



# Castles and Historic Homes Survey 2020



**Using research insight to unlock tourism potential**

# Introduction

Following on from our 2019 Visitor Attraction Survey, which **received such a great reception** in the UK tourism sector, Catapult PR has again commissioned consumer research, this time focusing on a specific segment of the hospitality and visitor economy - castles and historic homes.

**Catapult PR** has extensive PR experience in representing and promoting a wide number of castles and historic homes, so is combining its research findings<sup>1</sup> with tips and suggestions of how to utilise the insight.

With all that has happened in the UK in 2020, the need for venues to align their vision with that of prospective visitors is of huge importance. If the staycation is to become the popular – or only shorter-term holiday choice - it is vital that UK castles and historic homes get their messaging, events and offering right. Hopefully, this booklet will assist.



<sup>1</sup>The Catapult PR Castles and Historic Homes Survey was commissioned through Gorkana Surveys. The results are licensed for the use of Catapult PR, a British PR consultancy based in North West England and working with clients nationwide and in Europe. Any unauthorised use of the results, without the express consent of Catapult PR will be in breach of the consultancy's copyright privileges with regard to the licensed data.

# What We Can Offer

**Catapult PR** can also offer you more support, on a one-to-one basis, if you wish to discuss your challenges, launches, or post-lockdown strategies with us. Just call us on **01253 446925** or email: **[jane@catapultpr.co.uk](mailto:jane@catapultpr.co.uk)**

We can also assist you with your product development and events programme, suggesting how this can be enlivened or revitalised. Catapult PR's managing director, Jane Hunt, has a Diploma in Tourism Marketing from the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM). She can also speak Italian and has worked with various Italian clients in the tourism and hospitality sectors.

**Should you wish to use our services and are a castle or historic home, you can qualify for a 10% reduction on our fees by using the code:**

**CAS-HH2020**

And finally, it is also worth mentioning that our Visitor Attraction Survey – or podcasts about the survey – may also be of great use to you. These can be found in the Tourism/Travel and Podcast areas at **[www.catapultpr.co.uk](http://www.catapultpr.co.uk)**

# Castles: What's the Verdict?

**71%** of British consumers say they like to visit castles and learn about their history.

There is little difference between men and women on this point. **70%** of men and **72%** of women find castles interesting and good places to visit.

**8%** of people say they find visits to castles "dull and boring".

The most likely to find castles boring are those earning more than £40,000. Greater expectations, perhaps.

Those most keen on their castles are inhabitants of Northern Ireland of whom **83%** find castles great places to visit - an opinion shared by **80%** of those in both Wales and the East Midlands.

The age group fondest of castles is that comprising 55-to-64-year-olds, (**78%**) whilst the attraction of castles drops to **63%** of over-65s and **64%** of 18-24s.

Worryingly, from the point of view of future visitors, **15%** of this younger age group find castles dull and boring.

## TIPS!

- Play to your strengths. You have every opportunity to attract visitors to your castle, if you get the visitor experience right.
- Don't view your castle through rose-tinted spectacles. Take an unbiased look at what you offer and consider whether it is a little dull and could be enlivened. Get fresh eyes to look at it and take their opinion on board.
- Use visitor exit interviews to assess what visitors really feel about what you offer and make sure you act on any recurring comments.



Those less likely to like to visit castles are inhabitants of Yorkshire **62%** and the North East **65%**.

Folk in the North East really don't seem to like castles all that much, with **16%** - double the national average - saying they find castles "dull and boring".

Despite those in Yorkshire being less keen on castle visits, only **4%** are likely to be yawning from boredom, whereas this rises to **13%** in the West Midlands and even one-in-ten in London.



# Sandcastle Syndrome

So how strong is this syndrome?

Castles have something very special that they can use for their benefit – memories of being on a beach building your first sandcastle, and then being clever enough to add moats and drawbridges to your sand construction. Nostalgia is a powerful marketing phenomenon, so why not use it?



Nearly one quarter of those interviewed (**24%**) say they feel that every child who has ever built a sandcastle has dreamed of living in a real castle at some point. This rises to **28%** of women.

Sandcastle syndrome is strongest in the North West, Wales and North East, where **35%**, **33%** and **29%** respectively believe children building castles on the beach are dreaming of one day living in one.

Sandcastle syndrome is lowest in London (**17%**)

Sandcastle syndrome is present in different age groups to different degrees. **29%** of those aged **55-64** feel it exists, followed by **27%** of 35-44-year-olds and **26%** of 25-34s.

However, only **15%** of 18-24s and **22%** of over 65s feel this. Does this mean that current sandcastle builders with children and grandchildren are seeing sandcastle syndrome in action and maybe actually rekindling it in themselves?

## TIPS!

Focus hard on the demographic with the nostalgia for castle building. Maybe build mention of sandcastles into your marketing materials/website, along the lines of ... this is your chance to see your children's eyes widen as you take them from imaginary sandcastle, to real-life, bricks and mortar castle.

## IDEAS



- Build opportunities for families to draw, colour and create castles into your experience.
- Maybe bring the beach to your castle, by hiring a huge sand pit for an event.
- Sponsor a sandcastle building competition, if you have a nearby beach and provide competitors with reduced-rate entry.
- Create sandcastle moulds of your castle, to sell in your gift shop!
- Consider leaflet distribution opportunities around your nearest beach.



# Ghostly' Goings-on... for day visitors

If you have a regularly seen apparition, should you tell your visitors about it in your marketing or not? Does it rather depend upon whether you offer visitor accommodation and whether your visitors are likely to be deterred by thoughts of having to hide under the sheets all night? We set out to find out. Here's what we discovered.

**15%** say a haunted castle or home is of more appeal to them, with only those earning over £40,000 not having this level of interest (**12%**).

Those most likely to want to play ghostbusters are East Anglians, nearly a quarter of whom (**24%**) have more interest in haunted venues. This is followed by **22%** of those in both the NW and Scotland.

This differs greatly from London, where only **8%** feel the same. The SE and SW aren't as keen either. Only **9%** would find a haunted place more appealing.

The age group most likely to want to get on the trail of a ghost are the 25-34s (**19%**), closely followed by 35-44-year-olds (**18%**).

This drops greatly to just **8%** of those aged over 65. Only **13%** of 55-64-year-olds believe a haunted place to be more attractive to them.

## Do Your Research!

If sightings of something odd are common, dig into the past and try to find out who this apparition could be. You could end up with a major story, as we did when we discovered Maud could not be Maud!

[www.thetimes.co.uk/article/mit-professor-nets-grey-lady-ghost-that-tickled-jk-rowling-376gxgfcg](http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/mit-professor-nets-grey-lady-ghost-that-tickled-jk-rowling-376gxgfcg)

[www.whodoyouthinkyouaremagazine.com/news/castle-appeals-family-historians-help-researching-ghost](http://www.whodoyouthinkyouaremagazine.com/news/castle-appeals-family-historians-help-researching-ghost)

[www.chroniclelive.co.uk/news/north-east-news/northumberland-castle-worried-ghost-might-18225314](http://www.chroniclelive.co.uk/news/north-east-news/northumberland-castle-worried-ghost-might-18225314)

## TIPS!



- **Be authentic.** If nobody has ever mentioned seeing an apparition or having a cold sensation pass over them, don't make it up.
- Whether or not you decide to go after the ghost tourism pound for your visitor attraction castle or home is really up to you and whether you feel it will add or detract from the rest of the experience.
- **If you feel it can add something but are a little nervous about it dominating other messaging, perhaps create something just for Halloween or at a particular time of year, rather than making it a year-round obsession.**
- If you do go down the ghostly route, be prepared for paranormal fanatics to descend to try to track your ghost down.
- **Be prepared for possible postings of mentions of apparitions on social media and respond in accordance with your chosen 'ghost' strategy.**
- Remember that some people – including potential future employees – could be deterred by ghostly tales. Not everyone feels this to be an exciting topic. But if you do have a regular 'visitor' of a different kind, there's little you can probably do about it.

# Ghostly' Goings-on... for overnight guests

Our consumers had split opinions when it came to whether or not they would like to stay overnight in a supposedly haunted place.

**18%** said they would like to do it and would try to spot a ghost.

More than one-in-20 (**18%**), however, said they are afraid of ghosts and would **NOT** stay in a supposedly haunted place.

The strongest impulse to stay in a haunted venue comes from those aged 35 to 64. More than a fifth (**21%**) of those in this age range would revel in staying in a haunted accommodation.

This drops dramatically, to just **8%** of over 65s. The 18-24-year-olds aren't too keen either (**13%** would enjoy it).

The nation's ghost hunters are most likely to be found in East Anglia, where **27%** would relish a ghostly overnight stay. This is followed by **24%** of those in the NW, 22% of those in the West Midlands and **20%** of East Midlanders. Least keen are Northern Irishers (**6%**) and then Scots (**10%**).

Interestingly, only **1%** of Scots are scared of ghosts and the same is true of **2%** of West Midlanders. Yet, **15%** of people in the NE admit to being spooked by spooks!

When it comes to being totally turned-off by the thought of staying in a haunted venue, it's the 25-34-year-olds who come out top (**10%** being afraid of ghosts). **8%** of the 18-24-year-old age bracket say the same. Only **2%** of over-65s concur.

Women are less keen than men on overnight ghostly goings-on. Whilst **19%** of men would like to stay in a haunted place, the same is true of **16%** of women.

Only **2%** of men say they are afraid of ghosts, but this rises to one-in-ten women (**10%**).

Ghosts do tick the box of those earning over **£40,000 a year**. A quarter (**25%**) of those in this income bracket say they would enjoy a night spent with a ghost.

## TIPS!

- **Consider whether some upmarket stag weekends could possibly be themed around ghostbusting.**
- If you wish to dampen down news of past 'sightings', perhaps try to suggest only certain rooms are affected.
- **Assess whether you could create a special Halloween package, with other elements included, such as a Murder Mystery event, or spooky story telling. Just make sure guests who are turned off by such things are not on the guest list at the same time.**
- Perhaps use our demographic figures, to target the right age groups and income group, with your ghostly package.
- **Remember those afraid of ghosts may be higher than the survey suggests – people sometimes don't wish to admit to what may seem like an irrational fear.**

# Telling the Story



**One-in-twelve** of those surveyed believe that castles and historic homes are generally poor storytellers when it comes to their history – both online and during a visit.

Nearly a fifth (**19%**) feel that historic venues could tell their story better, by sending information in advance of a visit, to those buying tickets online. That way, they feel they would know what to look out for, when they arrive.

Those most critical of the storytelling are those earning £40,000 or more (**12%**) and those living in Northern Ireland (**15%**), the SW (**14%**) and NW (**10%**). Least critical are those in the NE (**3%**).

**27%** of those aged 55-64 would like to see information sent out ahead of a visit.

**23%** of those aged 45-54 feel the same, but only **2%** of 18-24s agree, even though **9%** of this age group finds the storytelling generally poor.

Those living in the West Midlands are those most in favour of the idea of receiving information in advance of a visit. A whopping **28%** would like to see this happen.

Other regions in favour are East Anglia (**23%**), NI (**22%**) and the NW (**20%**).

The NE (**13%**) was the region that least felt this could make a difference.

## TIPS!

- Read our storytelling tips – don't leave the storytelling to chance.
- Consider collateral you could send out in advance of a visit, to pre-booking customers only e.g teasers of what to look out for, which will ignite their interest during the visit.
- Make sure you have great interpretation on show and guides who can relay stories, rather than just facts.

# Storytelling Tips



• *Do your research, with the aim of uncovering all the interesting people from your venue's past, e.g.*

- the brave knight
- the freedom fighter
- the widowed maiden
- the one with the royal connections
- the skilled artisan
- the talented pianist, gardener, artist
- the gilted lover
- the war hero or heroine
- the adventurer or discoverer
- the community supporter or doer of good deeds
- the villain or cad
- the independently minded woman
- the black sheep of the family!

• *Build authentic stories around these people, rather than around bedknobs and broomsticks, unless you have a specialist group touring interested in something like furniture or art. Even then, don't forget to weave the characters in!*

• *Add the fabric around the bare facts.*

• *Create a sense of place- e.g. how the knight would appear on the hill just visible through this window or how the gilted lover would stand at this gate, hoping for a glimpse of their loved one. How the villain used this pistol or how the King's men broke down the door in search of this item or person.*

• *Consider using a scent in certain rooms, if it will add to the story.*

• *Make sure your story in each part of your attraction grabs them with the opening line, retains the theme and gives them a fabulous ending.*

• *Dramatise, add humour, throw in your view and ask them if that's how they view it. Engage and interact. Let people handle items, if you can. Spark the imagination at every opportunity.*

• *Put quotations from real people into your stories, so visitors can get a feel of life through their eyes.*

• *Leave some gaps and mysteries, if you can. Visitors love to speculate about possibilities, conspiracy theories and what happened after the cliff-hanger!*

• *Make it entertaining, by throwing in some surprises e.g the knight in armour walking through a room that the visiting group is viewing; the maid who suddenly starts singing; audio that suddenly presents the voice of the person you are discussing.*





# Dramatic Effects



**Do TV programmes have an impact on visits to castles and historic properties? We asked the questions.**

One-in-five people **(20%)** say period dramas have made them more interested in historic houses/mansions.

**22%** of women say this, as opposed to **17%** of men.

**(30%)** of those in N Ireland have had their interest sparked by period dramas, **(21%)** in the SW and one-in-five **(20%)** in the East Midlands, London & the SE.

More than one-in-ten people **(11%)** say Game of Thrones has increased their interest in castles.

**(15%)** of 25-34s say they are more interested in castles because of GoT, as are **14%** of 35-44s. This drops to **2%** of over-65s.

**25%** of Northern Irelanders are more interested in castles because of GoT. Folk in the East Midlands and NW are next in the table **(13%)**.

## TIPS!

- Try to build the visual side of period dramas into your experience – costumes, insights into the era covered, historical cooking utensils, coaches and carriages, dramatic historical events, swords and weapons and roaring log fires perhaps?
- **Work hard at your storytelling so you retain the romantic attachment of your visitor and do not disappoint. Are there colourful stories to tell? Is there any tittle-tattle of an upstairs/downstairs nature? Were there villains or heroes living here? Were battles or disputes fought? What did the inhabitants of the household or castle have to do, on a daily basis, or from time to time? What were the love stories and the inheritance battles? Remember to sell the story and don't just let visitors view inanimate staging.**
- Create events appealing to those who are avid period drama or GoT viewers and who would like to play out their notions in your venue.

# Don't Just be Seen to be Paying the Bills!



**We asked our panel of consumers what they felt about their visitor experiences at castles and historic homes in general and something we discovered relates to how visitors may perceive what you are laying on for them, if you are not careful.**

**When we asked whether they felt that "Castle and historic homes need to be more genuinely interested in providing a good experience for visitors, rather than just getting money in to pay the bills, this is what we found:**

More than **a fifth (21%)** feel castles and historic homes do need to concentrate more on the experience, with little difference between males surveyed v females.

## TIPS!

- **Make sure visitors feel welcome at your venue and don't feel they are actually an inconvenience you have to put up with on occasions.**
- Make sure your messaging always has the visitor, and their needs, at its heart.
- **Add value at every opportunity and in ways that will not cost very much – better storytelling is a great way to do that.**
- Manage perceptions through smiles, greetings, a 'thank you' as they leave.
- **Don't have a venue in which rules and regulation notices are as prominent as good interpretation panels.**
- Have a suggestions book or exit survey and take note of what people say.
- **Work hard at your events programme.**

Definitely looking for a better concentration on the experience offered are these in the 35-44 age bracket, where more than a quarter **(26%)** felt more focus on the visitor was required. **24%** of those aged 55-64s and **23%** of 45-54s feel the same. That's a lot of people wanting more.

The stats are actually skewed by only **10%** of 18-24s wanting more.

The parts of the UK most likely to feel the experience needs more consideration is Northern Ireland **(31%)**, Yorkshire **(27%)** and East Anglia **(23%)**. Scots seem most content with the experience castles and historic homes offer. Only **(17%)** think it needs to focus more on the product delivery and value. Elsewhere in the country, it's pretty much **a fifth** of the prospective visitor community that is looking for more.

# What Should Happen Next?

**More than one-in-ten (11%) of the people we surveyed feel that some events at castles and historic homes are becoming two-a-penny and that venues need to switch things up more and offer different experiences. Examples of events with which they are becoming jaded are classic car rallies and food festivals.**



Once again, it is the core market age groups for most venues, who want something new, this being the desire of:

- **16%** (more than one in six) of those aged 35-44
- **14%** of 45-54s and 25-34s
- **11%** of over-65s

This opinion is most strongly held amongst the same age groups that want heritage venues to focus more on the visitor experience, i.e. the £10,000 to £19,999 income-earning bracket and the £20,000 to £39,999 income earners. Here **46%** and **40%**, respectively, want to see new things appearing on the events calendar.

By far the strongest opinion on this regionally was expressed by those in Northern Ireland (**32%**), followed by the North East (**17%**) and the East Midlands (**16%**).

**Having discovered that many visitors are yearning for something different to go to see or do, we assessed what that might be.**

**Some of the retro responses might just surprise you! Perhaps certain experiences just skip a generation or two and then become all the rage again?**

# What Visitors Would Like to be Able to Do at Your Venue ... the top-line figures



**An overview of what visitors would most like to do at a castle or historic home is given below. Prepare for some surprises!**

- **33%** would consider going to an outdoor theatre event.
- **33%** would like to see castles being the backdrop for a children's storytelling festival.
- **32%** just want that experience of days of yore – a medieval banquet.
- **27%** would probably pop a jousting or historical re-enactment into their calendar.
- **21%** would be tempted by a murder mystery event and the chance to play detective.
- **16%** would consider visiting a genealogy-focused event, where experts are on hand to advise on family tree searches and DNA discovery.
- **16%** would also think about going to a horror-focused outdoor cinema event at a castle.
- **12%** would love to learn to cook historic dishes in the kitchen of a historic home.



# Variations in events wants & desires

## 1. Outdoor Theatre

Women **39%** are more likely than men **26%** to consider heading to an outdoor theatre event.

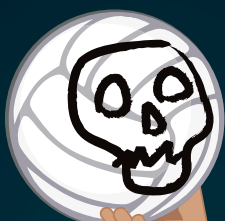
By far the most interested age group are the 55-64s **45%**. However more than a third of those aged both 35-44 and 45-54 would also be interested.

The regions most interested in outdoor theatre experiences are Northern Ireland, where it appeals to **44%**, the South East (**41%**), the SW (**35%**) and Yorkshire, the East Midlands and East Anglia (**34%**). Least keen are those in the NE and Wales, where it's a quarter of those surveyed (**25%**). This is still a significant percentage, however.

### TIPS!



Don't forget the storytelling even here. What will your backdrop be? Will people in costume greet visitors? How can you build the excitement for what you are showing from first arrival? Does what you are showing have some synergy with the setting? Can you build sense of place in some way?



## 2. Children's Storytelling Festival

Women really grasp the potential of a children's storytelling festival in a historic venue, with four-in-ten (**40%**) thinking this would be an ideal setting. **26%** of men - still over a quarter - agree.

Matching women's enthusiasm for a children's storytelling festival in a historic setting are those in the SW (**40%**), but even they are outnumbered by those in Northern Ireland where it is two-thirds (**66%**) of people raring to go to such an event.

Also ranking high is the NE (**39%**), East Anglia and Scotland (**36%**) and the East Midlands, West Midlands, SE and Wales, where a third of people (**33%**) could see this working. Londoners are the least likely to think this an attractive option, but still more than one-in-five (**23%**) do.

### TIPS!



- Focus on stories that have sense of place in your venue
- Could you create a treasure hunt with clues relating to the stories being told?
- Consider how staff could dress, to add to the experience.
- Make all activity as connected and dramatic as possible.
- Let kids create their own stories and dress up as their favourites.

## Festival

Age group-wise, this idea appeals to **43%** of 55-64-year-olds, **39%** of 35-44s and **37%** of 45-54s.

**Could this type of event work for you?**



### 3. Break Open the Mead! Who Wants the Medieval Banquet to Return?

Slightly more women **(35%)** than men **(30%)** fancy a medieval banquet.



**Retro experiences tend to be all the rage at times when people are trying to make sense of the present or finding it tough and seeking solace in the past.**

**Could this be that time?**

**With the staycation now perhaps the only feasible option for people to choose for a holiday, could an event of this kind extend your season?**

They are going crazy at the thought of this experience in Northern Ireland **(54%)** but it's also of appeal to more than a third in the West Midlands **(38%)**, NE **(37%)** and NW **(36%)**. A third in the SE **(33%)** and around the same **(32%)** in the SW and Yorkshire **(32%)** concur. The least excited by this are Londoners **(26%)**.

Medieval banquets are of great appeal to 55-64-year-olds, who perhaps missed out on them in the concept's heyday.

**42%** say they would consider going banqueting and more than a third of 35-to-54-year-olds agree.

Just under a fifth of 18-24s feels the same **(18%)**.

### 4. Let's Joust, Present Arms...

**27%** of men and women alike would consider heading to a jousting event or historic re-enactment at a castle or historic home.



Regionally, Northern Ireland **(39%)** just beats East Anglia **(35%)** to the most-interested-region slot. They are followed by the SE **(32%)**.

Least interested in jousting and historic re-enactments are folk in Yorkshire **(17%)** and the NE **(19%)**.

The age groups most into this are the 35-44s **(34%)** and the 45-54s **(32%)**. This is more than double the percentage of those aged 18-24 **(15%)**.

#### TIPS!

Try to find something from a period of history that will have an authentic home in your setting. It will add to the visitor experience, if there is no jarring between venue and the time in history being acted out.

## 5. Playing Detective

A murder mystery event is definitely one for the budding Miss Marples, with **26%** of women being interested in this, as opposed to **17%** of men. Maybe women wish to exercise the little grey cells more?

More than a quarter of both those aged 35-44 and 55-64 (**26%**) would consider booking for a murder mystery event.

Keenest to solve the mystery are those in the East Midlands (**27%**), followed by a quarter of those in both the SE and the SW (**25%**). Only slightly less keen are Scots (**24%**).

Least likely to be reaching for the magnifying glass are those in Wales (**14%**), the West Midlands (**15%**) and Northern Ireland (**16%**).

### TIPS!

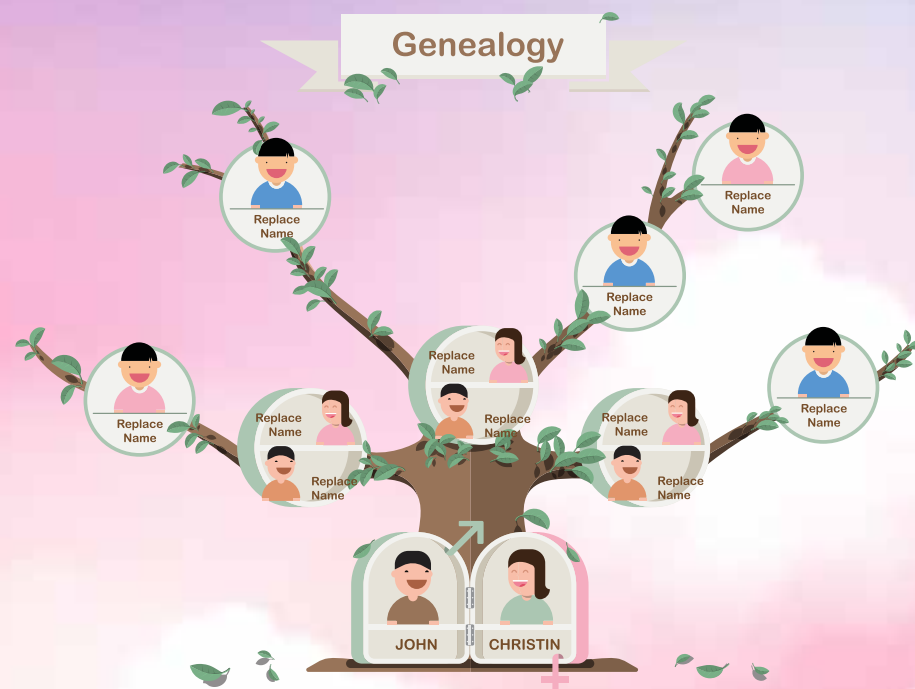


If you are going to try to attract sleuths, try to create an event based on your venue, or one in keeping with its ambience. Make it a fun, as well as fiendishly frustrating event. Perhaps tease it via a social media 'whodunnit' type challenge, with online clues to another mystery of some kind, leading up to the event you wish to sell.



## 6. Who Do Your Visitors Think They Are

The success of **Who Do You Think You Are?** makes genealogy and family-tree building of great interest to many. Given that success, we suspect that some of your possible visitors may already have started a search into their roots, so the tip might be to combine such an event with something else, such as an examination of local history, or an antiques event. Bring in a few experts and it might fly. Here's what people said.



Nearly a fifth of women (**19%**) would be interested in a genealogy-based event, as opposed to **12%** of men.

Most interested, income-wise, are those in the £40k+ income per annum bracket (**18%**).

Age-wise there is not that much difference in level of interest. Even **14%** of the hard-to-attract 18-24s would consider this type of event.

Nearly a quarter of those in East Anglia (**24%**) and more than a fifth of those in the SW (**21%**) would be interested in a genealogy-based event, followed by **20%** of Northern Irishers and **19%** of people in Wales.

Least interested are those in the West Midlands, where it would appeal to one-in-ten (**10%**).



## 7. Heading out for Horror

Horror movies may not be everybody's cup-of-tea, but if there are enough people out there, and some sort of spooky link to your venue, maybe there is an opportunity to build some sort of event of appeal to those who love to jump out of their skin.

There's no difference in the appeal of this sort of event amongst men and women, both coming in at **16%**.

It is vastly more popular amongst 35-44s (**26%**) than amongst other age groups, such as over-65s (**3%**), 18-24s (**11%**) and 55-64s (**13%**).

If you run this sort of event, make sure you target it at the right age demographic!

It is likely to appeal to anywhere between **11%**, as in the SW and NE, to **28%** (Northern Ireland). In between, there are regions like Scotland, where it would appeal to **22%**.

**At the right time, in the right place, it could be a winner.**

ON  
NIGHT

31  
OCTOBER

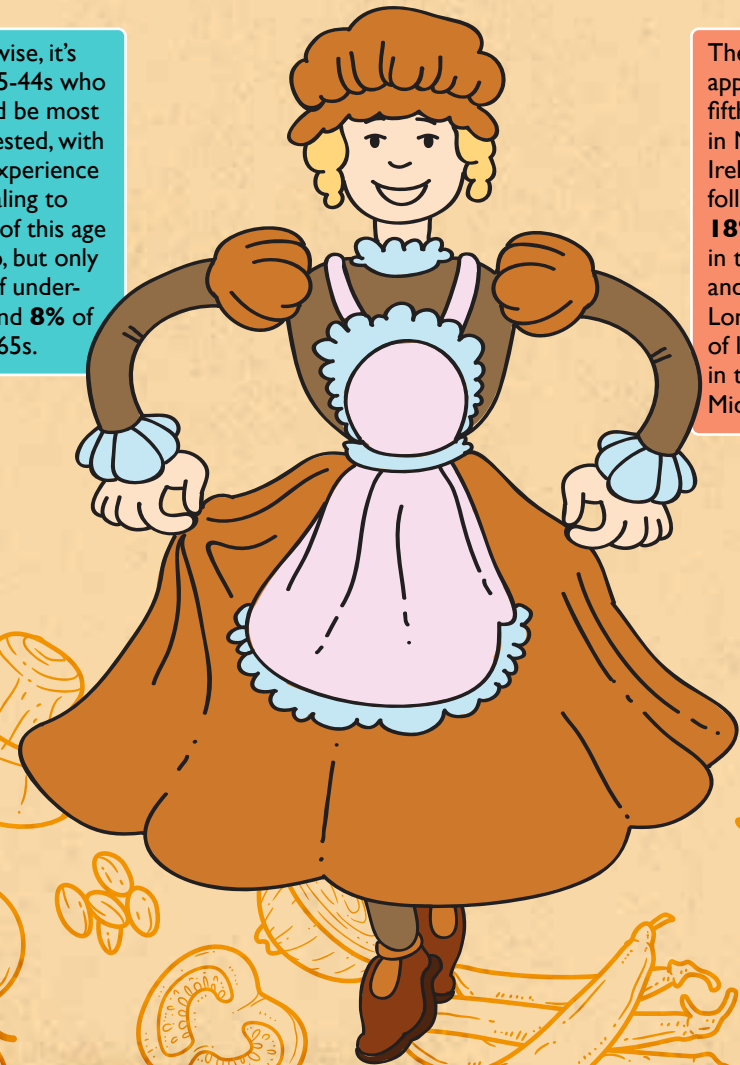
HORROR MOVIE  
CINEMA FESTIVAL

## 8. Cooking up Heritage

And finally, when it comes to cooking in a heritage kitchen, the idea is of more appeal to women (**14%**) than men (**10%**). Bearing in mind that this could be an experience for just a few people at a time, however, you could have a target market for it.

Age-wise, it's the 25-44s who would be most interested, with the experience appealing to **15%** of this age group, but only **4%** of under-25s and **8%** of over-65s.

The idea appeals to a fifth of those in Northern Ireland (**20%**) followed by **18%** of those in the NE and **17%** of Londoners. It's of least appeal in the East Midlands (**8%**).



## County Days

Catapult PR is a leading expert when it comes to county days, having mooted a Northumberland Day when first representing Langley Castle, in July 2015. Catapult PR then founded the day and ran celebrations for the first time, in May 2017.

The PR campaign for Langley Castle won the national CIPR Excellence Award 2018 for the 'Best Travel, Leisure or Tourism Campaign' in the UK that year, as well as several regional awards. Subsequent Northumberland Days have also been shortlisted for numerous awards and won others, the most recent example being a finalist's accreditation at the national CIPR Excellence Awards 2020, for the 'Best Arts, Culture, Sport or Entertainment Campaign'.

Catapult PR has now founded a sister company, The County Day Company, to bring the benefits of a county day to other historic venues, counties and communities.



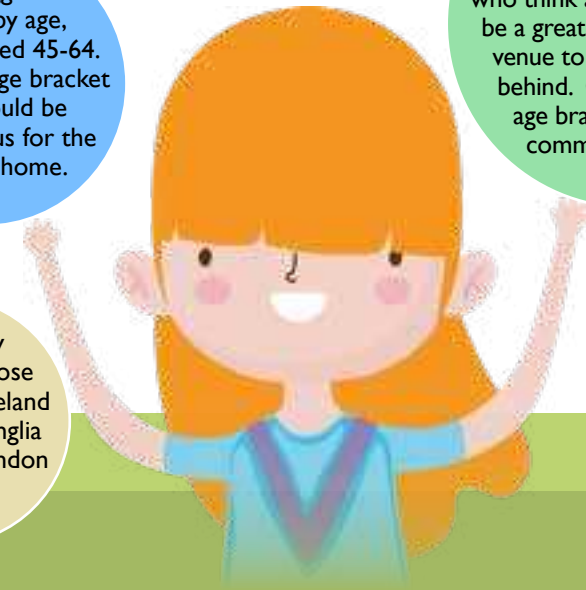
The benefits to Northumbrian communities have been profound but does the average consumer, who may or may not have experienced a county day, or may have a county day that is inactive, think that involvement with a county day, on the part of a castle or historic home, would be a good thing to do?

**13%** said “yes”, with this rising to **15%** of men.

The biggest backers, by age, are those aged 45-64. **18%** in this age bracket feel it would be advantageous for the castle or home.

Keenest by region are those in Northern Ireland (**26%**), East Anglia (**23%**) and London (**20%**).

Interestingly, the lowest earners – those earning less than £10,000 – are those who think a county day would be a great idea for a historic venue to throw its weight behind. Often, this is the age bracket for whom community matters most.



**If this provides fuel for thought, please get in touch, as there is very little that we don't know about county days, run privately and without funding – or indeed very much money at all. It's all about how much passion you can exude and how much you can motivate others.**



# Summary

If this research has given you some inspiration for your marketing and you wish to engage with visitors in different ways than paid advertising, or create exciting ideas for events and community involvement, the PR and place-making team at Catapult PR and the County Day Company can assist.

If you, on the other hand, require compelling content for your website news or blog sections, which will help attract like-minded people to your online home, we can help with that too.

We can even assist if you wish to respond to the wish of pre-booking visitors to have some information in advance of their visit. We can easily create compelling and creative copy that will leave them wanting to know more and which will engage them before they even arrive.

But we're also here for a chat or a video-conferencing meeting, if you wish test ideas on us or get some advice. Please just call:

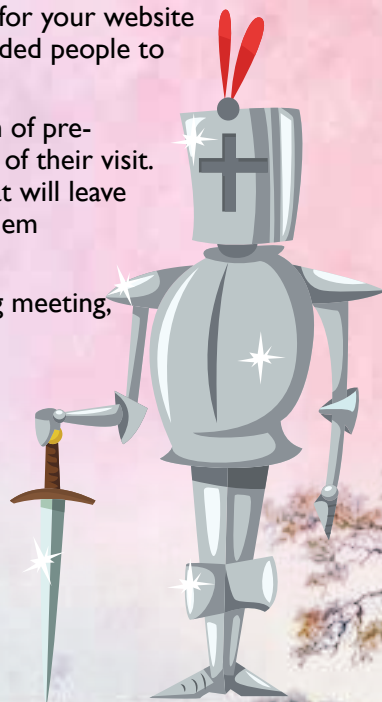
Tel: **01253 446925** or **07711 628661**

Email **jane@catapultpr.co.uk**

More information can also be found at:

**[www.catapultpr.co.uk](http://www.catapultpr.co.uk)**

**[www.thecountydaycompany.co.uk](http://www.thecountydaycompany.co.uk)**



# Recent Relevant Awards

We have won 35 awards in our lifetime as an agency, plus over 50 finalist accolades. Here are some of our recent awards of relevance to this document. A full list of awards, runners-up accolades and current award shortlistings (8 as of 4 July, 2020) can be seen at **[www.catapultpr.co.uk/awards](http://www.catapultpr.co.uk/awards)**

**National Finalist:** Independent PR Practitioner – National CIPR Excellence Awards 2020

**National Finalist:** Arts, Culture, Sport or Entertainment Campaign – National CIPR Excellence Awards 2020

**Gold Award:** Outstanding Independent Practitioner – CIPR PRide NW Awards 2019

**Silver Award:** Best Community Relations Campaign – CIPR PRide NW Awards 2019

**National Winner:** Travel, Leisure or Tourism Campaign – National CIPR Excellence Awards 2018

**Silver Award:** Arts, Culture or Sport Campaign – CIPR PRide NW Awards 2018

**Silver Award:** Outstanding Independent Practitioner – CIPR PRide NW Awards 2018

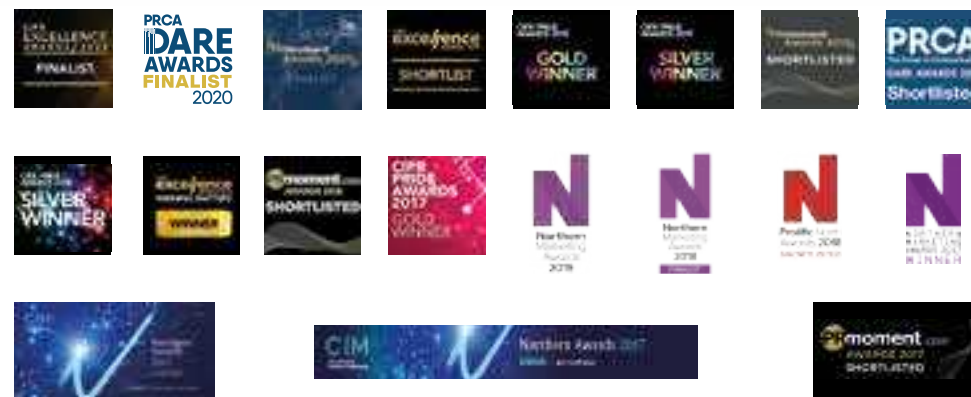
**Best B2C Campaign** – CIM Northern Awards 2017

**Best Consultant** – CIM Northern Awards 2017

**Gold Award:** Best Community Relations Campaign – CIPR PRide NW Awards 2017

**Gold Award:** Outstanding Independent Practitioner – CIPR PRide NW Awards 2017

**Best Tourism & Leisure Campaign** – Northern Marketing Awards 2017







**Using research insight to unlock tourism potential**

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