

Advice for Participants

Please read carefully as this contains important information

Promoting yourself and the arts trail

- Please spend some time to publicise the art trail in whatever way you can. If we don't have many visitors the value of our hard work will be reduced.
- Word of mouth is most effective. Carry flyers around to give to people you meet.
- Include flyers with your personal invites to the weekend or to your Friday night private view.
- Send an email to everyone you know. It is always worth asking something like 'help us to publicise the trail by forwarding this email to anyone else who might be interested'.
- Put up posters in your window, car, workplace and anywhere else that will take them – cafes, shops, pubs, etc.
- If you are a venue, put up a poster in your window now.

Insurance

- Art on the Hill does not have public liability insurance.
- Individual householders could be liable for accident or injury sustained inside the house during the art trail if caused by negligence such as a loose carpet or trailing cables, in the same way that the council would be responsible for loose paving stones.
- Normal household insurance does usually cover this in a public liability clause but artists must inform their insurers of the event.
- Your insurance probably does not cover the art work exhibited in your house, so please make sure any other artists sharing with you are aware of this. You can take out extra insurance to cover this if you want.
- Your theft insurance may be invalidated during opening hours. For you and your insurers' information you could expect up to 1,000 visitors over the weekend.
- Please display the Liability notice on your front door or main entrance.

Health and safety risk assessment

- Hide all valuable and breakable items.
- Check and attend to loose carpets, rugs or anything people can trip over.
- Check for trailing electric wires, tuck away or tape down.
- Put something down on very slippery floors.
- Put up a sign to warn people of steep or slippery steps and paths.
- Clear walkways of any protruding objects and mark low beams and doorways.
- It may be raining so have a place for umbrellas and have a store of suitable, safe floor coverings to put down if it is wet.
- Check for anything dangerous for children, the elderly or infirm.
- Display your Liability notice.

Preparing venues for the event

- On the weekend, make sure that your poster, venue number and windmill are clearly visible.
- In addition to the above, draw attention to your venue in other ways by putting out bunting, streamers, decorations to *leave people in no doubt that you are a venue and are open!*
- Label rooms that are not for public entry.
- If the toilet is available, make a sign and use direction signs.
- Make sure you have a pile of brochures available near the front door. If you run out, more can be collected over the weekend from the Information Point at the Community Centre.
- You may want to have a donations tin, clearly labelled, next to the brochures.

- Have plenty of your own business cards or postcards as people may come back later.
- Mention forthcoming exhibitions or have flyers/leaflets to hand out.
- Label your work professionally and distinguish clearly between artists.
- Provide short, clear information about your work.
- Have a CV /book/folder if people want to see more about you and your work.
- Think carefully about background music: is it distracting or complementary to your work?
- If people are helping you out, tell them exactly what you would like them to do and show them this sheet.
- If you are providing refreshments, make it clear if they are for sale, if donations are being requested or if they are free. Just as with your work, don't make people ask as this can sometimes put people off.

Pricing and Selling

- Price work that is for sale clearly and realistically. It doesn't always help to have low prices; remember your work is original and unique.
- Try and have a range in price from postcards upward. Bear in mind that giving postcards away can promote your work.
- If you offer instalments for more expensive items, make this clear; and take account of any bank charges.
- Instalments can be set up in several ways:
 - For larger amounts a direct debit can be set up
 - A number of pre-dated cheques could be made
 - The buyer can just bring the money in stages (monthly)
 - Unless you know the buyer and the state of their finances don't release the work until it has been paid in full.
- If possible take a deposit when people say they'll come back later to complete the sale.
- Make sure you take people's addresses and /or card number on any cheques made.
- Give a receipt - it looks professional and gives you a record of who bought what.
- If you accept commissions or run art workshops, etc don't forget to mention that.
- Don't be disappointed if you don't sell a lot to new visitors. It takes time - the arts trail is a good opportunity to start to build a relationship with potential clients. Some may never have bought original work before.
- Have change and wrapping paper available.
- Be aware of scams and never give cash in exchange for cheques.
- Be aware - it is not unknown for the Benefit Agency to visit such events.

During the event

- Always be friendly to visitors and say hello and goodbye.
- Be ready to talk to people about your work, methods, etc. – this is why an art trail is different and intriguing – the opportunity to meet the artist.
- It is good to be doing something, painting etc, even if it's stop-start, visitors like to see the process.
- It is OK to keep an eye on visitors but don't lurk behind or follow them - it will make them feel uncomfortable.
- Invite people to sign a visitor's book, with a column for their address if they want further information about your work and forthcoming exhibitions.

And finally ... try to allow time to visit other venues. Have a great trail and make sure to enjoy yourself!!

These notes are adapted from ' Front Room 2005 – Advice for Artists'