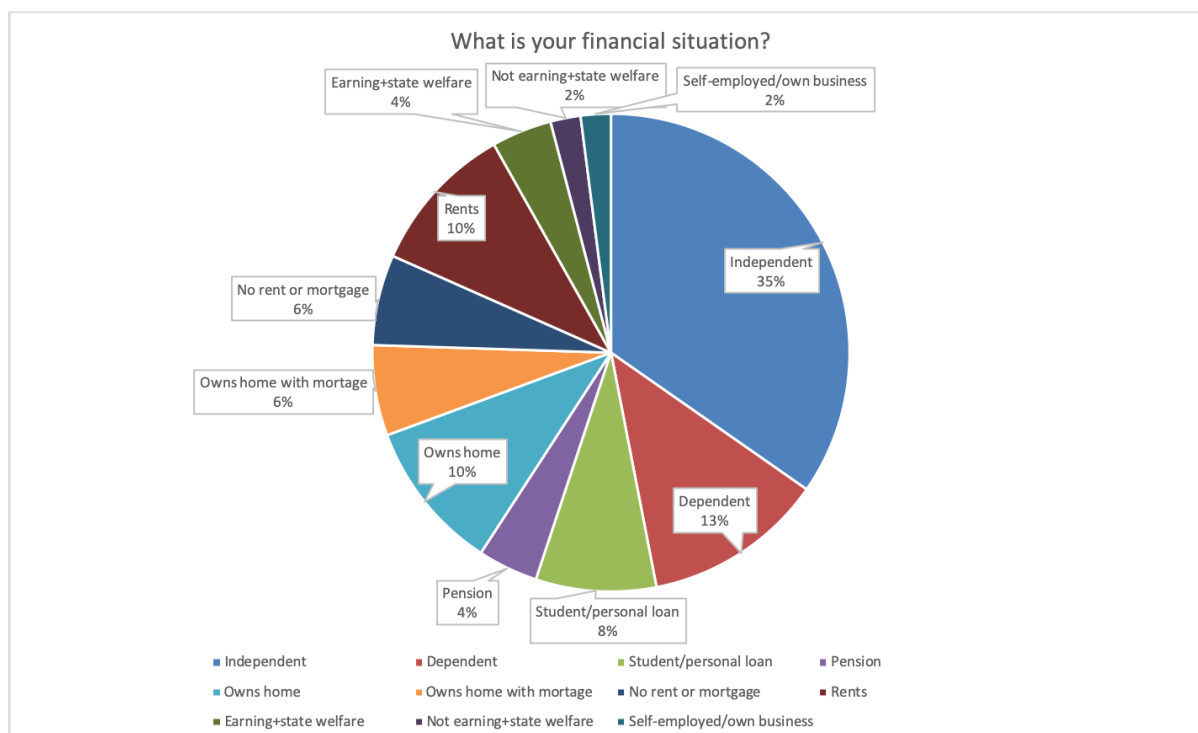
(Q10. Response rate: 62%)



The household profiles of the cohort vary considerably. 25% live with parents or carers, 22% live with their spouse or partner and 13% live with children under 18. 16% mention relatives living their household. 12% live on their own. 3% cite living with adult children, foster parents and companion animals respectively. Without this data collecting exercise this diversity of our Citizen Curators' home environment would be unknown beyond anecdotes, suggesting the continued importance of enquiring beyond protected characteristics. Indeed when we think of diversity and inclusion in more nuanced terms we can already see how diverse our cohort really is, challenging conventional methods of only collecting data on visible and protected characteristics.

(Q13. Response rate: 100%)

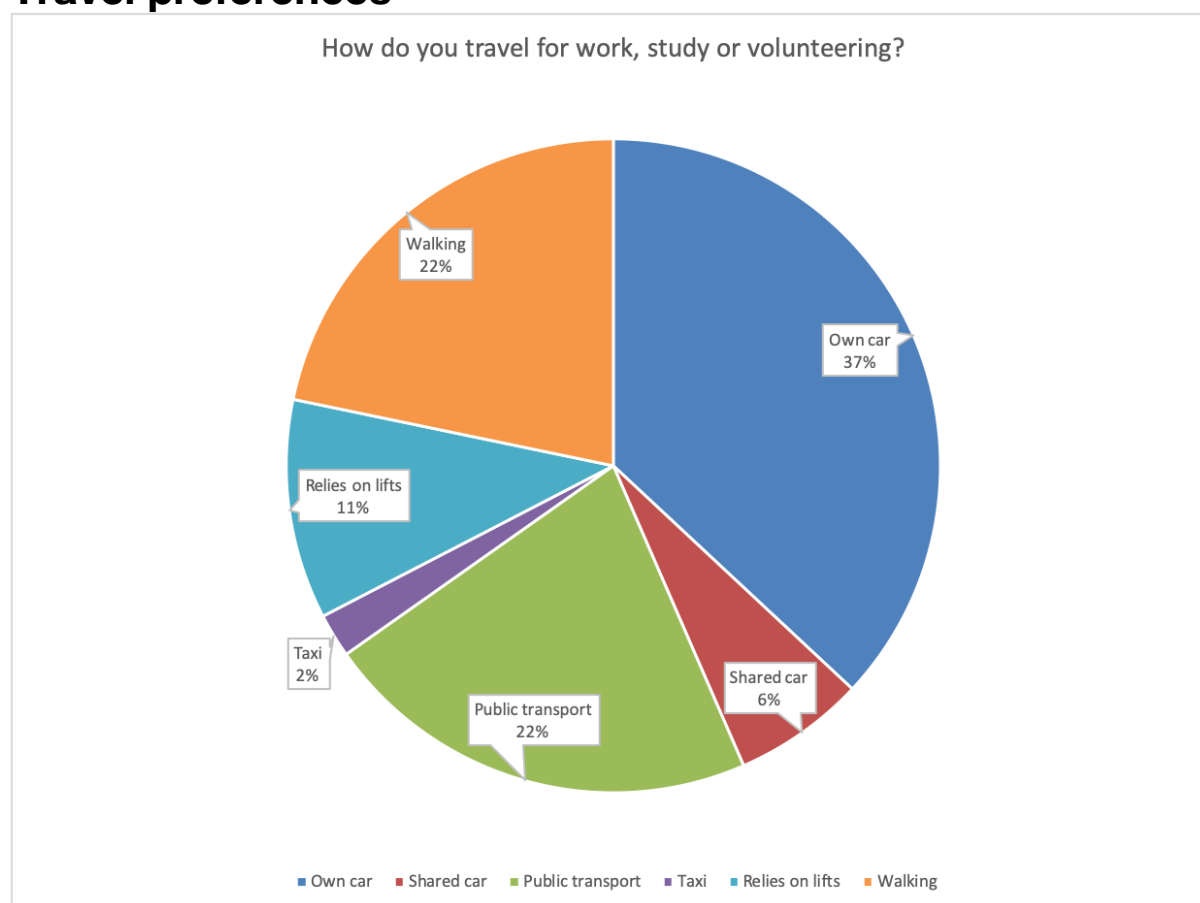
Financial situation



Across the cohort, participants' financial situations vary considerably and mixed and combination options were available to permit respondents to report multiple situations that affect financial independence, including renting, home ownership and loans. 35% of participants reported being financially independent while 13% cited being dependent on another. 10% own their own home outright while 6% own homes with mortgages. 10% rent their homes. 6% responded that they had no rent or mortgage to pay. 4% earned an income while also being reliant on tax credits or state welfare, 2% are entirely reliant on tax credits or state welfare support. 2% cited being self-employed or owning their own business. 8% have or are paying off a personal or student loan. 4% cited receiving a pension. This percentage may be higher given the number of respondents who only cited financial independence as a reflection of their financial situation. As with home and household data, financial data provides an insight into how this programme is able to attract those who are not as financially mobile as other volunteers, or indeed workers. Given one of the key motivations for creating the Citizen Curators programme is to combat time and cost of travel constraints, this data suggests that a model of museum participation that budgets for travel costs matters hugely to diversity of participation. This is reflected too when we look at travel preferences.

(Q14. Response rate: 100%)

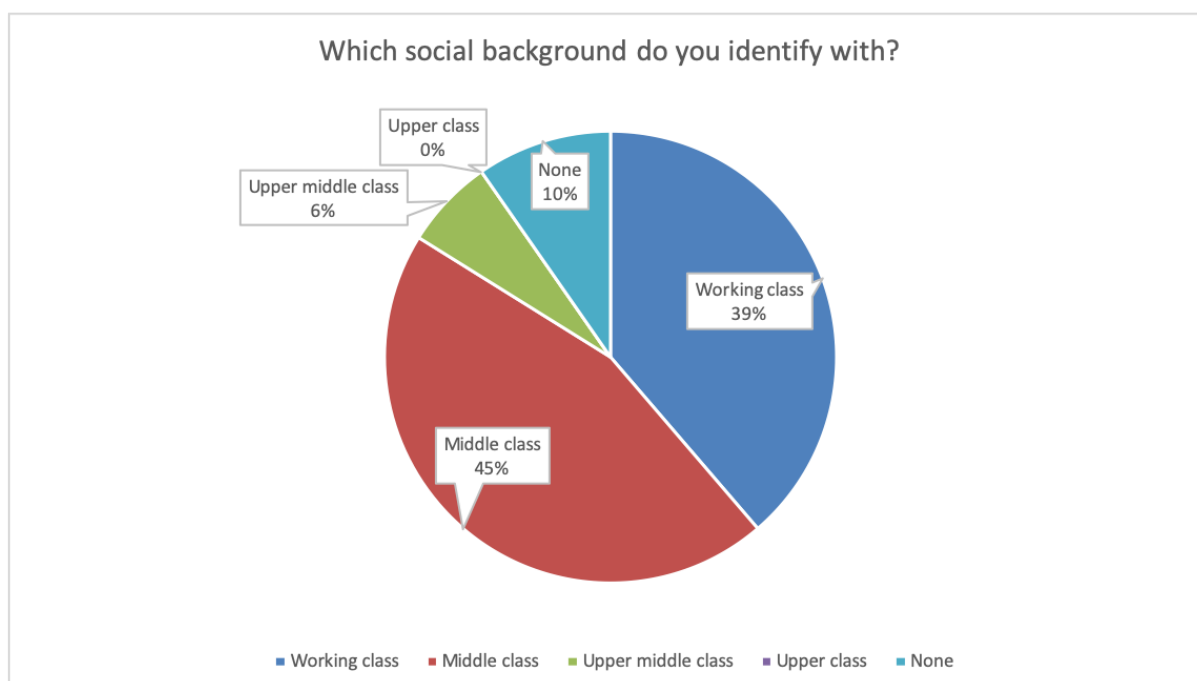
Travel preferences



The responses to this question, how do you normally travel to volunteer, work or study, are critical and measuring how this programme is meeting the challenge of time and cost of travel as a barrier to cultural opportunities in Cornwall. 37% own their own car. 22% regularly use public transport and 22% walk to get around. 11% cited relying on lifts, while 6% used a shared or family car and 2% use taxis. Anecdotal evidence from observing how participants organised travelling in to their museums for volunteering and to attend core sessions and optional events suggest that access to the budget for covering travel costs was critical an enabling their participation. Those that did have use of a car were observed offering car shares and lifts to others. Ensuring the timing of events were sensitive to travel pressures was critical, as was providing high quality joining instructions that did not privilege car users.

(Q16. Response rate: 100%)

Social background

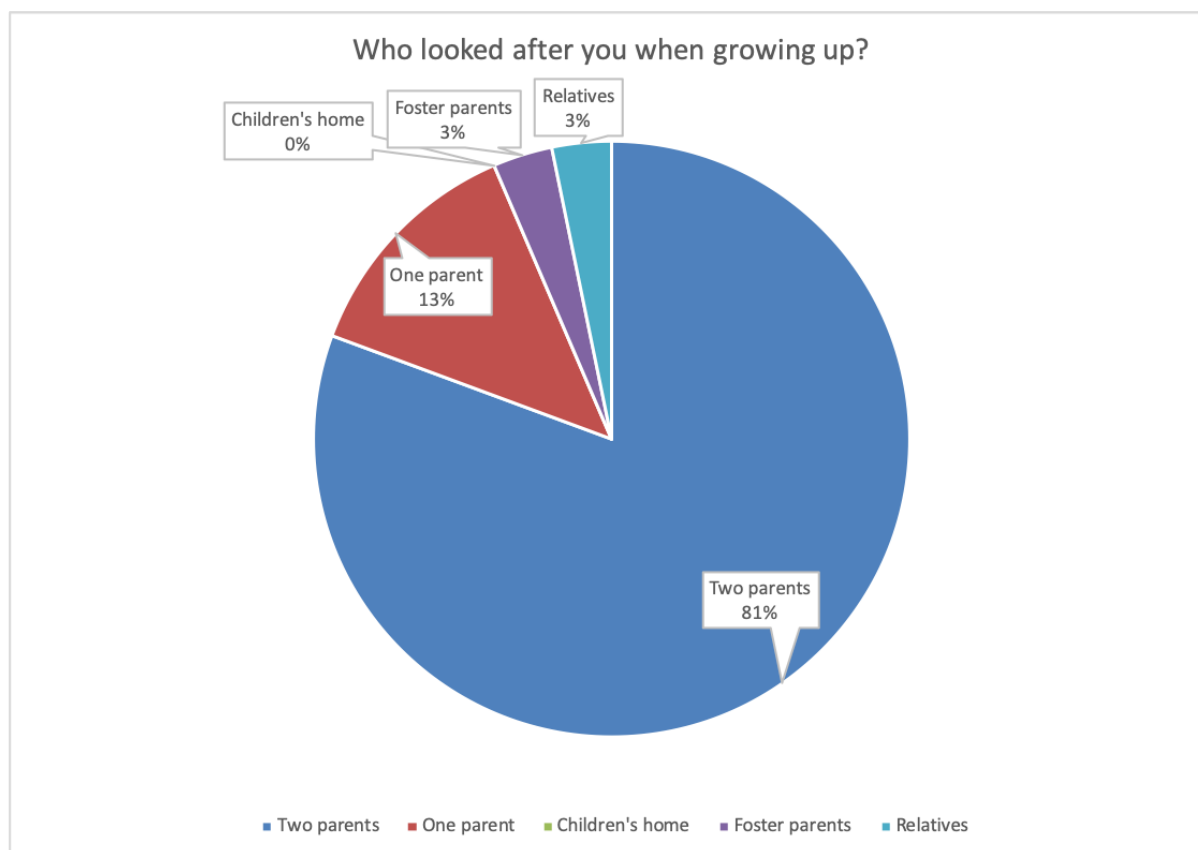


While social, socio-economic and class-based identity is not as routinely studied or understood, particularly in Cornwall, it is nevertheless a highly contested subject in the cultural and museum sectors (see the Museums as Muck campaign, for example).⁵ Perceptions of class and social mobility are being questioned, and largely dictated by large, metrocentric and urban post-industrial ideas of, for example, working class being an important part of a person's heritage identity even if traditional features of being working class may not be obvious. In our survey, commonly used class labels were given as options for the question of which social background participants identified with either now or through parentage. 45% identified with being middle class, while 6% cited identifying with being upper middle class. 39% identified as working class. 10% did not identify with any class labels.

(Q15. Response rate: 100%)

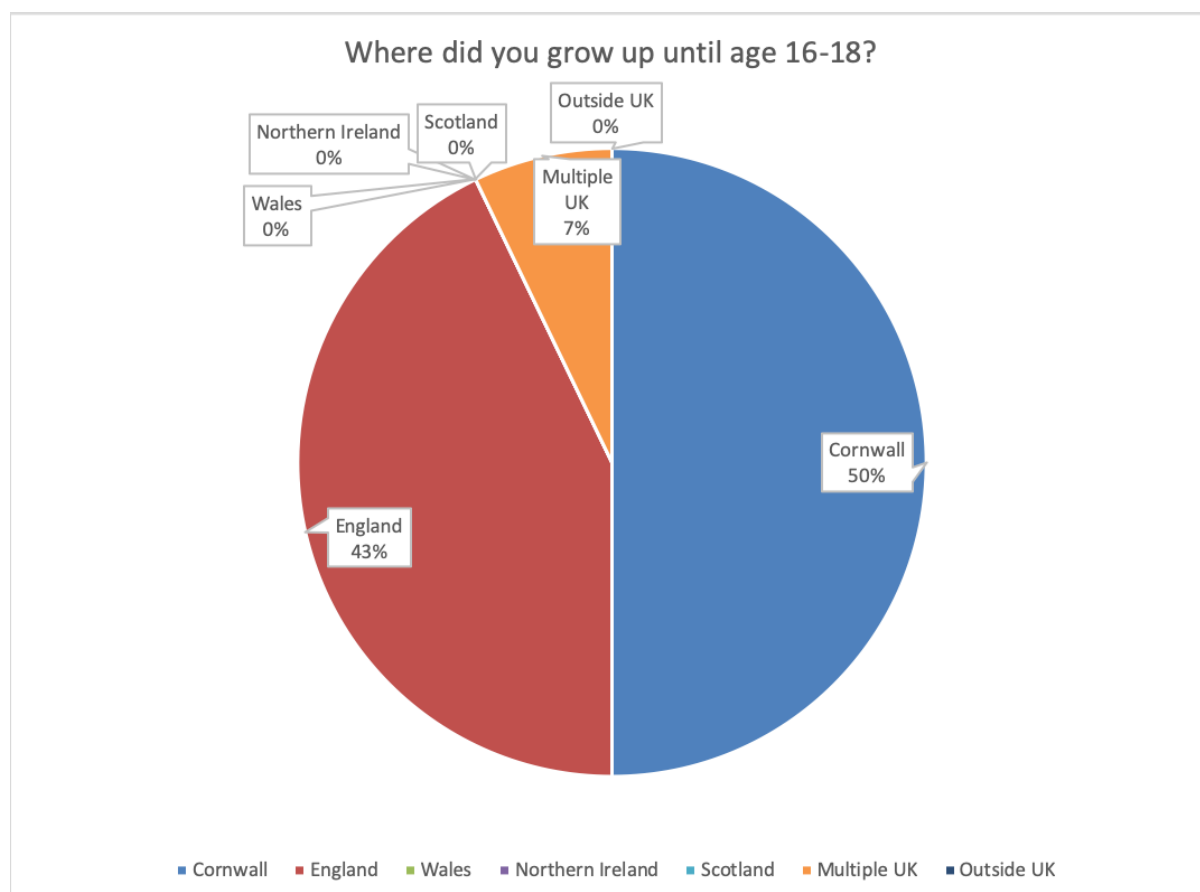
⁵ Stephanie Robinson, 'Museums as Muck – improving working class representation in museums and galleries', *British Library Living Knowledge blog*, 7 October 2019. Accessed: <https://blogs.bl.uk/living-knowledge/2019/10/museum-as-muck-improving-working-class-representation-in-museums-and-galleries.html>.

Parenting and growing up



81% of the cohort were parented by two parents during the majority of their growing up. 13% were predominantly parented by a single parent. Foster parents and relatives were cited by 3% respectively. No participants grew up in a children's home. Additional information provided shows participants citing themselves as 'parent', separated parents, and a father that spent 6 months of the year deployed away from home.

(Q12. Response rate: 100%)

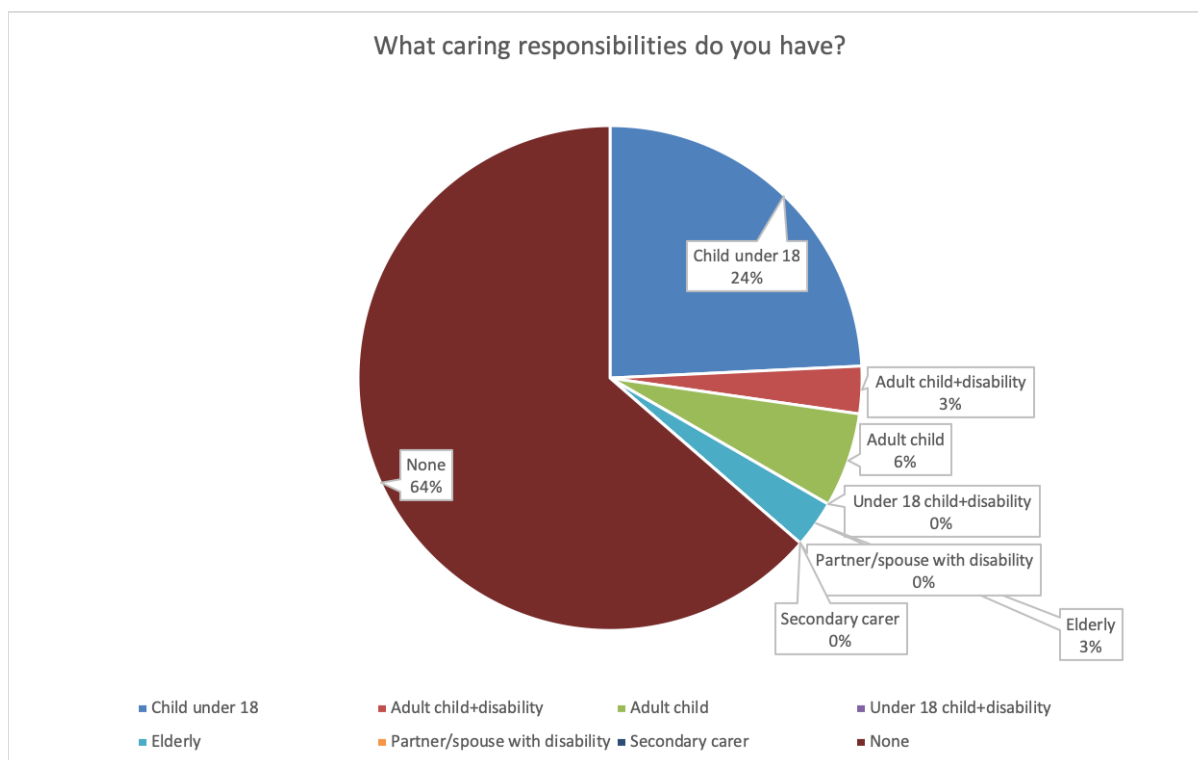


50% of the cohort did the majority of their growing up until age 16-18 in Cornwall, while 43% grew up in England. 7% of the cohort reported growing up in multiple places around the UK, with no participants with experience growing up outside the UK. Just over half (57%) of respondents mentioned a specific place where they grew up:

Cornwall	Outside Cornwall
Truro	Leamington Spa, Warwickshire
Camborne	Royal Wootton Bassett, Wiltshire
Helston	Dorchester, Dorset
Penzance	Kent
Bissoe	Oadby, Leicestershire
Chacewatter	Bramoon, Suffolk
Torpoint	Leek, Staffordshire
Mount Hawke	Totnes, Devon

(Q11. Response rate: 97%)

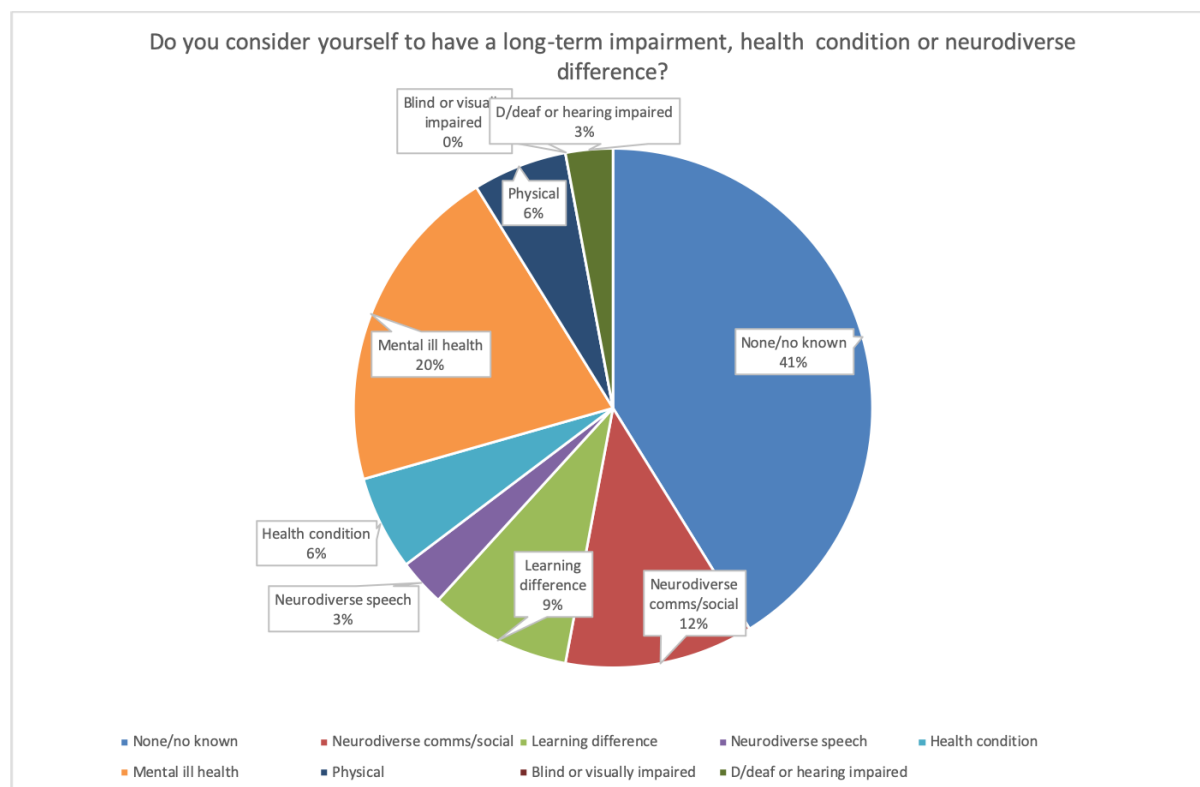
Caring responsibilities



The multiple responses to this question provide a useful overview of the realities volunteers face when donating their time to a museum. 64% cited no caring responsibilities while 24% had responsibility for children under 18. 3% care for adults child with disabilities and 3% cited being a carer for an adult child. 3% had caring responsibilities for an elderly person. None of the cohort cited care responsibilities for children under 18 with disabilities or support needs and none cited secondary responsibility for a spouse or partner with care responsibilities. With data on household and financial situations, this data provides a unique picture of the diversity of pressures museum volunteers can face, and how a programme such as Citizen Curators can provide a direct personal reward for the time volunteers donate to museums.

(Q17. Response rate: 100%)

Conditions affecting daily life and relationships



Asking participants about long-term impairments, disabilities, conditions, neurodiversity and learning differences revealed a powerful picture of the inclusiveness of the Citizen Curators programme. Nearly 60% of respondents reported a condition that affected their daily life or relationships. These varied from physical disabilities to health conditions such as diabetes. However, most of the reports suggest the unseen disabilities or conditions that most people deal with without comment or notice, such as mental ill health especially anxiety, dyslexia and dyspraxia and challenges with words and language. Given a lack of capacity and experience at participating museums to support volunteers with specific access and support needs, it is striking how the programme through multiple layers of informal support from the programme leader and museum leads and colleagues, nonetheless succeeded in providing fulfilling opportunities for them. Sometimes the headline-grabbing work of museums *with* people with visible/audible disabilities may overshadow the work we do with people who nonetheless struggle with every day life to a lesser or greater degree.

Respondents reported these specific or other conditions affecting daily life or relationships:

Dyslexia	2
Dyspraxia	2
Condition affecting daily life or relationships (unspecified)	1

Generalised Anxiety Disorder/Anxiety	2
OCD	1
Diabetes	1
Autistic spectrum	1
Asperger's	1
Struggles with new words	1
Endometriosis	1

(Q18. Response rate: 97%)

Appendix: Survey questions and response options*

We want to work with and offer training to people from a wide range of backgrounds and diverse experiences. Enjoyment of this programme should not be affected by how you self-identify, your living situation or access requirements. Collecting this information anonymously helps us make sure we are not excluding people. Please feel free to share as much or as little about yourself on this form. **Leave blank if you prefer not to say.**

Which gender labels do you identify with?

Female	Non-binary	Trans	None of these
Male	Intersex	Other please specify	

Is your gender identity today the same as you were assigned at birth?

Yes No

Which of these sexual relationship labels do you identify with?

Heterosexual/Straight	Gay man	Lesbian/Gay woman	Queer/questioning
Bisexual	Asexual	Other please specify	None of these

What is your marital status?

Single	Married	Divorced	Widowed
Civil Partnership	Other please specify		

What title do you use?

Mrs	Ms	Mr	Dr
Other please specify	None of these		

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Which of these religious cultures do you identify with? Be more specific if you want to, e.g. Pagan, Druid; Christian, Methodist, Muslim, Shia

Buddhist	Specifically...
Christian	
Pagan	
Hindu	
Muslim	
Jewish	
Sikh	
Atheist	
No religion	
Other please specify	

Which of these cultural/ethnic labels do you identify with through parentage or ancestry? Choose as many as feel right for you

Black	Cornish	English	British
White	European	Gypsy/Roma	Arab
Asian	Irish Traveller	Chinese	Indian
African	Scottish	Roma	Caribbean
American	Irish	Polish	Portuguese
Dual/Mixed Heritage	Welsh	Pacifica	Russian
Other please specify	Other please specify	Other please specify	Other please specify

What age group are you (years)?

16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40
41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	61-65
66-70	71-75	76-80	81-85	86-90
91-95	96-100	100+		

What is your highest qualification?

No qualifications	Undergraduate degree (BA/BSc)	Postgraduate (MA/MSc)	Postgraduate (PhD)
GCSEs/O-Levels	A/AS Levels	Other please specify	

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What is your home postcode?

Where did you grow up until age 16-18?

Cornwall	England	Wales	Northern Ireland
Please specify town/village	Multiple places in UK	Scotland	Outside the UK, please specify:

Who looked after you during the majority of your growing up?

Two parents	One parent	Children's home	Foster parent(s)
Relative(s)	Other please specify		

Who lives in your household now?

Parent(s) or carer	Relatives
On my own	Friends or house/flat mates
Other please specify	

What is your financial situation? Select all that apply

Financially independent	Earning and receiving tax credits and/or state benefits
Financially dependent (e.g. on spouse, partner or relative)	Not earning and receiving tax credits and/or state benefits
Student or other personal loan	Rents home
Receives pension	Owens home with mortgage
Owens home without mortgage	Other please specify
Does not pay rent or mortgage	

Which social background labels do you identify with either now or through parentage?

Working class	Middle class	Upper Middle Class	Upper Class
Other please specify	None of these		

How do you normally travel to volunteer, look for work, work or for study?

Own car	Shared/family car I drive	Public transport	Taxi
Rely on a lift	Walking	Other please specify	

What caring responsibilities do you have?

Primary carer of child/children under 18	Primary carer of child/children with disabilities 18 or over	Primary carer of elderly person (65+)
Primary carer of child/children with disabilities under 18	Spouse or partner with disabilities	None
Other please specify	Secondary carer (someone else carries out main caring role)	

Do you consider yourself to have a significant or long-term impairment, health condition or neurodiverse difference?

No known impairment, health condition or neurodiversity	Neurodiversity affecting communication or social preferences: Asperger's syndrome, Autistic spectrum, AD(H)D, OCD, other please specify:
Specific learning difference: dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, other please specify:	Neurodiversity affecting speech and language: Tourette's, stuttering, muteness, other please specify:
Illness or health condition: cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, epilepsy, ME, other please specify:	Mental ill health, such as bipolar, schizophrenia, depression or anxiety disorder, other please specify:
Physical impairment or mobility issues: wheelchair user, uses crutches, amputee, other please specify	Blind or visual impairment uncorrected by glasses or contact lenses
D/deaf or have a hearing impairment un corrected by hearing aids	Other condition affecting my daily life or relationships
Other please specify	

**Survey questions and response options © Curatorial Research Centre / Cornwall Museums Partnership.*