

SAOS AND OPEN
STUDIOS
EVALUATION
REPORT 2011

SAOS & Open Studios

SAOS is a non profit making organisation that supports artists and makers in Surrey and on its borders by providing a valuable promotional platform with Find A Surrey Artist, training and networking opportunities, and regular e-bulletins promoting opportunities and events.

Included in the SAOS offer is the opportunity to take part in Surrey Artists Open Studios events.

The SAOS organisation continues to deliver best practice, in line with this, is comprehensively evaluated and a final report published.

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Introduction

This report will study in depth our new offer for artists and the public; it will focus on the annual 2011 June Open Studios event; it will touch on new initiatives that we are planning to bring into the new SAOS membership scheme and will update on any forthcoming changes that will effect the SAOS group.

Overall I am thrilled, as the coordinator of SAOS, that the new SAOS membership scheme and the established annual June event has been a great success and enabled SAOS to become self sustaining, showing that artists and makers and the public retain their need and interest in what we have to offer.

Surrey Artists Open Studios faced some major challenges in 2010, the largest being the reduction in financial support from Surrey County Council.

Historically the Surrey Artists Open Studios annual June event has been financially supported by Surrey County Council, Arts Partnership Surrey, the District & Boroughs of Surrey and Arts Council UK. Surrey Arts (the Arts development team for Surrey County Council) set up the annual June Open Studios event in 2000.

In 2000 the Surrey Artists Open Studios event had a number of core aims:

- * To celebrate the high quality of artwork produced by Surrey Artists
- * To create local networks of artists to share information and give support
- * To increase contacts and opportunities for the participating artists
- * To develop new audiences
- * To generate an income for Surrey Artists

These aims are still current today.

With impending funding cuts, Surrey Arts wished to retain a vital role within the Open Studio organisation but could not continue to fund the event in the same way. In 2010 Surrey Arts subsidised the event by providing 50% of required income. For 2011 this was to reduce to 5% and in 2012 to 0%. In 2011 Surrey Arts still remained supportive of this event through income in kind and in particular through administrative support, office space and meeting rooms. Like many publicly

funded projects this event has had to evolve and work towards becoming self sustaining.

We have limited resources and rely heavily on artists to be proactive and to read information available to them whether online, on the member pages or sent in correspondence via email

After extensive research and development, the new SAOS membership scheme was introduced in November 2010. The simple concept was to look at our current offer to artists and develop the offer into a more substantial effective resource that artists will invest in.

In order for the annual event to take place and for the new membership scheme to take off we had to secure 200 paid up SAOS members and 100 participating studios for the annual Surrey Artists Open Studios in June. Much to our delight and surprise in the first year of the new SAOS membership we secured over 300 members and over 150 participating studios for the annual June event.

The SAOS membership scheme provides artists with promotion and access to opportunities in training, networking, exhibitions and events. (SAOS membership is defined on page 5)

Surrey Artists Open Studios has now become an event within the SAOS membership annual programme of events.

Historically Surrey Artists Open Studios has undergone an annual evaluation preceding the event. This has proved vital in establishing stability for its future, and developing the needs of its participants and its audience. To become self sustaining the 2010 evaluation was vital in moving this event forward with a challenging budget. It proved appropriate that the new look and feel in particular of the 2011 brochure coincided with introduction of SAOS membership. The brochure received excellent feedback in its more manageable format, and as testament 20,000 brochures were distributed before the event with high demand for more.

(the development of the Open Studios brochure has been outlined on page 12)

The SAOS group now faces a new challenge, in the loss of vital administration support due to further cuts within the Surrey Arts service. We have spent time over the past few months looking at the administration role and how we can adapt and work more efficiently and are currently putting new ideas into practice so that the SAOS group will not be disrupted.

Exciting news for 2011/12, included further new initiatives; artist bursaries for open studios participation; artists' residencies in schools; Christmas Open Studios and refining our website offer: more details are in this report.

Thank you to everyone, especially our steering group who have dedicated time and effort to making this programme such a success and long may it remain a vital resource for both artists and the public.

Caroline Jackman
SAOS and Surrey Artists Open Studios
Coordinator



Website report

Richard Wells, Webmaster for surreyopenstudios.org.uk

The introduction this year of a new membership scheme with online payments and no paper forms presented a number of challenges for us and especially for those artists without computer access or skills. There were certainly glitches in the system, particularly in view of a larger number of applicants than expected, many of whom doing so in the last few days before the deadline in January. Hopefully these 'teething problems' have been largely sorted out.

If the system is repeated next year with improvements rather than wholesale changes I would expect it to run more smoothly.

The image uploading facility has proved particularly problematic, though that has been improved. It is not possible to upload large images 'straight off the camera' which means artists have to be able to resize them and many computers do not have that facility 'out of the box'.

The payment system would benefit from being more automatic so that applicants are returned to the Surrey Open Studios website immediately with payment confirmed once the payment has been processed through the Surrey County Council payment portal. This is not currently possible.

There is also the continuing problem of catering for a range of different sized, and sometimes disparate, groups.

A few people found the website unclear, particularly the navigation. This should be reviewed.

There have been a number of requests for additional features for the Find a Surrey Artist facility:

- * more than 12 images per artist
- * the ability to designate a particular image to go with each medium
- * a general slideshow of images
- * more focus on artists' own events, including a general events board
- * search using other criteria such as genre
- * breaking down large areas like painters into sub groups
- * the facility to link to more than one other artist.

These requests need to be balanced against the call for making the whole system simpler.

The other main area to consider is how to publicise the website more effectively. One way is to develop ways for artists to work together as a community to build links in to the website from their own websites and using social media like Facebook (there are Facebook 'Like' buttons on each members' page and for the website as a whole but they are underused) and the new Google+ service. Having continuous year-round artist content on the site, rather than deleting it each autumn and starting again will help to establish a presence on search engines. However the membership system is still quite new and will take time to grow.

Richard Wells
artistswebsites.co.uk



SAOS membership Evaluation

We invited all of our SAOS members to complete a short evaluation, so that we could gauge the value of the new membership scheme. It is important to the future of this scheme that we have successfully engaged with our artists, and they understand what our new offer entails and are making the most of the new membership scheme.

Our biggest challenge is to make our new offer clear to artists. SAOS membership is separate from the Surrey Artists Open Studio June event. It is a new membership scheme that offers artists:

- * Management of their own webpage
- * Their own webpage to be profiled on Find A Surrey Artist
- * Monthly e-bulletins on opportunities and events
- * Access to training workshops
- * Access to networking events
- * The chance to participate in Surrey Artists Open Studios annual June event for an additional fee

Member offer – managing your own webpage
What does this mean exactly?

For an artist to have secure access to their own webpage in order to be able to:

- * upload images
- * add image details
- * upload new images
- * add events
- * add and edit a description about their work
- * add and edit their own contact details
- * publish so that this webpage can be viewed on Find A Surrey Artist

It was clear from the applications received this year that many artists did not realise that SAOS membership and Open Studios applications were separate.

It was also clear from the applications received this year that many artists did not realise that publishing their own webpage on Find A Surrey Artist is separate from the annual June Open Studios event webpages.

The SAOS evaluation questionnaire received 187 responses from a possible 315 SAOS members.

First of all we needed to gain more knowledge about our artists: Do they use the World Wide Web as a marketing tool and in particular their social media usage? Social media is becoming a very popular method in spreading the word, as well as a free source of publicity.

***Do you have your own website?** 34% of the responses received said Yes

***Do you use any of the following social media?** : (the following percentages are those artists who said Yes)

- * Facebook 47%
- * Twitter 12%
- * LinkedIn 23%
- * Flickr 6%

From this feedback we can gauge that many of our members are active online in marketing their art practice, though a high percentage are not. Does our new membership offer with the individual webpage fill the void for those artists wanting to market themselves more? Or, are many artists not worried about being online? All social media is free to use, but is it useful in raising awareness?

Artists market themselves through many avenues: their connections with friends, family, neighbours or work colleagues; through galleries or organisations such as Open Studios; through local media and through online websites. Social media is just another opportunity to access a wider audience: it may not suit everyone, but it is a positive resource even if it only brings in one extra contact or buyer to your work.

We asked our members ***Do you exhibit or sell your work in a Surrey Gallery?**

35% of the responses we received said yes.

The most frequently used galleries were New Ashgate Gallery, Lewis Elton Gallery, Otters Pool Studio. It is interesting to note that all three are involved with the Open Studios scheme either through the taster exhibitions or Artist of the year competition. This shows that our partnerships with galleries are working for our artists.

We asked our members ***Did you read the Artists Information Booklet before applying** (document supplied as a download online, via email or printed and sent in the post)

Of the responses received 85% said yes, 15% said no. This is still an alarming rate of artists who do not refer to the Information Booklet, as the Open Studios programme has undergone some major changes over the last 12 months and we rely on artists reading the information. Otherwise how else can they know what is offered and expected of them or how we manage expectations if they do not know how the programme works?

We asked for any comments or additions you would like to see in this Information Booklet. We generally received positive feedback. Some artists found it too long and took the fact that they did Open Studios in the past as their basic knowledge - not ideal due to the major changes that have taken place.

Making use of your membership: we asked our SAOS members:

***Have you referred to the members' page for the regular member updates and downloads?** 31% of our artists responses said No

Our monthly newsletters provide information about:

- * News and offers for SAOS members open studios participants
- * Jobs, exhibitions and event opportunities
- * Exhibitions & events
- * Workshops and studios for hire
- * Resources useful for artists

***Do you refer to the Monthly newsletters sent via email?** 92% Yes 8% No

This is excellent news to know that the e-bulletins are a valued resource for our members

We asked artists if they can you recommend any additional events or information they would like to see included – here are a few suggestions: Regional art competition deadlines/timetable; Local classes; art shops & resources perhaps; Art Insurance options; add to downloads section of website. We have already started to introduce some of these suggestions

Managing your own webpage

Once set up as a member of SAOS, we ask artists to be responsible for managing and updating their own webpage, this gives them the freedom to market themselves at their convenience.

We asked our SAOS members the following questions:

*Have you completed your own webpage with images of your work and your contact details? 11% said No

*Have you published your webpage on Find A Surrey Artist? 21% No

*Have you updated or edited your webpage? 41% No

*Have you added events? 57% No

Do you have any suggestions to improve this membership scheme?

“To be able to add prices to the work description”.
“To have an events calendar linking all events going on in same month rather than events just listed on an artist webpage”. (The events calendar is now online as a separate feature with links to individual SAOS member pages on Find A Surrey Artist.)

Some artists commented that they already had a website and why pay for another, but our hope is that artists who already have a webpage will also use this as an extra marketing tool. For those that don't we hope this facility will fill the void.

Find A Surrey Artist is a new resource which affords public access to over 300 artists all year round providing our artists with a platform to promote their work all year round.

We asked artists: *Have you viewed the new Find A Surrey Artist Resource online at www.surreyopenstudios.org.uk? 27% No

Have you any suggestions or comments about this resource? “Expand search facility by area”

*Have you gained any public enquiries from Find A Surrey Artist? 20% Yes

If yes can you indicate the type of enquiry?

Gallery; member of public to visit studio; members of public using in addition to Open Studios brochure; other businesses enquiries

Training workshops are offered to our SAOS members and other artists to provide the opportunity for artists to develop their skills in marketing, presenting their work and developing skills so that they can offer more to the public

*Please indicate if you have attended any of the following:

* Welcome evening events with Caroline Jackman in either Nov/Dec 2010 or Feb 2011 33% yes – is there still value in these evenings? Due to snow two were postponed before Christmas and run in February

* Promoting you and your work with Diana Roberts: 25 artists attended. Overall good feedback

* Top tips for studios workshop with Caroline Jackman: 22 artists attended and received good feedback – useful for those new to the Open Studios event

* Networking event at New Ashgate Gallery with talk about approaching galleries by Joanne McCarthy: 13 attended, overall good feedback, though perhaps to run two events and try to partner a gallery in east of Surrey

Do you have any comments regarding the above networking and training events?

Some artists commented that they would like to see more events and at different locations. This will be addressed though each event takes time to coordinate and there sometimes is not the manpower. Venue locations tend to be dictated by availability, price and partnerships.

Do you have any suggestions of events you would like to see take place in the future?

Photography is top of the list, we hope to be working with Open Studios network on this

Next event: Train the Trainer by offering a workshop on 'How to Run A Workshop'.

Feedback on Artists Training- Promoting you and your work

Date: Thursday 24th February 2011
1.30 – 4.30pm)

Venue: Surrey History Centre, Woking,
For: Visual Artists

Trainer: Diana Roberts, Tourism and
Marketing Manager, Guildford

Fee: £25

This course is aimed at artists who wish to

increase their understanding of promoting & marketing their working practice, make better use of social media resources, sourcing the correct press contacts and how to write an eye-catching press release.

Comments:

25 attended – an enormous increase from last year

The venue was unfortunately too small for the group due to room request not being fulfilled.

There were requests from artists to have a dedicated workshop for social media and how to photograph artwork.

Feedback:

'I found the whole thing really helpful'

'Helpful constructive afternoon'

'Excellent, jam-packed with gems of information'

Feedback on Artists Networking evening

Date: Wednesday 18th May 2011
(6 – 8pm)

Venue: New Ashgate Gallery, Farnham

For: Visual Artists

Fee: £ 8

An opportunity to meet other artists participating in Surrey Artists Open Studios 2011. There was a short talk by a Gallery manager to offer advice on how to price your work and how to approach galleries for representation.

Comments:

11 attended. General feedback/quotes:

'A very useful event and I gained a lot from it - so thank you for organising.' Jo Rowley

For the future, potentially find a venue more central to Surrey, and to accommodate a bigger group a bigger venue will be needed.

We asked artists to complete a short questionnaire, here are some of their responses:

We asked artists: Why did you attend this event?

To hear the gallery director's point of view for a change

I came because I have never shown my work in a gallery and was curious about how to set about it

To meet other artists and learn about marketing my work

What did you learn from the event?

That you have to be well prepared when you approach a gallery with a view to asking them to take on your work. Send a preliminary letter of

introduction, be prepared for rejection. How much commission was taken by the gallery

A lot remarketing and presenting my work in a professional way. It was good to listen to other artists too.

Nothing new, but my own experiences were confirmed which was good.

Learned that a considerable amount of work on presentation and 'contact establishment' is very necessary

Are there any training or networking events you would like to see hosted in the future by SAOS?

I would like to have some help in presenting / wrapping/ exhibiting my work

Probably more on getting people to know about our work. Meeting other artists and sharing ideas is definitely a good thing. Also its having the confidence to exhibit and learn from your experience.

Top Tips informal workshops: Monday 9th May at Quadrant Court in Woking and Wednesday 11th May at Surrey County Council Area Office Reigate.

The aims of these workshops were to offer artists tips on opening their studios to the public. We covered the following topics:

If your work is for sale, things to consider:

- * Studio accessibility
- * Pricing your work
- * Getting your work ready
- * Getting your studio ready
- * Handy things to have around: e.g. seat for your visitors
- * Studio signage
- * Managing your visitors & what can you expect
- * Managing your studio during open times – how to be prepared and what to do if you need to pop out.

Both workshops were well attended and artists found them very useful and felt more confident about opening up their studio to the public. Quadrant Court, though a suitable venue to host meetings, was difficult to get to after work, either there is a need to source another venue or host at a different time.

Publicity for Open Studios & SAOS

Call for artists September 2010

- * Sent to: SAOS mailing list, SA mailing list, TIC Guildford, Surrey Life, Surrey Ad, Phil Ely at UCA Farnham, Jonathan Parsons at arc, ECAN, Ochre Print Studio, Arts & Leisure Council officers in Surrey
- * Posted on SAOS fan & group pages of Facebook
- * Published online at: Surrey Life, TIC Guildford and on Surrey Artists Network website
- * Published in: Through Looking Glass (GBC publication)

The following for PR for SAOS and Find A Surrey Artist online resource

- * Media Coverage in Surrey Advertiser and on BBC Radio and District & Borough magazines
- * Printed A5 flier distributed April and October 2011 to venues around Surrey
- * Social Media coverage on Facebook

Surrey Arts secured the following for PR for Surrey Artists Open Studios

- * Media Partner: Surrey Life giving 2 page spread in June
- * Listings & some editorial with National Magazines: A-N, Craftsman; Crafts;
- * Local magazines: Guildford/Surrey Downs & District & Borough publications; Elmbridge mag;
- * Newspapers: Surrey Advertiser; Surrey Mirror
- * Radio: BBC Surrey
- * Social media: Facebook & Twitter
- * Social media support: from Guildford TIC & Surrey Life
- * Promo events including three taster exhibitions

Surrey Arts paid for the following marketing:

Adverts in ACL, Elmbridge mag, Round and About magazines, WI magazine, other Open Studios event publications

- * Farnham High Street Banner
- * Listings in Craftsman
- * Print of: Brochure; A3, A4 posters, A5 postcards; A3 flags, A5 fliers
- * Cost of banners; balloons; flags
- * Prize draw

- * Website
- * Cost of distribution of the brochure

We no longer have financial support from SCC Communications: huge impact on our organisation as we had 4k financial support in 2010.

Extra Promotional Activities

Surrey Arts provides each taster exhibition with a ½ page advertising space in the open studios brochure, promotion on the open studios website and information on the exhibitions is distributed to our open studios mailing list.

Guildford Taster Exhibition

Supported by Surrey University who promote the event through their website and arts calendar and provide print & design of private view invitations. They charge 20% commission on sales. Criteria: open to Guildford artists
Feedback: Excellent quality show this year with 37 artists showcasing their work – the most ever
Excellent team setting it up
A shame it's only by appointment at weekends

West Surrey Taster exhibition

Supported by Otters Pool Studio who promote this event through their website and mailing list. Criteria: for artists in the West of Surrey, due to space, selected artists only
Feedback: Excellent quality work

East Surrey Taster Exhibition

Supported by East Surrey College who promote this event through their website and mailing list. Criteria: for artists in the East and Mid areas of Surrey, ESC were very accommodating and this was their first public show in their new atrium. Only for 4 days. They are offering two weeks for 2012 taster and potential to showcase more and bigger work. This proved an excellent venue and many of the participants sold pieces of work.
Feedback: Excellent quality work
Excellent team setting it up
Excellent venue with good footfall from students and tutors and potential for a bigger and longer show for 2012

Distribution of brochures:

Farmers Markets : Farnham, Guildford, Reigate & Dorking Friday market, Woking Volunteer Festival and Surrey County Show
A great way to distribute brochures, though the distribution of brochures was better this year due to new format. There were not enough brochures to distribute to attend the Guildford market.

Plans for SAOS 2011 that were implemented

Addressing the above issues for 2011

- * Need sustainable income: A new membership scheme to generate income and increase the offer for artists
- * Open Studios as a part of this scheme
- * Reviewing the layout and design of the brochure
- * Looking at advertising option for our groups
- * Changing layout of brochure to be more attractive to potential advertisers
- * Re-assessing the look and usage of the website for both artists and the public

Issues concerning the running of SAOS

Administration

Administration for SAOS – Surrey Arts can no longer provide the same administration support, therefore we are trying to find ways to make administration easier and doing more through the website. Though we need volunteers more than ever.

District & Borough Support

8 of our 11 District & Boroughs contribute a small sum towards this projects overall budget. However 3 of these have decided to opt out of funding this project in the future

No financial Support from Surrey County Council
SCC still offer office and meeting room space and minimal administration support

Low visitor numbers for 2011 Open Studios event
Visitor numbers were down, though sales were not affected.

Artist participation

ARTists will gain more from the SAOS membership scheme if they simply make the most of their membership and read the artists Information Booklet. It is hard to manage expectations if Artists do not have the basic knowledge of the SAOS membership and Open Studios event

Low attendance by artists at Welcome evenings and annual evaluation meeting

Addressing the 2011 issues for 2012

- * Need to refine our administration through the website
- * To define and promote an Internship offer
- * Reviewing design of the SAOS and Open Studios marketing to attract more of the public and businesses
- * Offer more to the public – Christmas Open Studios
- * Invest in emerging artists by offering Artist Bursaries. Having a more diverse range of artists will provide a bigger offer to the public
- * Revisiting business sponsorship
- * Re-assessing the look and usage of the website for both artists and the public
- * Managing artists expectations and how to ensure they have a clear understanding of SAOS membership and open studios
- * To run the evaluation meeting at another time of year and for the welcome evenings to become network evenings for artists to gain informal feedback on their work.



Surrey Artists Open Studios Evaluation Report 2011

Each studio was asked to complete a short artist questionnaire, which included a record of visitor numbers and their income. The results enable us to monitor the impact Surrey Artists Open Studios has on the County. Here are our findings:

We asked all of our participating studios to complete a short questionnaire, 123 studios responded out of possible 158, which is 78%

Quantitative Evaluation

We asked studios to indicate the total value of sales for their studio and the total number of visitors for their studio. Of the 123 forms completed, the income generated overall was £114,973 and the visitor total was 10,023.

We had 158 participating studios with a total of 243 artists

In 2010 we had 170 participating studios with a total 450 artists. The drop in artists participating was mainly due to large groups opting to either not participate or place an advert due to the change in format of the event and the new SAOS membership

Quantitative evaluations are only accurate if 100% forms are returned. The number of participants will also affect the results. For example in 2008 only 58% of forms were returned, 2009 86% returned and for 2010 90% but for 2011 78% were completed.

To estimate the total visitors
2011: 10,023 + 22% = 12,228
2010: 20,252 + 10% = 22,277
2009: 16,638 + 14% = 18,967
2008: 8755+43%=12,520 visits

If we take averages to get to 100%, to compare figures:

Year 2011 £114,973 + 22% = 140,267
year 2010 £164,668 +10% = 181,135
year 2009 £136,281+14% = 155,360
in year 2008 £73,546+43% = £105,170

These figures indicate that there are less visitors to the Open Studios event, but in terms of the amount of participating artists the sales have not been affected.

Qualitative Evaluation

We asked our participating studios what were the three main outcomes they hoped to gain from participating in Open Studios?

- * Gain feedback
- * Networking/To meet new people/catch up with old friends
- * Promoting artwork & profile raising
- * Making sales
- * Opportunity to try new ideas in artwork
- * Having a deadline/exhibition to work to
- * Promoting workshops & classes
- * Increase mailing list
- * Having access to other opportunities and events
- * To gain experience in promoting and selling work

*Were these met?

	2011	2010
Completely	34%	26%
Mostly	34%	40%
Partially	23%	25%
Barely	7%	7%
Not at all	2%	2%

Many artists and makers have very high expectations about the potential outcomes that this event can offer. It is hard to succeed when expectations are high and also simply when dealing with a topic or commodity that is a subjective luxury item rather than essential item to the viewing public.

Were there any other unexpected outcomes?

Some artists had more visitors than expected and made more sales than expected. Though some artists had fewer visitors and made fewer sales than expected. Again this reflects artists expectations about the event. Participating in the open studios event does not guarantee visitors or sales, but it does potentially lead to both. Being a creative practitioner and making money from your practice is very tough.

Did you have any negative experiences?

The removal of the orange studio flags
Was expecting more people to come as a result of the brochure

From the main negative responses, we are placing logos from Surrey County Council and SAOS on the flags in the hope people leave them on display and not take them down. We recommend to all participating artists that they drop in one of the postcards to each of their neighbours inviting them to their studio, to include them in what you are doing and so that their neighbours can see that it is a short event. Though if people are determined there is nothing that can be done.

With regards to lack of visitors, events across the board (sports, leisure and arts events both paid for and free) are seeing a fall in visitor numbers, though just having a handful of new people to add to your mailing list is investment well spent for your future.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements to this event?

To have studio open times on the posters and/or flags. This would not be possible as some studios (due to various reasons agreed by the coordinator) cannot be open during the advertised times, therefore this year we introduced the black poster available to download from the website for people to personalise and display on their studio door to help manage visitor expectations.

There is a request for more signage whether signs, banners, flags and/or balloons. There is always a cost implication to signage, though there are always ample flags and balloons, if an artist or coordinator does not have enough then they are advised to contact the main coordinator for more.

This year we decided to give the brochure a new look and feel to complement the new format of the Surrey Open Studios scheme. In 2010 our brochure was 100pp and the print cost was £14,000. This new layout and design for 2011 meant 56pp were used, the print cost was 50% less and even though the design cost was more, overall the production cost of the 2011 brochure was 40% cheaper than in 2010. The design was inspired by the Norfolk Norwich Open Studios event. **We asked artists to rate our new design:**

Brochure layout:	97% excellent - fair
Loyalty card in brochure:	94% excellent - fair
Brochure overall:	95% excellent - fair
New Look Postcard:	85% excellent - fair
New look Poster:	92% excellent - fair

Overall the design was well recieved and the brochure received 75% excellent or good.

There was a call to have better print quality and better quality images in the brochure. The new size of brochure was awkward for some when distributing and the text needs to be clearer.

Better communication is required between the designer and printer to ensure good quality print of the brochure. With this the readability of images and text will be better.

Many artists did not use the A5 postcards and were confused by the A5 Find A Surrey Artist fliers: Again, this is down to good communication and trying to find a way that artists know what's expected of them and how to use their marketing material: perhaps a brief to be given to each artist should be included with the marketing material – but again we require artists to read this brief!

Distribution: we asked artists to take more responsibility for distributing the brochures this year. In the past we had one distributor who dropped off boxes of brochures to venues. There was therefore no evidence that these venues distributed the brochures. Therefore by giving artists the responsibility of dropping off brochures to 2-5 venues, there was then a guarantee that these venues were distributing brochures. As a result the distribution this year was more efficient and effective and we ran out rather than having a lot left over as in 2010.

We asked artists whether the allocation of brochures was sufficient? 67% said Yes 33% No

We suggest that for the 2012 event we give artists the option to choose normal or large amount, and put this on application form

We asked artists - Did you make use of the downloads on the Open Studios member pages?

Open Studios E-flier	68% said No
Blank Poster for your studio	70% said No
Open Studios logo	56% said No
Loyalty Card	74% said No

We asked artists - Would you consider taking part in the event again next year?

Yes definitely	36%
Probably	30%
Possibly	21%
Probably not	11%
Definitely not	2%

Workshop Feedback

We asked our Open Studio participating artists who were hosting a workshop to complete a short evaluation

17 artists offered workshops
36 workshops offered in total
12 of the artists returned forms

Examples of the type of workshops run: Learn to oil paint; life drawing; exploring clay; woodturning; tile decorating; monoprint tasters

Dates run: 8 - 26 June 2011
Amount of attendees: 58
How many attendees were new to the workshop leaders?: 54
Income earned from all workshops: £1277

Workshops that were not run due to lack of interest:
Exploring Labyrinths; Classic Tressels; Tetra Tressels; Still life drawing; Still life monochromatic painting; Still life painting

A greater feature needs to be made of the workshop pages in the brochure, they need to be more appealing and it should be clearer that you have to book in advance. Also to have a description available online as to what the workshop entails and that this is advertised in the brochure.

Visitor feedback

from Surrey Artists Open Studios June 2011

How did you find out about this event?

Email	2%	
Balloon/Poster	8%	
Picked up a Brochure	11%	
Artist/Word of mouth	35%	
Advert	11%	
Road sign	3%	
Website	7%	
Local newspaper	1%	
Visited previous years	15%	
Library	4%	
East Surrey College/Lewis Elton Preview	1%	1%
Leaflet	1%	
Banner	1%	

What do you like about the event?

Demonstrations by artists
Meeting artists
High standard of work

Everything
Having a go
Variety of work and friendly welcomes
Good to see the countryside
Affordable

What would you like to see in the future?

Perhaps refreshments
Introduce X-mas Open Studios
Groups of artists
More artists in Epsom
Local trails provided by some studios
Longer opening times
Better signage
Better publicity
Longer opening on a Sunday
Local radio interviews
More workshops and longer courses
Happy with the event as it is
Clearer open times
Tours
Print next years dates in brochure
More artists demonstrating
Discourage artists to conduct tours of each painting – allow people to browse

Would you visit Open Studios again?

92% Yes

Would you recommend to a friend?

87% Yes

We asked visitors to let us know if they have viewed the online resource Find A Surrey Artist. If yes could they inform us if they think it is a good resource

15% of visitor responses said that haven't used this resource. For those that had used the resource, 30% gave us the following the responses:

- * Nicely presented website and good to see artists getting more publicity
- * Be good to browse by location or price range
- * Maybe more contemporary approach: www.artplatform.org
- * Not all artists on Find A Surrey Artist when they are in brochure (artists need to publish their web pages)
- * Offer advice on how to get involved in art
- * Make it clear that members of Find A Surrey Artist are members of SAOS

Visitor Comments

'I spent hours viewing all the artists to pick the ones I liked. It's a good website'
Kerry from Hampshire

Evaluation meeting

Thursday 14th July 2011 at the Surrey History Centre, Woking.

All SAOS members were invited to attend this evaluation meeting regardless of whether they had participated in the Open Studios 2011 event. Only 3 artists attended; a huge disappointment as the normal average for these annual meetings is 25.

The purpose was to present artists with a presentation of the evaluation report followed by group discussions. 2010/11 saw major changes with the set up and design of the annual Open Studios event as well as the set up of the SAOS membership

Artists' feedback on the membership scheme, the website offer and the open studios event is vital for the development of the project as a whole. Therefore for 2012, the evaluation meeting will be held in September, in the evening, at a central location and clear invites will be sent to all members.

For those that attended, we focused on the following topics:

- * Membership scheme
- * Design
- * Christmas Open Studios
- * Artists Bursaries
- * Residencies with schools
- * Admin for SAOS and Open Studios

Since the meeting on 14th July – new initiatives for 2011/12

Christmas Open Studios - many of our members already open their studio doors to the public before Christmas, our proposal is to unite these studios and offer support with a Surrey wide publicity campaign and a special feature online at www.surreyopenstudios.org.uk.

If this proves popular with SAOS members there is potential to launch a printed map of studios open in the run up to Christmas 2012. There will be a fee for 2012 to pay for the print, however no additional fee to SAOS members for 2011.

2012, the year of the London

Olympics, should Open Studios get involved?

Your feedback:

A summary of the pros and cons for 2012

- * Potentially Surrey could see an increase of 1.5 million tourists during the Olympics July – August 2012)
- * Should we celebrate this opportunity by involving Open Studios? There will be so much on offer from other organisations and groups that tourists will be spoilt for choice as these organisations compete for business.
- * Or do we join the competition and consider this influx of tourists a great way to seek new audiences for our event?
- * Surrey Open Studios has been a well established event for 12 years, should we risk our established June event and move it to July?
- * Or should we consider hosting an additional event?
- * If yes would you be able to volunteer your time and get involved?
- * If yes, how would you like to get involved?

Get involved 46% Yes 44% No

Move Open Studios to July: 20% Yes 80% No

Run an additional event: 44% Yes, 46 No,

Would artists volunteer to run additional event
35% Yes, 65% No

If you have any comments or queries about anything on this questionnaire please email caroline.jackman@surreycc.gov.uk or call Caroline on 01483 519281

Conclusion

How does SAOS and Open Studios work for our artists?

What do our artists get in return for their participation fee:

- * Dedicated webpage of up to 12 images at any one time
- * Facility to edit their webpage at their leisure
- * Opportunity to publicise events through our online calendar and e-bulletins
- * Monthly e-bulletins promoting opportunities & events
- * Artists information booklet
- * Training opportunities
- * Networking opportunities
- * Promotion through our online resource Find A Surrey Artist
- * Be a part of our Surrey wide publicity campaign
- * Chance to join Surrey Artists Open Studios Summer event
- * Chance to join the Surrey Artists Open Studios Christmas event

What do our artists get in return for their Surrey Artists Open Studios participation fee:

- * Dedicated coordinator to make the event work
- * Dedicated volunteer coordinators
- * Registration available on-line
- * proofing opportunities on-line
- * Contact and artwork details Published on website & in full colour brochure
- * Printed publicity (brochures, A5 postcards, A4 & A3 posters, A5 fliers, balloons, studio arrows)
- * Take part in a county event
- * Open your studio to the public
- * Network with other artists at artist meetings and networking events
- * Showcase in taster exhibitions & other promotional events
- * Take advantage of events press campaign
- * Advertise your workshops online and in the printed brochure
- * Our reach is further as we now incorporate studios on our Surrey Borders

Additional benefits, indirect to the Open Studios participation fee:

- * Demonstrate your work to the public
- * Promote your work
- * Gain feedback on your artwork
- * Offer creative workshops
- * Increase your mailing list
- * Sell your work
- * Gain commissions
- * Be approached by others arts organisations to take part in opportunities

SAOS and Open Studios always strives to better itself, to improve on audience numbers and income for artists. Considering the 'recession', it has been a good year with continuing sales for our artists.

However we cannot be complacent, with the constant offer of more and more events for the general public, it is harder than ever to increase our audience, especially as this event is Countywide with limited infrastructure. More than ever we need our artists to take ownership of this event and make it work for them.

What Happens Next?

Our future is for SAOS to become an independent group that will work in partnership with Surrey County Council. We hope with the growing strength of Find A Surrey Artist and the introduction of Christmas Open Studios SAOS will become even stronger and remain a vital resource to our artists and makers.



Dates of reference for SAOS:

Artist Network evenings will take place at the end of November & beginning of December. Confirmation of venues & dates will be sent and advertised online at www.surreyopenstudios.org.uk/members. The aim of these evenings is to bring artists together, discuss their work and share ideas.

The 2011/12 copy of the Artists Information Booklet will be available to download from the website www.surreyopenstudios.org.uk/members by the beginning of November.

There is no Early Bird option for Open Studios registration

Artists can only register for SAOS membership and Open Studios online. If you do not feel confident to register for either your membership or Open Studios online, you can book an appointment with Caroline Jackman at Surrey Arts, by calling 01483 519285. We can also show you how to set up and use your own email account. This service is also available through your local library. There is no charge for this service, however we expect people to make their own way to Surrey Arts.

Deadline for Open Studios registration: Friday 20th January 2012

Any incomplete or late registrations after this date will not be accepted

Dates for Surrey Artists Open Studios 2012
Summer event: Saturday 9th – Sunday 24th June
AND Friday 20 – Sunday 22 July.

Compulsory opening day: 17th June.

Notices:

Call for artists:

Any comments regarding this evaluation, or any suggestions as to the future development of Surrey Artists Open Studios please contact Caroline Jackman on 01483 519 281 or email caroline.Jackman@surreycc.gov.uk.

Call for images:

We are inviting artists to submit high resolution images of work they deem suitable for next year's publicity material, these can be of artists and/ artists work. Please email or post submissions to Caroline Jackman, Surrey Arts, Westfield School, Bonsey Lane, Woking, GU22 9PR or email saosandopenstudios@yahoo.co.uk.

Finally, special thanks go to:

Sandie Sharp (administrator), Richard Wells (webmaster)

Our Steering Group: Alison Clarke (Visual Art Officer for Surrey Arts), Kirsten Baron, Diana Croft, Christine Hopkins, Terri Smart and Peter Rodgers

Area Coordinators: Joan Wigley and Janine Rees, Julie Holt & Linda Walsh, Kirsten Baron, Diana Croft and Peter Rodgers

Volunteers and all the Districts and Boroughs who offer their support.

The New Ashgate Gallery for their valuable partnership with the Baines Surrey Artist of the Year competition.

Venues: Farnham Maltings, Surrey History Centre in Woking, St Geroges Arts in Esher, Performing Arts Library in Dorking, Art Matters in Redhill, Ochre Print Studio in Guildford, Otters Pool Studio in Guildford, Lewis Elton Gallery at the University of Surrey and East Surrey College.

SAOS & Open Studios Budget for 2011 event

Appendix 1: SAOS 2011 Budget

actual income for 2010/11	Income
Local authority dis/bor contributions	1950.00
new SAOS membership scheme £40 per artist	11000.00
open studios participation individual artists (duo or solo) £70 each	12320.00
open studios participation small groups (3 - 4 artists) £180 each	2520.00
open studios participation small groups (5+ artists) £270 each	1080.00
arts disability groups £110 each	330.00
advertising	2570.00
SAOY new ashgate partnership	1000.00
website listings	40.00
training events	435.00
networking events	65.00
total	33310.00

Income in kind:

Surrey Arts Admin support

design of SAOS Find a Surrey Artist fliers

design Open Studios loyalty cards

Surrey Arts training from Joanne McCarthy at New Ashgate & Diana Roberts from Guildford Tourism

Venues: Performing ArtsLibrary, Cranleigh Arts Centre, Farnham Maltings, Riverhouse Barn, Ochre Print Studio in Guildford, Bank Gallery in Chobham and Art Matters in Redhill

	expenditure
SAOS Co-ordinator from September 2010 - June 2011, 10 months, £1200 per month	12000.00
webmaster: website design, update & admin	3000.00
website domain name renewal	90.00
Volunteer expenses	125.00
Brochure distribution	900.00
Public Liability insurance	924.00
design of postcards A5, posters & brochure	2830.00
Print of A5 postcards, A4 & A3 posters, 20,000 brochures	7420.00
print of SAOS find a surrey artist fliers A5 (5000)	190.00
display containers for brochure distribution	98.00
banners - replacement text, new banners and installation	420.00
Baloons	130.00
Artist Network evenings	75.00
Training Events	180.00
Advertising and Listings	1666.00
Evaluation meeting	30.00
Total	30228.00

Appendix 2: 3rd Baines Surrey Artist of the Year

History behind this venture

Surrey Artists Open Studios is working in partnership with The New Ashgate Gallery on the Surrey Artist of the Year competition supported by the Baines Charitable Trust.

SAOS, the new Ashgate Gallery and Baines Charitable Trust recognise the quality and diversity of work produced by our Surrey artists and makers and wish to continue the partnership to celebrate this.

Aims of the project:

For SAOS: to set up a project that could give us public presence at other times in the year apart from June, to offer more opportunities for our artists and engage our audiences by encouraging them to participate

For New Ashgate: to raise their profile countywide, to encourage more visitors to the gallery, increase their mailing list and encourage sales

Set Up

The New Ashgate gallery have secured funding for a third year from The Baines Charitable Trust (in memory of its founder Patricia Baines. Patricia Baines lived in Farnham for a number of years. She was a professional oboist and after her retirement became absorbed by the many aspects of weaving including teaching and writing. She was interested in the New Ashgate Gallery and an early supporter) to host two exhibitions, contribute to SAOS and provide a prize for the Baines Surrey Artist of the Year.

SAOS designed a loyalty card enabling the visiting public to vote for their favourite artists as they visited studios during SAOS 2011. This card also engaged the public with feedback, prize draw and a chance to join the New Ashgate mailing list. For the first time this card was incorporated in the Surrey Artists Open Studios brochure.

The top ten artists with the most votes were counted. 3 artists were equal 10th in the voting, therefore this year 12 artists were invited to exhibit.

An exhibition has been set up at the New Ashgate in the upper gallery comprising of work from The 12 'cream of the crop'. The public are then asked to vote again for their overall favourite. The dates are 9th – 30th Sept, with voting closed on 30th Sept for prize presentation at the end of the exhibition.

A panel of selected expert judges will be voting alongside the public, and the third Surrey Artist of the year was chosen. The winning artist will receive a solo exhibition at the New Ashgate Gallery in 2012 and a bursary for their professional practice

Outcomes & feedback

Publicity:

Joanne distributed a detailed press release to her contacts which included:

Building Partnerships in Farnham and Surrey

The partnership of the New Ashgate Gallery and the Surrey Artists Open Studios, led by Caroline Jackman, goes from strength to strength each year.

The Baines Surrey Artist of the Year has received good publicity from both the Surrey Advertiser and Surrey Life magazine for the 2011 Cream of the Crop show at New Ashgate.

For SAOS, our aim was to raise our profile throughout the year and this competition enabled us to do so.

The panel of judges:

Robert Moore, Trustee of the Baines Charitable Trust; Beatrice Phillpots, Writer with the Surrey Advertiser; Annabel Agace, Chalk Hill Contemporary Art; Diana Roberts, Business & Marketing Manager for Guildford Tourist Information Centre and Peter Milton, Head of Culture for Surrey County Council

This partnership and the exhibitions have proved very popular. The Private View on the 9th was buzzing with talk on the quality and diversity of work from the 12 selected artists and what a hard choice it will be. In 2010 Jamie Barratt was

chosen as the Baines Surrey Artist of the Year, but due to prior commitments declined the solo show, The New Ashgate and the Baines Charitable Trust were keen for commitment to this partnership to remain and offered the solo show to Adam Green, 2011's runner up.

Prizes

Winner: Cash Prize of £1,000

Additional professional Practice information from the New Ashgate Gallery
Exhibition in New Ashgate Gallery in August 2012.

Prizes for Runners up (2nd, 3rd Place)

An original piece of art/craft as chosen by the gallery.

Winner 2011: Stuart Stanley

In second place was Linda Walsh and in third place was Joe Szabo

Data: approximately 330 votes counted from first round of voting in June. Approx 500 votes counted from visitors to New Ashgate Gallery

Rules: people can vote for two artists through first and second choice

Proposal for 2012

To continue to work in partnership with The New Ashgate Gallery in delivering the Surrey Artist of the Year competition with the hope that it remains supported by The Baines Charitable Trust.

Press programme for 2012

Surrey Artists Open Studios will start their press campaign in December 2011. The Baines Surrey Artist of the Year will be incorporated into the SAOS campaign

Surrey Arts and The New Ashgate are working in partnership to offer opportunities in 2012:

A volunteer internship at the gallery during the Cream of the Crop show in September.

Professional development for Surrey Artists through a networking event held at the New Ashgate in May where artists can gain an insight as to how to approach galleries and how to present their work for gallery representation

Prize presentation evening:

Joanne McCarthy, Gallery Director welcomed all collectors, visitors, exhibitors, judges, Trustees of the New Ashgate Gallery and Surrey Arts Co-ordinator Caroline Jackman to the finale and congratulated the public for curating such a wonderful exhibition.

Joanne McCarthy also further stated that, "We owe many thanks to the Baines Charitable Trust and also to the partnership with Surrey Arts. As a result of this wonderful donation and partnership work, we have been able to give a platform to a range of Surrey's artists and makers. The exhibition and its opening and closing receptions reinforced the local and countywide support and appreciation for the visual and applied arts."

Benefits of Exhibiting with the Baines SAOY

The New Ashgate Gallery provides a huge platform for artists and makers of all stages. The gallery's core aim is to promote art and craft to a wide audience. An exhibition such as the Baines SAOY is so important in our annual calendar. Artists and makers, chosen by the public, are given a regional stage to sell their work and thereby increase their reputation.

It takes a lot of time and energy and focus to practise as an artist or a maker, so this exhibition is designed to feed that drive, to propel that artist, to challenge them to make and exhibit work that can hold its own amongst hundreds of artists studios and eventually, amongst a shortlist of 14.

The gallery has thousands of buyers, some passing through, more who are loyal and supportive. Our website www.newashgate.org.uk is always up to date, with a gallery profile video posted on our homepage, exhibitors' biographies, exhibitions and works for sale - all there for our audience to view.

We try to encourage people of all ages and backgrounds to come into the gallery to experience the very best of fine art and craft there is.

By creating this marketplace for artists and makers, we contribute to the art and craft economy, filling our customers' homes with interesting, handmade work by independent UK and international artists and makers.

saos