

Understanding UK Evangelicals

Who are they?



Research conducted
with Whitestone Insight

evangelical alliance
together making Jesus known



“The evangelical church in the UK is thriving: it’s young, diverse, and growing. This research shows that evangelicals make up almost two-thirds of practicing Christians in the UK and remain at the heart of church life every Sunday. It gives us real confidence that evangelicals will continue to shape the future of the church, and that the Evangelical Alliance will keep standing strong and speaking up on behalf of this vibrant movement.”

Gavin Calver
CEO, Evangelical Alliance



Understanding Evangelicals: Who they are?, Evangelical Alliance, 2026
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Growing, younger, and more diverse

As the Evangelical Alliance celebrates its 180th year, understanding who evangelicals are in the UK today has never been more important. This report presents the findings of a landmark survey that sought to measure the size, shape and identity of the evangelical population across the United Kingdom.

The results are encouraging, surprising, and in some cases challenge long-held assumptions.

Most practising Christians in the UK are evangelicals and evangelical Christianity is growing. Evangelicals are younger, more ethnically diverse, and more likely to be male than the wider population.

The number of evangelicals has grown significantly from the 2 million estimated by Tearfund's 2007 survey of UK churchgoing¹. Using the narrowest definition there are now an estimated 2.6 million evangelical Christians in the UK.

Looking at the number of practising Christians in the UK – those who regularly attend church, pray and read their Bibles – 64% are evangelicals in terms of both how they identify and their beliefs.

Adults under 35 are the age group most likely to identify as evangelical and to hold evangelical beliefs. Approximately a third of the most committed evangelicals come from ethnically diverse backgrounds, while an estimated 60% of evangelicals are male.

This is incredibly encouraging news. At a time of widely reported decline in religion, the statistics tell a different story. Evangelical Christianity is thriving among young people, ethnic minority populations and men. The UK church is growing, and this looks set to continue, given the demographics.

This growth is mirrored in the Evangelical Alliance's own story. Since 1846, the Evangelical Alliance has been serving the UK church, uniting evangelicals to make Jesus known. It represents more than 30,000 personal members, more than 3,000 church members and more than 500 organisation members. The Evangelical Alliance connects with approximately half a million people through its membership and has seen its personal membership double in the last 10 years.

It is the largest and oldest body representing the growing, and increasingly diverse, number of evangelical Christians in the UK. In its 180th year and beyond, the Evangelical Alliance will continue to bring evangelical Christians together to strengthen their voice and inspire them for mission.

¹ Churchgoing in the UK: A research report from Tearfund on church attendance in the UK (2007)

Key findings

12.3 million people in the UK hold evangelical beliefs
OR identify as evangelical (or both)

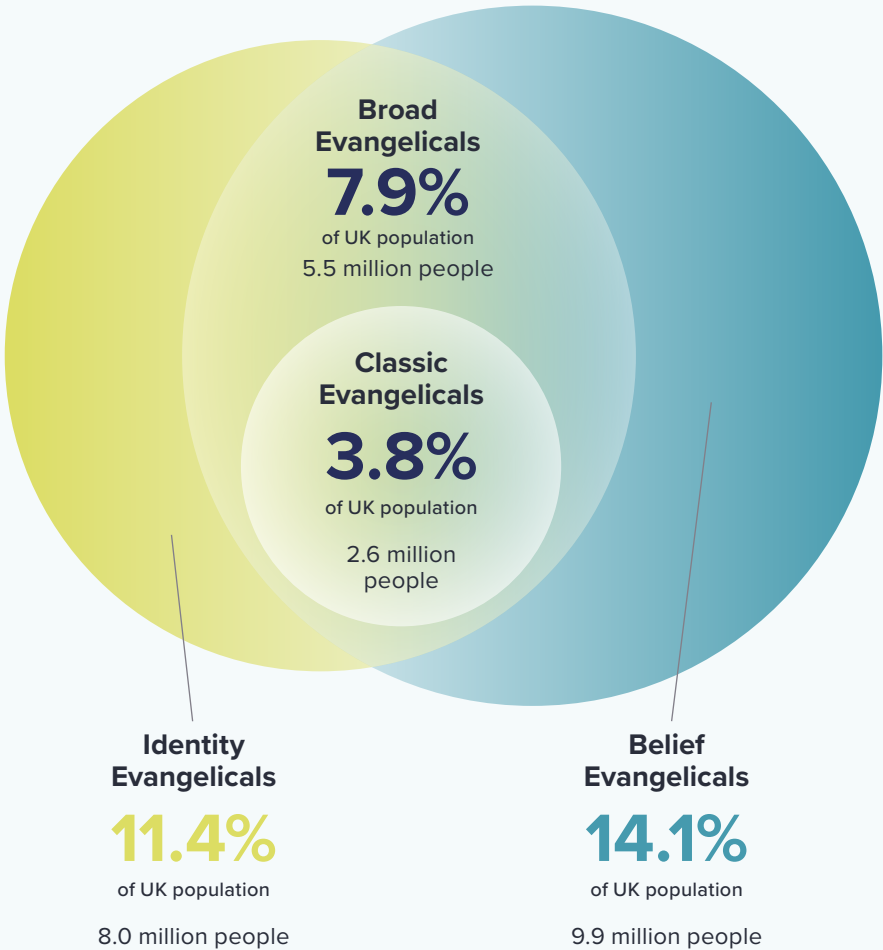


Fig 1 UK Evangelicals based on identity and belief, showing Broad and Classic Evangelicals.

Circle areas are drawn in proportion to population size. Figures are applied to a total UK population of 70 million.

There are approximately
2.6 million

Classic Evangelicals in the UK.

This is based on the 3.8% of respondents who strongly hold evangelical beliefs AND identify as an evangelical AND are part of Protestant traditions.

1 in 3

of those who strongly agree with evangelical beliefs are from an ethnic minority background.

There are approximately
5.5 million

Broad Evangelicals in the UK.

This is based on the 7.9% of respondents who hold evangelical beliefs AND identify as an evangelical.

7.2%

of respondents are practising Christians – attending church at least monthly and praying and reading the Bible at least weekly.

17.6%

of UK adults are Somewhat Evangelical. This is based on respondents who hold evangelical beliefs OR identify as an evangelical.

64%

of practising Christians are Broad Evangelicals.

Adults under 35

are most likely to identify as evangelicals and hold evangelical beliefs.

12%

of UK adults attend church at least once a month.

How we defined evangelicalism

As the UK Evangelical Alliance, it is important to have a robust understanding of who evangelical Christians in the UK are, and how many there are. This research has been conducted to provide those answers. This report maps out the evangelical landscape using two key measures – identity and belief.

Evangelical identity was measured by asking respondents whether they considered themselves an evangelical, and whether they would be comfortable using the term to describe themselves. This provided a group of **Identity Evangelicals**.

Evangelical belief was measured using four statements based on the Bebbington Quadrilateral, a widely accepted framework for defining evangelical Christianity. Respondents indicated their agreement with each statement on a scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. This enabled us to identify those who agree with all four statements – a group of **Belief Evangelicals**.

From this we identified five groups within the broader evangelical population, from those who simply identify with the label to those who hold the tightest combination of evangelical identity, belief, and Protestant church tradition.

We anticipated significant overlap between these two groups and that those who identify as evangelical would be highly likely to hold the beliefs, and vice versa. What we found was a core group who meet both tests, but also a much larger population who meet only one. Altogether, 17.6% of the UK population (around 12.3 million people) are Somewhat Evangelical on at least one of these two measures.



Five groups within UK evangelicalism

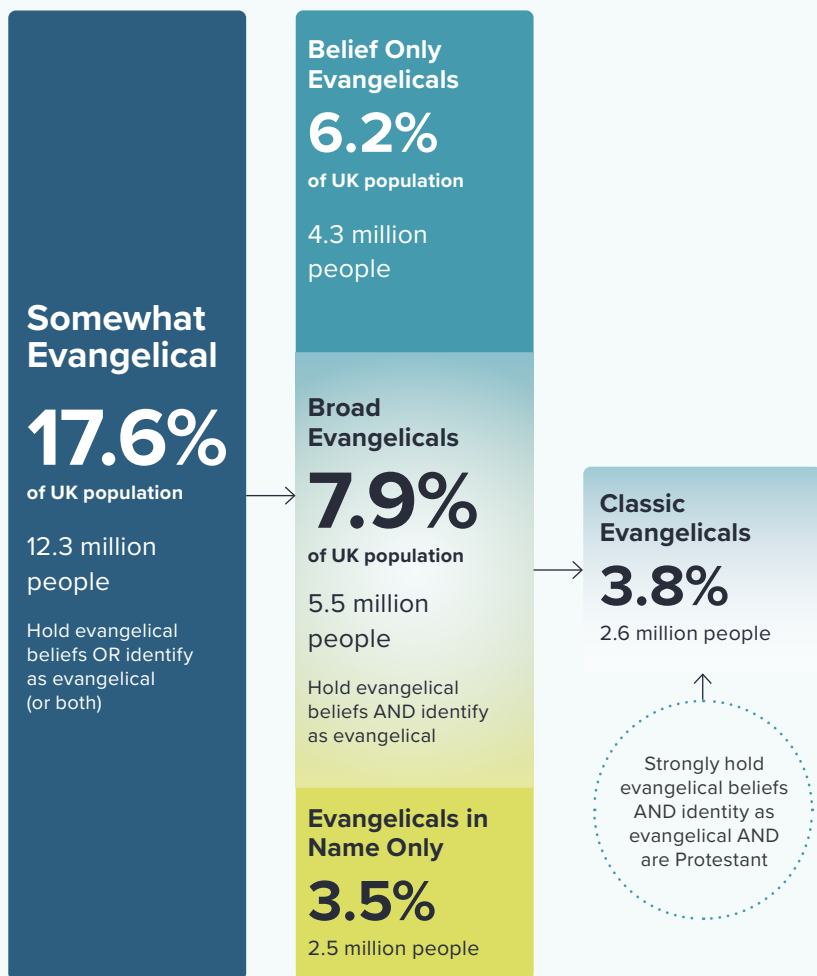


Fig 2 The five groups within UK evangelicalism, and how Classic Evangelicals sit within Broad Evangelicals.

Segment widths are proportional to population size.
Figures are applied to a total UK population of 70 million.

Alongside identity and belief, we also tested for practising Christians – those who attend church and read the Bible regularly – to understand how evangelical belief and identity relate to lived practice.

Methodology

Whitestone Insight conducted an online survey using a nationally representative group of 8,407 adults. The fieldwork took place between 25 February and 8 March 2026. The data provided has a margin of error of 2%, meaning that all percentages can realistically be 2% higher or lower than presented in this report. Within this sample, 3,804 people who categorised themselves as Christian were identified and asked further questions about their Christian practices, evangelical identity and beliefs. The demographic profile of this group was used to apply appropriate weightings to future representative research of evangelicals. Full tables for all the findings presented in the report are available at eauk.org/ukevangelicals

A note on population figures

This survey sampled UK adults, and all underlying percentages are calculated on that adult sample. However, to give a clearer sense of scale, this report applies those percentages to the total UK population of approximately 70 million – rather than to the adult population alone – whenever it states a number of people. This is a deliberate choice to communicate the reach of evangelicalism across the population as a whole, and readers comparing figures with other sources should bear the basis of calculation in mind.





Definitions

Christian (45%)

Those who would identify as Christian as a proportion of the UK population

Somewhat Evangelical (17.6%)

Those who agree or strongly agree with all four belief statements OR identify as evangelical (whether or not they would use the term). No denominational or practising limitation – the widest category of evangelicals.

Broad Evangelicals (7.9%)

Those who agree or strongly agree with all four belief statements AND identify as evangelical (whether or not they would use the term).

Classic Evangelicals (3.8%)

Those who strongly agree with all four belief statements AND identify as an evangelical (whether or not they would use the term), AND are Protestant Christians (excluding Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox traditions).

Evangelicals in Name Only – EINOs (3.5%)

Those who identify as evangelical but do NOT agree with all four core evangelical belief statements.

Belief Only Evangelicals (6.2%)

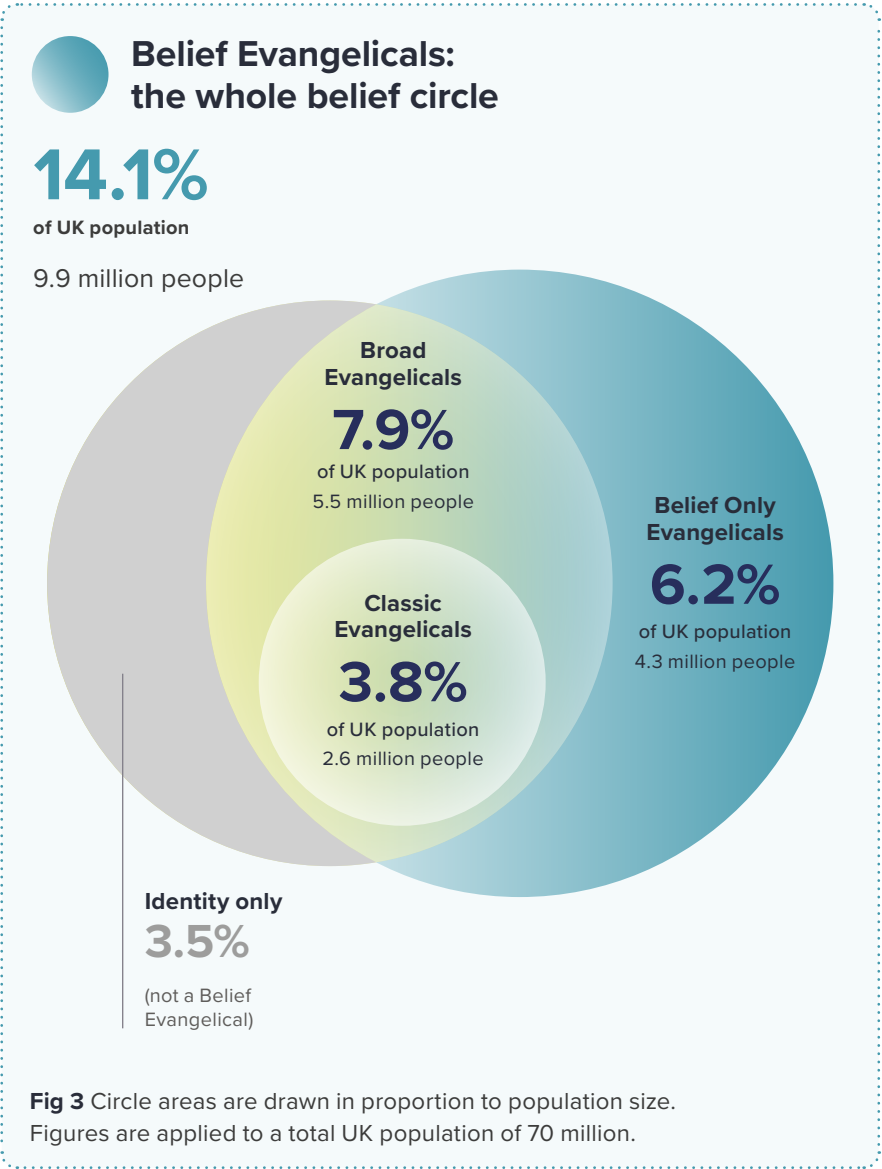
Those who agree or strongly agree with all four evangelical beliefs but do NOT identify as evangelical at all.

Practising Christians (7.2%)

Those who attend church, in person or online, at least once a month, and pray and read the Bible independently at least once a week.

Belief Evangelicals

Belief is at the heart of Christianity, and in seeking to understand evangelicals in the UK, our primary approach is to understand how many people share the beliefs of evangelicals, as defined by the Bebbington Quadrilateral.

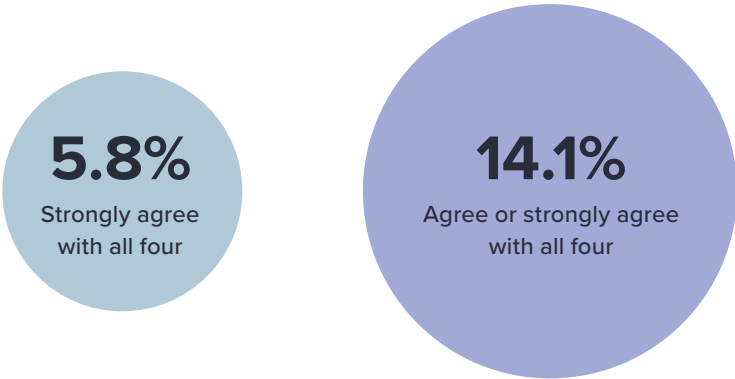


The table below shows responses to the four belief statements:

Evangelical Belief	Strongly agree	Agree or strongly agree
Biblicism – The Bible is the inspired and authoritative word of God	11%	26%
Crucicentrism – Jesus Christ died in our place to save us from our sins	14%	28%
Conversionism – Belief in the need for personal conversion through faith in Christ	10%	20%
Activism – The importance of putting faith into action through evangelism and good works	8%	20%
Agree with all four statements	5.8%	14.1%

Percentage figures represent the proportion of the UK adult population who strongly agree, or either agree or strongly agree with the statements.

Those who either agreed or strongly agreed with all four statements make up our group of Belief Evangelicals. This group accounts for 14.1% of all respondents – equivalent to 9.9 million of the UK population.



The significance of Jesus’ death to save us from our sins has the highest level of agreement. Perhaps surprisingly, the importance of putting faith into action through evangelism and good works has the lowest level of agreement.

Belief Only Evangelicals

A substantial subgroup of Belief Evangelicals do not identify as evangelical – they believe, but would not describe themselves as evangelical, even quietly.

This group, which we call Belief Only Evangelicals, represents 6.2% of the UK population or around 4.3 million people. Of this group, 25% would strongly agree with all four statements, equating to 1.6% of the UK population.

Their convictions place them squarely within the evangelical tradition, but their self-understanding does not. It is a fascinating group: people whose beliefs align closely with evangelicalism, yet who would not recognise themselves as such.



Identity Evangelicals

One of the key questions this research wanted to explore was how Christians in the UK feel about the term 'evangelical'. The label can be a loaded one, so we wanted to understand the state of evangelical identity in the UK today.



Identity Evangelicals: the whole identity circle

11.4%

of UK population

8.0 million people

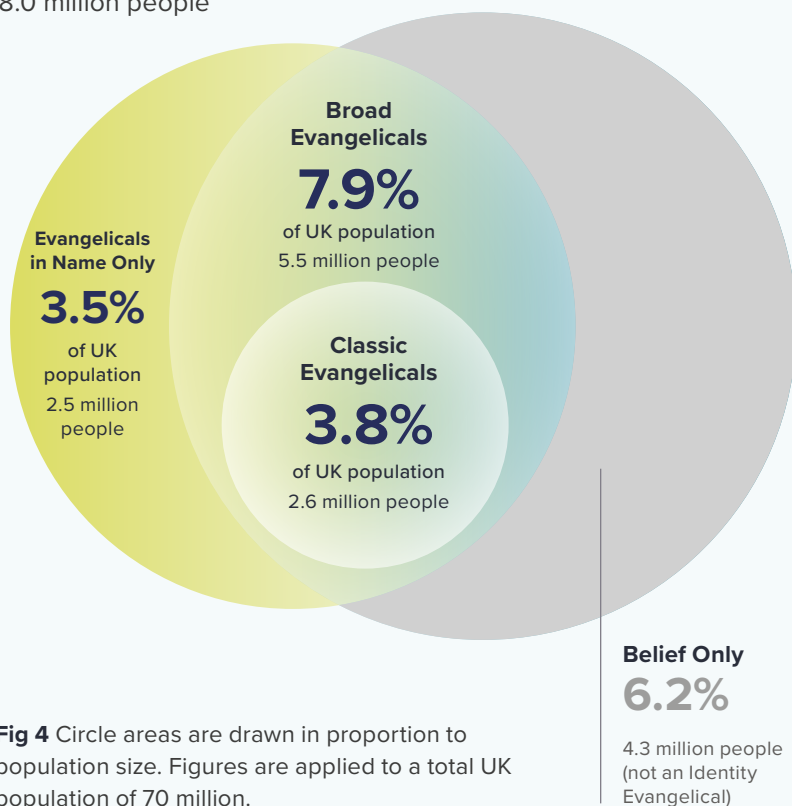
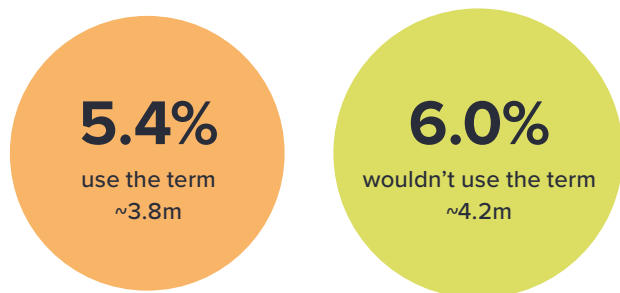


Fig 4 Circle areas are drawn in proportion to population size. Figures are applied to a total UK population of 70 million.

We found that 11.4% of respondents (equivalent to a quarter of UK Christians, or around 8.0 million people) form part of this group, which we call Identity Evangelicals.

Within this group, we asked whether people would be comfortable using the word 'evangelical' or would generally avoid it. Around 47% of Identity Evangelicals said they would be comfortable using the term (5.4% of the population, or around 3.8 million people). The remaining 6% (around 4.2 million people) identify as evangelical but would not use the label.

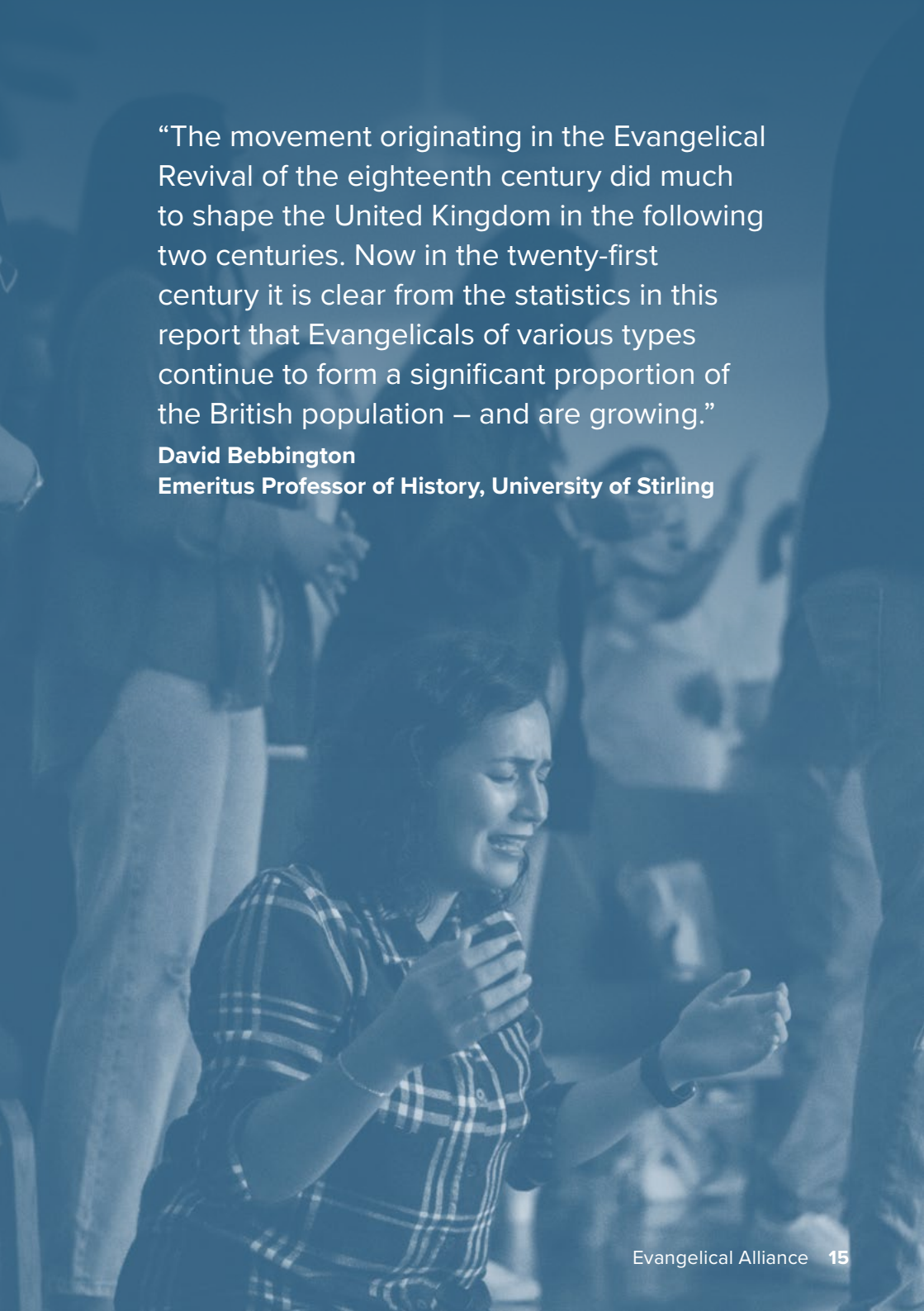


Identity does not appear to be a strong indicator of Christian practice on its own. Around 44% of Identity Evangelicals are practising Christians. However, practising Christians are notably more comfortable using the term: about 64% of identity Evangelicals who are also practising Christians, are comfortable describing themselves as evangelical, compared with 47% of all Identity Evangelicals.

Evangelicals in Name Only

We found that 31% of all those who identify as evangelical do not agree with all four belief statements. For those who are comfortable identifying as evangelical this drops to 17%. This group of Evangelicals in Name Only make up about 3.5% of the UK population or around 2.5 million people – those who may call themselves evangelical without holding all the core evangelical beliefs.

Interestingly, over 6% of Identity Evangelicals don't agree with any of the four belief statements at all. The significant presence of this group suggests there is a broad lack of shared understanding of what defines an evangelical – an interesting tension worth exploring further.



“The movement originating in the Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century did much to shape the United Kingdom in the following two centuries. Now in the twenty-first century it is clear from the statistics in this report that Evangelicals of various types continue to form a significant proportion of the British population – and are growing.”

David Bebbington

Emeritus Professor of History, University of Stirling

Who are Classic Evangelicals?

Classic Evangelicals strongly agree with all four belief statements AND identify as an evangelical (whether or not they would use the term) AND are Protestant Christians (excluding Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox traditions). Historically, evangelicalism has been considered a group within Protestant Christianity, which is why we have restricted this group to only Protestants. 3.8% of respondents can be described as Classic Evangelicals – equivalent to 2.6m of the UK population. This group is younger than the general population and much more ethnically diverse.

It is highly likely that an individual from this group is also a practising Christian: we found that over 77% of Classic Evangelicals were also practising Christians, suggesting that this group makes up a significant part of active evangelical churches up and down the UK.

Age

Classic Evangelicals skew notably younger than the UK population as a whole. 43% are under the age of 35, with another significant grouping (nearly 20%) aged 35 to 44.

Age distribution of Classic Evangelicals

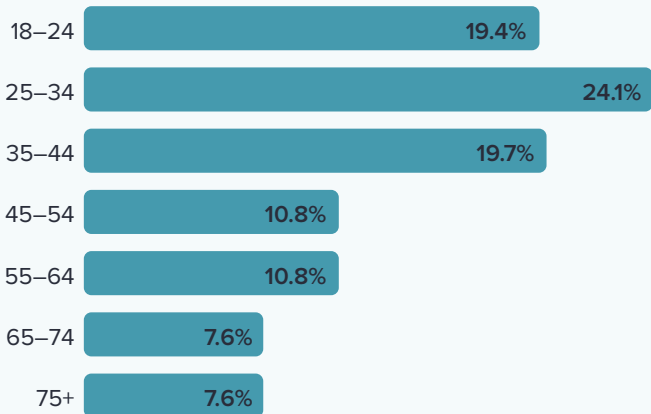
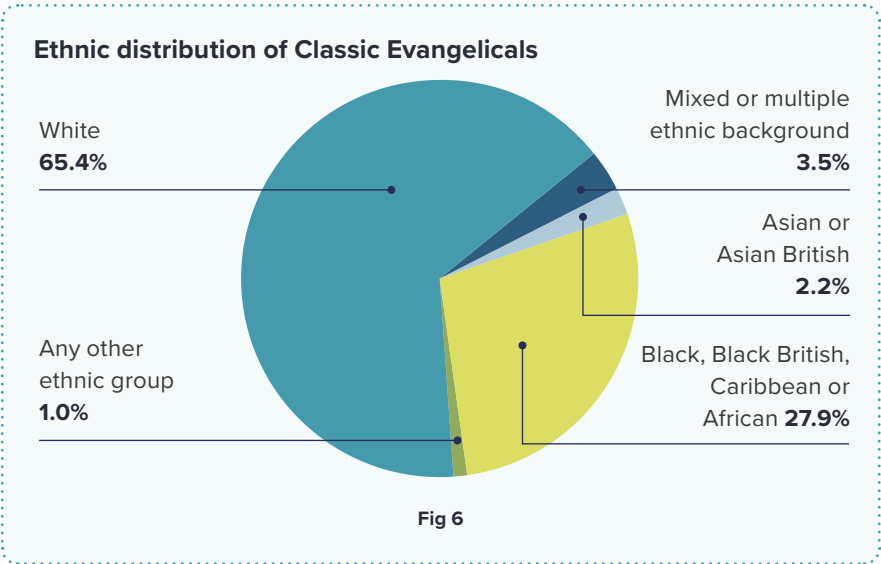


Fig 5

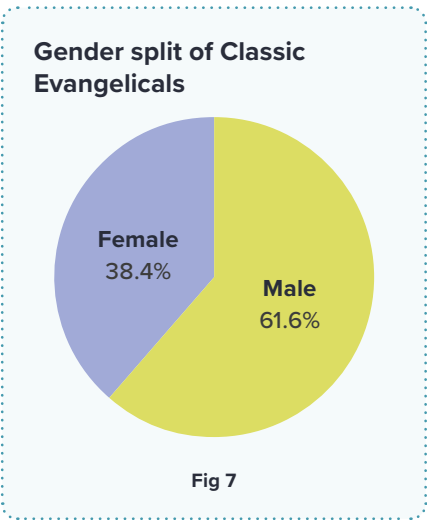
Ethnicity

Classic Evangelicals are also ethnically diverse. Over a third come from an ethnic minority background – nearly double the proportion of the general population. The majority of this group are Black, Black British, Caribbean or African, who alone make up nearly 28% of all Classic Evangelicals in the UK.



Gender

This group trends significantly male: more than 61% of Classic Evangelicals are men.



Who are Broad Evangelicals?

This wider definition of evangelicals – those who identify as evangelical and hold the core beliefs, regardless of denomination – accounts for 7.9% of the UK population, or around 5.5m people. By most measures, this group can be defined as evangelical; they are simply less certain in their belief, and, unlike Classic Evangelicals, do not necessarily belong to a Protestant denomination.

Broad Evangelicals follow a similar demographic pattern to Classic Evangelicals, though the trends are somewhat less pronounced. About 58% of this group are practising Christians, notably lower than the 77% recorded among Classic Evangelicals.

Age

Like Classic Evangelicals, Broad Evangelicals skew younger, though less markedly: 41% are under the age of 35.

Age distribution of Broad Evangelicals

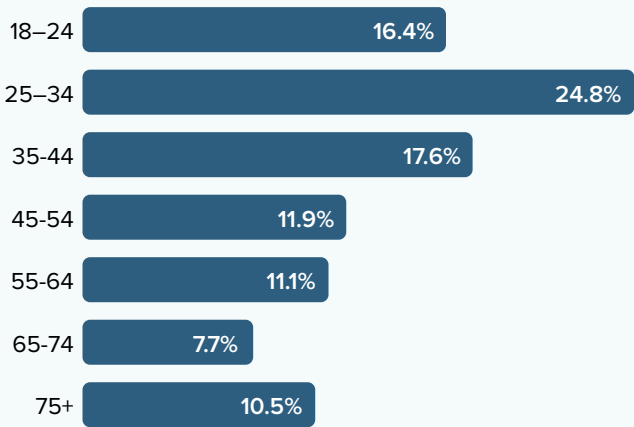
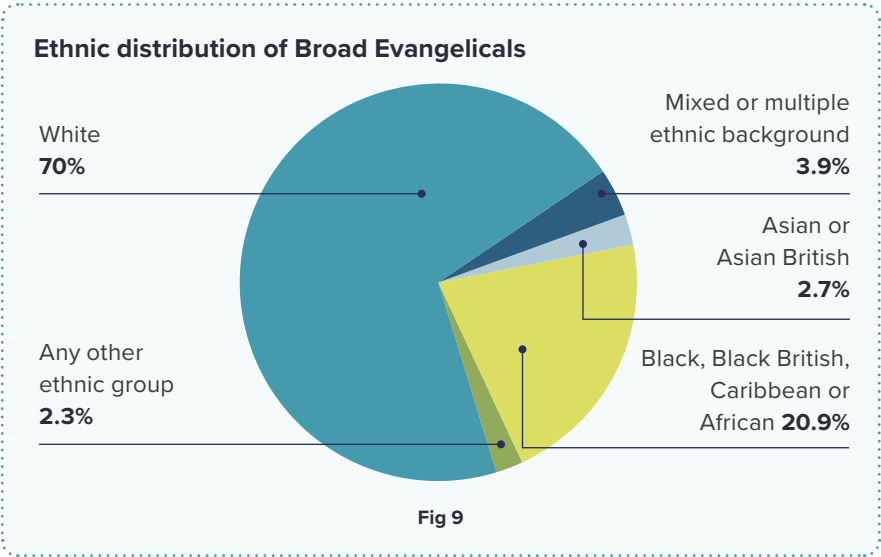


Fig 8

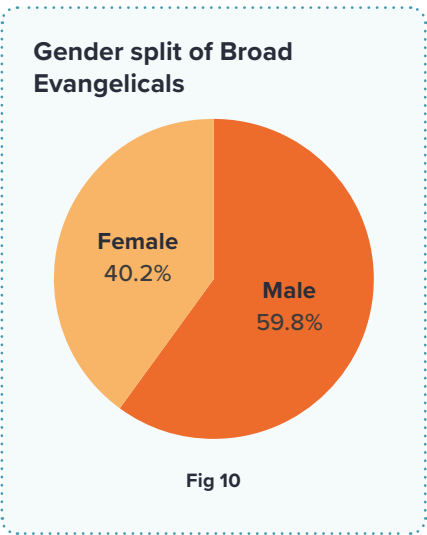
Ethnicity

The pattern of ethnic diversity holds here as well, with nearly 30% of this group from an ethnic minority background.



Gender

The gender split is similar too: nearly 60% of Broad Evangelicals are male.



How identity, belief and denomination interact

Somewhat Evangelicals, Classic Evangelicals and Broad Evangelicals: what's the difference?

17.6% of the respondents, equivalent to 12.3 million of the UK population can be described as Somewhat Evangelical. They agree or strongly agree with all four belief statements OR identify as evangelical (whether or not they would use the term).

Classic vs Broad: what's the difference?

There is significant but not total overlap between evangelical beliefs and identity. The overlap includes Broad and Classic Evangelicals – the latter group are entirely within and included in the Broad Evangelical group. Comparing the two groups side by side, Classic Evangelicals are slightly younger than Broad Evangelicals (43% vs 41% under 35), and slightly more ethnically diverse (over 35% vs nearly 30%). The gender balance between the two groups is very similar, with both trending male. The clearest distinctions then, are less about who these groups are demographically and more about the strength and confidence of their belief and identity, and in the case of Classic Evangelicals, their Protestant church traditions.



The core of evangelicalism: Broad and Classic Evangelicals

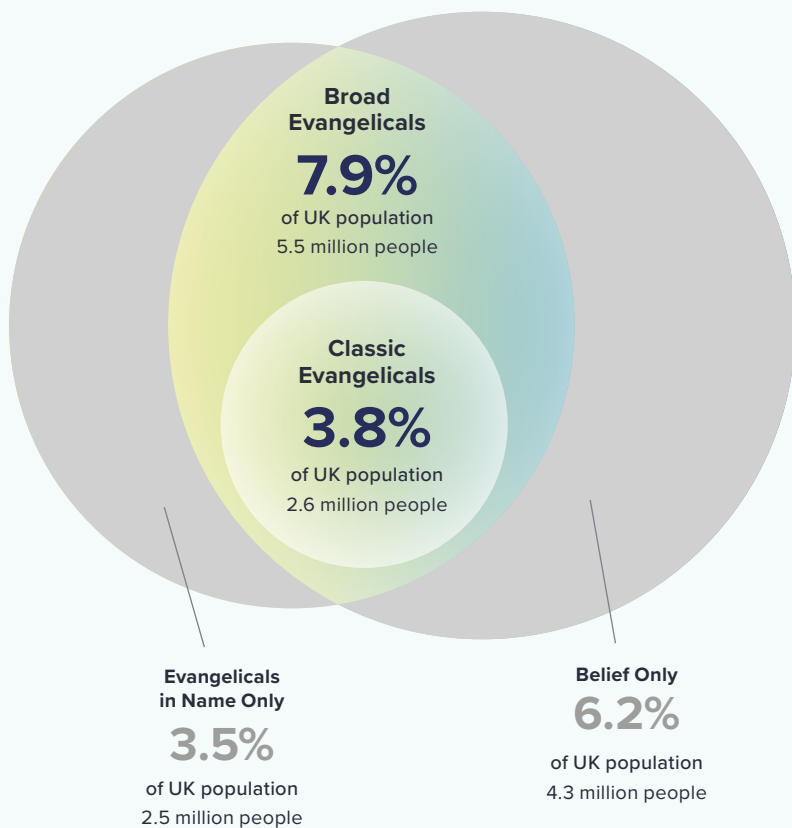


Fig 11 Circle areas are drawn in proportion to population size.
Figures are applied to a total UK population of 70 million.

Evangelicals by denomination

Evangelicals in the UK can be found in all denominations and non-denominational churches. The research found that evangelicals make up a majority of both Pentecostal and New Church charismatic congregations, with Broad Evangelicals accounting for 66% within each of their groupings. The graphs below show how evangelicals in the UK are distributed across denominations and groupings.

Denomination distribution of Classic Evangelicals

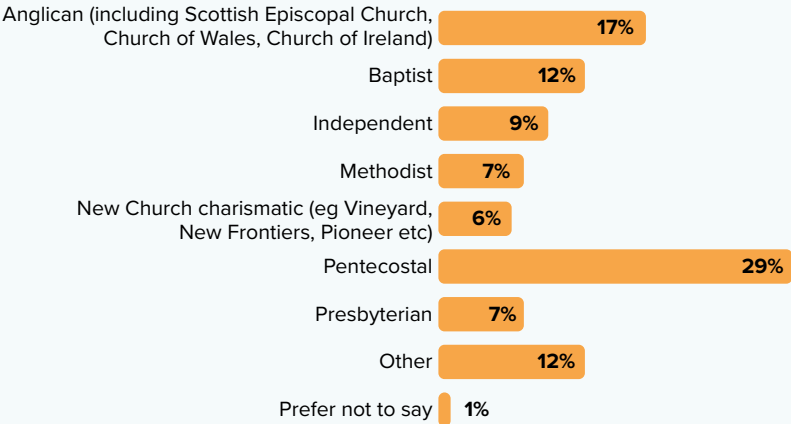


Fig 12

Denomination distribution of Broad Evangelicals

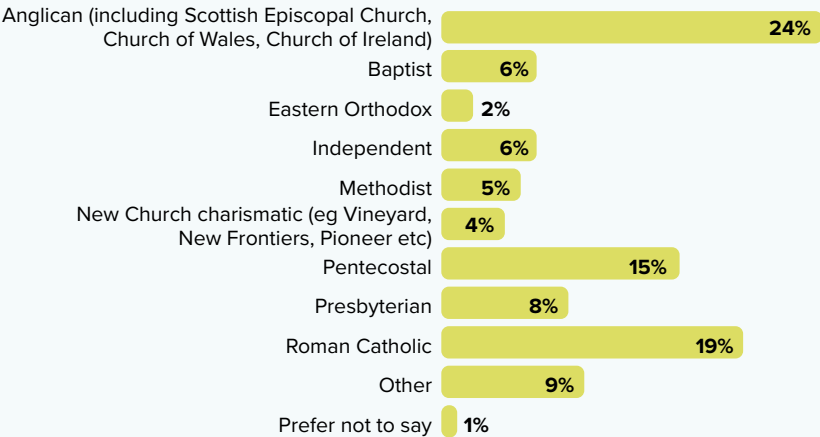


Fig 13

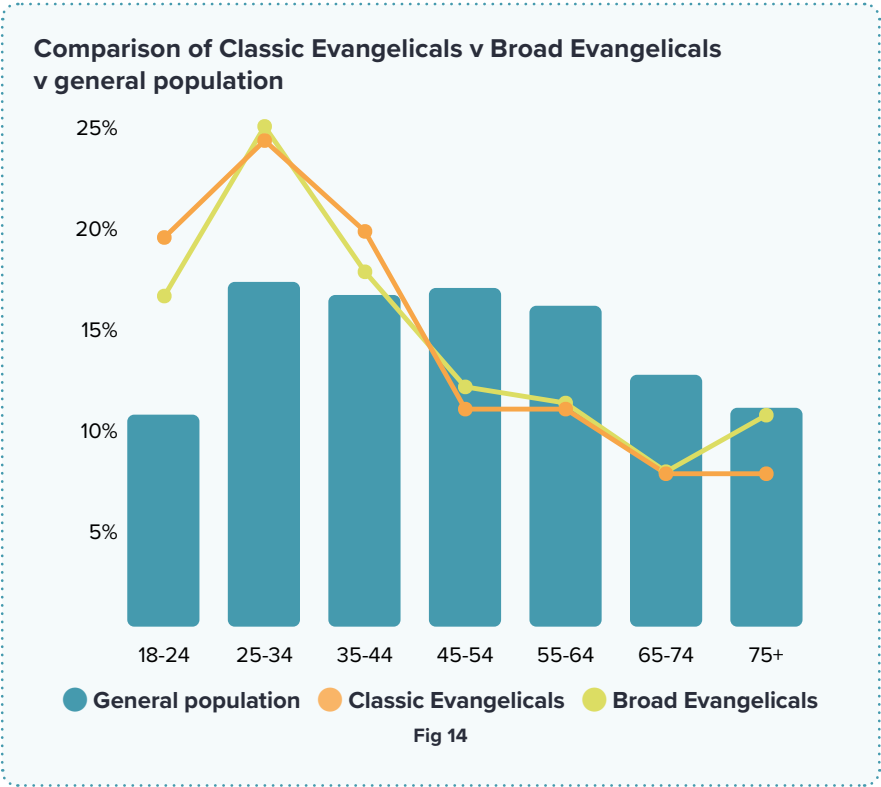
About 19% of Roman Catholics would be classed as Broad Evangelicals. This is a striking finding, since Catholicism has traditionally been considered a separate strand of Christianity to evangelicalism, particularly in areas such as the authority of scripture and the nature of salvation.

Evangelicals by age

Evangelicalism in the UK skews disproportionately younger. We found that of those who strongly agree with all four belief statements, 20% are between 18–24 and a further 24% between 25–34, so 44% of those strongly holding to these beliefs are under 35.

A similar, if less pronounced, pattern holds for evangelical identity: around 36% of those who consider themselves evangelical are under 35. The age distribution levels off from the mid-40s onward, with older age groups consistently under-represented within evangelicalism relative to the general population.

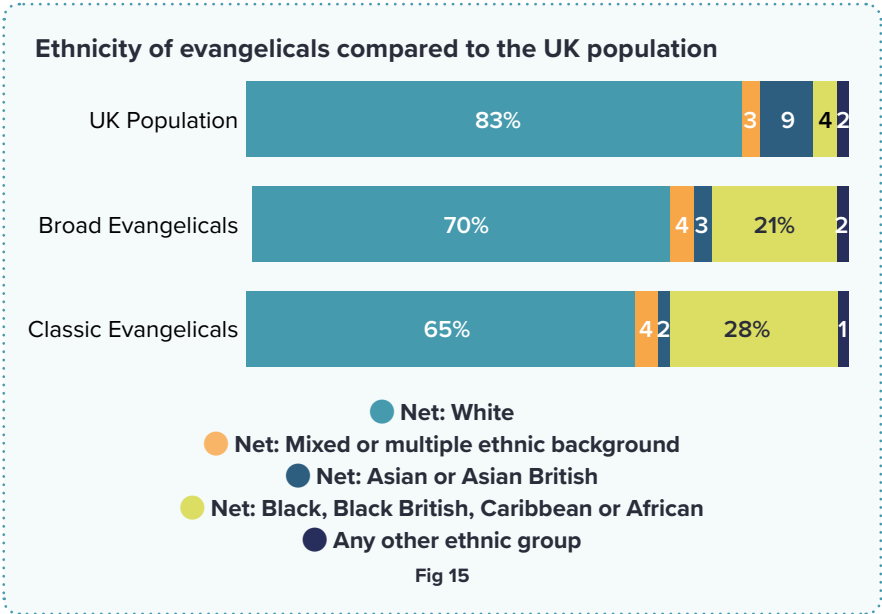
The blue bars show the age distribution of the general population, with the orange and green lines showing the age distribution of Classic and Broad Evangelicals respectively.



Evangelicals by ethnicity

Evangelicals are far more ethnically diverse than the general UK population. Across the UK population as a whole, 17% of adults are from an ethnic minority background. Among Belief Evangelicals, this rises to 23%, and among those who strongly agree with all four belief statements, to approximately a third (34%).

Those from an ethnic minority background also tend to be more comfortable describing themselves as evangelical, particularly those from a Black, Black British Caribbean or African background, where nearly two thirds (63%) would be comfortable using the term.



Evangelicals by gender

Evangelicalism trends notably more male, in both belief and identity. In the UK population as a whole, men and women are roughly evenly split. Among strong Belief Evangelicals, however, the ratio is around 1.4 men to every woman, easing slightly to 1.3:1 across Belief Evangelicals more broadly.

The pattern holds for Identity Evangelicals too, with a slight increase to nearly 1.5 men to every woman among those comfortable self-describing as evangelical. This is a notable finding, given that women have often outnumbered men in the UK church. The evangelical population appears to buck this trend.

Evangelicals by practice

**5.0
million**

UK adults (7.2%)
are practising
Christians

64%

of practising
Christians are Broad
Evangelicals

**8.4
million**

UK adults (12%)
attend church at
least monthly

We found that 7.2% of the UK population attend church and read the Bible regularly, meeting our criteria for 'practising Christians'. A strong majority of this group is likely to be evangelical: Broad Evangelicals make up 64% of practising Christians.

A very large majority (85%) of practising Christians agree or strongly agree with all four evangelical belief statements, and more than two thirds (70%) would identify as evangelical, whether or not they would use the term.

Overall, 12% of UK adults attend church, in person or online, at least once a month. A helpful reminder that church attendance and evangelical belief or identity, while closely related, are not the same thing.



Conclusion

This report set out to understand evangelicalism in the United Kingdom: how many evangelicals there are, and who they are. We found that the evangelical church is far larger, more diverse and younger than initially thought. Evangelicals are present across all denominations, dominant in some, and a small minority in others.

We also found that it is not accurate to talk about a single evangelical population. It is far more instructive to view evangelicalism from different angles, considering identity, belief and Christian practice together, and to recognise the distinct groups that emerge from doing so.

It is important to understand the size and scale of Classic Evangelicals, who have historically been most closely associated with the work of the Evangelical Alliance. However, there is also a wider group who are evangelical in their beliefs and identity, which we label Broad Evangelicals, a group more than double the size of the Classic group.

This report begins to provide a framing for who evangelicals are in the United Kingdom today. It should bring encouragement to UK evangelicals as to their breadth and presence, and prompt greater awareness in wider society of a group whose role in public life has historically been significant, and we believe, is currently underestimated.

There are undoubtedly challenges in navigating and understanding a population as broad as we have found here, and further research is underway to chart the features of Classic and Broad Evangelicals in more depth. There is also more work to do to explore the nature of the groups who do not meet both criteria; the Belief Only Evangelicals and the Evangelicals in Name Only, whose relationship to the evangelical label and evangelical belief raises questions well worth pursuing.

What is clear, above all, is that evangelical Christianity in the UK is not fading. It is growing, diversifying, and putting down deeper roots among a new generation. With the Evangelical Alliance in its 180th year, this report offers a firmer foundation for that work: a clearer picture of who evangelicals are, and a confident basis for representing them well in the years ahead.

To find out more about the Evangelical Alliance's research, visit eauk.org/research



Three ways the Evangelical Alliance is here for you

Speaking up
on the issues
facing UK
Christians

Sharing the
trends shaping
mission and
ministry today

Producing
practical
resources you
can use in
your church



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