GIGXCHANGE

MONTHLY MARKET REPORT

THE GIGXCHANGE INDEX

# What gigs actually pay.

The open benchmark for UK live music fees – 4,290 checked observations across thirteen cities, seven gig types and every band size. Free to read, free to cite, rebuilt nightly.

**Issue 04 · July 2026**

| 4,290 | 13 | 280 | 30 Jul |
|---|---|---|---|
| DATA POINTS | UK CITIES | RATES PUBLISHED | LAST REFRESH |

GIGXCHANGE.APP/RATES

FOREWORD

# We took rows out. The market moved anyway.

> July was the month we audited our own machinery – and published what we found. Two hundred and twenty-five observations that never deserved a vote – an over-eager club model, and behind it our own test accounts – are out of the pool, two sources emptied with them, and the published cell count now reads 280 against June's 310. Then, with the noise gone, the city league moved for the first time.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **4,290** | **+254** | **280** | **670** |
| OBSERVATIONS IN THE POOL | NET GROWTH SINCE THE JUNE ISSUE | PUBLISHED CELLS, DOWN FROM 310 | AGENCY LISTINGS RE-CHECKED THIS WEEK |

*Source: GigXchange Index ingest telemetry, June-issue close to 31 July 2026.*

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Issue 04 pairs a correction with a first: what we removed from our own dataset, and the first genuine movement in the city league – across seven gig types, thirteen cities and four band sizes.

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### HOW TO READ A RATE CELL

A single average would blend a festival headliner into a Sunday carvery slot, so we never print one. Each cell gives four points on the curve: p25 the budget end, p50 the typical fee – half pay less, half pay more – p75 a strong booking, p90 the premium tier. Price yourself against the curve, not a rumour.

SECTION ONE

01

# Where the market settled in July

Every figure below is performer pay, in pounds – ticket money, door splits, gear hire and travel are refused at the database layer. No cell publishes on fewer than three trusted observations. Reading note: n counts weighted samples, not unique gigs – an observation is counted at every geographic level it informs and once per re-sighting, which is why n runs far above the 4,290-observation pool.

## UK MEDIANS BY GIG TYPE 3-4 PIECE

| USE CASE | P25 | P50 (MEDIAN) | P75 | P90 | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Wedding | £754 | **£1,042** | £1,345 | £1,907 | 15,359 |
| Private party | £666 | **£1,000** | £1,420 | £2,167 | 8,705 |
| Corporate event | £669 | **£839** | £892 | £1,025 | 14 |
| Festival | £649 | **£669** | £872 | £892 | 12 |
| Theatre / pit | £631 | **£640** | £640 | £640 | 3 |
| Club (ticketed) | £450 | **£600** | £1,463 | £1,463 | 33 |
| Pubs & bars | £225 | **£375** | £625 | £950 | 509 |

**ANALYSIS** Weddings set the ceiling at £1,042, up £37 on the June issue, and private parties sit £42 behind at £1,000 – functionally the same market at this lineup size. Corporate holds at £839 for a third issue; fixed budgets do not negotiate. At the floor, pubs read £375 against the £425 we printed in June: the bulk of that fall is the July quarantine taking fabricated rows out of the cell (Section Three walks through it), not landlords paying less.

## HOW BAND SIZE MOVES THE MONEY UK NATIONAL, WEDDINGS

| BAND SIZE | P25 | P50 | P75 | P90 | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Solo | £247 | **£328** | £458 | £599 | 961 |
| Duo | £499 | **£613** | £777 | £1,396 | 2,569 |
| 3-4 piece | £754 | **£1,042** | £1,345 | £1,907 | 15,359 |
| 5+ piece | £1,101 | **£1,433** | £1,800 | £2,678 | 1,249 |

**ANALYSIS** Solo £328, duo £613, £1,042 for a 3-4 piece, £1,433 at five-plus. The big cliff is still duo-to-band – a £429 jump, the price of turning background music into an event. Per chair, though, growth gets cheaper: a quartet works out near £261 a musician, while the five-plus median spread across six players comes to about £239 – because the van, the PA and the admin cost the same whether four people share them or six.

01

SECTION ONE — CONTINUED

# Gig type × band size heatmap

Every cell below is the UK national median (p50) in pounds — the scale underneath shows the bands. Dashes mark combinations with insufficient data to publish.

| GIG TYPE | SOLO | DUO | 3-4 PC | 5+ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Wedding | £328 | £613 | **£1,042** | **£1,433** |
| Private party | £496 | £433 | **£1,000** | £850 |
| Corporate | £375 | £765 | £839 | **£1,246** |
| Festival | £223† | £446† | £669 | **£1,515** |
| Club | £359 | £468† | £600 | £2,291† |
| Pub & bar | £283 | £375 | £375 | £500 |
| Theatre | £175† | – | £640† | £960† |

under £300 · £300+ · £600+ · £1,000+ · £1,500+

† fewer than ten underlying observations

**ANALYSIS** The top row belongs to weddings at every lineup size, with private parties close enough behind that a 3-4 piece client is effectively choosing on service, not price. Corporate compresses into a narrow band; pubs and clubs anchor the floor. Two figures earn a caution flag rather than a quote: club five-plus at £2,291 stands on six samples, and the theatre 3-4 piece on three — read both as bearings, not benchmarks.

### HOW TO READ THIS

Pick your gig type (row) and band size (column) to see where the UK market sits. Then check the city league on the next page to see how your location shifts the number. The live calculator combines all three axes in real time.

**£175**
CHEAPEST — THEATRE SOLO

**13×**

**£2,291**
PRICIEST — CLUB 5+

01

SECTION ONE — CONTINUED

# City league — first blood

Thirteen UK cities publish a wedding cell this issue, ranked by the typical 3-4 piece fee. After three issues of a frozen table, July finally produced movement: London's median climbed from £903 to £917 and took fourth place from Leeds. One swap is not a trend — but it is the first time fresh evidence has re-ordered the league rather than confirmed it.

| CITY | P25 | P50 (MEDIAN) | P75 | P90 | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Edinburgh | £1,119 | **£1,186** | £1,759 | £1,829 | 30 |
| Brighton | £833 | **£1,050** | £1,219 | £1,259 | 123 |
| Cardiff | £887 | **£987** | £1,230 | £1,455 | 66 |
| London | £576 | **£917** | £1,200 | £1,685 | 288 |
| Leeds | £730 | **£910** | £1,254 | £1,437 | 96 |
| Bristol | £793 | **£893** | £1,112 | £1,143 | 192 |
| Glasgow | £643 | **£868** | £1,419 | £1,960 | 54 |
| Sheffield | £663 | **£854** | £1,289 | £1,553 | 126 |
| Manchester | £663 | **£825** | £990 | £1,153 | 252 |
| Birmingham | £593 | **£788** | £944 | £1,210 | 180 |
| Liverpool | £663 | **£773** | £817 | £850 | 129 |
| Newcastle | £657 | **£663** | £697 | £781 | 24 |
| Nottingham | £583 | **£663** | £825 | £1,027 | 48 |

### A NEW FOURTH PLACE

Edinburgh keeps the crown at £1,186, ahead of Brighton (£1,050) and Cardiff (£987) — but London (£917) now edges Leeds (£910) for fourth, the league's first re-ordering in four issues. London also remains the widest market we publish, spanning £576 to £1,685. Newcastle and Nottingham still share the foot of the table at £663.

## COVERAGE OUTLOOK

We are keeping the same honest score as last issue: the corporate cells for Nottingham and Sheffield and the festival cells for Brighton and Edinburgh, first promised in May, are still short of the three-observation bar. Scraping cannot manufacture city-tagged event fees and the artist panel reports asking rates, not gigs. Those four cells get built when working musicians report real fees at gigxchange.app/rates — that route, or none.

01

SECTION ONE — CONTINUED

# Two markets, one industry

## WEDDING FEES BY BAND SIZE
UK NATIONAL

Weddings stay the deepest cell in the Index and the ceiling of the market. The July curve runs £328 solo to £1,433 at five-plus, and the flagship 3-4 piece median lands at £1,042 – £37 up on June, the largest move this segment has shown, though still modest against a pool this deep.

| BAND SIZE | P25 | P50 | P75 | P90 | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Solo | £247 | **£328** | £458 | £599 | 961 |
| Duo | £499 | **£613** | £777 | £1,396 | 2,569 |
| 3-4 piece | £754 | **£1,042** | £1,345 | £1,907 | 15,359 |
| 5+ piece | £1,101 | **£1,433** | £1,800 | £2,678 | 1,249 |

## PUB & BAR FEES BY BAND SIZE
UK NATIONAL

Pubs hold the floor at £375 for a 3-4 piece – £50 under June's printed figure, mostly because the July quarantine took rows out of the cell rather than because rooms pay less. What the floor lacks in headline it returns in rhythm: repeat slots, a built-in crowd, minimal overheads. A month of steady residency nights can still beat a single wedding fee.

| BAND SIZE | P25 | P50 | P75 | P90 | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Solo | £220 | **£283** | £363 | £729 | 1,301 |
| Duo | £300 | **£375** | £500 | £700 | 182 |
| 3-4 piece | £225 | **£375** | £625 | £950 | 509 |
| 5+ | £375 | **£500** | £836 | £1,350 | 422 |

### THE MOST LOCATION-PROOF GIG IN BRITAIN

Pub fees barely flex by city, because venue economics – door take, bar margin, a fixed entertainment budget – set the price everywhere and regional income barely registers. Book a pub slot in London or Newcastle and the fee lands within roughly ten percent.

SECTION TWO

02

# How the figures are built

> From an observed fee to a percentile you can quote in a negotiation – the pipeline in plain English.

### 1 — WHAT WE COVER

UK live music only. A published cell is the meeting point of three axes: **where** (a canonical city, one of twelve UK regions, or the national baseline), **what kind of gig** (seven types, weddings to theatre/pit), and **how many musicians** (solo, duo, 3–4 piece, 5+). Each cell carries four percentiles – p25/p50/p75/p90 – never an average.

### 2 — WHERE THE DATA COMES FROM

The July pool draws on six sources, two fewer than June: weekly re-scans of three UK booking agencies' public rate cards, Musicians' Union and Equity published minimums, a monthly panel of artist asking rates, fees reported by gig-workers, and human-reviewed extractions from public pages. Venue budgets and the ticket-derived club model both left the pool in the July audit – Section Three explains each exit. Every observation arrives tagged with source, gig type, band size, venue type and location.

### 3 — CITIES WITH THIN DATA

Publication happens at three levels: **city** (major UK metros, satellite towns folded into their hub – Hove counts as Brighton, Oldbury as Birmingham), **region** (the twelve official UK regions) and the **UK baseline**. Three observations earn a cell its place in print. Ask the live calculator about somewhere thinner and it walks the chain – city, then region, then the national figure with a regional adjustment – and tells you which level answered you.

### 4 — REGIONAL ADJUSTMENTS

The adjustment layer blends ONS regional household income and family-spending data with public industry price benchmarks, tuned per gig type: corporate fees track regional wealth closely, wedding spend barely does, and pub fees hardly flex at all because venue economics set the ceiling everywhere. Adjustments only ever fill gaps – wherever real observations exist, they win outright.

SECTION TWO — CONTINUED

02

## Weights, gates and cadence

### 5 — WHY SOME SOURCES COUNT MORE THAN OTHERS

A fee that provably changed hands outranks a listings-page price, so every observation carries an **effective trust weight** (source weight × confidence). One change of basis to declare this issue: the table below prints the average weight *actually applied* to this month's rows, not the headline dial setting. Where the two differ – verified reports most visibly – it is because older rows keep the weight they entered with; the time series never retro-edits itself.

| SOURCE | WEIGHT | WHY |
|---|---|---|
| MU / Equity recommended rate | 0.55 | The union floor – authoritative, not market-clearing |
| Agency published rate card | 0.48 | Asking price, commission stripped at ingest |
| Artist profile asking rate | 0.38 | Monthly stated-rate panel |
| Web-extracted rate | 0.35 | Public-page extractions, human-reviewed |
| Anonymous public submission | 0.16 | Held at arm's length until verified |
| Post-event verified submission | 0.12 | Launch-era rows at their entry weight – see the basis note above |
| Venue gig budget | – | Withdrawn this issue – every row was seed data |
| Ticket-derived club estimate | – | Withdrawn this issue – approved against its shadow-mode design |

### 6 — KEEPING JUNK OUT

Five automated gates separate an incoming observation from a published cell: required fields, a vetted-source whitelist, an artist-fee-only rule enforced in the database itself, per-musician-per-hour plausibility bounds, and a duplicate fingerprint. One of the five spent the spring switched off without anyone noticing – Section Four tells that story straight, including what the gate rejected the day it came back.

### 7 — REFRESH CADENCE

Cells rebuild nightly at 05:00 UTC; agency rate cards re-scan on Mondays; the artist panel snapshots on the 28th of each month; approved submissions flow in daily. Each rebuild is archived, never overwritten – that archive is what makes the issue-on-issue comparisons in Section Three possible. A cadence note for the series: the report now compiles overnight on the 28th of each month. This first issue under the new schedule was compiled on 31 July, so its window runs to the end of the month; from Issue 05 the window closes on the 28th.

### 8 — HONEST SCOPE

A record of **what the UK market paid or asked** across the observation window – nothing more. Not a price recommendation, not a regulated benchmark, not financial advice. A legitimate gig can sit outside every range we print. Free to reuse under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0.

SECTION THREE

03

# What changed in the July dataset

The pool stands at **4,290 approved observations**, up 254 on the June issue. The number that matters more is smaller: 225 – the rows we removed from our own index, in public.

| SOURCE | OBSERVATIONS | SHARE | WEIGHT | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Agency rate cards | 3,463 | 80.7% | 0.48 | Weekly re-scan: 3 UK agencies |
| Artist profile rates | 335 | 7.8% | 0.38 | Monthly panel; 135 snapshots on 28 July |
| Post-event verified reports | 195 | 4.5% | 0.12 | Launch-era rows at entry weight |
| MU / Equity recommended | 143 | 3.3% | 0.55 | Union floors, refreshed annually |
| Web-extracted rates | 128 | 3.0% | 0.35 | Pulled from public pages, human-reviewed |
| Anonymous submissions | 26 | 0.6% | 0.16 | Public form; rate-limited and reviewed |

### THE 225-ROW QUARANTINE

A July audit of our pipeline found three faults, all self-inflicted. 123 ticket-derived club estimates had been approved into the pool when the model was designed to run in shadow and count for nothing; 62 artist-panel rows and 40 venue budgets traced back to our own seed and test accounts – invented fees no one was ever paid. All 225 are quarantined, every adapter now screens for seed accounts at intake and fails closed, and the published cell count dropped by 36 overnight – regrowth since leaves it at 280 against June's 310. Venue budgets were seed data to the last row, so that source now stands empty. The visible result is in Section One: the pub 3–4 piece median prints £375 where June printed £425. June's figures stay as published – we correct forward, never backward – but that £425 was propped up by rows that should never have counted.

## DEDUPLICATION AND RE-SIGHTING

A listing that is still there next Monday tells you its price is holding – but it must never vote twice. When the weekly scan recognises a listing it already holds, it bumps a sighting counter instead of inserting a twin: 670 re-sights this week, none of them widening the sample. Since July, a re-confirmed listing also ages from its latest sighting, not its first – a price the market keeps confirming no longer fades as stale.

## EXTERNAL REFERENCES USED FOR REGIONAL ADJUSTMENTS

- ONS regional household income and family-spending data (latest releases).
- Music Venue Trust grassroots venue occupancy and capacity data (2025 survey).
- Public 2026 UK wedding and function-band price benchmarks.
- Help Musicians / Musicians' Union – Musicians' Census (~6,000 respondents).

SECTION FOUR

04

# How we keep junk out

Every observation faces the same gates whatever its source, and every rejection is logged with its reason – the audit trail is part of the product. This issue owes you a confession: the range check spent roughly ten weeks not running, and nobody noticed until the July audit.

CHECK 1

### Has the basics

No amount, no source, no gig type – no entry. Incomplete rows are refused at the door, not patched later.

CHECK 2

### From a known source

Only the vetted source list may write to the index, through a single ingest funnel. A new feed earns its place via a weighting review first.

CHECK 3

### Is an artist fee

The database layer itself refuses ticket money, gear hire, licensing and door splits. Only pay to performers counts.

CHECK 4

### Passes the range check

Per-musician-per-hour bounds, set per gig type. This is the gate that silently fell out of the pipeline in a spring rewrite – for about ten weeks nothing was range-checking incoming rows. It is back, unknown gig types now bounce outright, and on its first day back it rejected a £25,000 "wedding band" and a £100 one from the same feed.

CHECK 5

### Not a duplicate

Every observation is fingerprinted. A re-scanned listing bumps a sighting counter; it never becomes a second row.

BONUS CHECK

### Sealed against our own test data

New since the quarantine: every adapter checks whether a profile belongs to a seed or test account before ingesting, and fails closed when it cannot tell. The 225 rows we removed have no way back in.

## ANONYMOUS SUBMISSIONS

Anyone who has played or booked a UK gig can report the fee at gigxchange.app/rates – no account needed. Submissions are rate-limited, sanity-checked and human-reviewed before they touch a cell. Three approved reports unlock every cell and trend line for 30 days.

SECTION FIVE

05

# What this report is and isn't

## WHAT IT *IS*

A transparent record of fees actually paid or asked on UK gigs, with every cell showing its sample size, sources and refresh date – and a standing public record of the corrections we make to our own data, including the ones that shrink our own headline numbers.

## WHAT IT *ISN'T*

- **Not a recommended price.** We publish where the market sits, not where you should sit in it. Undercut or exceed any figure here with a clear conscience.
- **Not an official benchmark.** No industry body endorses or regulates these figures. Independence is the point.
- **Not financial advice.** Evidence in, decision yours.
- **Not the whole market.** Most UK gig fees are agreed privately and surface nowhere. An index can only weigh what it can see.

## WHAT'S STILL MISSING

- Confirmed platform bookings – the 1.00-weight reference signal – still contribute zero rows. The bookings we hold are dominated by our own test accounts, and counting those would repeat the exact mistake this issue spent a section undoing. The source switches on when real transactions arrive in volume, not before.
- Venue budgets restart from nothing: the first genuine venue budget the index ever ingests will be the first row in that source.
- The club picture is thinner without the ticket-derived model – the five-plus club cell rests on six observations and is directional at best.
- Festival and theatre stay the sparsest gig types; the 3–4 piece theatre cell stands on three observations.
- No genre-level cells yet – every observation carries the tags, and publication is waiting on volume, not engineering.

## FREE TO USE



## HELP SHAPE THE NEXT ISSUE

One real fee from one real gig outweighs a hundred scraped listings – July proved it outweighs a hundred of our own estimates too. Report yours anonymously at gigxchange.app/rates – sixty seconds, no signup – and three reports unlock full granular access for 30 days.

GIGXCHANGE

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