



# Illuminating your visitors

Audience Research for The  
Alamo

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▶ morris  
▶ hargreaves  
▶ mcintyre

**Who we are**

# A strategic research consultancy



# Immersed in the cultural and heritage sectors



ENGLISH  
HERITAGE

GUGGENHEIM

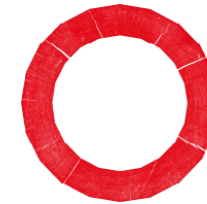


National  
Trust

**COOPER  
HEWITT**



Smithsonian



**SHAKESPEARE'S  
GLOBE**



**Historic  
Royal Palaces**

The British  
Museum

# What we are going to cover today

- Profile of visitors
- Audience segmentation
- Needs, motivations and expectations of visitors
- Onsite behavior, engagement, needs and wants
- Depth of engagement with content and interpretation
- Response to experience

# Methods

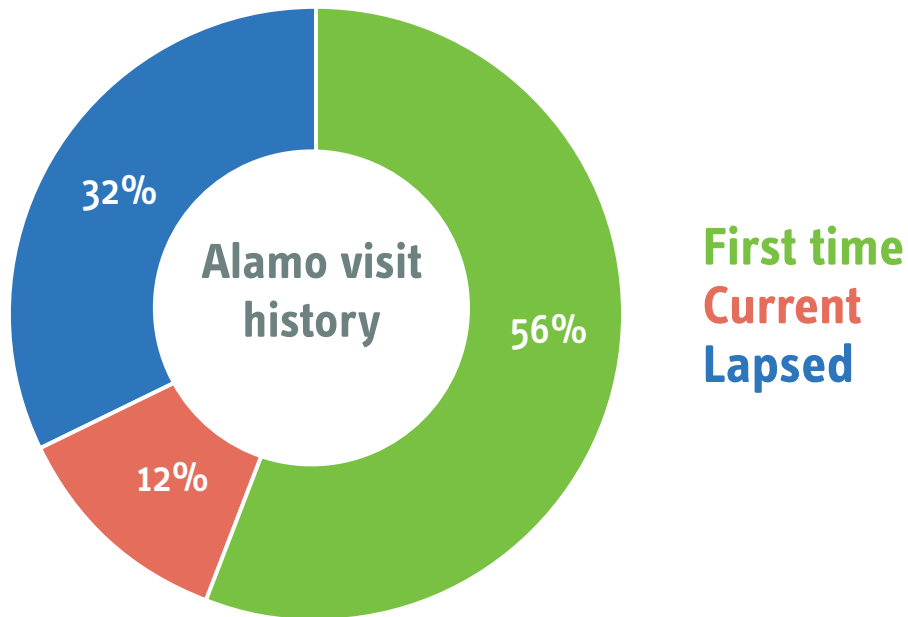
- 249 exit surveys
- 104 Vox Pops across five locations
- 381 observations in three areas

**Diverse demographic profile**

## Over half of visits were made by first-timers

But together, two-fifths of visits were made by **current and lapsed** visitors.

This means there was a significant contingent **familiar with the offer.**

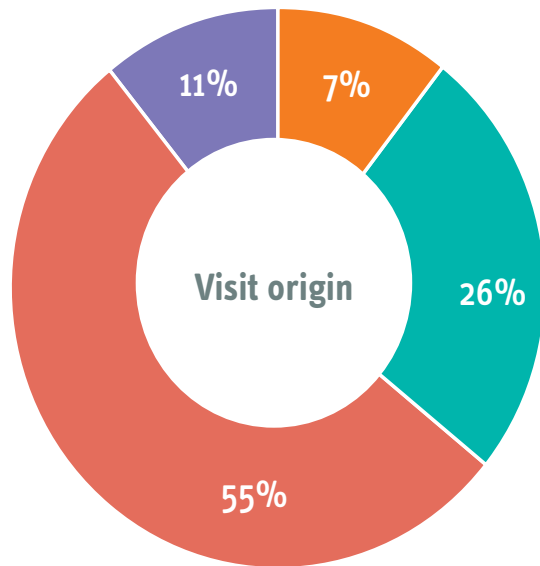


[Base: 249]





## The majority of visits were from out of state



San Antonio  
Rest of Texas  
Rest of US  
Overseas

[Base: 249]

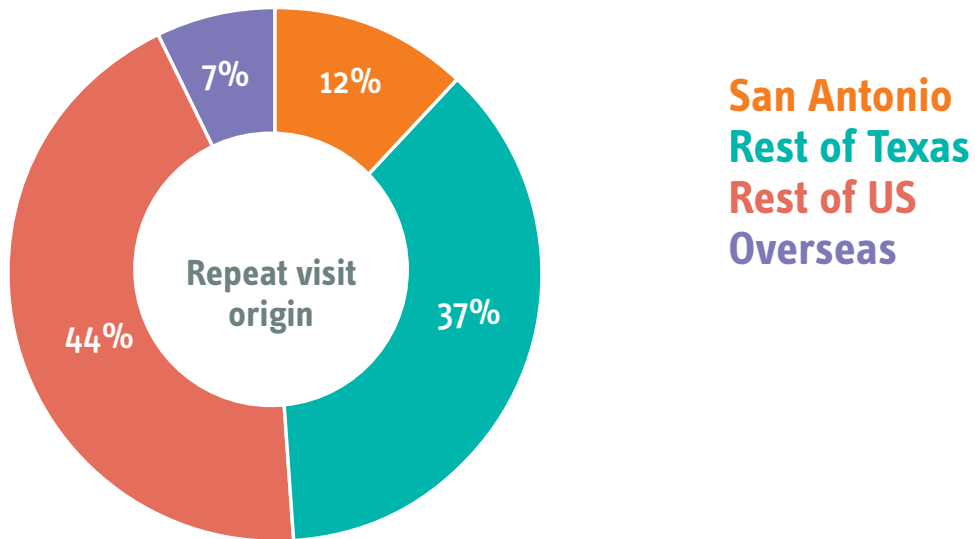
A minority of visits were local.

The H2R research reports that 96% of San Antonio Overall had visited The Alamo previously.



## And few locals made repeat visits

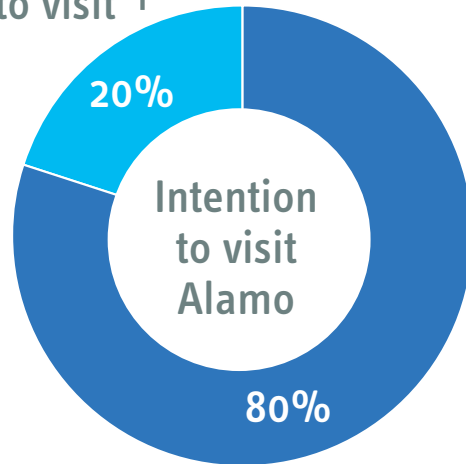
Those who made a **repeat** visit were most likely to originate from **out of state** – likely lapsed visitors returning to the area.



[Base: 110]



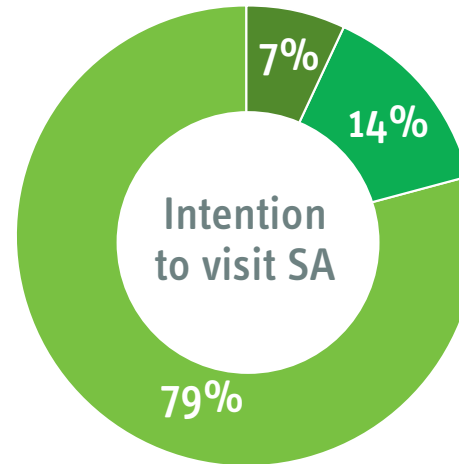
I was in the area for another reason and decided to visit



I intended to visit the Alamo today

[Base 249]

Live, work or study in SA



Visiting SA for other reasons

Visiting SA specifically for the Alamo

[Base 244]

The Alamo had a **high level of intentional** visits, but was **not** the main attractor for most of those visiting San Antonio.

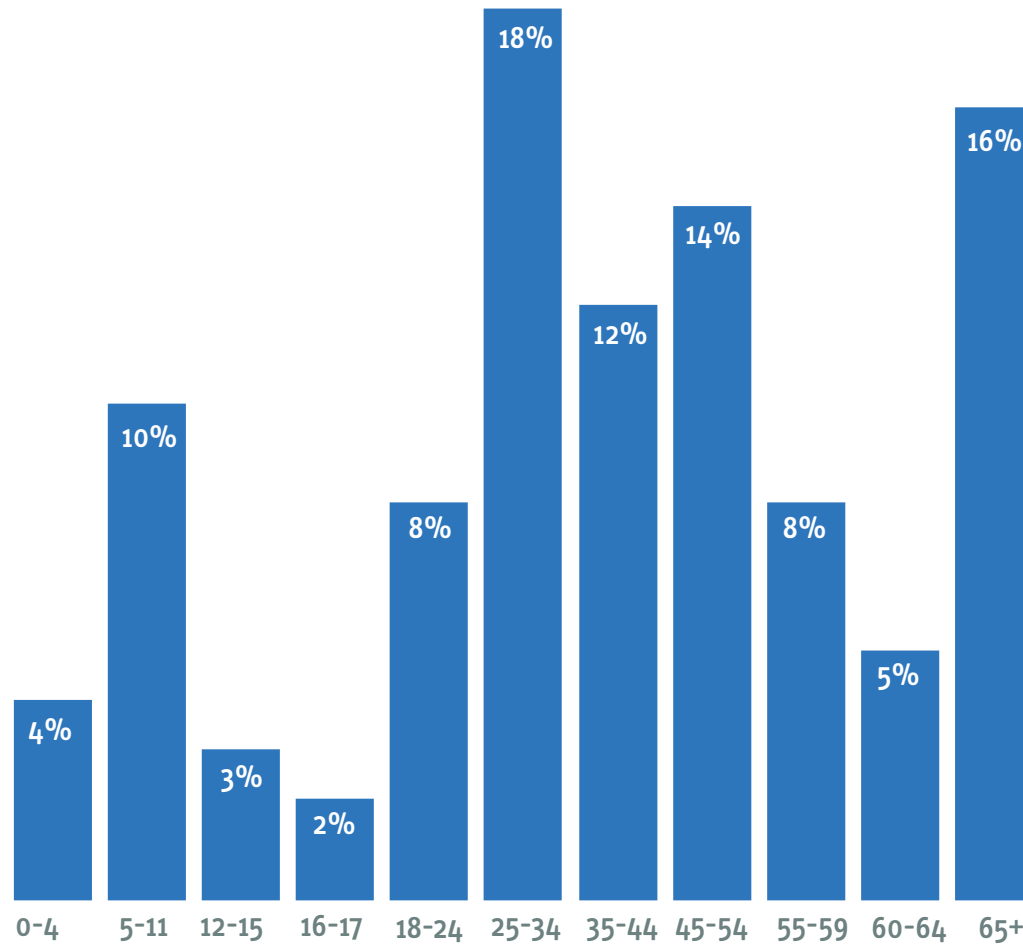


**‘We happen to be in San Antonio and we had a little time to kill. It is a great historical place and we are staying two blocks away’**



# Diverse range of ages

Group age (exluding PNTS)

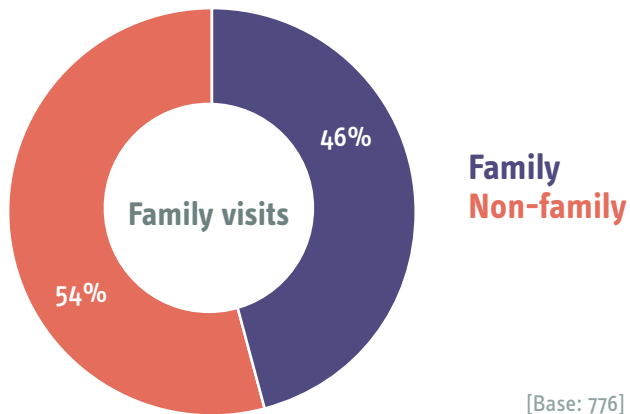


The diverse age range of those visiting the Alamo is a testament to its **all-round popularity**.



[Base: 734]

# High level of family visits



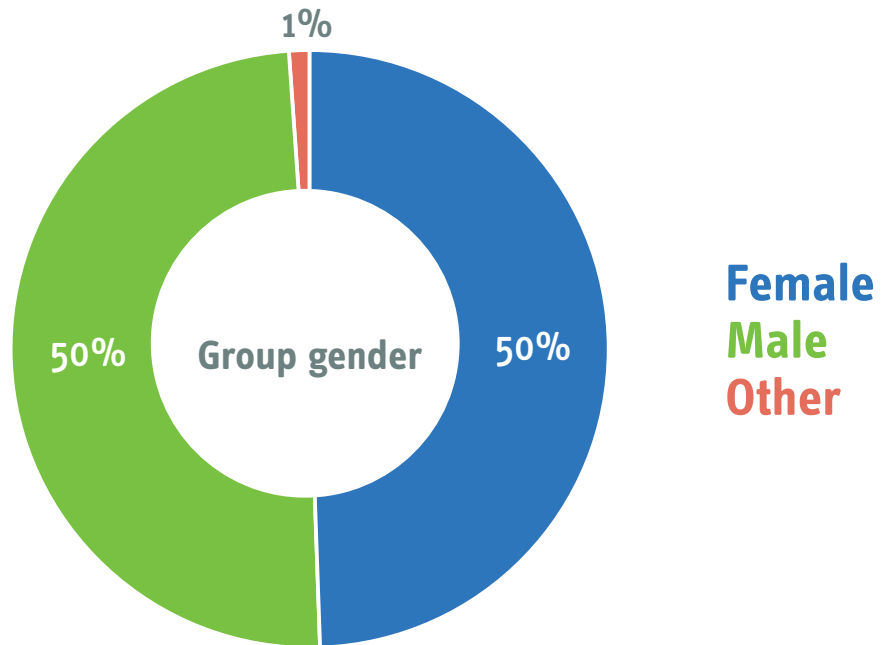
[Base: 776]

The Alamo is clearly a family destination.

**Successful family engagement requires tailored information and activity provision.**



## Even gender split

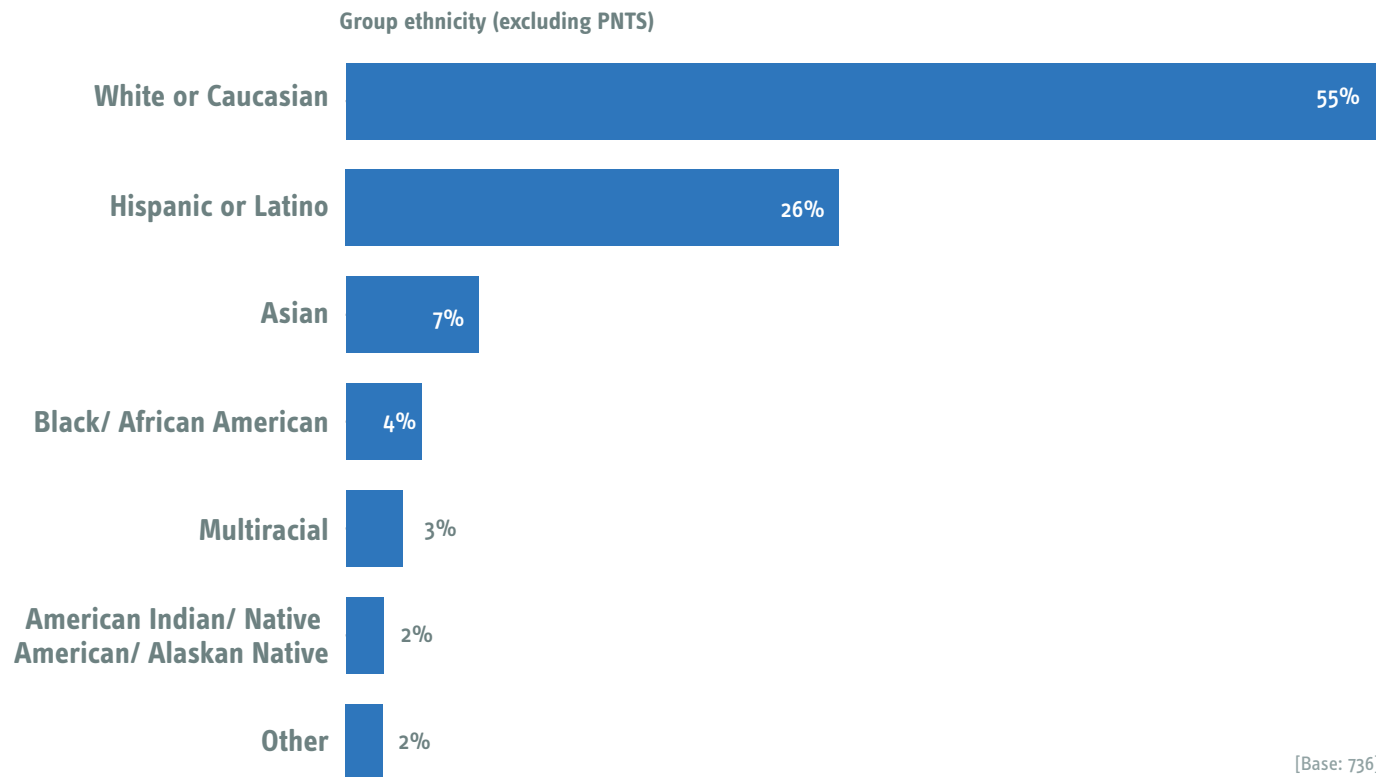


[Base: 749]

Typically, military sites have a **gender bias**, attracting a higher proportion of **males** than females.

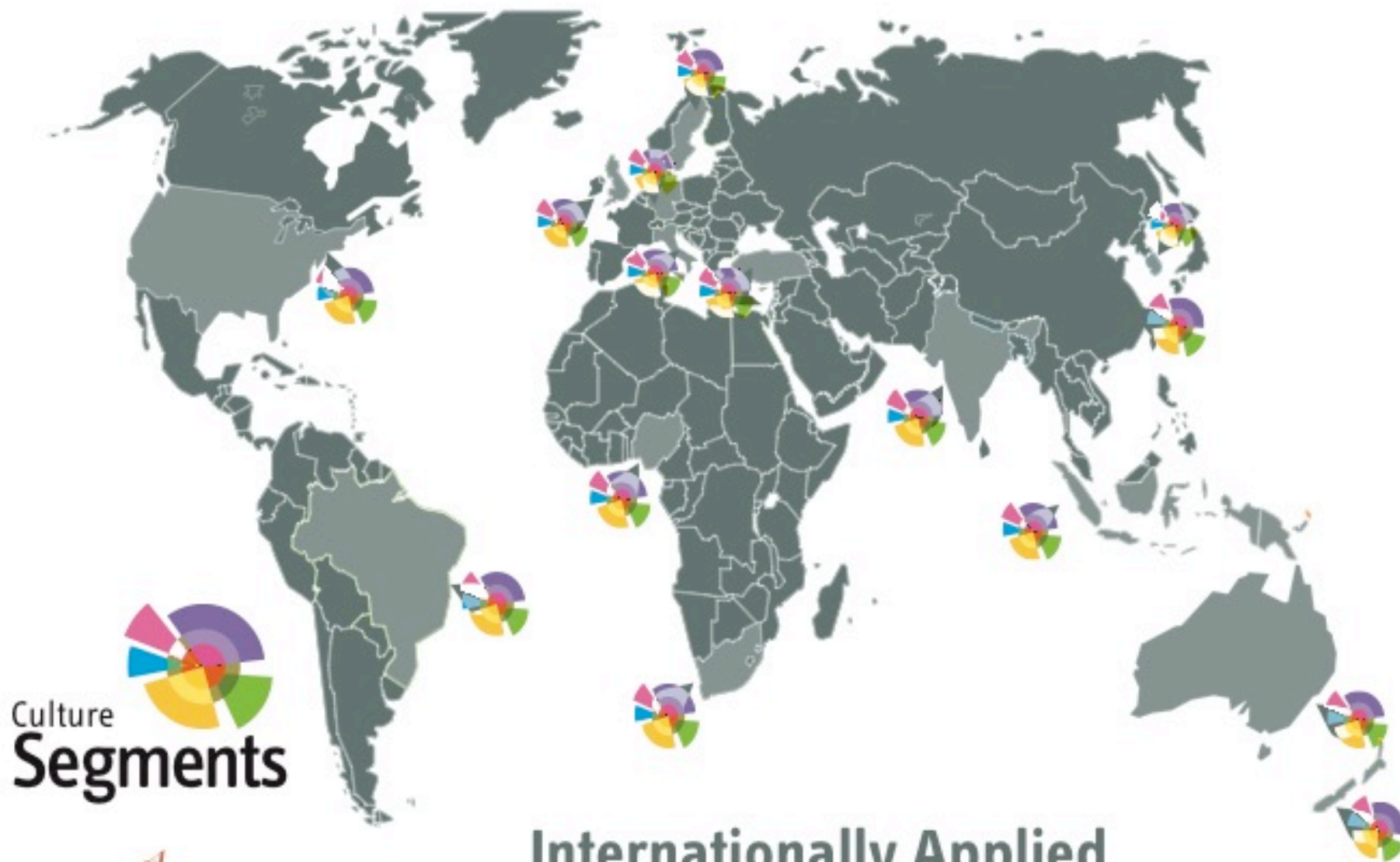


# Strong Hispanic/Latino presence





# What is Culture Segments?



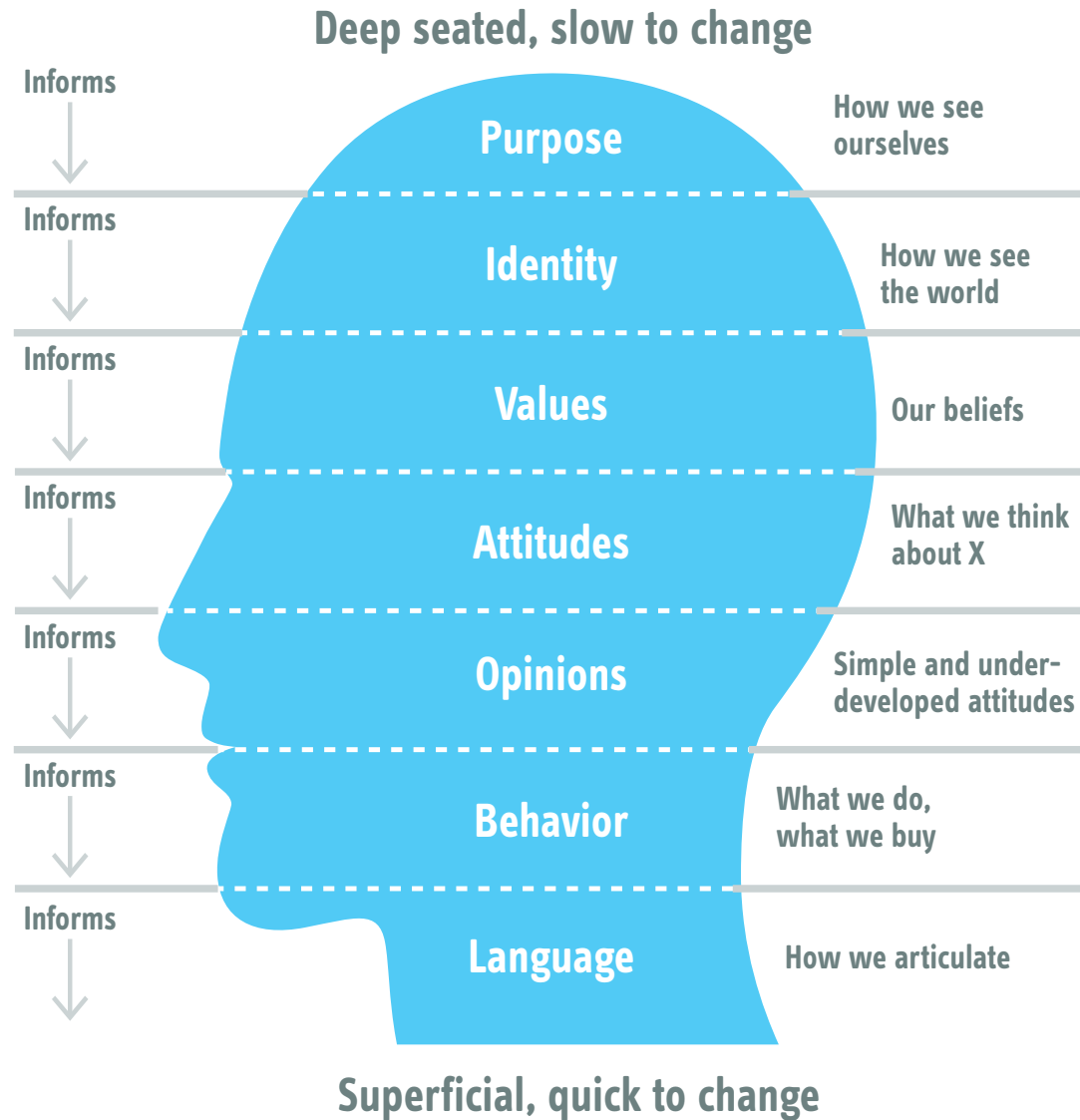
Culture  
**Segments**



## Internationally Applied

- |           |         |           |             |        |
|-----------|---------|-----------|-------------|--------|
| Australia | China   | Indonesia | New Zealand | Turkey |
| Brazil    | Germany | Israel    | Oslo        | UK     |
| Chicago   | India   | New York  | South Korea |        |

# What is Culture Segments?



# Evolution of segmentation



DEMOGRAPHICS

VISITING  
BEHAVIOR



GEOGRAPHY



LIFESTYLES



ATTITUDES



VALUES





**ESSENCE**

**Discerning  
Confident  
Independent  
Arts-essential**



**EXPRESSION**

**Generous  
Community  
Nurturing  
Committed**



**STIMULATION**

**Active  
Experimental  
Social  
Ideas**



**AFFIRMATION**

**Self-identity  
Improvement  
Considered and diligent  
Time well spent**



## ENRICHMENT

**Traditional  
History and heritage  
Nostalgia  
Learning**



## PERSPECTIVE

**Self-sufficient  
Focused  
Reflective  
Fulfilled**



## RELEASE

**Busy  
Prioritizing  
Ambitious  
Escape**



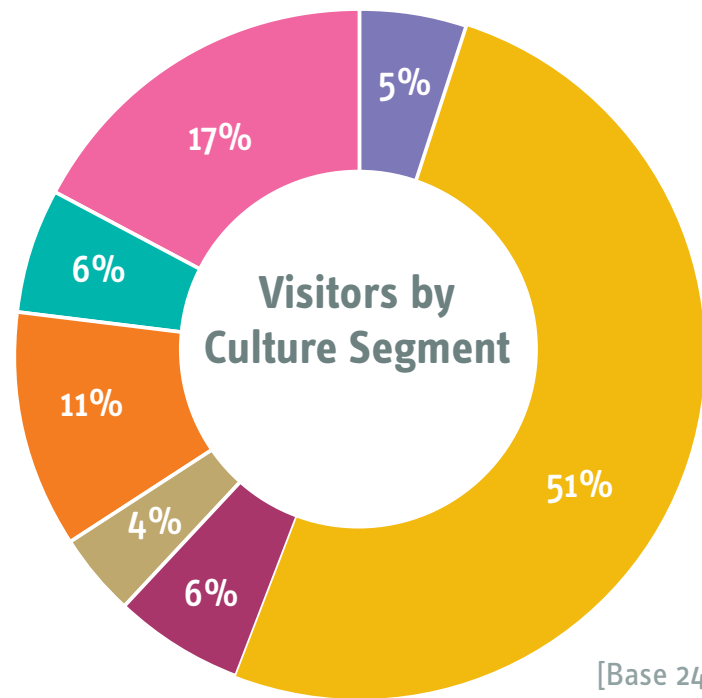
## ENTERTAINMENT

**Mainstream  
Populist  
Leisure  
Fun**

**Expression dominate**

# Expression was largest segment at The Alamo

With Entertainment and Stimulation making a significant proportion of visits



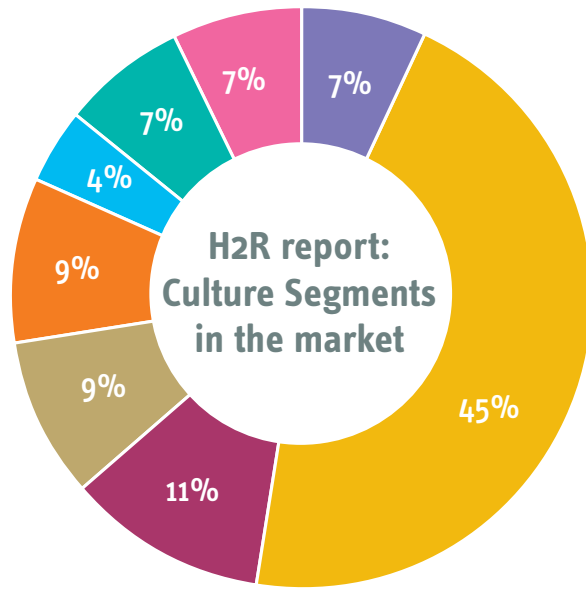
Essence      Stimulation  
Expression    Release  
Affirmation   Perspective  
Enrichment   Entertainment

[Base 249]



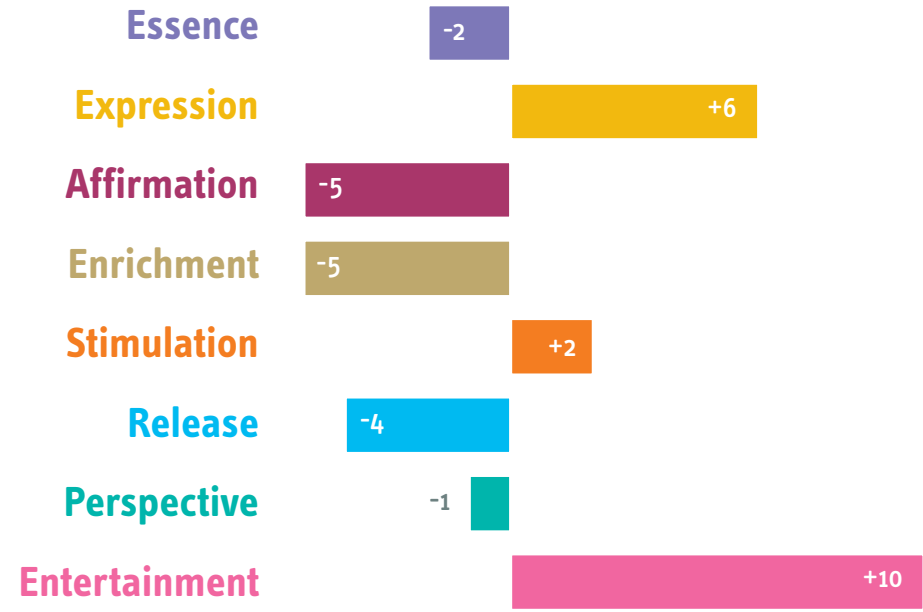


# Expression largest segment in H2R total market



[Base 2,068]

% point difference between the H2R Culture Segments in the market and The Alamo exit survey



[Base 249, 2,068]

45% of population survey respondents were Expression. This segment had the **highest opinion** of the Alamo (90%) and **highest intent to visit** (60%).



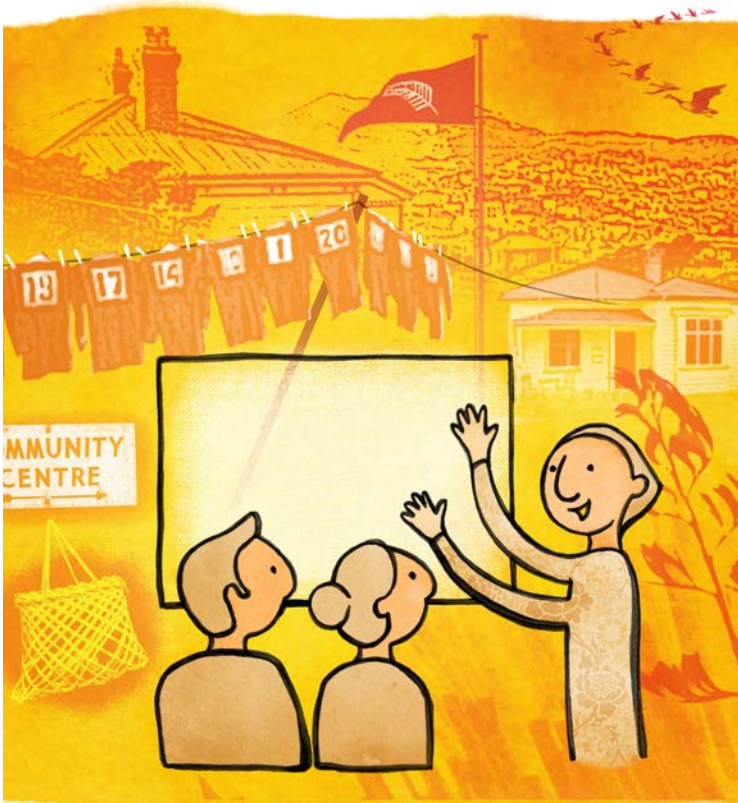
**Who are they?**

**Expression, Entertainment,  
Stimulation**

# Expression

**Community, Nurturing, Generous, Committed**

Open and **full of enthusiasm** with varied and **eclectic** tastes. They enjoy activities that help them **connect with and share experiences** with others. They like to be sure that **everyone is welcome to join in and enjoy** things, and as such **put a high price on inclusivity.**



# Entertainment

## Mainstream, Populist, Leisure, Fun



Tend to see **culture as peripheral**. Their occasional visits are likely to be for **mainstream events or days out**. Leisure time is for **fun and escapism**, not intellectual stretch. If they do attend, it will be **socially motivated** but their engagement is typically among the lowest of all segments.



# Stimulation

**Active, Experimental, Ideas, Social**



An active group who **love adventure** and live for the moment. They seek out **new experiences** to live a varied life and **keep ahead of the curve**.

They are all about **big ideas** and are looking for something **'out of the ordinary'**. But they also attend cultural events for the **social experience**.



**Visitors seek a good day out at a historic attraction**

# What drives people to visit historic sites?

## Hierarchy of motivation

Visitors who see venue as a...

Have this driver...

And they seek this from a visit

**Church**

**Spiritual**

Creative stimulation and quiet contemplation, a place to escape and recharge, food for the soul.

**Spa**

**Emotional**

See fascinating objects in an inspiring setting. Ambience, deep sensory & intellectual experience.

**Archive**

**Intellectual**

Develop own interest and knowledge, journey of discovery, find out new things.

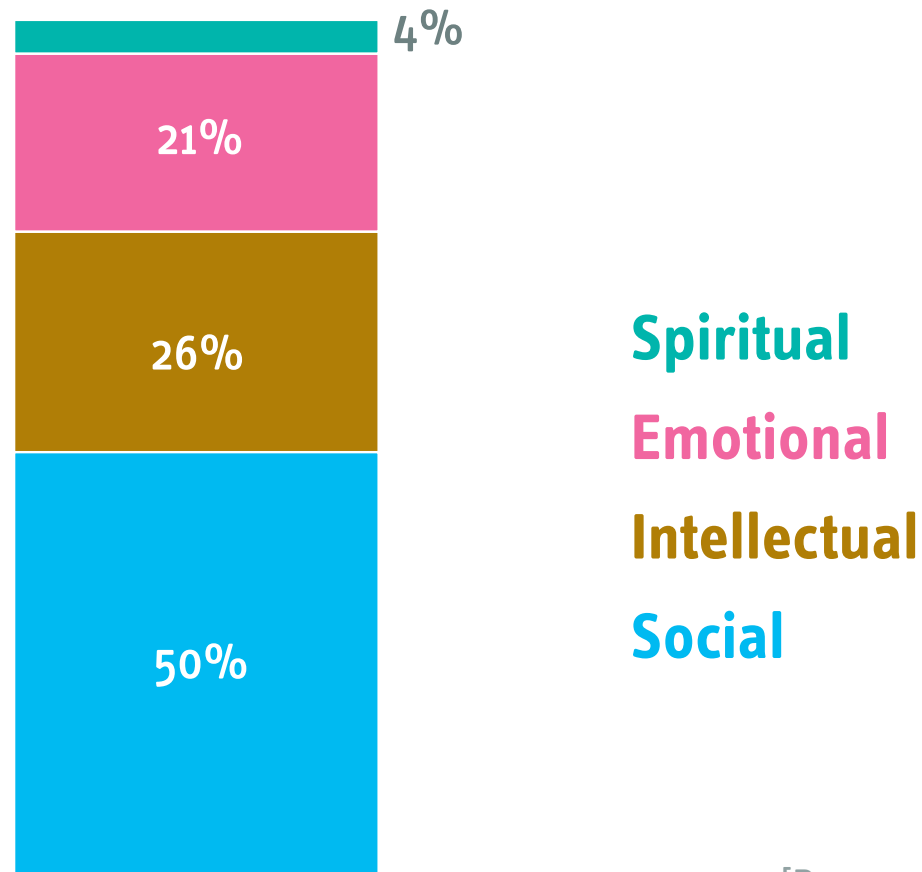
**Attraction**

**Social**

Enjoyable place to spend time, good facilities and services, welcoming staff.



# Half of visits were socially driven



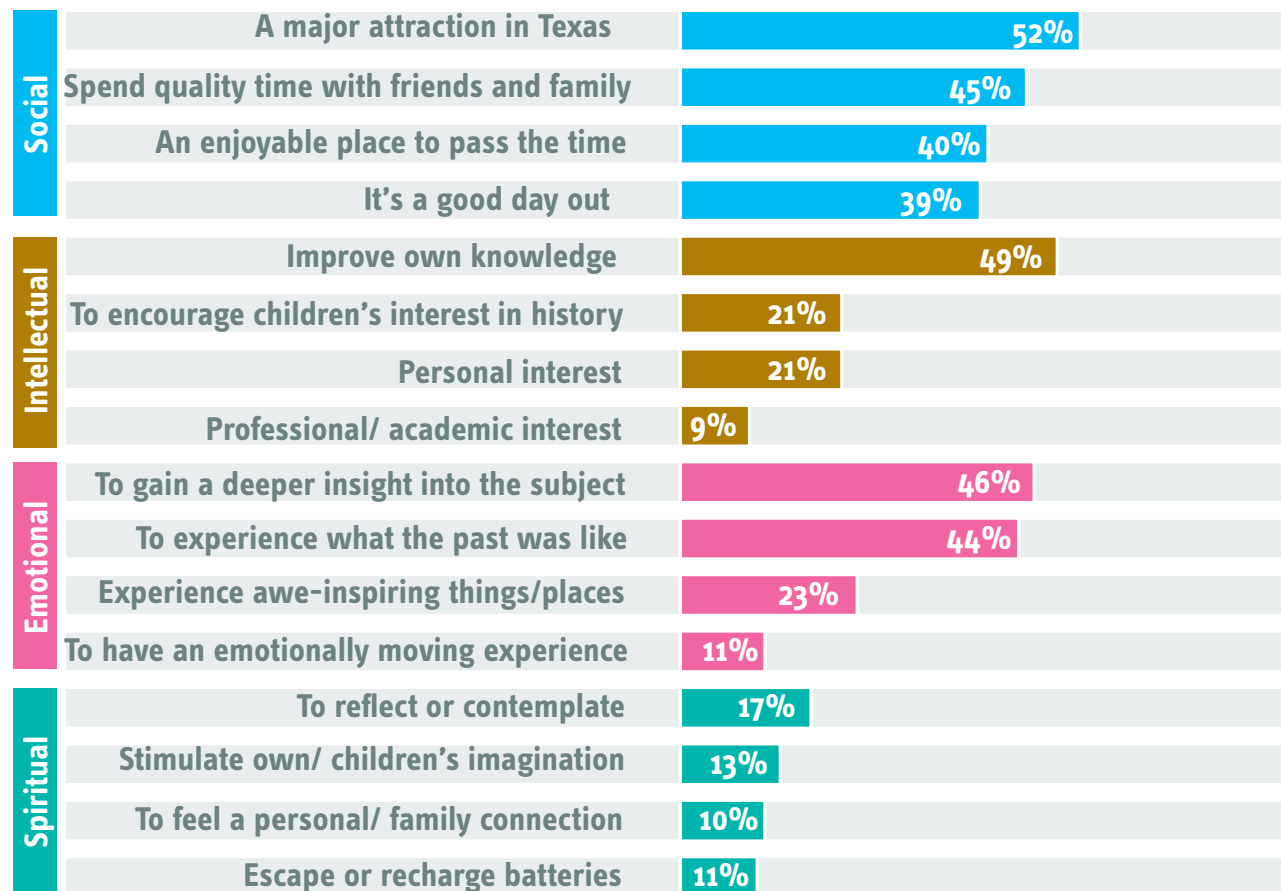
[Base: 247]





# Although visitors had a host of motivations to visit

All motivations to visit



[Base 249]

‘They got the kids flying on a broom which is super fun, Dad got to hear about guns, which is fun, and got some dolls. Yeah, it was great’





**‘If somebody visits San Antonio, this is the first thing they should see, because this is actually like the flagship’**

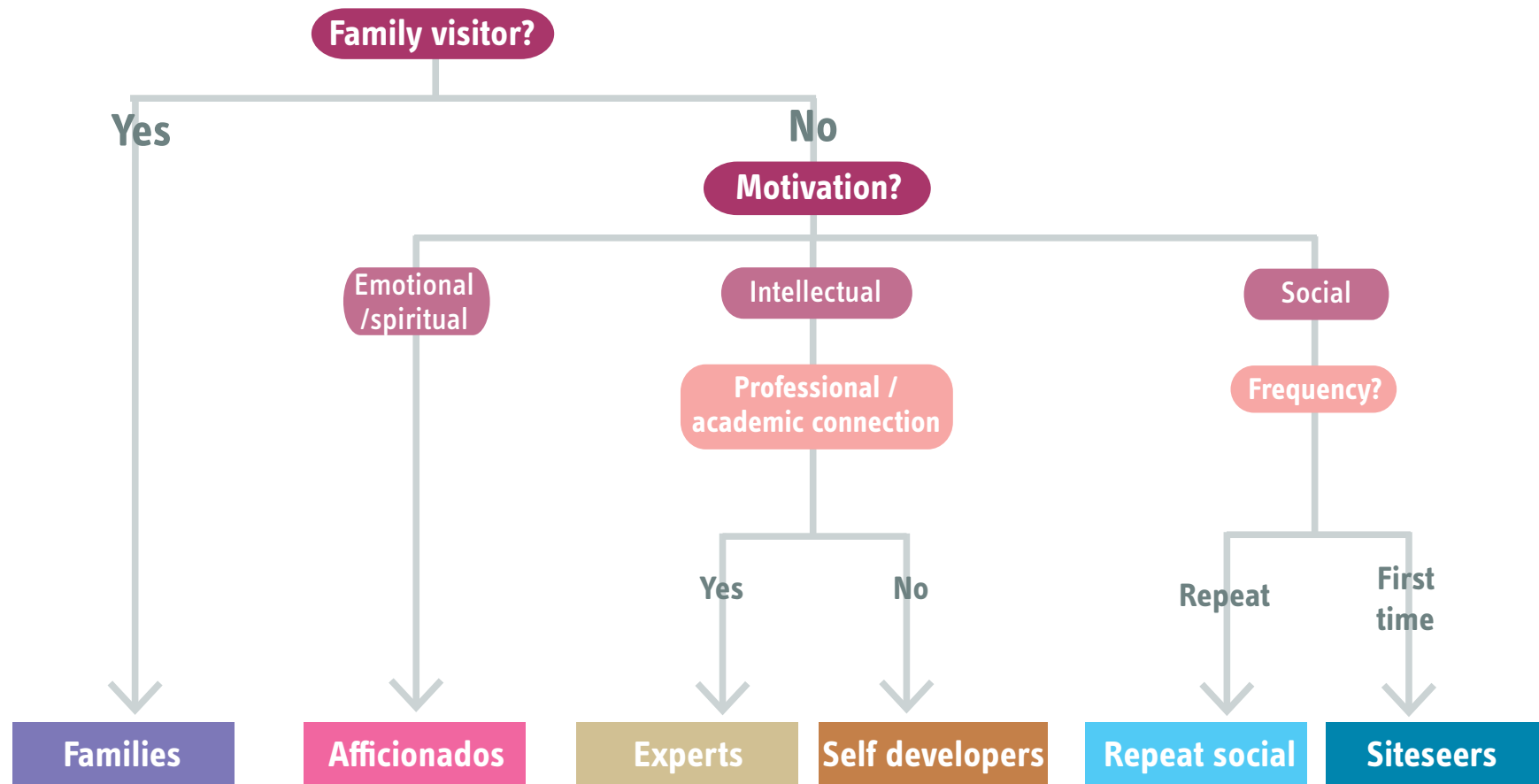


**‘I have learned about the key players. I learnt more about what happened and where events happened from coming here’**

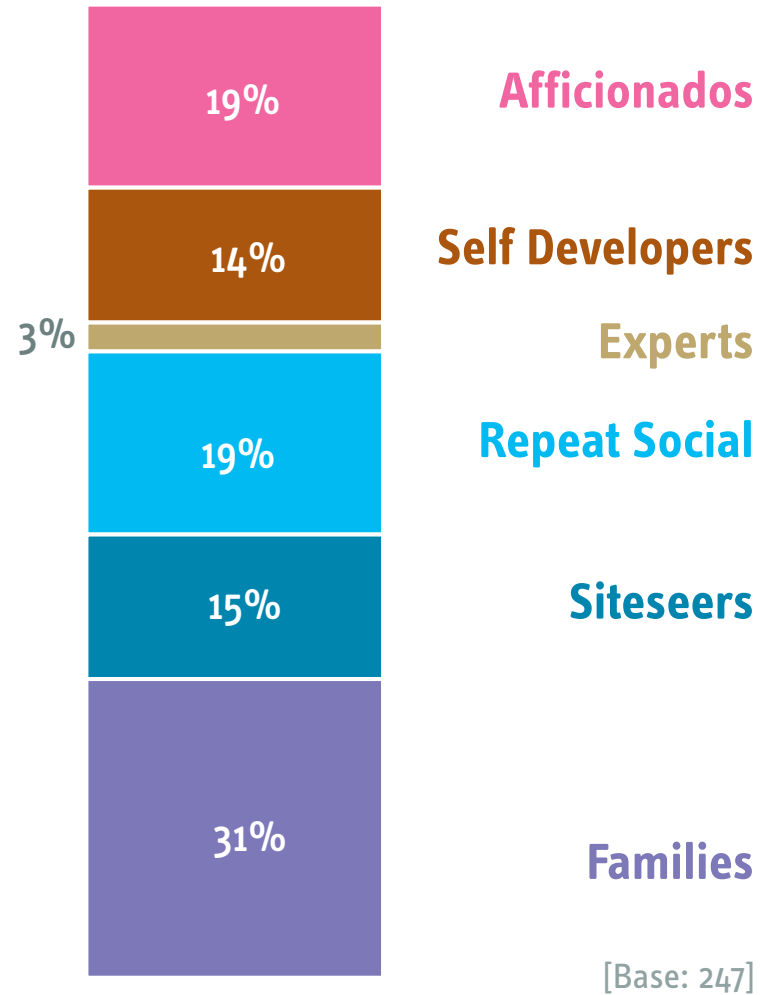
# Visit modes provide a structure for visitor provision

By combining the motivations of visitors with some key profile information (family, knowledge level, visit frequency) we can determine a more granular 'mode' of visit:

Visit modes decision tree



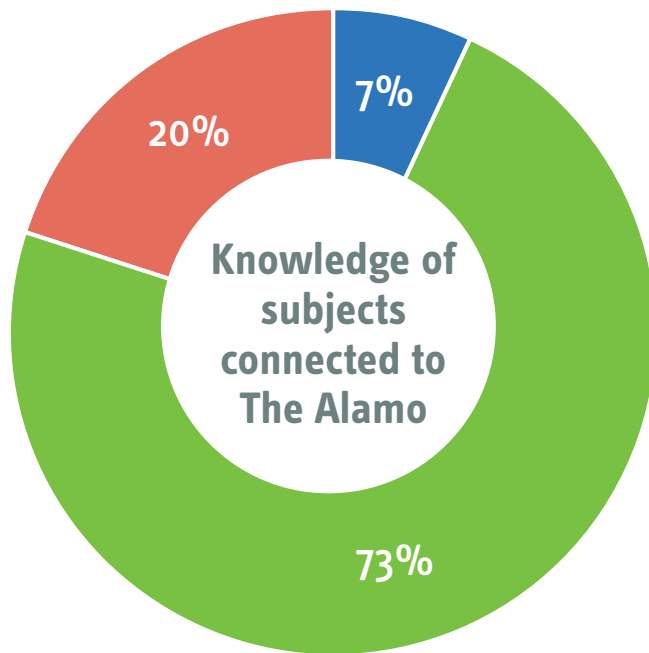
# Families were the dominant visit mode



Most saw The Alamo as a site of **military history** and were only **vaguely aware** of its **social and religious** historical narratives **on arrival**.



# The majority had general knowledge of the subjects connected to The Alamo (self – identified)



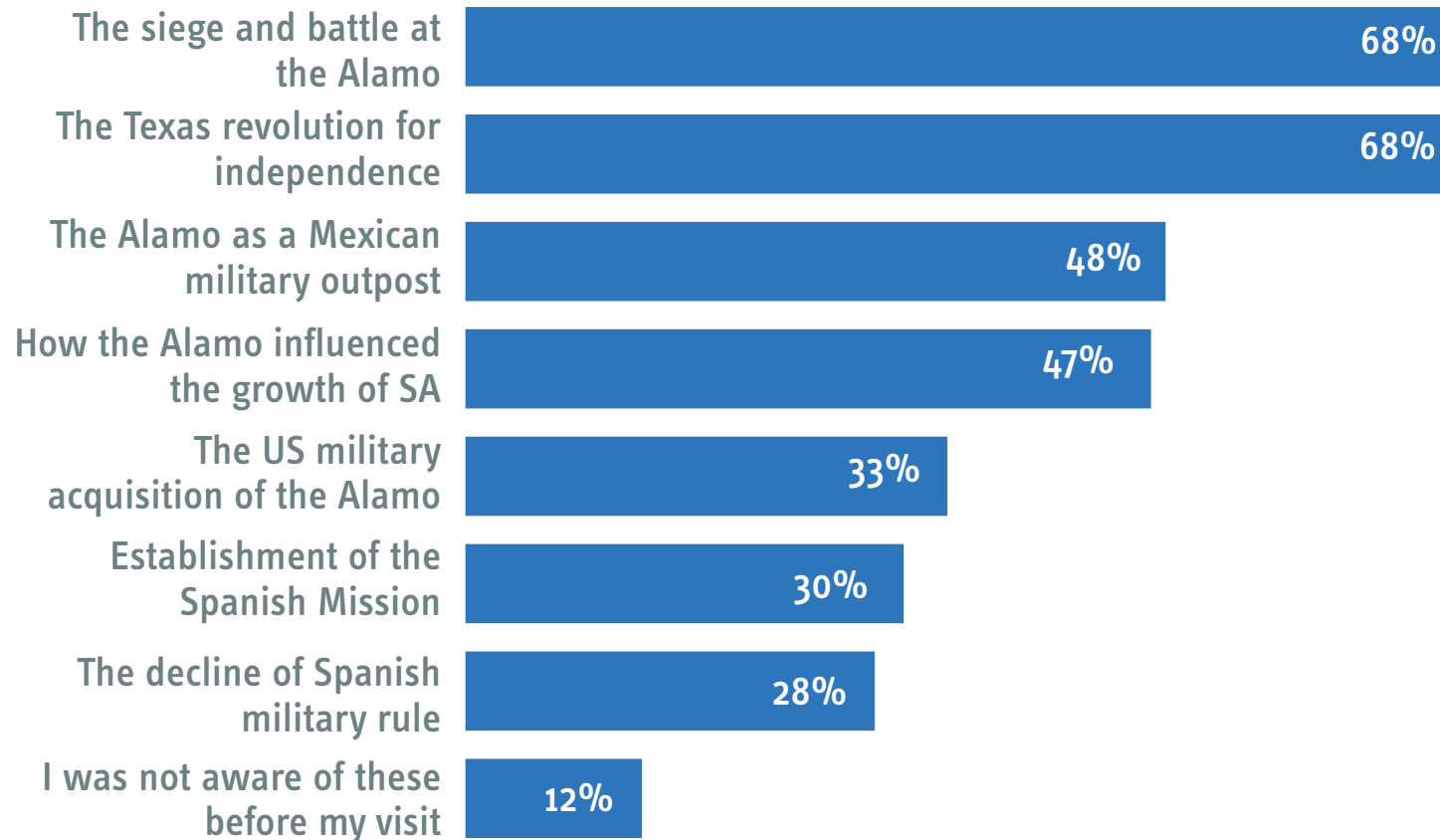
Specialist knowledge  
General knowledge  
Little or no knowledge

[Base: 249]





# The majority associate the site with the Battle and the Texan Revolution



# The Alamo was most well-known for the battle...

'The battle and the words Remember the Alamo'

'Oh, it is known for the battle, The Alamo'

'I didn't know what happened before the battle'



## ...And the revolution for independence

‘Only that it became the battle cry for the Texans to defeat the Mexicans’

‘It is the beginning of the history of independent Texas’

For some visitors, the battle and the revolution were the **limit of their knowledge** on arrival.



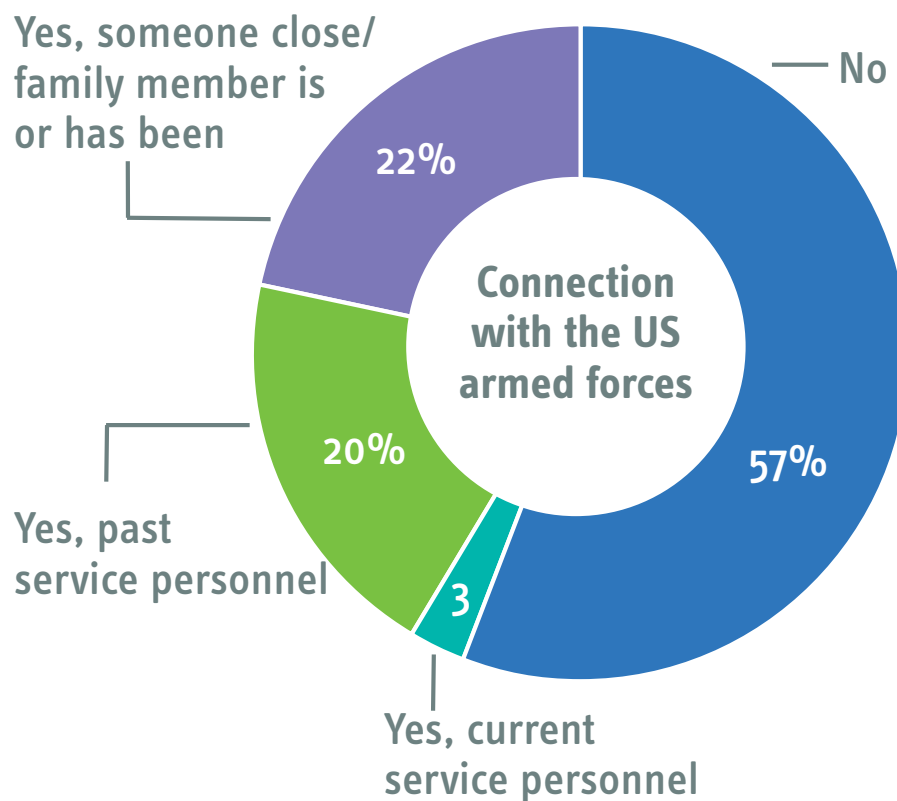
## Lower awareness of Mission history

**30%** were aware of the site's Spanish Mission before they visited. However, repeat visitors were **significantly more likely to be aware** of Mission history (46%) than first-timers (16%).

**'I was wondering why there was a church – like, what it had to do with The Alamo'**



# Two-fifths have some connection to armed forces



[Base: 249]



**Uncertainty surrounds what  
a visit might entail**

# Reliant on onsite information

Our research indicates that **visitors are doing very little pre-visit research**. They **arrive with a low awareness** of the site and **rely on The Alamo** to fill their **information needs**.

However, when we see what visitors' engaged with during their visit, it appears that **some are not taking advantage** of the fullness of the offer.

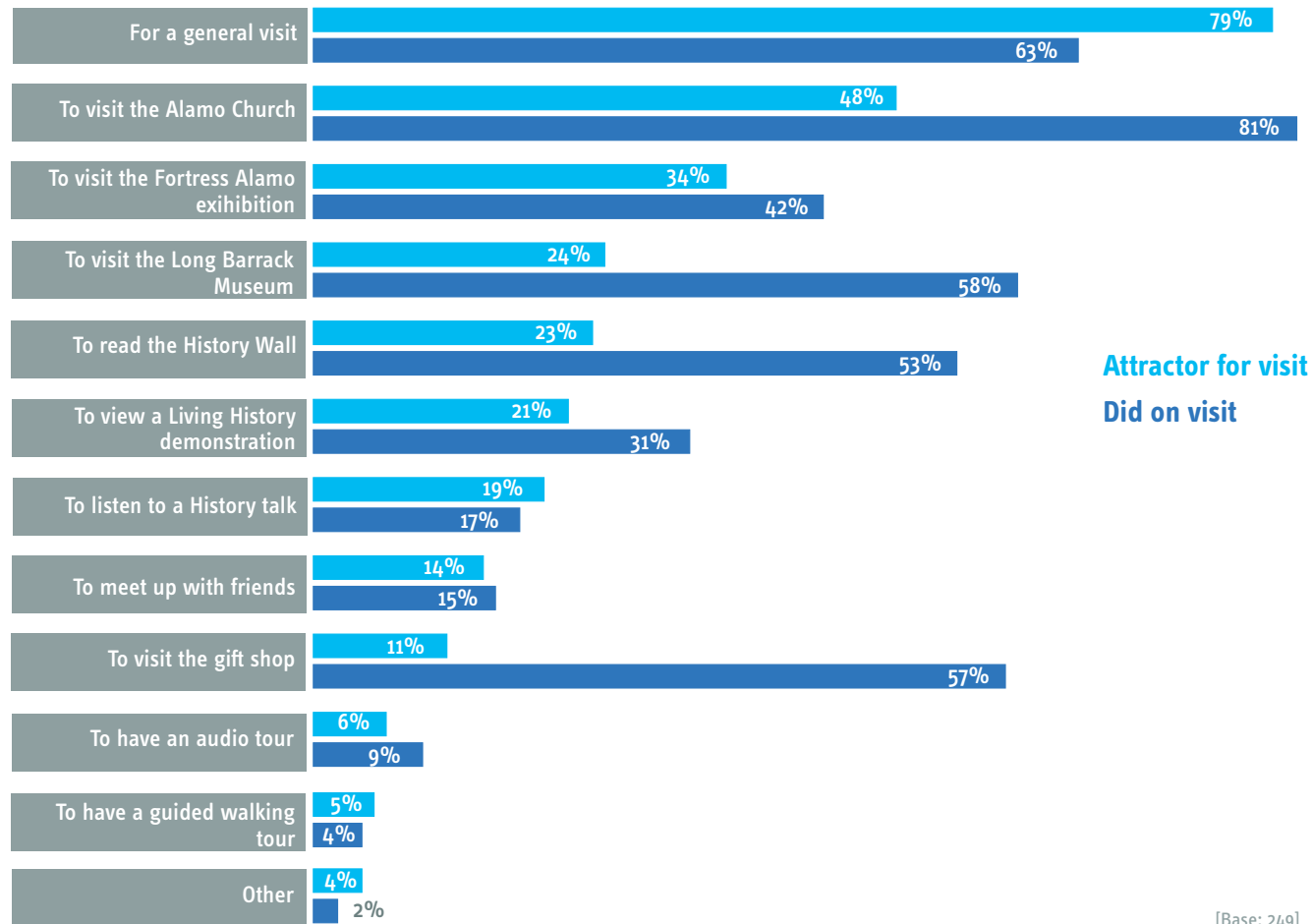




‘I don’t really have expectations because I am not too sure exactly what it consists of’



# Room to further engage visitors with the fullness of the offer



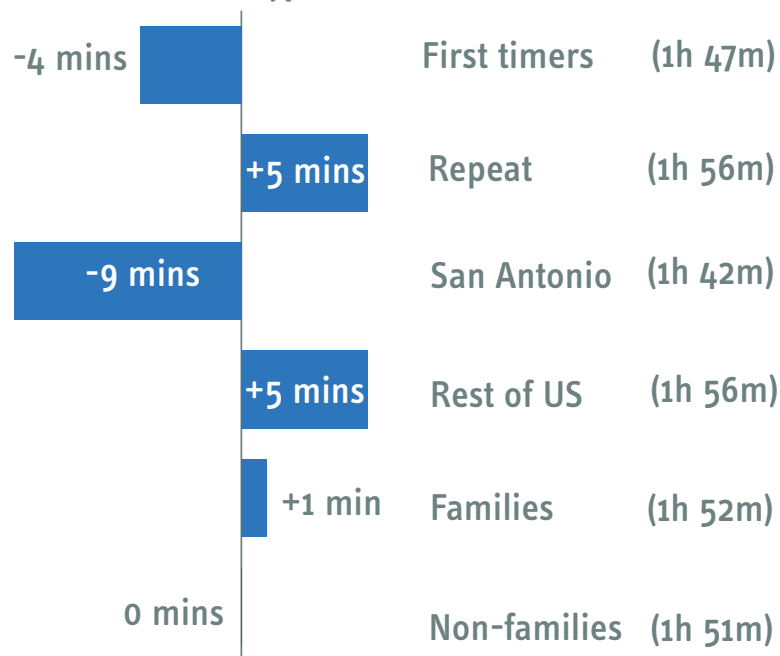
[Base: 249]

### Average dwell



1 hour  
51 minutes

### Change in length of average visit compared to different visitor types



[Base 249]

## Although visitors took their time on site

Average dwell is fairly consistent across visitor types.



**Information needs not always  
fulfilled**

# Essential to meet information needs at start of the visit

The information provided at the start of the visitor journey needs to be **more visible**, available in more **varied formats**, and visitor uptake of information should be encouraged by **site staff and volunteers**.



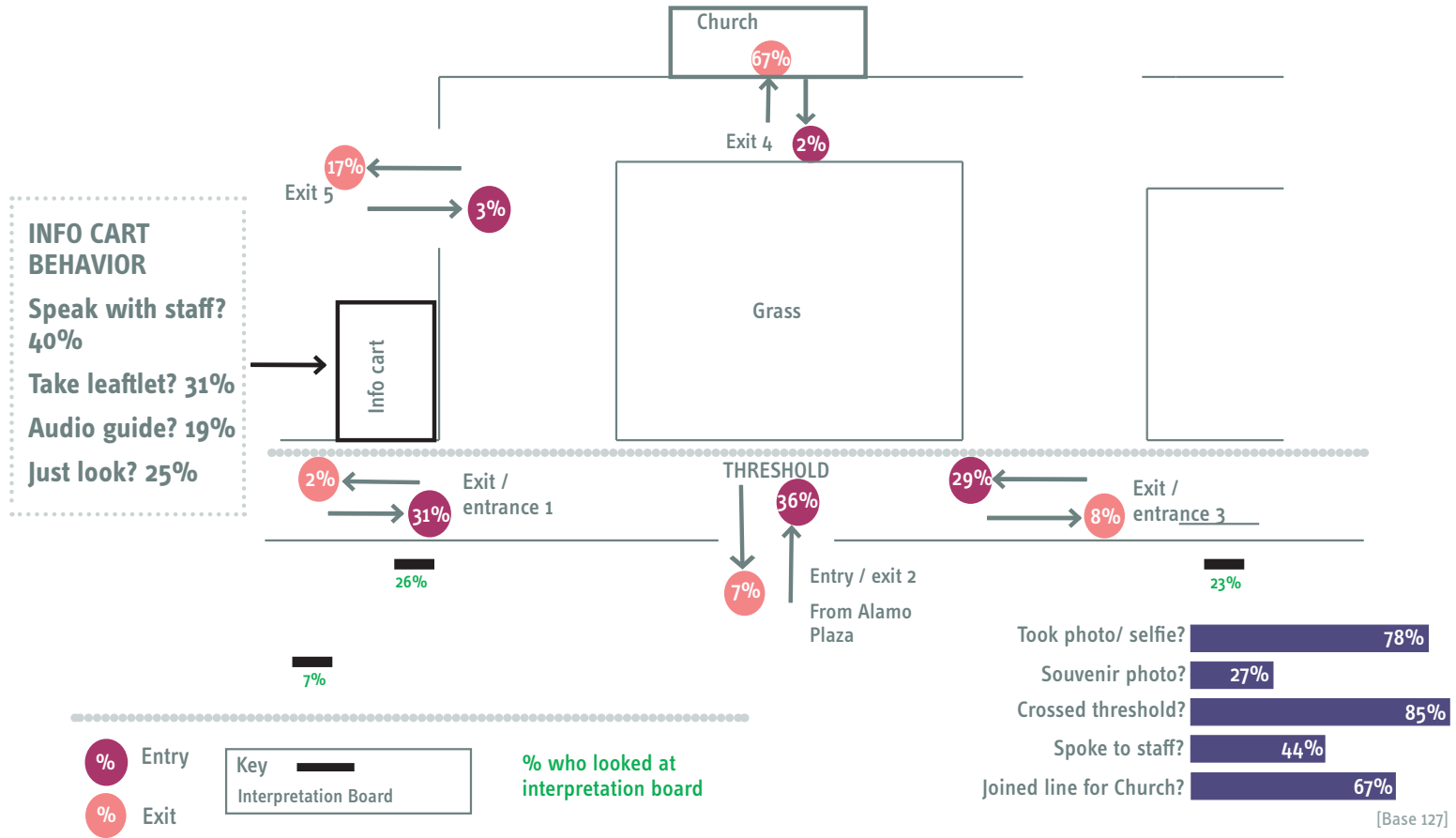


## Essential to meet information needs at start of the visit

‘To have, when you come in, a sense of which way you’re going, a sense of the chronological history. So you know in advance what you’re going to see, where you’re going’



Area 2 - Plaza



## Most enter the site without on-boarding first

42% engaged with the info cart, which means that most enter the site **without introductory information.**

We would suggest focusing **more actively on-boarding** before visitors enter the Church, which may require placing of **additional information.**



## On-boarding more likely to happen in the Church

59% were making use of the available sources at the information desk or speaking to staff.

However, for many, the Church will be the **main focus** of their visit and seeking out introductory information will take visitors **out of the experience**. It may likely inhibit visitors receiving **emotional or spiritual** outcomes in this space.

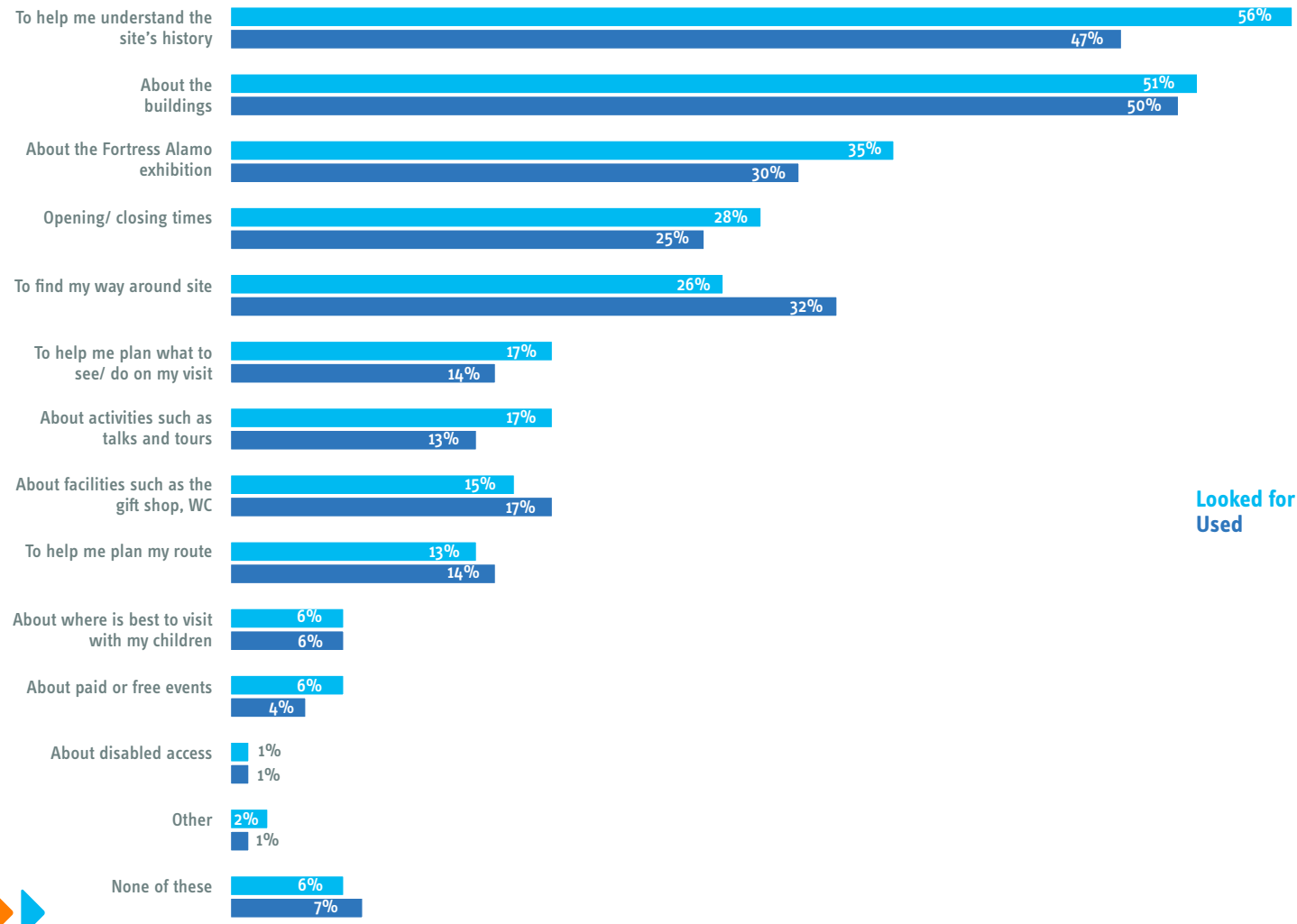






‘So far [in the church] it’s just confusing and kind of hard to get around and figure out the sequence of events that took place here. We’ll see if it makes more sense when we get out’

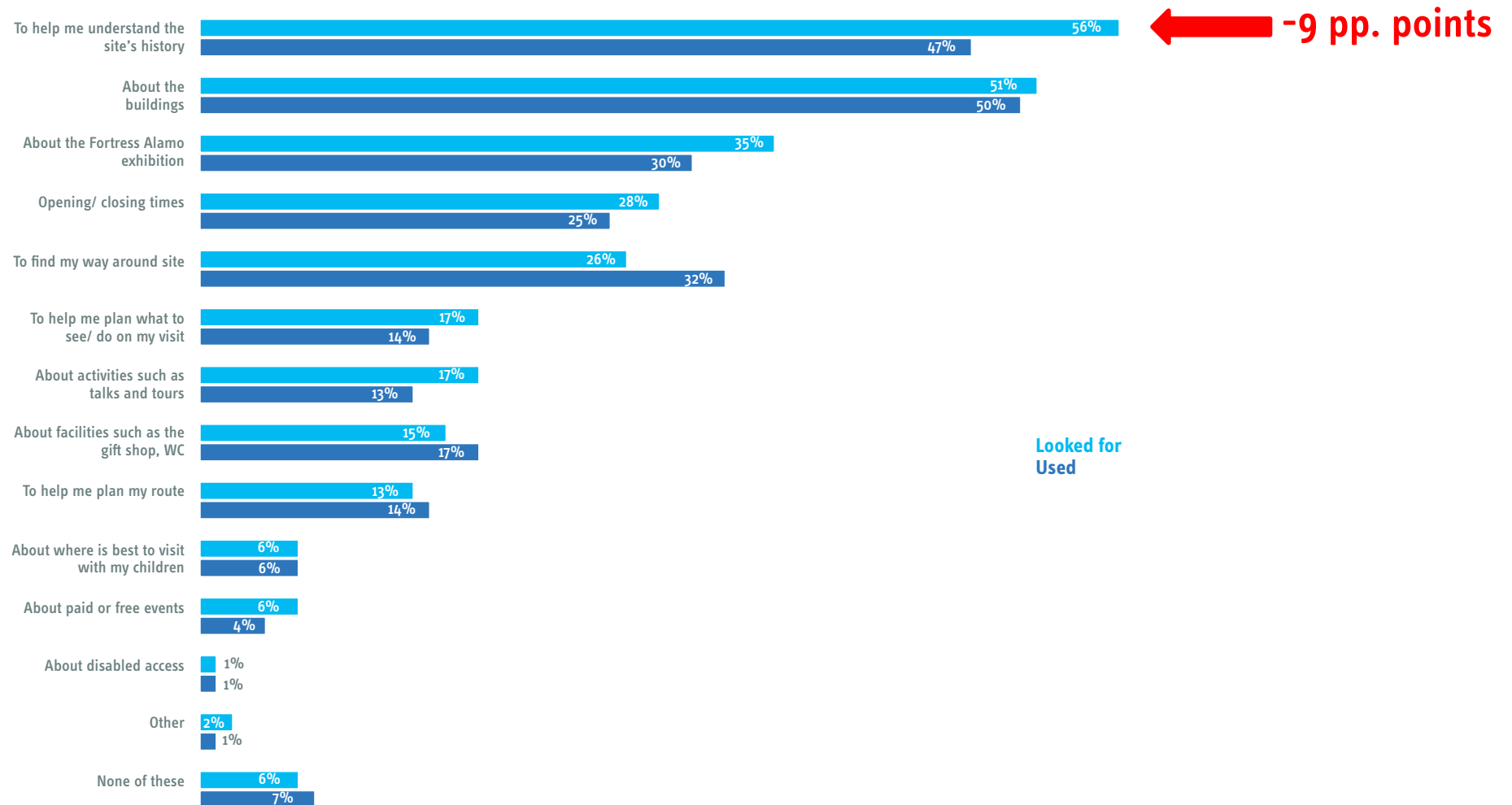
# Information needs were focused around the site's history



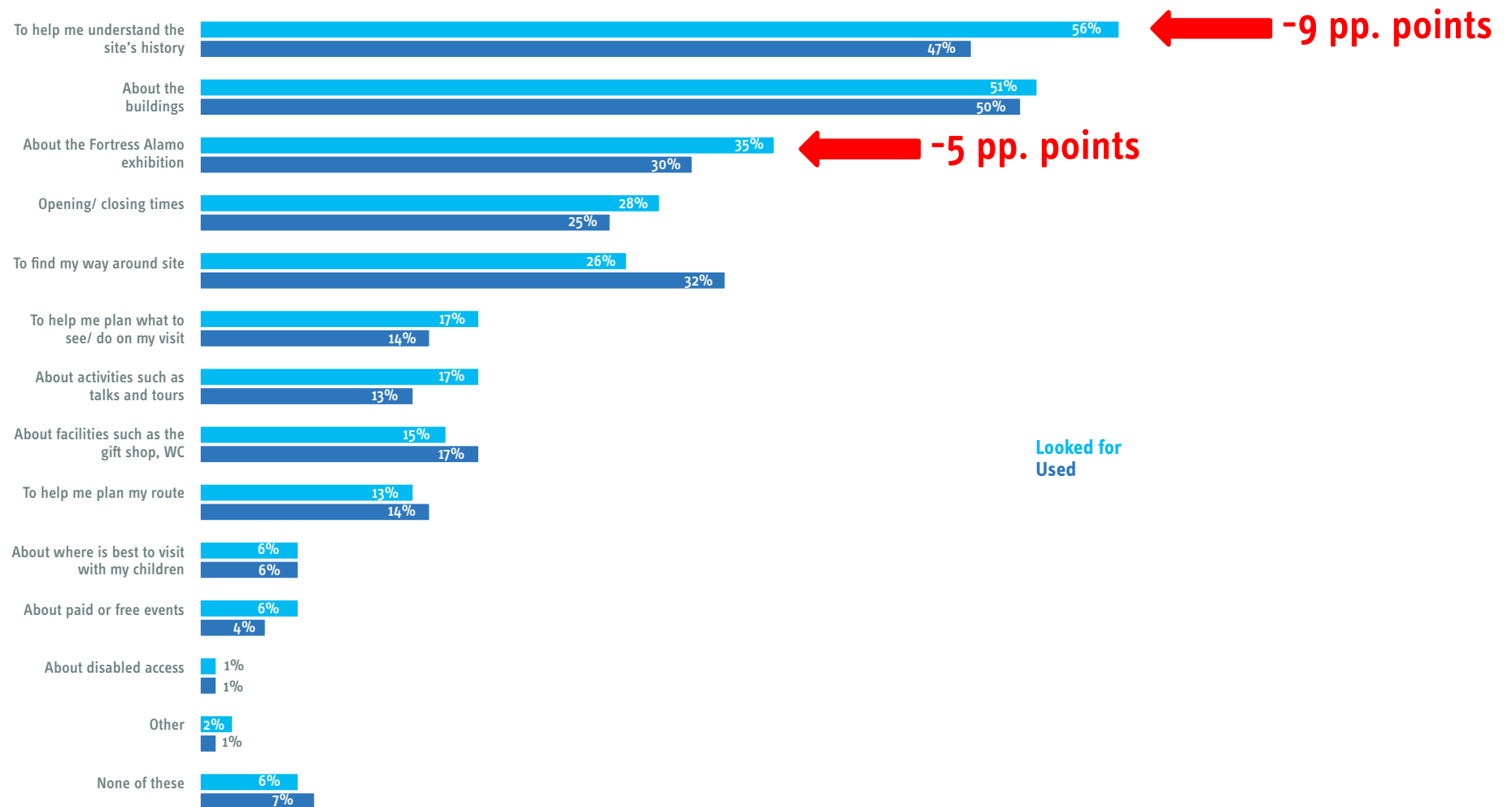
Looked for  
Used



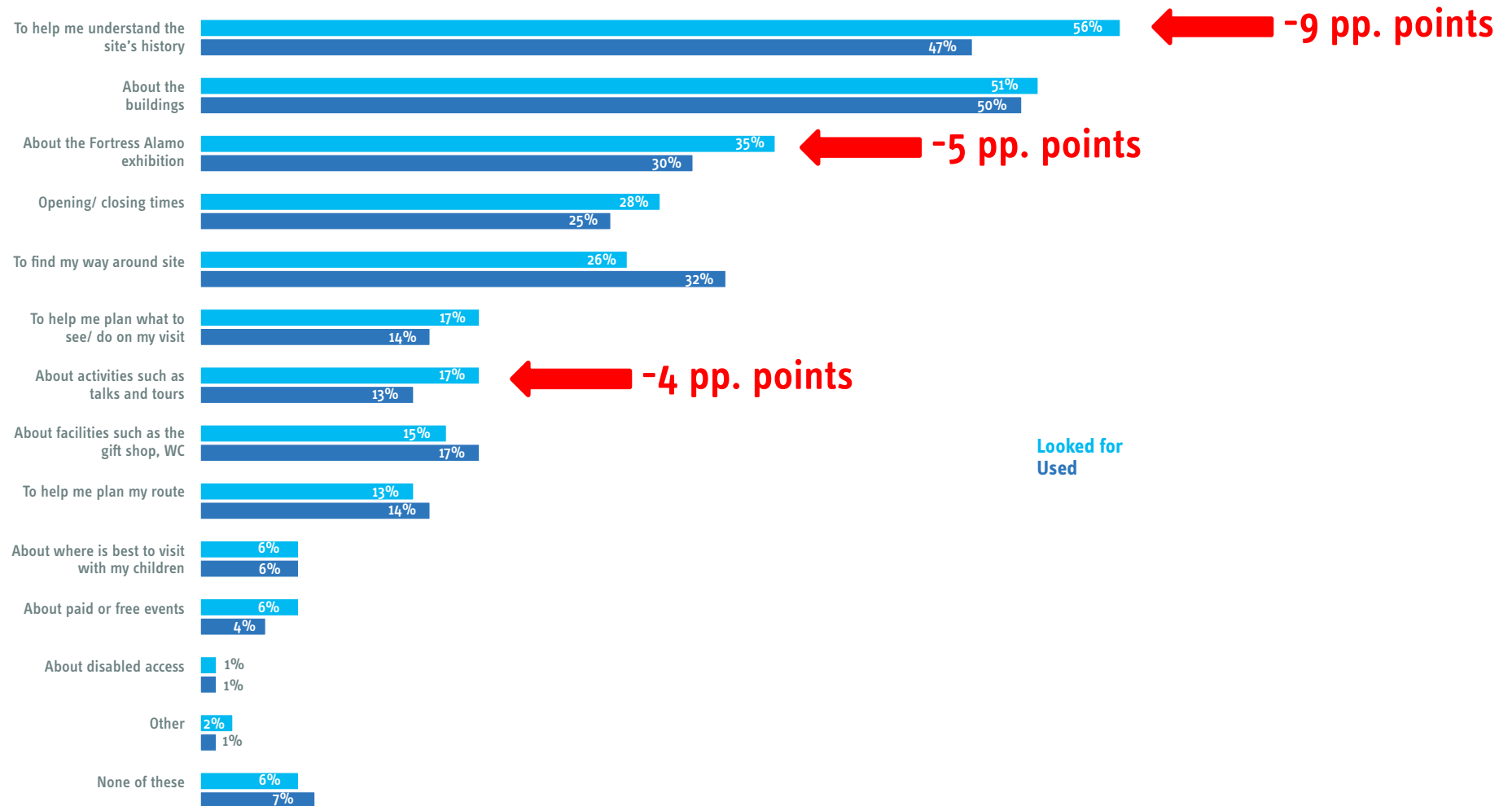
# Some visits resulted in an information gap



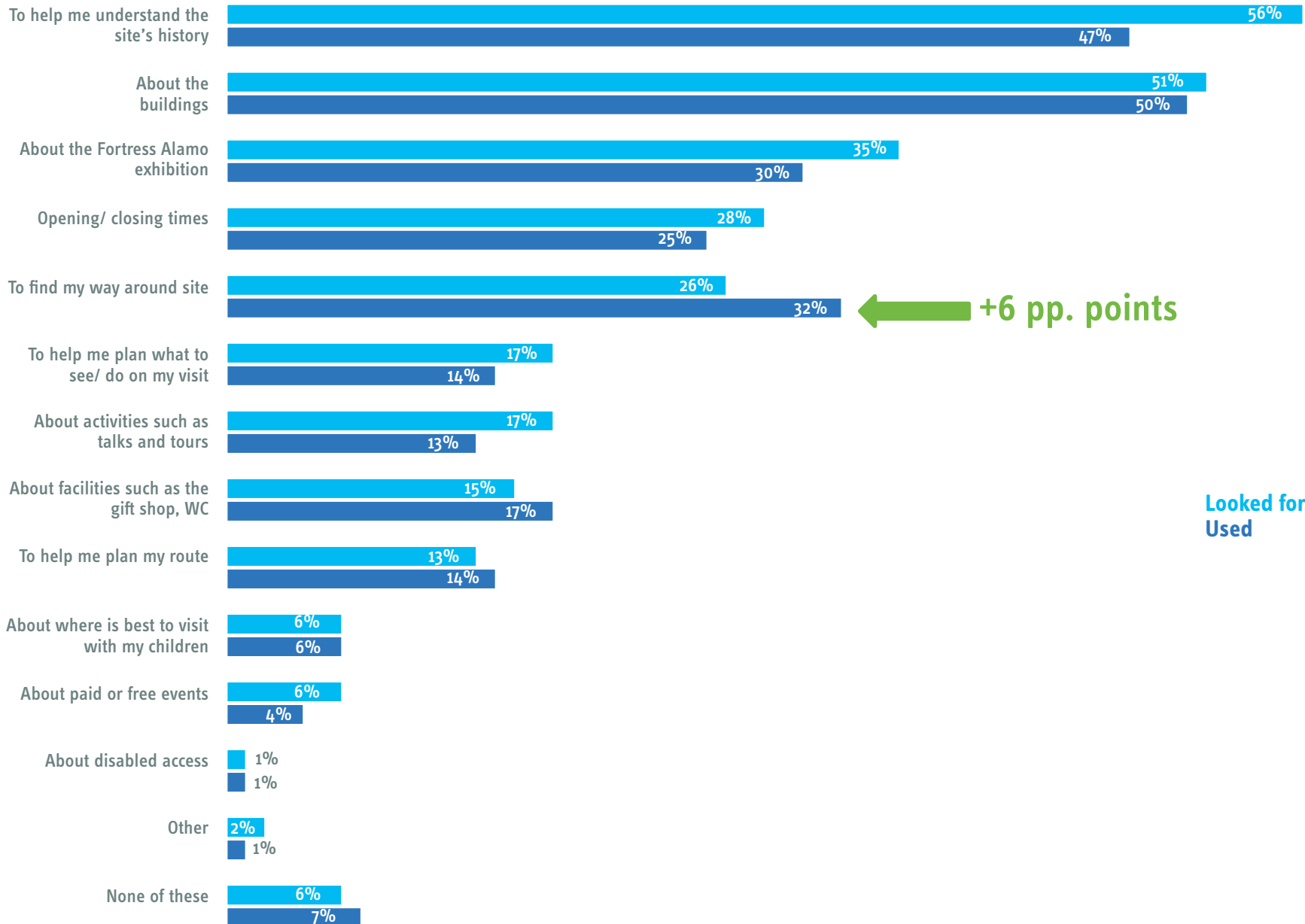
# Some visits resulted in an information gap



# Some visits resulted in an information gap



# Navigation information provided more effectively



[Base: 249]

## **Some visitors were grateful for potted information and many observed the information was succinct**

‘[I received] enough information to learn something but not too specific where it takes too long to read’

‘Yes, just enough to explain everything’

‘If you have the high points, that’s good enough’



## But others were looking for more depth

‘I wish there was a lot more information but it just kind of gave an overview’

‘There’s just a lot of general information right now’

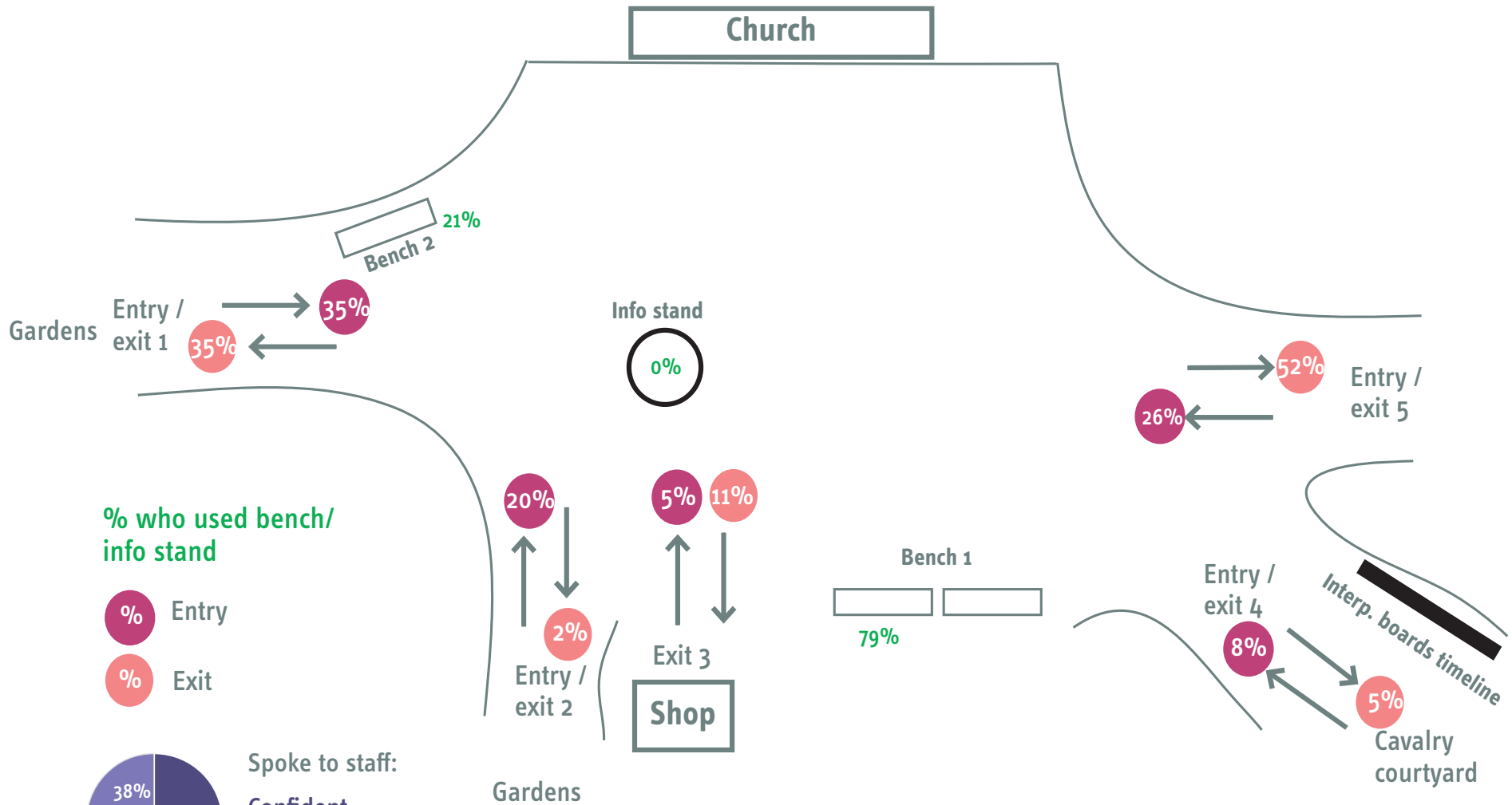
This highlights the need for more forms of **layered interpretation**, providing visitors access to more detailed insight if they wish to explore further.





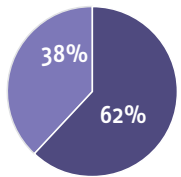
**Low uptake** of information could in some circumstances be connected to **the placing** of specific sources.





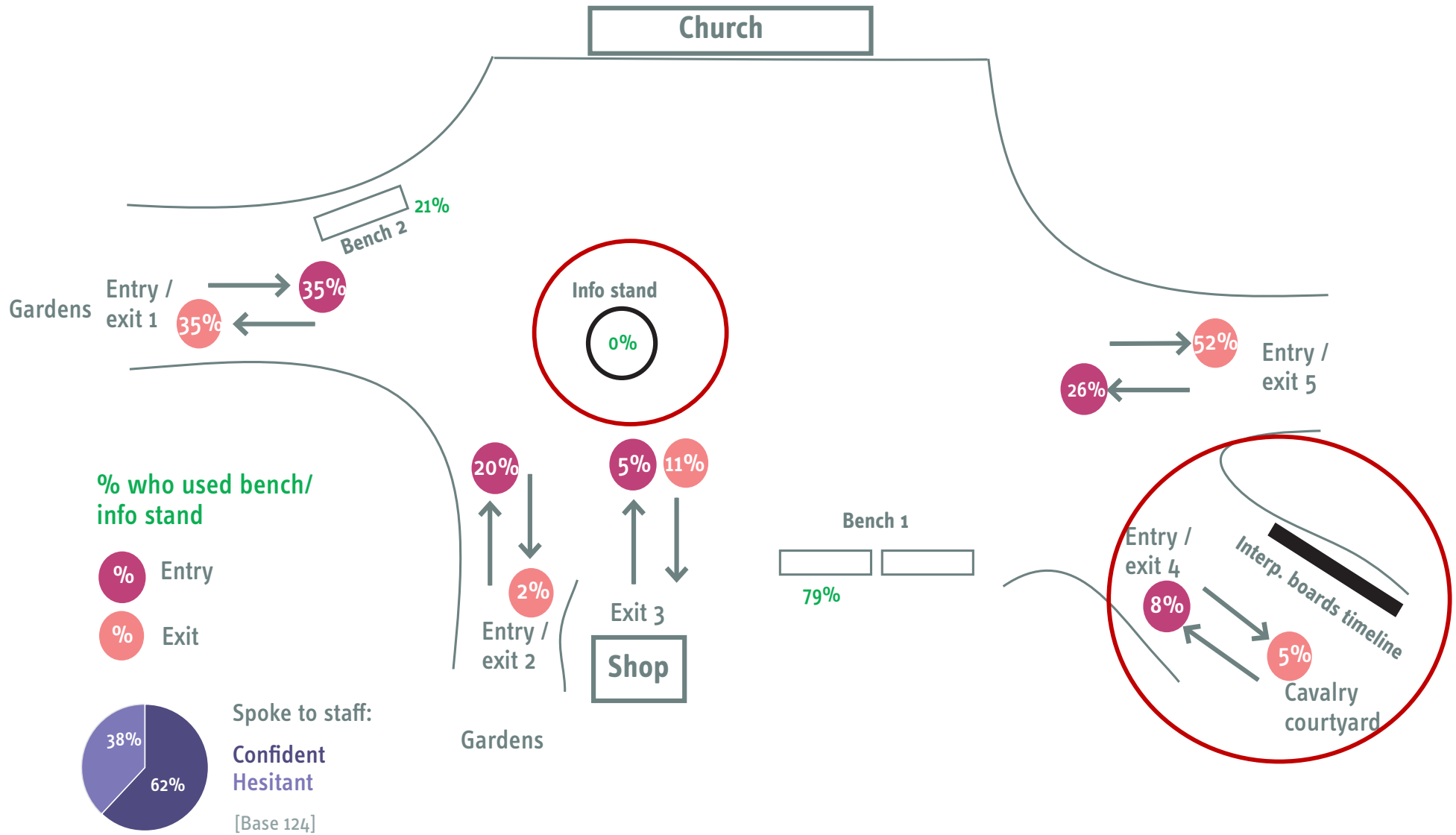
% who used bench/  
info stand

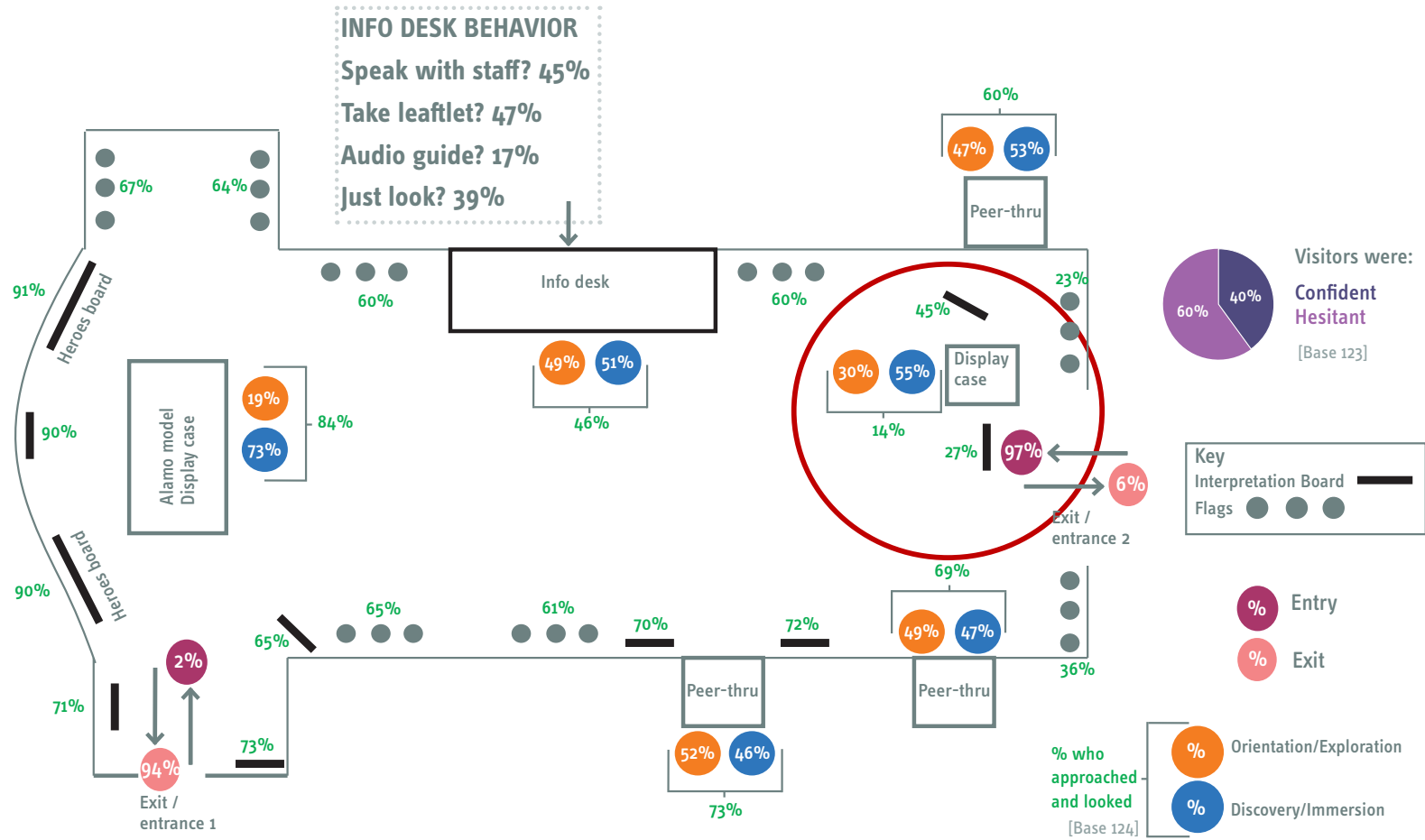
- 35% Entry
- 35% Exit



Spoke to staff:  
**Confident**  
**Hesitant**  
[Base 124]





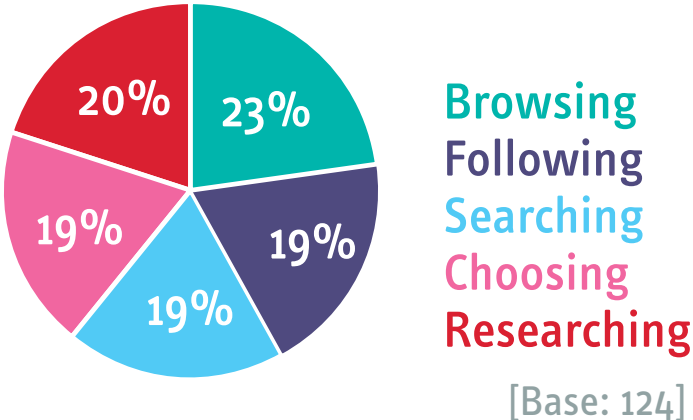


**The majority engaged with  
the content available**

Visitors in this mode...	Select objects in this way...	And behaviour in this way...
<b>Researching</b>	<b>Specific objects or collections</b>	Researchers are typically focused, specialist museum visitors, selecting objects themselves based on their in-depth knowledge of the subject area. These users study, sketch or examine objects, and seek expert opinion, perhaps having made an appointment with the gallery.
<b>Choosing</b>	<b>Specific objects or collections</b>	These visitors confidently pick individual objects of interest and become quickly immersed in them, using their existing knowledge. They may be objects they have seen before.
<b>Searching</b>	<b>Classification or collection</b>	Searchers have a good general understanding of the topic, and want the museum to select and present the best objects. They have an applied agenda, following the layout of the exhibition and consuming all available interpretation.
<b>Following</b>	<b>Narrative theme</b>	Followers need a narrative explanation, and want the museum to select and present objects illustrating themes. These users broadly look at most objects and in a sequential pattern.
<b>Browsing</b>	<b>Random objects</b>	These visitors select random pieces through the room in no narrative or sequence. They look at whatever catches their eye.

# Visitors were most likely to Browse in the Church

Church



Visitors were most likely to **Browse**, selecting **random** pieces **without narrative sequence**.

**Researching**, purposefully selecting **specific** objects for **detailed** study, was also common.



# Depth of engagement



Engagement is measured by observing the highest level of engagement reached in a room.

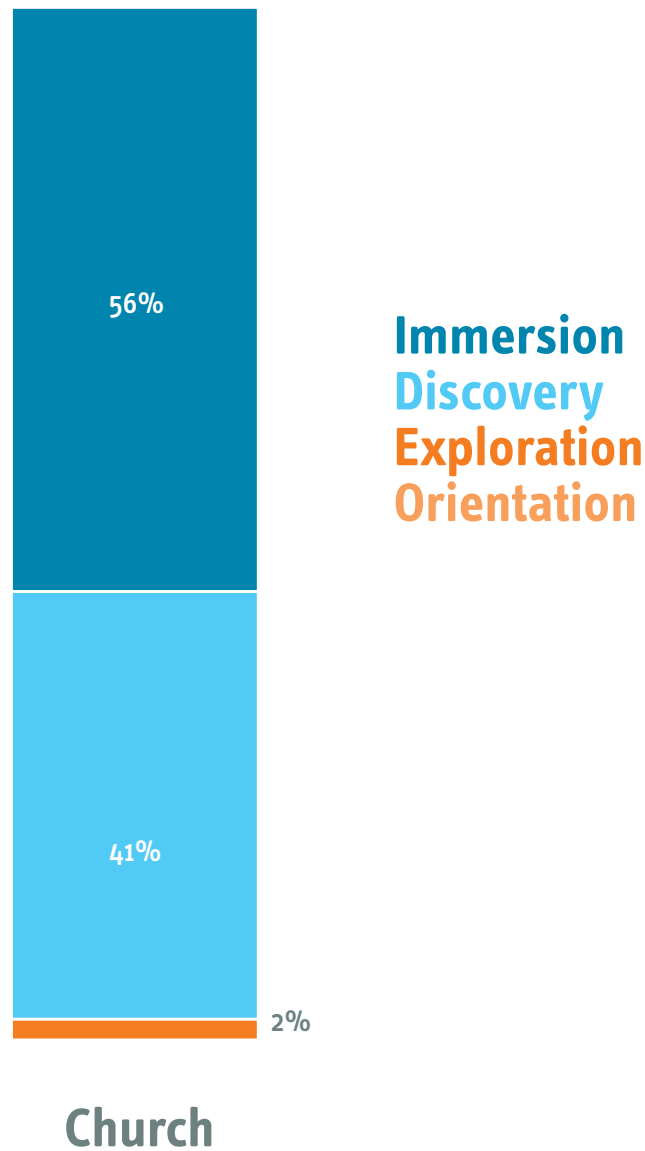
If a visitor walks straight through a room, they do not register on this scale.





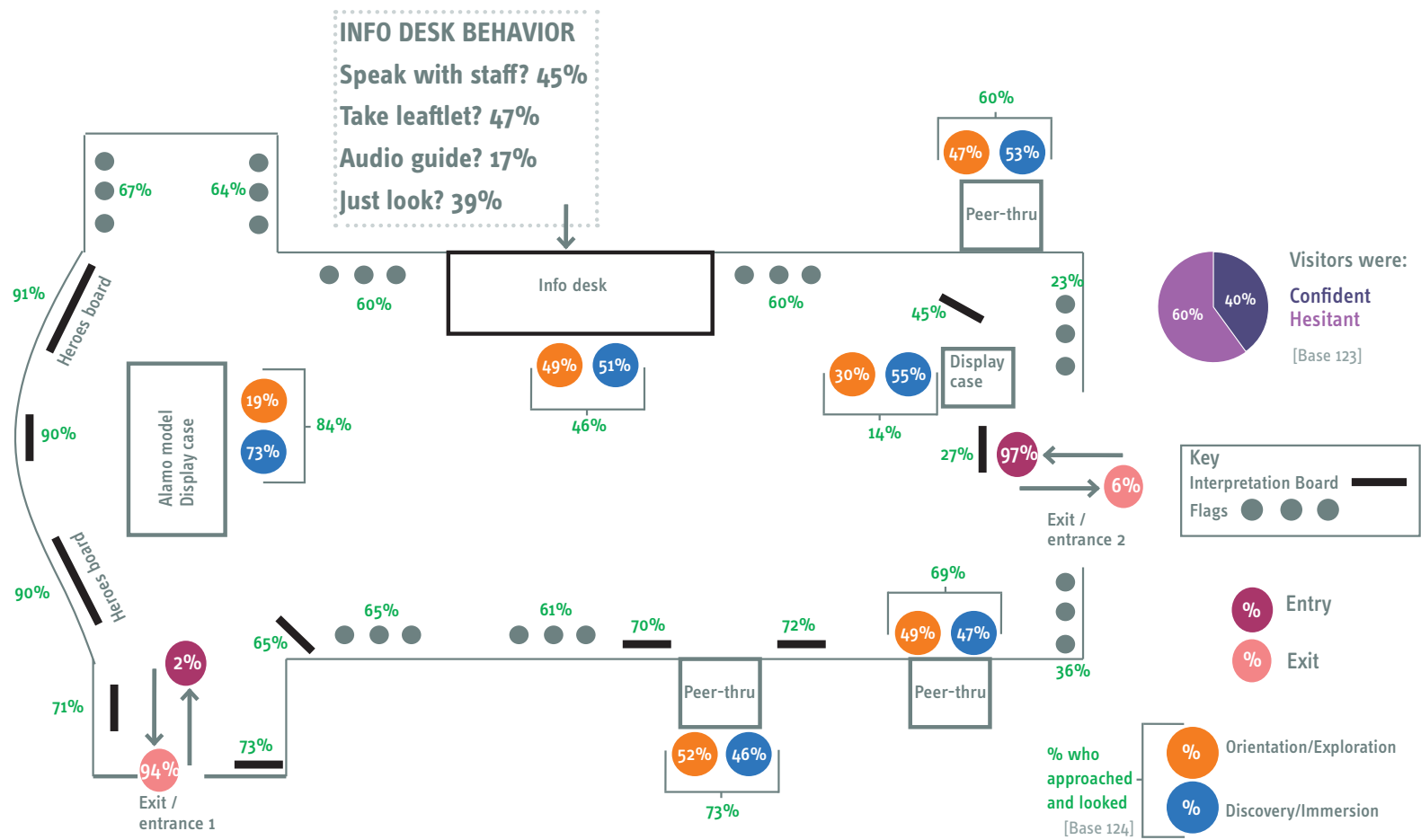
## Over half of visitors reached immersion in the Church

At least one object within the Church immersed 56% of visitors, meaning they **stayed** for some time and were **deeply engrossed** in it.



[Base: 123]





# Highest engagement was at the back of the Church

Visitors exhibited **high levels of engagement** with objects and interpretation towards the **back** of the Church.

Majority engaged with the **Heroes board**, and the Vox Pops indicate that this interpretation **resonated** particularly.



**‘I’ve learned something new. I hadn’t realised there were so many foreigners involved – the heroes, the defenders – I’d imagined them to be all pretty local and instead they were from all over’**





## Visitors valued having a variety of information mediums

Opportunities to **watch** movies, **listen** to audio guides, **experience** Living History, and **see** original **architecture** and **artefacts** facilitated **deep engagement**.

‘...Otherwise there’s just a lot of reading which doesn’t always help’



## The movie provides useful interpretation

‘I really enjoyed the movie because it’s very structured and then you get the whole history overview which is a very nice addition to the posters’

‘[The movie was] very excellent and insightful’

‘Oh there is [a movie]? I didn’t see it’



# Audio tours add depth to learning experience

‘The audio has been really helpful to understand the context of things’

‘The audio tour gave me all the information I needed’

‘I didn’t know where the audio guide was. I had no clue where to find that and there was no one behind the counter’



# Visitors respond very positively to human interpretation

**Human interpretation** at The Alamo was **a highlight** for many, particularly the **Living History** demonstrations.

Our **research continually finds** that **human interpretation**, particularly at heritage sites, is **highly valued** and can **significantly increase engagement** with content. We would **recommend** that this type of information provision continues within the new development.





## Living History enthralled visitors

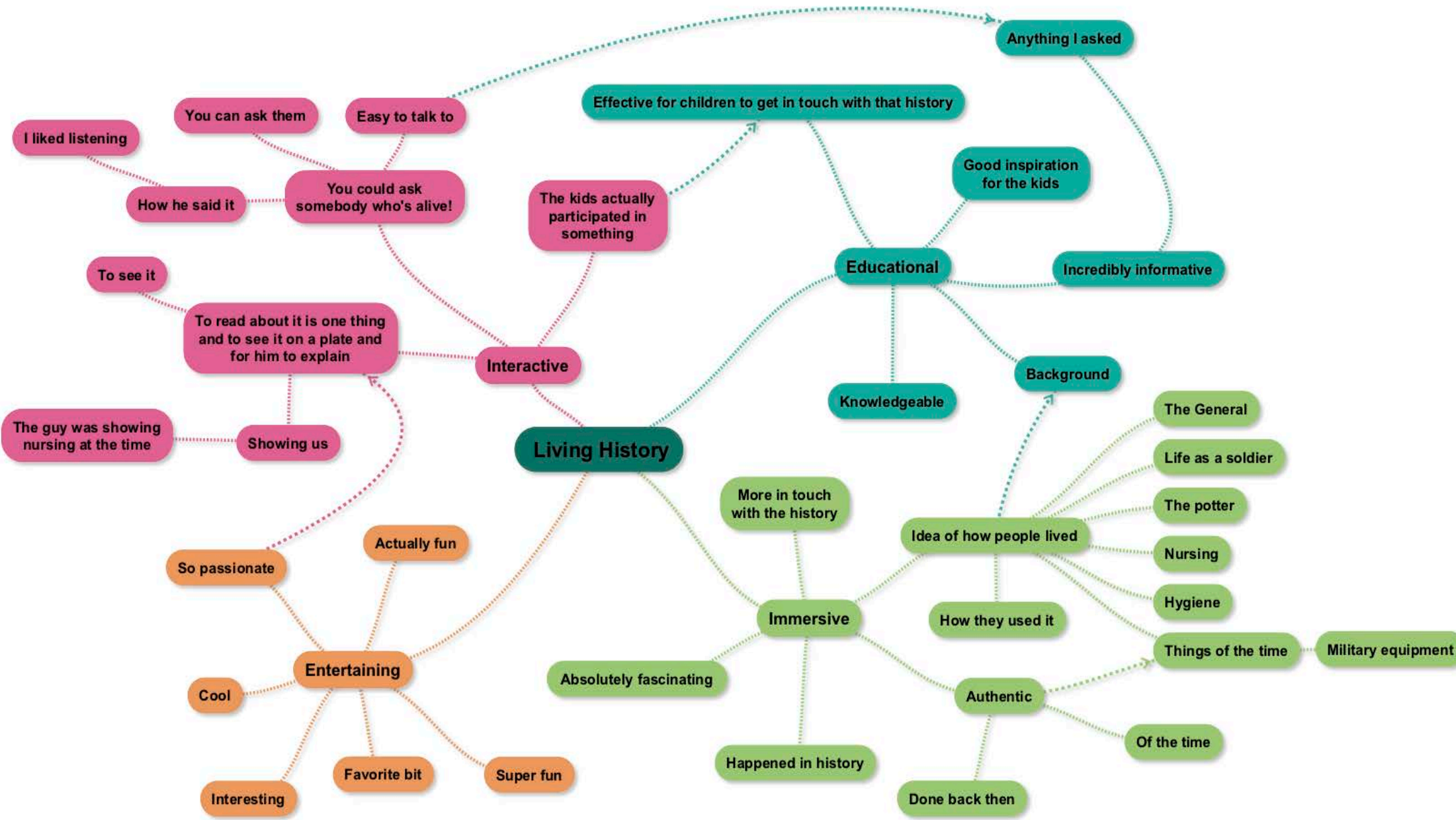
31% of visits included watching a Living History demonstration, so considering the **positive impact** this had on a visit it may be advisable to **promote further**.

Visitors had **great feedback**, appreciating that they could learn in an **entertaining** and **immersive** way.





‘This I really wanted to see [Living History] because I really wanted to get an idea of how people lived at the time’

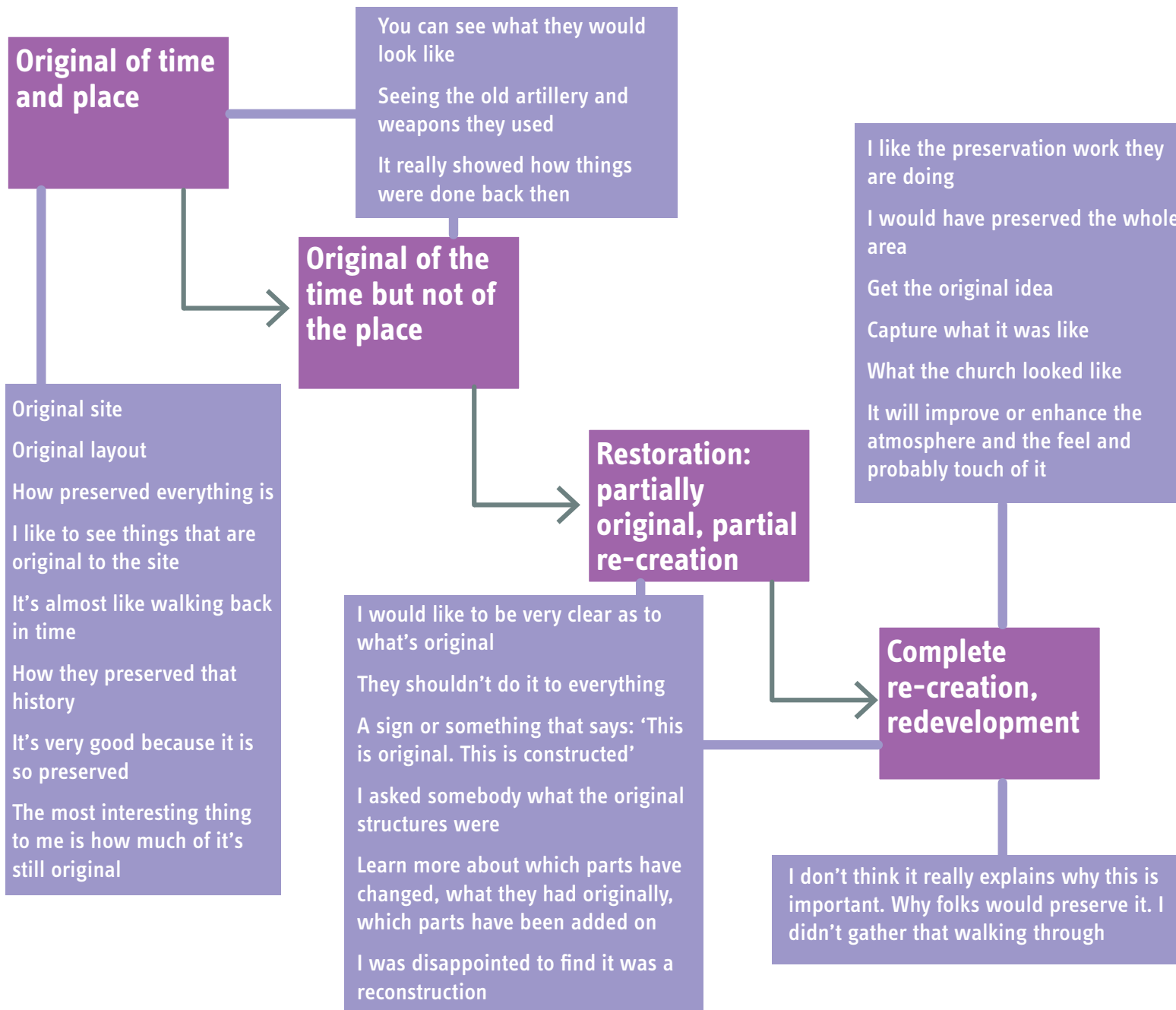


**A desire for more immersive and  
personal experiences**

The Alamo's **historical atmosphere** was appreciated, but visitors wanted a **more immersive experience** with focus on **representative, personal narratives**.



## Degrees of human intervention and terms used by the audience to identify them



## Visitors want transparency

However, visitors had a sense that some areas of the site were not authentic and were **keen to distinguish** between authentic and restored elements.

**‘[I’d like] A sign or something that says: “This is original. This is constructed”’**



## Site's authenticity was important to visitors

Visitors really enjoyed the site's **original objects** and **architecture**. These helped them to **connect** to the past, providing a more **immersive** and authentic experience.

**'It's almost like walking back in time'**





# The human, personal stories were most likely to resonate

Visitors clearly found the human narrative of The Alamo rewarding and one of the favourite aspects of their visit.

**‘The people who were here – why were they here?’**



## Knowing the individuals helped visitors to relate

‘Knowing some of the names of the historical figures, I think that’s very meaningful. To realise what happened here’



## Some expected a range of perspectives

‘This is the American version, so there are always two sides to a story.’



## From a wider view point

‘I’d want to see more of the indigenous people that were colonized. It’s like “Oh, it’s a tribute to one colonizer fighting with another colonizer”, as opposed to having a really genuine, true presence’

‘I expected to see a little more history written from the Mexican point of view’

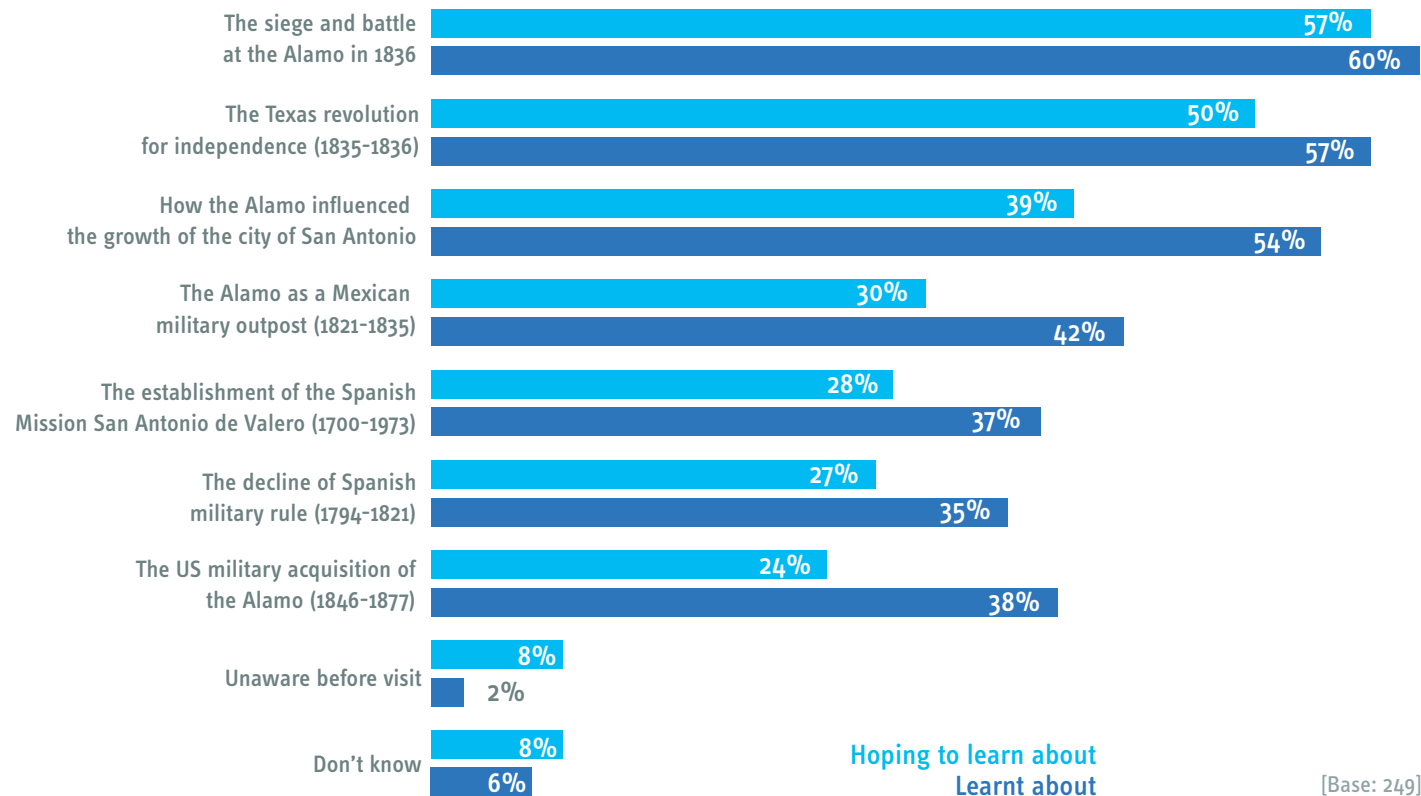




**‘What I did think I knew kind of gets thrown out of the window’**

# Many achieved their learning aims but room to expand knowledge

Learning expectations versus outcomes



# Those on visits learned unexpected things: top three

pp. difference



The Alamo's influence on San Antonio's growth

The US military acquisition of The Alamo

The Spanish Mission



## Mission history still missing for some

Despite the **positive increase** in those who learnt about The Alamo's time as a Spanish Mission, some of those visiting still felt that the Mission's history **was missing** from the overall narrative.





## Mission history still missing for some

‘It seems to me that the focus is really on the battle and its role in the movement to independence’

‘I’ve been to a lot of missions in California where they focus a lot more on the mission aspect and everything, so there was very little, I felt, here’

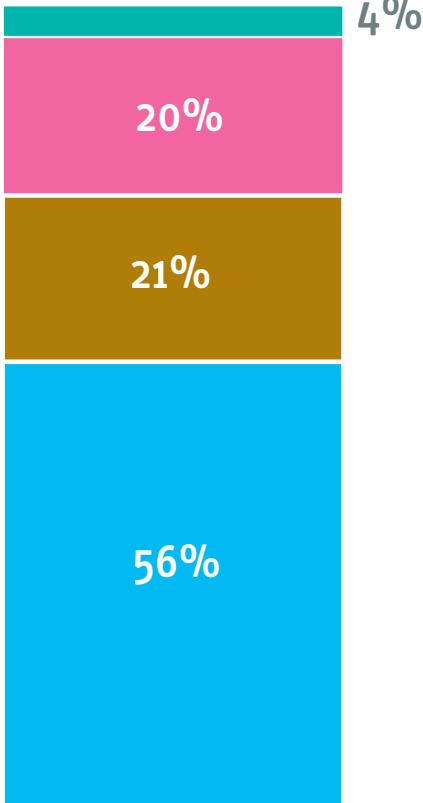


**More visits resulted in social  
outcomes than anticipated**

# Higher social outcomes than motives

Main outcome

% point difference from main motive

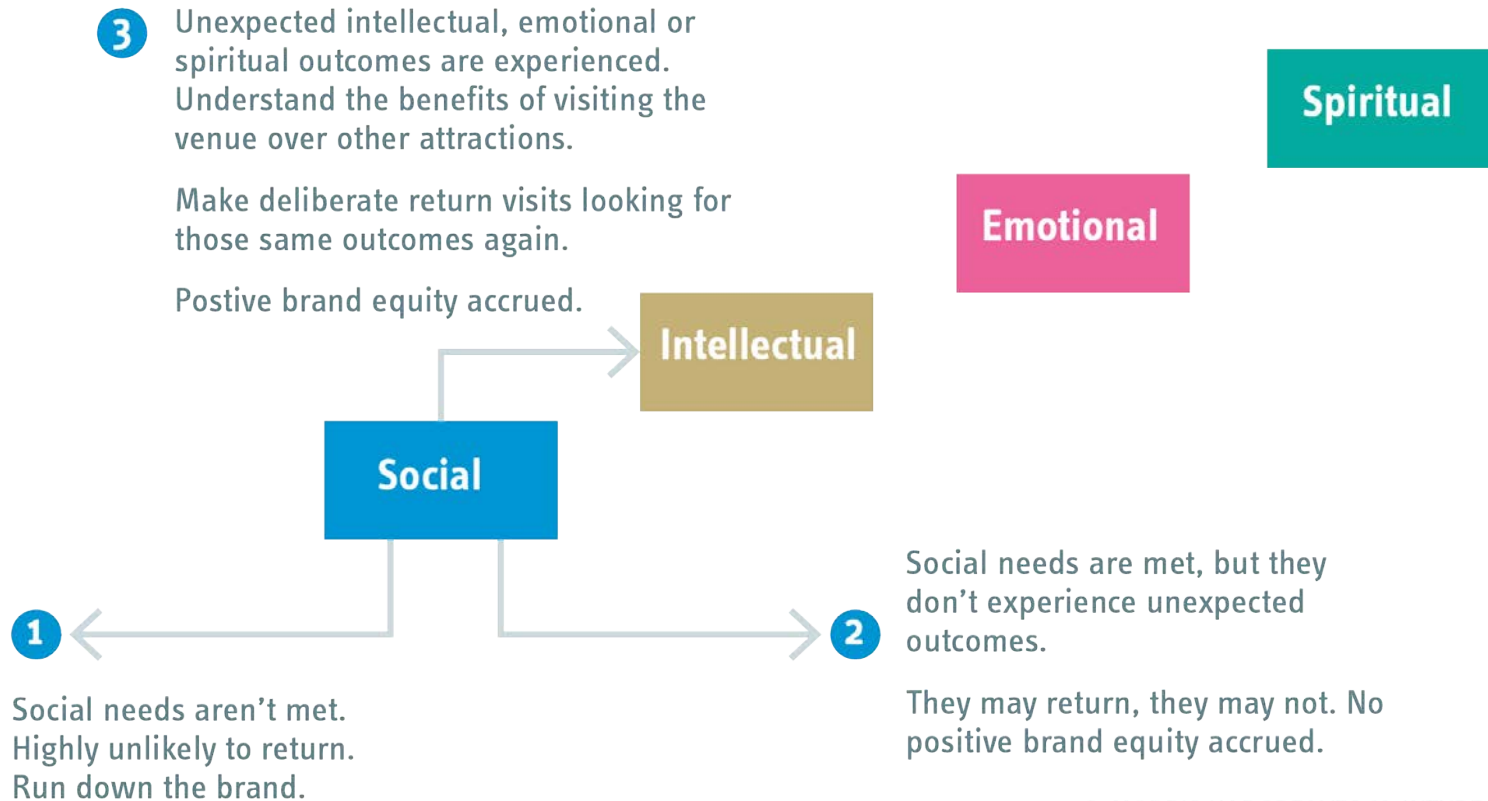


- 0% Spiritual
- 1% Emotional
- 5% Intellectual
- +6% Social

[Base: 245]



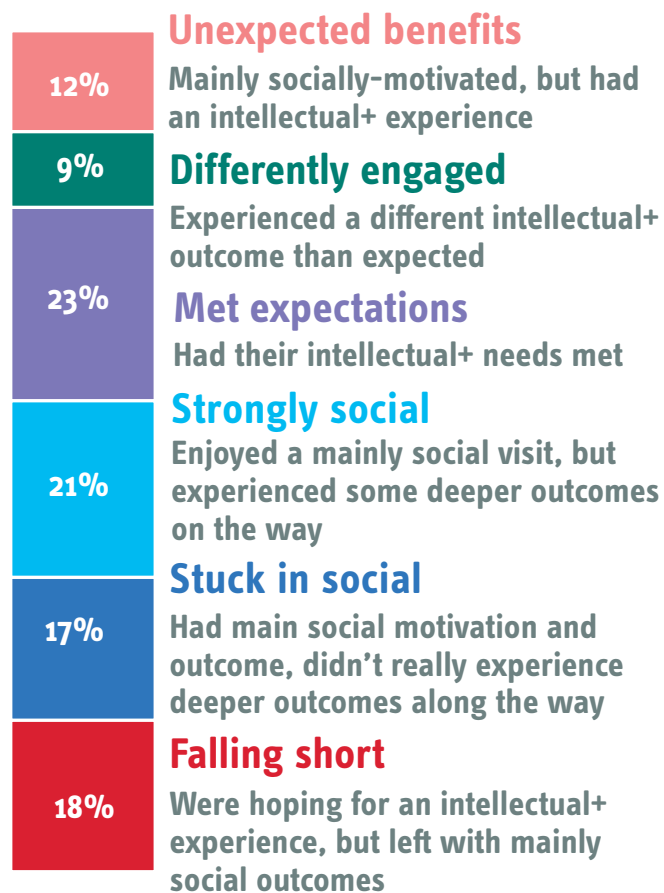
# Delivering unexpected visitor outcomes



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# Almost one fifth were falling short



[Base 243]

# Staff welcoming and passionate

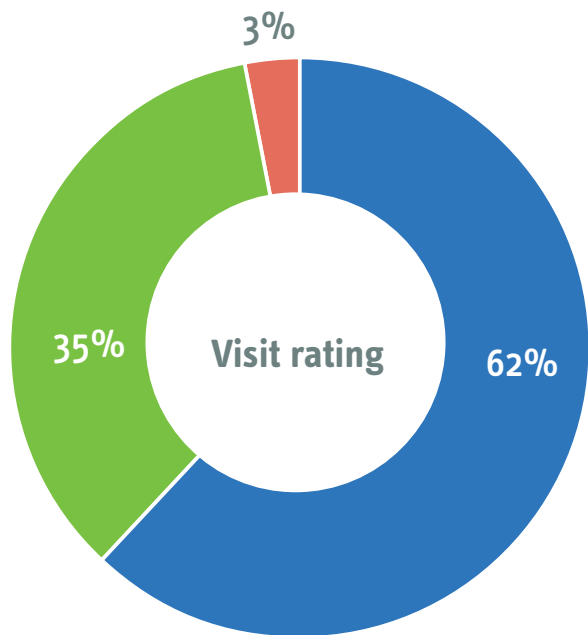
70% of respondents interacted with staff.

Of those:

- 94% agreed staff were welcoming
- 91% agreed staff were knowledgeable
- 85% agreed staff communicated pride and passion for The Alamo

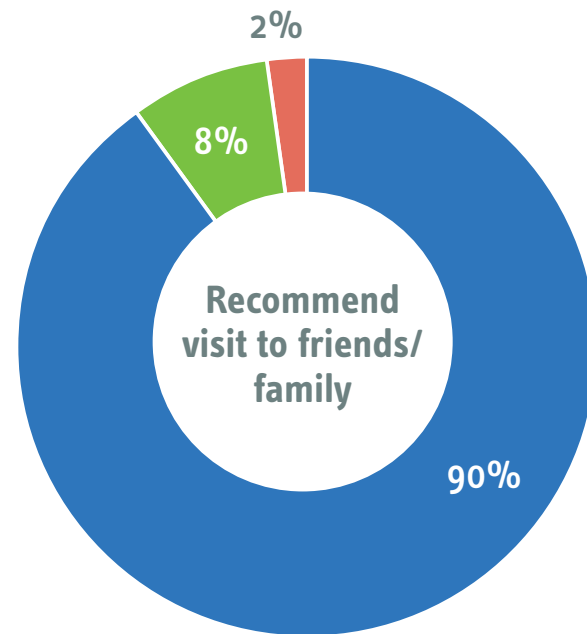


# Alamo rated highly and likely to be recommended



Excellent  
Good  
Fair/ OK

[Base: 249]



Yes  
Neutral  
No

[Base: 249]



# Future engagement with visitors



[Base: 249]





# Thank you!

▶ **morris**  
▶ **hargreaves**  
▶ **mcintyre**