# Pre-hens trend reshapes UK bridal celebrations amid rising wedding costs



In recent months, the trend of 'pre-hens'—preliminary celebrations leading up to bachelorette parties—has gained considerable popularity among bridal parties in the UK. These gatherings, often characterised by intimate settings with drinks and relaxed activities, are increasingly seen as an opportunity for friends to bond before larger wedding festivities commence.

Social media platforms like TikTok have played a significant role in showcasing these events, with videos highlighting everything from quaint gatherings featuring snacks and cocktails to more elaborate celebrations featuring personalised itineraries and themed decor. For example, UK-based Ellis Warren shared her own 'pre-hen get together' on social media, complete with cocktail pitchers, goody bags, and a charcuterie board, all in advance of her official trip to Paris.

Other participants in this trend include Keavy from Scotland, who highlighted the creativity of friends crafting DIY food boards for her gathering. Similarly, Rebecca Nowell from Manchester hosted a laid-back wine tasting for her best friend, demonstrating the range of approaches to these celebrations. Amanda Woodward, who is set to marry this year, also reported being welcomed with pre-hen festivities from her bridal party.

Zoe Burke, a wedding expert and Editor of Hitched.co.uk, discussed the rationale behind these gatherings, saying, "A pre-hen is a smaller celebration, often held months, and sometimes years, ahead of the actual hen do and wedding." Burke noted that these events serve as a means for wedding party members to meet and connect, potentially easing the planning complexities of the main celebrations.

While many individuals have responded positively to the idea of pre-hens, expressing excitement for the additional opportunities to celebrate, there are concerns regarding the financial implications. With the average cost of weddings climbing significantly—reported to have risen by 34 per cent since 2021 to approximately £23,250—potential participants are urged to remain mindful of their budgets. Burke cautioned that extravagant celebrations, heavily influenced by social media portrayal, might lead to financial stress, advocating for simpler, more cost-effective gatherings that still allow for memorable experiences.

The recent trend coincides with observations of escalating costs associated with hen and stag parties, particularly those held outside the UK. A survey found that the average price for such trips reached £1,519, with travel expenses averaging £376, food and drink costs at £396, and accommodation at £385. On the contrary, local celebrations in the UK tend to be more affordable, with average costs around £854, covering travel, accommodation, and activities at a fraction of the price of international events.

Amidst the evolving ethos of these pre-hen parties, participants have expressed varied priorities regarding their celebrations. While many are willing to spend more for cultured activities, some report challenges in setting budgets and dates, reflecting a changing dynamic in how these pre-wedding events are organised. Arun Tharmarajah, director of European payments at Wise, commented on the shift in expectations for stag and hen parties, noting the complexities that arise as these events become more 'grown up'.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.hitched.co.uk/wedding-planning/organising-and-planning/the-average-wedding-cost-in-the-uk-revealed/> - This source provides data on the average wedding costs in the UK, highlighting a 12% increase from 2023 to 2024, with the average wedding cost reaching £23,250. It also discusses how nearly half of couples have adjusted their budgets due to economic factors, with many increasing their budgets or incorporating more DIY elements into their weddings.
2. <https://home.barclays/news/press-releases/2023/08/cost-of-loving-crunch--how-brits-are-spending-and-saving-on-wedd/> - This article discusses the financial implications of weddings in the UK, noting that one in five Brits is spending over £25,000 on their wedding celebrations, with 7% spending more than £50,000. It also highlights that 17% are sticking to a budget of less than £5,000, opting for a more economical approach.
3. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/826961/average-wedding-costs-by-category-united-kingdom-uk/> - This source provides detailed statistics on average wedding costs in the UK for 2023, including an average of just under £10,000 spent on the wedding venue with catering, and around £1,300 for the wedding dress.
4. <https://thisiscluck.com/hen-party-trends-2023/> - This article discusses the rise of affordable hen party packages in 2023, noting that themed brunches and alcohol-free options are becoming popular, reflecting a shift towards more budget-friendly and inclusive pre-hen celebrations.
5. <https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/blog/life-events/how-much-does-an-average-wedding-cost> - This source provides information on the average wedding costs in the UK, noting that a Bridebook survey of 4,000 newlyweds showed that on average a wedding costs £24,069, including the rings and a honeymoon.
6. <https://thisiscluck.com/2024-uk-hen-party-trends/> - This article discusses the merging of hen and stag parties into one combined event, known as the HAG, in 2024, reflecting a trend towards more inclusive and diverse pre-wedding celebrations.
7. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14659931/pre-hen-bride-newlywed.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data