

THE GIGXCHANGE INDEX

What gigs **actually** pay.

The open benchmark for UK live music fees: 5,192 checked observations, published for thirteen cities. This month seven national medians rose, none fell, and the private-party solo led at +£31.

Issue 07 • October 2026

5,192

DATA POINTS

13

UK CITIES

414

RATES PUBLISHED

28 Oct

LAST REFRESH

FOREWORD

Seven medians rose. Not one fell.

Of the 22 national tiles we can compare with September, seven moved and every move was upward. The biggest was the private-party solo, which rose £31, from £323 to £354, on a sample that grew by one. At the 3-4 piece lineup, four of six gig types held: weddings rose £10 to £1,000 and private parties £3. All four pub medians held, though most of their new rows are panel members restating the rates they gave in September.

5,192CHECKED
OBSERVATIONS IN
THE POOL**+420**NET GROWTH SINCE
THE SEPTEMBER
ISSUE**7 of 22**NATIONAL MEDIANS
THAT MOVED, ALL
UPWARD**£17**WIDTH OF THE CITY
LEAGUE

Source: GigXchange Index ingest telemetry and the nightly cell archive. Growth and median moves are measured between the 28 September and 28 October 2026 refreshes, both taken at 05:00 UTC.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Seven national medians up and none down, led by the private-party solo; four of the six headline 3-4 piece figures unchanged; and a closer look at why the pub medians held while their samples grew.

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HOW TO READ A RATE CELL

No gig has one correct fee, so no cell prints one. Each gives you four points on the distribution: p25, where the cheaper quarter of quoted fees sits; p50, the weighted midpoint; p75, a strong fee; and p90, the premium end. Place yourself on that spread and negotiate from it.

SECTION ONE

Where the market stood in October

Every figure that follows is a fee for performers, paid or asked, in pounds. Ticket income, door splits, equipment hire and travel are refused by the database before they can be counted. One note governs every n in this report: n counts the approved observations applicable to a cell, not unique gigs booked in it. Each row counts once in every cell it informs; an agency listing seen again on a later scan adds nothing, but a panel member's monthly rate is a new row each month; and at city level n includes the rows that carry no location and so apply to every city.

UK MEDIANS BY GIG TYPE 3-4 PIECE

USE CASE	P25	P50 (MEDIAN)	P75	P90	N
Wedding	£729	£1,000	£1,405	£1,900	1,616
Private party	£500	£869	£1,329	£1,955	537
Corporate event	£669	£812	£892	£1,082	6
Festival	£200	£669	£866	£892	5
Club (ticketed)	£450	£600	£1,463	£1,463	11
Pubs & bars	£275	£350	£600	£750	379

ANALYSIS Six gig types publish a 3-4 piece median, and four of them are where September left them. Weddings rose £10 to an even £1,000, on a cell of 1,616 rows, and private parties £3 to £869, so the gap between the two dearest bookings at this size widened from £124 to £131. Corporate (£812), festival (£669) and club (£600) did not move, and the corporate and festival figures still rest on six and five observations. Pubs remain the cheapest 3-4 piece booking at £350, the figure September printed, now on 379 observations rather than 274. Theatre has no 3-4 piece figure; its one national tile, at solo, is on the next page.

HOW BAND SIZE MOVES THE MONEY UK NATIONAL, WEDDINGS

BAND SIZE	P25	P50	P75	P90	N
Solo	£245	£333	£450	£650	110
Duo	£443	£541	£792	£1,146	189
3-4 piece	£729	£1,000	£1,405	£1,900	1,616
5+ piece	£1,130	£1,489	£1,907	£2,837	427

ANALYSIS From solo to five-plus, the wedding curve now reads £333, £541, £1,000 and £1,489. The lower three rungs each rose a little, by £3, £8 and £10, while five-plus printed its September figure to the pound, so the top step shrank by £10. The steepest step on the curve is from 3-4 piece to five-plus, at £489. A second player on a solo booking adds £208 at the median, and turning a duo into a band adds £459. Per head there is no steady discount for size: £333 for a solo act, about £271 each in a duo, £250 to £333 in a 3-4 piece and about £248 to £298 at five or six players.

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	£333	£541	£1,000	£1,489
Private party	£354	£433†	£859	£575
Corporate	£392	£445†	£812†	£1,337
Festival	–	–	£669†	£1,560†
Club	£250†	£468†	£600	–
Pub & bar	£250	£325	£350	£525
Theatre	£175†	–	–	–

under £300

£300+

£600+

£1,000+

£1,500+

† fewer than ten underlying observations

ANALYSIS Read the grid by column and the market splits by occasion. In the solo column corporate leads at £392, and private parties, at £354, have moved ahead of weddings, at £333; in September the order of those two was the other way round, £330 to £323. At the two extremes sit festival five-plus, the dearest tile at £1,560, and theatre solo, the cheapest at £175, both unchanged. Eight tiles carry the low-sample dagger, the same eight as in September, and not one of them gained an observation this month: each still rests on between three and nine. Quote them only with their n attached.

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

9×

£1,560

PRICIEST – FESTIVAL 5+

SECTION ONE – CONTINUED

01

Thirteen cities, £17 from top to bottom

Every city with a wedding 3-4 piece cell sits between £1,065 and £1,082. Edinburgh leads on its own; Birmingham, Liverpool, London and Manchester share the foot of the table. The spread is £17, three pounds wider than the £14 September printed.

CITY	P25	P50 (MEDIAN)	P75	P90	N
Edinburgh	£750	£1,082	£1,500	£2,049	1,090
Brighton	£750	£1,079	£1,500	£2,000	1,121
Cardiff	£750	£1,079	£1,500	£2,034	1,102
Glasgow	£750	£1,079	£1,500	£2,049	1,098
Leeds	£750	£1,079	£1,500	£2,034	1,112
Newcastle	£750	£1,079	£1,500	£2,049	1,088
Sheffield	£750	£1,073	£1,500	£2,034	1,122
Nottingham	£750	£1,072	£1,500	£2,034	1,096
Bristol	£750	£1,067	£1,500	£2,000	1,144
Birmingham	£750	£1,065	£1,500	£2,000	1,140
Liverpool	£750	£1,065	£1,500	£2,000	1,123
London	£750	£1,065	£1,476	£1,995	1,176
Manchester	£750	£1,065	£1,492	£2,000	1,164

WHY £1,000 SITS BELOW EVERY CITY

The national cell counts all 1,616 wedding 3-4 piece rows. The 536 located in a city have an unweighted median of £850; the 1,080 with no city, almost all of them agency price lists, £1,079. Each city cell is those 1,080 rows plus its own 8 to 96 local ones, so every city lands near £1,079, while the national figure takes in all 536 located rows at once and prints £1,000, below the lot. The order inside the league is consistent with that sum: the five cities with the most local rows, London, Manchester, Bristol, Birmingham and Liverpool, fill the bottom five places.

COVERAGE OUTLOOK

Of the 299 city cells, 100 now rest on three or more observations collected in the city (September printed 99) and 173 on none at all (September: 174).

September's promises, scored. July's 225 quarantined rows remain out of the pool. Platform bookings and venue budgets have yet to supply a row. The pub duo, promised a second look, held at £325 on 93 observations. And the fee form, which took no reports in September, took three.

SECTION ONE – CONTINUED

Two markets, one industry

WEDDING FEES BY BAND SIZE UK NATIONAL

No gig type has more observations behind it than weddings, and no 3-4 piece booking costs more. The flagship 3-4 piece went from £990 to £1,000 on eleven more rows; the duo rose £8 and the solo act £3, each on one or two more, and five-plus printed £1,489 again. The 3-4 piece top end moved with its middle, p75 up £35 to £1,405 and p90 up £20 to £1,900; small moves for a cell that spans £729 to £1,900.

BAND SIZE	P25	P50	P75	P90	N
Solo	£245	£333	£450	£650	110
Duo	£443	£541	£792	£1,146	189
3-4 piece	£729	£1,000	£1,405	£1,900	1,616
5+ piece	£1,130	£1,489	£1,907	£2,837	427

PUB & BAR FEES BY BAND SIZE UK NATIONAL

All four pub tiles grew (solo from 370 rows to 546, duo 66 to 93, 3-4 piece 274 to 379, five-plus 223 to 307) and all four medians held, at £250, £325, £350 and £525. The duo, which September flagged after a £50 fall, stayed at £325, quartiles and all. The 3-4 piece lower quartile rose from £255 to £275 and the five-plus upper quartile fell from £1,125 to £1,050, so both cells narrowed around a still median. How much of that stillness belongs to the market is the question in the note below.

BAND SIZE	P25	P50	P75	P90	N
Solo	£162	£250	£325	£425	546
Duo	£250	£325	£500	£500	93
3-4 piece	£275	£350	£600	£750	379
5+	£400	£525	£1,050	£1,350	307

WHY THE PUB SAMPLE IS LESS NEW THAN IT LOOKS

The pub tiles gained 392 rows, against 28 for every other national tile together. 390 came from the 28 October artist-panel snapshot, all labelled as pub rates, and 307 of those were members the panel also recorded in September, each restating the same rate. The panel tracks asking prices over time, as designed; but this month's steady pub medians mostly reflect the same musicians' steady asking prices, not a fresh test of what pubs pay.

SECTION TWO

02

How the figures are built

How an observed fee becomes a percentile you can quote across a table. October ran on the rules August and September ran on: no source weight and no range bound has changed.

1 – WHAT WE COVER

Live music in the UK, nothing else. A published cell sits where three axes meet: **where** (a canonical city, one of twelve UK regions, or the national baseline), **what kind of gig** (seven types, weddings through to theatre and pit work), and **how many musicians** (solo, duo, 3–4 piece, 5+). Each cell prints four percentiles, p25, p50, p75 and p90, and never a mean, because a mean folds a festival headline slot into a Sunday lunchtime set.

2 – WHERE THE DATA COMES FROM

Nine source classes appear in the weights table on the next page; six currently hold approved observations, and three of them supplied rows this window: the artist panel, the agency scans and, after none in September, anonymous fee reports. The six are weekly re-scans of three UK booking agencies' public rate cards, Musicians' Union and Equity published minimums, a monthly panel of artist asking rates, externally sourced rate schedules checked on import, fees reported anonymously by people who played or booked the gig, and human-reviewed extractions from public pages. Venue budgets and the ticket-derived club model have contributed nothing since July's audit. Every observation arrives tagged with source, gig type, band size, venue type and location, or, for just over half of them, with no city at all.

3 – CITIES, AND WHAT A CITY CELL MEANS

Cells publish at three levels: **city** (major UK metros, with satellite towns folded into their hub, so Hove counts as Brighton), **region** (the twelve official UK regions) and the **UK baseline**. A city cell is fed by its own observations *and* by every observation that carries no location, because a national price list is a price on offer in that city too. Its sample size therefore counts **observations applicable to the city**, not observations gathered there, and each cell stores the two counts separately. A city cell is measured on three rows collected in the city; below that it still prints, labelled imputed, and 173 of 299 have no local rows at all. Region and national cells work as before.

4 – REGIONAL ADJUSTMENTS

Where evidence runs thin, an adjustment layer blends ONS regional household income and family-spending figures with public industry price benchmarks, tuned per gig type. The layer lets corporate fees follow regional wealth closely, wedding spend hardly at all, and pub fees barely flex, on the assumption that venue economics set a similar ceiling in every town; that is a setting, not a finding. The adjustments only ever fill gaps; wherever real observations exist, they take precedence outright.

SECTION TWO – CONTINUED

02

Weights, gates and cadence

5 – SOURCE WEIGHTS: HOW MUCH EACH SOURCE CAN COUNT FOR

Each source class has a fixed top **weight**, the column headed max share below, and reaches it only as volume earns credibility: in any cell a source counts for its top weight times $n \div (n + 50)$, where n is its own row count there, so a handful of rows counts for little beside a well-stocked source. The nine top weights add up to 1.00, which makes each one the share a source would hold if every source were present at full strength. In a real cell the weights of the sources actually present are scaled to add up to one, so where little else exists a source holds far more than its column figure: in the wedding 3-4 piece cells for London, Manchester and Edinburgh, agency rate cards carry 67 to 69 per cent of the weight. **The weights were last set on 8 August.**

SOURCE	MAX SHARE OF A CELL	WHY
Anonymous public submission	0.20	A fee someone was actually paid
Verified rate import	0.18	Rate schedules checked on import
Confirmed GigXchange booking	0.15	Cleared transaction; still no rows
Artist profile asking rate	0.13	Monthly stated-rate panel
MU / Equity recommended rate	0.10	Union floor, not market-clearing
Agency published rate card	0.10	Two rows in three; commission stripped
Venue gig budget	0.09	Quota held for an empty source
Web-extracted rate	0.05	Public-page, human-reviewed
Ticket-derived club estimate	0.00	Shadow mode; never published

6 – ONE GRID, EVERY CITY

Every city publishes the same grid of cells, so the cities we know least about still answer the same questions as the ones we know best. The count is now 414 cells: 299 city, 93 regional and 22 national. The regional layer shows the thin spots most plainly: London and the North West publish twelve cells each, Northern Ireland two.

7 – REFRESH CADENCE

Cells rebuild every night at 05:00 UTC; agency rate cards re-scan each Monday; the artist panel snapshots on the 28th; approved submissions flow in daily. Each rebuild is archived, never overwritten, so one issue can be compared with the last. This issue covers 28 September to 28 October; its figures are the 28 October 05:00 UTC refresh.

8 – HONEST SCOPE

A record of **what the UK market paid or asked** over the observation window, and no more. It is not a price recommendation, not a regulated benchmark and not financial advice, and a perfectly fair fee can fall outside every range in it. Free to reuse under CC BY 4.0.

SECTION THREE

03

What changed in the October dataset

The pool stands at **5,192 approved observations**, 420 more than at the 28 September refresh: 390 artist-panel rates, 27 agency listings and three anonymous fee reports. Nothing was withdrawn or sent back for review, so the 420 rows admitted since that refresh are exactly the growth. The 225 rows quarantined in July stay out. The table is the mix at the 28 October refresh.

SOURCE	OBSERVATIONS	SHARE	MAX SHARE	NOTES
Agency rate cards	3,562	68.6%	0.10	Weekly re-scan: 3 UK agencies; 561 older listings re-sighted
Artist profile rates	1,236	23.8%	0.13	Monthly panel; 390 snapshots on 28 October
Web-extracted rates	173	3.3%	0.05	Pulled from public pages, human-reviewed
MU / Equity recommended	143	2.8%	0.10	Union floors, refreshed annually
Verified rate imports	39	0.8%	0.18	No change since the August withdrawal
Anonymous submissions	39	0.8%	0.20	Public form; three new reports this window

COUNTING THE WINDOW, HONESTLY

Our intake count opens at midnight on 28 September, and on that count 732 rows were approved and 243 refused. But 312 of those approvals and 98 of those refusals came before the 05:00 UTC refresh the September issue was built from, and September counted them too. New to this issue: 420 admitted and 145 refused, 111 panel rates and 34 agency listings outside the per-musician-per-hour bounds for their gig type. Agency rows fared worst: 34 of the 61 new ones were refused (56 per cent; 60 on the midnight count).

DEDUPLICATION AND RE-SIGHTING

An agency listing still online a week later shows its price holding, but it must never vote twice: the Monday scan updates the existing row's last-seen date instead of adding a copy. 561 older agency rows were re-sighted this window without widening a sample. The artist panel works differently, adding a row per member each month: 201 in August, 310 in September, 390 in October. Of the 390, 307 were members also recorded in September, every one restating the same rate.

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 meets the same gates whatever its source, and every refusal is logged with its reason, because the audit trail is part of what we publish. In this window every logged refusal came from one gate, the range check, and nothing that got through had to be taken back out.

CHECK 1**Has the basics**

A row with no amount, no source or no gig type is refused outright, never patched up afterwards.

CHECK 2**From a known source**

Only vetted sources can write to the index, all of them through one ingest funnel. A new feed must pass a share review before it counts.

CHECK 3**Is an artist fee**

Ticket income, gear hire, licensing and door splits are refused by the database itself. Only money that reaches performers counts.

BONUS CHECK**Passes the range check**

Per-musician-per-hour bounds, set per gig type. It logged 243 refusals across the window, 145 of them new since the September issue, and 536 since it was restored in July.

CHECK 5**Not a duplicate**

Every observation is fingerprinted. A listing seen again updates its sighting record; it never becomes a second row.

CHECK 6**Is not our own test data**

Rows traceable to a seed or test account are refused at intake across all six sources, and the check fails closed whenever it cannot tell.

ANONYMOUS SUBMISSIONS

Anyone who has played or booked a UK gig can report the fee at gigxchange.app/rates, with no account. Reports are rate-limited, sanity-checked and read by a person before they reach a cell, and three reports unlock every cell and trend line for 30 days. Three reports came in this window, after none in September: two pub bookings and one private party.

SECTION FIVE

What this report is and isn't

WHAT IT IS

A transparent record of what UK gigs paid or asked, in which every cell shows its sample size, its sources and its refresh date. City cells also record how much of that sample was collected locally and how much applies nationally, and the dataset published with this issue carries both counts for every city cell, so a reader can tell a city we have measured from one we are estimating.

WHAT IT ISN'T

- **Not a recommended price.** We report where the market sits, not where you ought to sit in it. Charge above or below any figure here with a clear conscience.
- **Not an official benchmark.** No industry body endorses or regulates these numbers, and that independence is the reason to use them.
- **Not financial advice.** The evidence is ours; the decision is yours.
- **Not a city guide, yet.** When thirteen cities sit within £17 of each other, the closeness reflects thin local evidence rather than cities that price alike.

WHAT'S STILL MISSING

- Fees collected city by city. 173 of the 299 city cells hold none, so their figures are national evidence applied locally, however large their n.
- Fresh pub evidence. The monthly panel largely re-records the same members, so most new pub rows repeat a rate we already held; reported pub fees would test the pub medians in a way the panel cannot.
- Rows from confirmed platform bookings and from venue budgets. Both sources still hold a top weight and no data.
- Theatre beyond its single solo tile, and enough club bookings to lift the solo and duo cells off four and three.
- Cells by genre. Rows carry a genre hint where the source gives one; publication waits on volume.

FREE TO USE

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HELP SHAPE THE NEXT ISSUE

The city at the top of this month's wedding league, Edinburgh, is there on ten fees collected in the city, and Newcastle, joint second at £1,079 with four other cities, rests on eight. Each approved fee reported from either city adds to its local tally. Three reports came in this window; add yours anonymously at gigxchange.app/rates, in about a minute and without signing up, and three reports unlock full granular access for 30 days.