

Warwickshire Artsweek
Research & Development Consultancy

Final report
December 2004

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“In general, artists can be seen as highly efficient micro businesses which, often on the slenderest of means, are able to convert creative value into commercial worth. This covers a breadth of practice that spans artists working in different contexts, in spaces orthodox and unorthodox, whose work may or may not be destined for the art market.”
Market Matters, Louisa Buck; Arts Council England 2004

‘Open studios are, potentially, a major element of the tourist and visitor industry. They represent a move beyond ‘star’ attractions such as Tate Modern or the Angel of the North, to a celebration of grass-roots practice and local creativity ... Talking to and watching artists at work opens up new understandings. Visitors learn much from meeting artists, gaining first-hand knowledge of where, how and why art gets made.’
Paul Glinkowski, Arts Council England, 2003

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Contents	Page No
Executive Summary	4.
1. Introduction and Background Information	10
Introduction	
Background	
Methodology	11
Part 1: Artsweek 2004 – What Happened?	
2.1 Operating Context	14
Demographics	14
Creative Industries Context	15
National Context	15
2.2 Operation & Staffing	16
Systems & Support	17
Planning	18
2.3 Research Findings	20
Scope	
Activity	20
Marketing	21
Participating artists & venues: results	24
Artists Expectations	29
Visitor development	32
Visitor Profile	33
3. SWOT Analysis	36
Part Two: The Future	
4.1 Opportunities & Issues Arising	38
4.2 Impact & Opportunities	38
4.3 Vision	39
4.4 Governance	40
4.5 Funding	43
4.6 Marketing & Development	44
5. Options for Development	50

Executive Summary

Background

1. In June 2004 Warwickshire County Council and its partners on the Warwickshire Artsweek Steering Group, including Warwick District Council, North Warwickshire Borough Council, Rugby Borough Council, Stratford on Avon District Council, Nuneaton & Bedworth District Council, Artists in Warwickshire Education, representative practicing artists and Arts Council England, invited Morag Ballantyne Arts Management to undertake an Evaluation, Research and Development Consultancy for Artsweek to explore how Artsweek could be sustainable and grow as part of a healthy creative industries sector in Warwickshire and across the wider sub region.
2. There were a number of specific objectives and tasks in the brief:
 - To explore the most appropriate project management for Warwickshire Artsweek
 - To identify possible sources of funding/income for the event in the long term
 - To ensure that artists are fully engaged with the planning and management of Artsweek – and the event meets their needs and aspirations
 - To explore broader options for the ongoing development of individual practitioners within the context of the growth of the creative industries across the Sub-Region (Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull)
3. Warwickshire Artsweek is a bi-ennial countywide celebration of the visual arts and crafts involving open studios, exhibitions, events and a series of artist-led residencies. The third event took place from 3-11 July 2004.
4. It is co-ordinated by a steering group of representatives from the County, District and Borough authorities together with representatives from Artzone, local colleges, artist groups and organisations.
5. At the sub-regional level, the development of the creative industries is a priority for partners including the County Council and the other local district and borough authorities, Arts Council England, Advantage West Midlands and the tourism authorities. There is a critical mass of artists living and working in the County; Artsweek is considered as pivotal to ensure further growth across the Warwickshire area.
6. It is against this background that we were assessing the success of Artsweek 2004 and considering its future development.

Context

7. Artsweek marketing, positioning and future product development needs to understand and take account of the local demographic. While south Warwickshire remains relatively prosperous overall, the north of the County accounts for higher levels of rural isolation, deprivation, unemployment and poverty. There is a clear role for Artsweek and socially engaged artists to contribute to projects identified through the local community plans.
8. Artsweek was operating with very lean resources. The management of Artsweek was not sustainable for the two staff from the County Arts Service. There was no clear corresponding picture of the benefits of the event; the long-term future of the event was being questioned.

9. County Arts Service co-ordinates the day to day operation of Artsweek. There are good systems at County Arts for organising and co-ordinating Artsweek. This includes detailed systems to collate information, organise data and finance. There are some changes suggested that could simplify the process further and that could have a positive impact in streamlining the administration.
10. The operating budget, excluding Arts Council England funding for the Artists residencies, is £21,000 with £12,000 allocated to the Artsweek brochure. Management time, from County Arts, to deliver the event is given in kind and is not accounted for in the budget. To do so would add at least another £10-£15,000 to the overall budget.

Research Findings: What Happened

11. 59% of participating artists returned detailed self-completion evaluation forms
12. 134 artists participated in Artsweek 2004 in 119 venues
13. 25 schools participated in 'Fusion' education projects facilitated by 14 artists and reaching 820 students
14. There is little, if any, connection between the education work for Artsweek and the 'main' event; there are opportunities to create better links and to involve students more in the wider activities of Artsweek.
15. The Artists in Residence Initiative was funded by Arts Council West Midlands. These projects have contributed significantly to the development of the individual artist's practice. The projects made an impact at a localised level and contributed an additional layer of professional activity to Artsweek.
16. There were five area co-ordinators, one for each district in the county. The aim was to engage artists more fully in the process and the planning of Artsweek. This pilot initiative generated additional PR and press and provided a direct link from artists to the Artsweek Steering Group and the organising authorities.
17. Two of the most critical success factors for Artsweek overall are: the strength of the relationship between the local public art gallery and the artists in the area and the existence of support networks for artists to meet, critique work and share information and ideas.
18. As an event, Artsweek has yet to 'cut through' and achieve a high profile across the county. While it is beginning to make its name as an industry event, it is still relatively invisible to the wider public.
19. Artsweek is positioned as a major event in the summer calendar in Warwickshire. Awareness in the wider artistic community is high and this partly accounts for the three quarters of all visitors who knew that the exhibition they were attending was part of Artsweek. However, awareness in the wider arts community in the sub region is lower.
20. Unprompted awareness among the general population is low and this is partly a reflection of the limited marketing budget.
21. The majority of visitors were aged 40+. There were few young people or children other than at the Fusion projects, although there were some visits by family groups at the weekend.

22. Artsweek marketing focuses mainly on publicity rather than on targeted and segmented marketing activity. The primary marketing tool is the brochure which is high quality and attractive. The layout is good, with lots of white space and the exhibitions are organised in areas.
23. For the future, the quality of the marketing materials should be retained but the accuracy and scheduling improved to make the print more visitor focused.
24. There is potential to work with the Tourism authorities to improve visitor information about Artsweek and to link to Multimaps map references. The online brochure acts also as a useful catalogue of artists after the event and has driven some sales and exhibiting enquiries.
25. The event is growing and developing:

2002	2004
84 artists	134 artists
	119 venues
9180 visitor attendances	23,861 visitor attendances
£25,423 sales: self-evaluation	£33,494 sales: self-evaluation
£42,800 estimated sales overall	£67,291 estimated sales overall

26. The figures demonstrate a considerable economic impact to the Warwickshire economy, as well as a contribution to artists' annual income. Each £1 spent in delivering Artsweek, generated £8 of sales.
27. While sales are an important part of Artsweek, and an important economic indicator, this is not a major objective for all artists. Few artists who exhibited in the north, had work for sale: their aim was to raise their personal and collective profile as artists living and working in the area.
28. The average sales per venue were £554. The mode of all sales was £400. There was a significant peak of sales at under £100; a significant number of artists achieved sales of over £1000. Many artists reported additional sales or enquiries after Artsweek.

Expectations

29. Over two thirds (67%) of artists agreed that Artsweek was meeting their expectations, while a further 17% agreed that it met their needs to certain extent. 16% felt that Artsweek did not meet their expectations; these respondents tended to be those who attracted fewer visitors than expected or sold less work than anticipated.
30. There was overwhelming support for Artsweek in providing a focus for the visual arts and crafts and as an opportunity to see other artists' work and to develop one's own practice
31. To succeed, Artsweek needs to attract all the professional artists living and working in the County. Some already show and sell at a national and international level; Artsweek needs their involvement to add to the profile and integrity of the event.
32. Artists need more studio time, to develop their practice, studio space across the county and exhibition space across the county – year round and for Artsweek.

33. The link with colleges and further education is critical. Existing relationships are good but need to be maintained and nurtured and relationships developed with University of Warwick and with art schools in close proximity.
34. Although there are a number of tools and training opportunities available, the artists need support to access these and conducting a skills audit to identify needs and gaps in development and artists practice would be a useful exercise for the Area Co-ordinators and the networking groups around the county.
35. Stimulating demand from the visitor is central to developing Artsweek, promoting creativity at the heart of communities, promoting links to local pride. Education and year round arts development activity has a role to play here too in terms of improving interpretation and helping to improve access to the work.
36. Artsweek visitors were arts enthusiasts. Many visitors were artists – both professional and leisure artists – and several were other Artsweek artists. Prompted awareness of Artsweek among visitors at individual exhibitions was high, with 70% of respondents aware that the exhibition visited was part of Artsweek.

Visitors

37. Just under a third of respondents (31%) in the visitor survey had attended Artsweek in 2002 and 15% of those had also attended in 2000. A third of respondents were new visitors to Artsweek, demonstrating that visitors are growing year on year and illustrating the audience development potential.
38. The majority of visitors are knowledgeable about the visual arts and 70% of respondents were motivated to attend because they had a particular interest in the exhibition and 66% because of specific interest in the artist.
39. Average additional discretionary spend by visitors to Artsweek was £13; this equates to an additional spend of £310,193 in the local economy. Visitors spend an average £8.75 on tickets to events and attractions during their Artsweek visit, representing a further spend of £209,658. In addition, visitors expected to spend an average £78.52 on artwork, crafts or gifts.
40. Taking the likely discretionary spend together with the overall sales of work, Artsweek contributed over £500,000 to the local economy over the 10 day period.
41. The vast majority of visits – over 75% - occurred between 2pm and 4pm; over 60% of visitors spent up to half an hour in venues and 10 to 20 minutes in open studios. Visitors spent more time if there were refreshments
42. 80% of visitors were within Warwickshire and one hour drive time of the venue visited. There was very little travelling across the country with few visitors from the north visiting exhibitions or studios in the south and vice versa. The Rugby area drew more visitors from the rest of the sub-region than any other area.

A Growing Event: Clarification and Development

43. Artsweek has emerged as a valuable event for artists in developing their practice; as a focus for creativity; as a celebration of the wealth of high level visual arts and crafts practitioners across the County; as a focus for networking and information exchange for artists; in the contribution it makes economically; for the potential it has to develop new markets and develop new visitors to Warwickshire
44. But there is a burden of unrealistic expectation: Artsweek is expected to deliver on the development of artists in the sector overall. One 10-day event cannot fulfil the diverse aspirations of the sector and Artsweek does not have sufficient marketing weight to achieve 'cut through' and the high levels of public awareness that other events and attractions with larger budgets can achieve.

45. As part of the business planning process, the Steering Group must now revisit and rearticulate the vision and identify clear aims and objectives.
46. A new business plan will have clear strategic aims and objectives and specific, focused objectives for each local area. These objectives will form the basis of the local plans to be taken forward by the Area Co-ordinator and Networking Groups.
47. Artsweek is still a developing event and needs both leadership and strong management. Therefore, central planning by the County Arts Service and colleagues in the District and Borough Authorities is essential, with the Head of Arts at County Council providing a lead for the project. This leadership needs now to be more strategic and less operational than previously.
48. Area Co-ordinators are central to artist involvement, as members of the Steering Group and in leading devolved regional planning groups or networks of artists.
49. Artsweek needs now some additional dedicated project management resources, over and above the time that County and District Authority arts staff can offer. Recruiting a part-time Project Co-ordinator to take forward genuine development with the creative industries is now essential for Artsweek to grow as an event. Without this additional resource, it is likely that the Steering Group and Area groups will remain bogged down by operational detail without the ability to develop and support artists and help them to access training, sales and market opportunities year round.
50. The introduction of a Young Steering Group would help to provide a direct link between the overall planning and organisation of the event and young people in schools and colleges. The Group would be supported by Artzone, the Artists in Education Service and the Head of Arts at County Council. There is enthusiasm from Artzone about establishing a Young Board, although it will require more planning and input from the Steering Group to consult with schools and colleges and to set this up. The Young Steering Group would provide a focus on the creative industries in schools as part of Artsweek.
51. To clarify expectations, Artsweek will have contracts with participating artists which assert the roles and responsibilities of the artists, County Arts Service and the Steering Group.
52. Partnership agreements with local authorities and funders should now be developed to secure long-term funding for Artsweek. To support these agreements, the Artsweek business plan must ensure that there are explicit links with the local Community Plan themes and outcomes.
53. ACE should be asked also to support the project manager development role as will make a critical contribution to both workforce and product development and will be essential in the development of the creative industries across the County and the sub region.
54. There is no funding currently from Advantage West Midlands (AWM). There is no creative industries cluster so any potential funding will need to come from product and visitor development budgets and from advocating Artsweek's contribution to the development of creative and healthy communities and improving and extending the range and quality of the tourist and visitor offer. There are clear opportunities and links to explore between Artsweek, artists and the existing business link support services. Many artists remain largely unaware of the wealth of advice and business support they could be accessing in any event.

55. Artsweek creates a market for the enjoyment and sales of contemporary visual arts and crafts in an area that has little regular indigenous habit of attending or purchasing contemporary art. Artsweek is helping to stimulate this market, which is in differing states of development across the County

The Future: Next Steps

56. Artsweek needs to have a focal or 'banner' event in each of the five areas. The public galleries and museums across the County play a significant role in this respect.
57. Three options for development emerged and their worth and value were tested: Artsweek Development Post; Artfair – and possible Artsweek website; Bursary.
58. Artsweek cannot grow and develop without additional dedicated management resources and it is our clear recommendation that Artsweek appoint a Development Co-ordinator.
59. The Development Co-ordinator would lead on business planning and on coaching and mentoring artists, individually and collectively; supporting Steering Group; developing Young Steering Group; strategic marketing; auditing existing local marketing activity and coaching Area Networks to create marketing plans; market development & associated product development; visitor development; fundraising and Sponsorship. County Arts will work up a person specification and applications for support, for approval by the Steering Group.
60. There is strong support for Artsweek to remain as a bi-ennial event, with an open access policy, as the main focus for the visual arts and crafts in Warwickshire. The Steering Group needs to review the timing and scheduling, however, and consider staggering the event over a longer period with a focus on different areas of the County at any one time. There is support for an Artfair event focusing on professional artists in the intervening year.
61. The Artfair needs additional research and to be worked up and costed as part of the Business planning process. County Arts and the Steering Group will lead on this. With additional resource the first Artfair could be piloted in 2007.
62. There is support for an Artsweek Bursary, particularly if it targeted at graduating artists. It should be branded as an Artsweek bursary to maintain profile and to create the link with the event as supportive of artist's development and careers.
63. An Artsweek Bursary would be open to all forms: visual arts, craft, mixed media, digital, photographic etc and should be competitive. A panel of recognised experts and key Artsweek partners would select the recipient. Overall, respondents considered that the Bursary option has merit but that it was less of a priority than having a development post. The Bursary remains a medium to long-term plan.

1. Introduction and Background Information

1.1 Introduction

In June 2004 Warwickshire County Council and its partners on the Warwickshire Artsweek Steering Group invited Morag Ballantyne Arts Management to undertake an Evaluation, Research and Development Consultancy for Artsweek. The overarching aim of the consultancy was to explore how Artsweek could be sustainable and grow as part of a healthy creative industries sector in Warwickshire and across the wider sub region.

The County Arts Service and its partners wanted to identify solutions to consolidate the growth of Artsweek and support visual arts and crafts practitioners across Warwickshire.

The Brief identified a number of specific objectives and tasks:

- To explore the most appropriate project management for Warwickshire Artsweek
- To identify possible sources of funding/income for the event in the long term
- To ensure that artists are fully engaged with the planning and management of Artsweek – and that the event meets their needs and aspirations
- To explore broader options for the ongoing development of individual practitioners within the context of the growth of the creative industries across the Sub-Region (Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull)

The consultancy was in three phases:

- Stage 1: Evaluation of Artsweek, July 2004
- Stage 2: Research and modelling
- Stage 3: Present outline proposals and option for future; present final report

This report is organised in two sections:

- Part 1- What Happened: looking at the planning and outcome of Artsweek 2004
- Part 2 – What Next: the future development of Artsweek

1.2 Background

Warwickshire Artsweek is a bi-ennial countywide celebration of the visual arts and crafts involving open studios, exhibitions, events and a series of artist-led residencies. The third event took place from 3-11 July 2004.

Artsweek is co-ordinated by a steering group of representatives from the County, District and Borough authorities together with representatives from Artzone, local colleges, artist groups and organisations. Attendance at meetings has fallen off and the colleges need to be re-engaged. The staff at the County Arts Service at Warwickshire County Council is responsible for the day-to-day management and operation of the event. The event is a key aspect of the support that the County, District and the Borough authorities offer to individual artists and practitioners and is seen as making a major contribution to the growth of the creative industries in the region.

Warwickshire Artsweek has grown rapidly and the number of artists participating has increased significantly over the three events. In 2004 there were 134 artist's entries in the brochure, compared to 84 in 2002. Early in the planning process for 2004, the Steering Group recognised that the day-to-day management and operation of the event needed to change.

As the event grew, so did the associated organisation and administration and this was rapidly becoming unsustainable for the team of two people in the County Arts Team.

Artists have been involved at the centre of the event to varying degrees since its inception; engaging artists in the year round planning and management process has always been considered important. By 2004, with the project management of the event reaching a critical point, more active involvement was now a priority. Therefore, for Artsweek 2004, participating artists were engaged to act as area co-ordinators with a brief to act as a local co-ordinator offering peer support, acting as a focal point for joint initiatives, including marketing and a launch event. This role has relied on the good will of volunteers, albeit with a small budget for expenses, and needed to be assessed in the longer term.

Artist's expectations of Artsweek were not clear and were considered unrealistic by some partners. The ability and willingness of artists to contribute significantly to the event needed to be tested and assessed: if artists were to be more involved in year round planning and management, thought needed to be given to what this might look like and who would lead this process.

At the sub-regional level, the development of the creative industries is a key priority for a variety of strategic partners including the County Council and the other local district and borough authorities, Arts Council England, Advantage West Midlands and the tourism authorities. There is a critical mass of artists living and working in the County, especially in the south, and Artsweek is considered as pivotal to ensure further growth across the Warwickshire area.

It is against this background that we were assessing the success of Artsweek 2004 and considering its future development.

1.3 Methodology

This study followed the phases outlined in the brief, above.

Central to our study was an exploration of:

- Vision: what Artsweek is for and what it is seeking to achieve; who has the vision now and in the future
- Participants: participants, partners - and the audience/visitor
- Governance: leadership – who leads now and who will lead the project in the future
- Management: implementation - who will do the work
- External context: what is happening in the external environment and the development of Artsweek as a key element of the growth of the creative industries
- Finance: long-term sustainability

The evaluation was two-pronged, reflecting the parallel and complementary areas of interest: operational and audience-focussed. Audiences in this case are both the individual artists and practitioners and the visiting customer/visitor.

This report is an evaluation and development study of Warwickshire Artsweek. It is not an audit of year round visual arts provision, although it does place Artsweek within an overall operating context and identifies the external factors affecting its development. Therefore, we have confined the study to the impact of Artsweek in particular and we have not systematically quantified the overall annual value of the visual arts and crafts sector across the region. Equally, the value of selling work at Artsweek varies from artist to artist; where sales are a key aim for involvement in Artsweek, they account for anything from 5% to 10% of overall income.

Artsweek includes work by professional and non-professional – or leisure – artists. Artsweek does not distinguish or classify artists; we have not separated out these categories in the evaluation.

In Phase 1 the level of work involved in producing Artsweek was assessed and the overall operation reviewed, including planning and activity, management and governance, budget and finance. Overall, we reviewed:

- Visitors
- Venues
- Sales
- Funders
- Marketing

Rigorous and sensitive evaluation tools were developed in association with the Steering Group. These included an evaluation checklist as well as templates to assist with recording daily visitor attendance and sales. The aim was to make it easier for artists to place monitoring and evaluation at the heart of their practice. Artsweek had some existing evaluation tools and the self-completion evaluation forms were reviewed, modified and distributed to all participating artists in advance of the event.

At the same time, Audiences Central was conducting visitor research as part of a wider Arts Council England, West Midlands project examining visitor and audience attendance at Festivals. This involved a further, separate, questionnaire distributed to visitors attending galleries or open studios.

Visits were made each day during Artsweek to over thirty exhibitions and Open Studios across the whole county. Visits were made to as wide a selection of spaces as possible, including a mix of urban and rural venues. We were able to assess the impact of Artsweek on the ground, talk to artists and to visitors and to gain an overall impression of the event. Arts Development Officers, and other Steering Group members, gathered information from their own Artsweek visits and their observation was added to the overall qualitative picture of the event.

Phase 2 involved:

- Analysis of self-completion evaluation forms
- Face to face interviews
- Telephone interviews
- Desk research
- Modelling: comparable information from other Artweeks in England

The consultation was wide ranging and included:

- Arts Development Officers in local authorities
- Steering Group members
- Area Co-ordinators
- Artists
- Existing funders
- Key public sector agencies – including potential partners and funders
- Existing and potential partners and stakeholders, including tourism authorities and Advantage West Midlands

Evaluation forms, no matter how sensitive, do not capture quality of thinking and observation. Therefore, structured telephone interviews were conducted with a sample of artists; artists were also contacted to provide more detail or clarification about aspects of their self-evaluation.

59% of participating artists returned the detailed self-completion evaluation forms. This high return gave us a strong sample and some robust evidence about the operation and impact of Artsweek 2004, as well as clear feedback about its future development and about the training and development needs of artists.

A number of common key issues and themes emerged during the consultation process and these were explored in further telephone interviews and tested during Phase 3 of the project.

Initial results, findings and options were presented to the Steering Group at the end of October. Following this, two discussion groups were held with artists at the end of November: one in the south of the county, in Warwick; the other in the north of the county in Rugby. These meetings offered artists the opportunity to hear the research findings and key issues and discuss the options for future development. These meetings helped to shape this final report.

The willingness and enthusiasm of partners to engage in the consultation process at a senior level augurs well for future partnership working.

2. Warwickshire Artsweek 2004 Planning and Activities

2.1 Operating Context

Demographics

The population of Warwickshire is 505,860 (2001 census) and has grown by 6% over the last 20 years, compared to the regional average of 1.6% and the national average of 4.9%. In common with national trends, the age range of the population has shifted to reflect increasing numbers of people aged 60+. The overall decline in births is reflected in the decrease of the population under the age of 5. Significantly, there are more people entering their 'third age' and, in the last 10 years, the numbers of people aged 85+ has increased by almost half.

Minority ethnic groups account for 4.4% of the population with the Indian ethnic group (at 2.4%) being the next largest to 'white'.

Warwickshire is relatively prosperous, although that prosperity is polarised between the north and south of the country. Employment is greater than the national average (65.5% compared to 60.6%) and consequently the unemployed and long-term unemployed are below the national average. People tend to own their own homes – over three quarters of people do so, compared to just under 70% nationally. The population is well educated, with an above average proportion of people with degree level or higher-level qualifications; this is reflected in the fact that over 30% of the population is in senior professional or managerial posts.

Artsweek marketing, positioning and future product development needs to understand and take account of the local demographic. While the south remains relatively prosperous overall, the north of the county accounts for higher levels of rural isolation, deprivation, unemployment and poverty. There is a clear role here for Artsweek and socially engaged artists to contribute to projects identified through the local community plans.

The geography of the county, and the location of people's homes relative to their place of work, means that almost three quarters of residents use their cars to travel to work, significantly higher than average. Only 4.7% use public transport. The high level of reliance on the car is highly relevant to Artsweek: car use extends to leisure trips also and many of the Artsweek venues are in rural or 'out of the way' locations.

Over 60% of 17-74 year olds are economically active and, significantly, the proportion of people working full-time is relatively similar over the five districts. Just under 9% of people are self-employed – artists naturally make up a proportion of this figure. Stratford-upon-Avon has the highest numbers of self-employed people (12.6%) and Nuneaton and Bedworth has the lowest (5.8%). Stratford has the highest proportion of retired people (15.3%) while Warwick has the highest numbers of students (9.7%). Unemployment is highest in Nuneaton and Bedworth (2.9%) although, in common with the other districts, it is still lower than the national and regional averages at 3.4% and 3.8% respectively. Nuneaton and Bedworth has the highest proportion of unemployed people aged 16-24 and the highest numbers of people permanently sick or disabled.

Creative Industries Context

The organising local authorities and their partners view Artsweek as making a major contribution to the creative industries in the region – and potentially to the cultural tourism sector also.

In March 2003 SQW economic development consultants were commissioned by Warwickshire County Council, Warwick District Council, Coventry City Council and the Chamber of Commerce to undertake a mapping exercise of creative industries in the West Midlands.

Funded by Advantage West Midlands, the audit took the definition of the creative industries adopted by DCMS to gather information about business across the Warwickshire area. The description of the creative industries is wide ranging and includes: advertising, architecture, arts and antique trade, crafts, design, designer fashion, video, film, photography, music, performing arts, visual arts, publishing, software and computer games, television and radio.

The principle outputs of the audit were a report and a creative industries database; there was little information about the development needs and expectations of these businesses. The audit identified that the creative industries are indeed a significant economic generator for the region with 2367 companies employing nearly 7500 people and generating £1.5m for the regional economy. The study estimated that creative businesses in Coventry and Warwick accounted for 2% of the national total of overall economic activity in creative industries. Employment in creative industries in the West Midlands accounts for 2.3% of the workforce.

The creative industries are particularly significant employers in South Warwickshire, equating to 8% of the workforce. However, if the definition of creative industries is narrowed to exclude design and technology, the overall figure is closer to 6%. It is no coincidence that the south of the county has the greatest number of self-employed people and the greatest critical mass of artists.

The implications for Artsweek planning are significant; we needed to identify the contribution that Artsweek makes if it is to be positioned as a major contributor to the development of the creative industries sector.

The National Context

Consultants Morris Hargreaves McIntyre (MHM) recently produced *Taste Buds*, a research report commissioned by Arts Council England that aimed to identify the current and potential buyer base for contemporary art in the country. It attempted to analyse buyers of contemporary original art, while at the same time taking into account the wider constituency of buyers - actual and potential - of art by living artists which is not 'endorsed' by recognised galleries and which is outside the focus of 'challenging contemporary'. This research provides interesting comparisons for Warwickshire Artsweek.

The MHM sample of just over 6000 people throughout England identified that 27% of respondents said that they would consider buying original art. When this percentage was built into the population of England, it translated into a potential market for original art of all forms of some 10.8 million. Original art in this context covers artists, dead and alive, and ranges from traditional styles and genres to work that can be defined as challenging and contemporary. It also includes editioned photographic works and works on paper, but not mass-reproductions.

However, within this 27% of the population, those committed to purchasing challenging contemporary art is comparatively small. And this is the area of most concern and relevance to Artsweek. The research revealed that out of potential buyers of original art, less than 1% – some 43,000 – stated that not only had they bought art by a living artist, but that they would 'only or mostly' buy 'artists who are recognised as being at the cutting edge of contemporary art and whose work is acclaimed by people in contemporary art circles', i.e. challenging contemporary art. The research also highlighted that 11% of potential buyers (1.2 million people) had already bought art by a living artist and said that they would 'equally' buy cutting edge work as any other.

Applying these figures to Artsweek, 148,500 people in Warwickshire are committed to buying original art. However, only 1485 people are committed to buying challenging contemporary art. This highlights a need for Artsweek to position itself as an accessible way of buying high quality, original art. The committed 1% is likely to seek Artsweek out in any event and to identify the most challenging work.

Based on MHM's analysis, Artsweek is reaching 45% of the available market in the county for buying contemporary art.

The possibility that 27% of the national population could be in the market for original art – and that Artsweek is already reaching 45% of its potential local market - cannot be discounted. This is especially the case when a large proportion of this potential market – nearly 70% – says that they would consider buying work by 'cutting edge' artists if it were within their price range. While there is no guarantee that anything like this number of people would definitely make a purchase, it indicates an unprecedented level of interest and appetite for contemporary art.

Of particular interest in the context of Artsweek is that the research highlighted a substantial potential market for art by living artists – and possibly, challenging contemporary art – outside London. This was proportionately nearly the same as that in the capital. 69% of adults in the regions and 70% in London said that they had either bought or would be *prepared to buy* work that was 'cutting edge' if it were within their price range. This equates with our own research that indicates that visitors are predisposed to purchase if work is within their price range. In any event, there is less 'cutting edge contemporary' work available at Artsweek and a higher proportion of accessible contemporary work.

Adding commentary to this research, Louisa Buck notes that:

"It has to be noted, however, that (as with *Taste Buds*' national sample) out of this group of potential original art buyers a substantial proportion – 33% in London and 41% in the regions – had never actually bought any original art at all, cutting edge or otherwise. But even a declaration of intent from such a large number indicates a groundswell of interest in original art by living artists that could be channelled into purchases, possibly of a challenging nature.

There is also a widely held misconception that the work will be beyond their price range: many buyers are surprised to learn how affordable (challenging, sic) contemporary art can be. Other consumers may have more of a retail attitude to art acquisition, purchasing art for the same reasons that they would an item of clothing or furniture: they like the look and they like what it says about them as individuals."
(*Market Matters*, Louisa Buck; Arts Council England 2004)

2.2 Artsweek Operation and Staffing

Artsweek operates with very lean resources. For some time County Arts Service had been concerned that the management of Artsweek was placing unsustainable pressure on a small core group of people co-ordinating the week, particularly the two staff from the County Arts Service. There was not a clear corresponding picture of the benefits of the event and, as a result, the long-term future of the event was being questioned.

The circumstances in the pre-planning period for Artsweek 2004 were particular: the post of Head of Arts at County Arts Service had been vacant for some months before an appointment was made at the end of 2003. The Head of Arts plays a key role in the leadership and planning for Artsweek and this vacancy highlighted not only the extent of this role in Artsweek, but also the gap in wider artist involvement.

Therefore, the County Arts Assistant was responsible for much of the pre-planning work in the intervening period. Project managing Artsweek was resource intensive – in terms of staffing, time and finance. While the priority of the new Head of Arts was to deliver Artsweek 2004, there was a clear imperative to review existing systems and structures.

Systems and Support

There are systems in place to support artists and practitioners, including a very clear toolkit which can be down loaded from the County Council website. County Arts Service co-ordinates the day-to-day operation of Artsweek:

- Creating and distributing information
- Servicing the Steering Group
- Recording the artists brochure entries
- Finance – including artists invoicing
- Organising area meetings for artists – at key stages to disseminate information, gather feedback and generate involvement and ownership of the event
- Answering queries and offering advice to artists – including advice about insurance, exhibition spaces
- Commissioning and managing artists in residence
- Creating the Artsweek marketing materials
- Organising general marketing and distribution
- Mailings to artists and partners
- Managing the overall generic press and publicity campaign – including collating images, photographs, copy, scanning images etc
- Recruiting and managing the area co-ordinators
- Organising artists' training seminars, in conjunction with A&MT: in 2004 these included 'Marketing and Selling Your Work'
- Acting as first point of contact for the public

There are good systems at County Arts for organising and co-ordinating Artsweek. This includes detailed systems to collate information, organise data and finance. There are some small changes that could be made to simplify the process further and that could have a positive impact in streamlining the administration. These include:

- Simplifying the pro-formas for entry to Artsweek
- Having forms available on line to avoid duplication of data entry
- Creating standard opening times or 'slots' to improve access and consistency for visitors

At least three quarters of the artist's entries require a level of clarification, including directions and opening times.

Artsweek entry fees are relatively low at £40 for an individual entry and £100 for a group entry. This is lower than comparable events in other counties. Artists consider that the fee is about right, with some considering it too high. The level of fee is linked to the value that some artists place on Artsweek. When probed, artists admit that they would be prepared to pay more. Overall, a slightly higher fee is likely to have a positive impact on artist's perception of the value of the event as delivering high quality. Therefore, we consider that there is scope to increase the fee to bring it in line with other arts weeks. However, it should be noted that some artists remain sceptical that the fee level will help to increase the quality of work as there are many artists who can afford to pay higher- level fees.

The press office at Warwickshire County Council supports generic press activity for Artsweek, including issuing press releases and organising photocalls and creating information sheets for artists on maximising coverage.

The operating budget, excluding ACE funding for the Artists residencies, is £21,000 with £12,000 allocated to the Artsweek brochure. The brochure was considered much improved for 2004 with a clearer layout and a strong visual identity. Management time, from County Arts, to deliver the event is given in kind and is not accounted for in the budget.

Accounting for this time at the minimum level of operational support would add at least another £10-£15,000 to the overall budget. It is estimated that the time given by other arts development officers would account for at least another £5000. Steering group members also help to support the event and to keep actual implementation cost low.

However, while the County Arts Service manages the event, we identified a lack of clarity about where the ownership of the event lay. There is a lack of clarity also about the overall aims and objectives for the event. This may, in part, be as a result of the way Artsweek has evolved over time: as an event that offers a service to artists, rather than one organised in conjunction and in partnership with artists. Initially the focus of the event was 'art in unusual spaces'. However, with the demand from artists to have their work well displayed in galleries and open studios, the event has evolved to incorporate a mix of venues and spaces, including more conventional arts spaces.

The Artsweek Steering Group comprises representatives from all the district and borough authorities, County Arts Service, Higher Education, Artzone (the County's artists in education service), local galleries and museums and artists. As such, it should be a powerful implementation group for Artsweek. However, all partners agreed that it was not working as efficiently as it might. All members did not attend meetings regularly and artist involvement has fallen significantly during the 2004 planning process. However, the advent of the area co-ordinators has gone some way to helping reverse this.

The Steering Group is managed and run by County Arts; best use may not be made of the skills and talents of the extended group. While, there are mitigating circumstances this year as the planning period was curtailed until the appointment of the County Head of Arts, it does serve to demonstrate that this is where leadership of the event lies.

For Artsweek to be a key element in the development of the creative industries across the county, the Steering Group must have a more strategic focus on the overall event, rather than on their particular aspect of it.

There was an overall impression from the Steering Group that, while artists wanted to be part of Artsweek, they were dissatisfied with the event overall, including entry fee, marketing and publicity. Artsweek had been conceived originally as an event that would have a high level of artist involvement; however, this involvement seemed to be on the fringes rather than in delivering the detailed planning and organisation of the event. As a result, there were several 'flashpoints' in the project management – including distributing brochures, publicity and bunting and organising the launch.

Planning

Some Steering Group members considered that they had capacity to take on additional tasks and assume responsibility for particular elements of the project. Overall, the arts development officers are the most active but, understandably, while they are active in implementation for their own areas, there is less involvement in countywide activity. For all the arts officers Artsweek is the key mechanism for supporting the visual arts.

However, this is against a background of cuts to the arts services across all the districts in the county and threats to arts development posts and budgets. The County Council Arts Service faced efficiency savings which resulted in a cut of 20% to its key clients. During the consultation period two arts development officers left post (Stratford and North Warwickshire) and Rugby had a vacant post. Stratford re-appointed in October 2004 (on a temporary contract until May 2005); Rugby appointed a part-time post in June 2004.

There was no involvement at a strategic level by the tourism and development agencies and authorities in Artsweek 2004. There was some very good local involvement in Shipston and in Rugby where the tourism agencies collaborated to create a town trail for Shipston and a taster exhibition in Rugby. However, overall the Artsweek offer fails to register as part of the summer cultural or tourist offer across Warwickshire.

Progressing Artsweek with a fragile infrastructure is a huge challenge. This highlighted the need for robust evidence about the impact and potential of Artsweek across the County, the need for advocacy to local elected leaders and to communities - and even more need for greater involvement and ownership by the artistic community itself.

2.3 Research Findings *Analysis and Impact*

2.3.1 Scope of Evaluation

The self-completion evaluation generated a 59% response rate. Overall, there was some resistance to the depth of the evaluation for Artsweek 2004, perhaps reflecting a lack of awareness of its usefulness and potential impact. In part this stems from artist's expectations of Artsweek as a service. In this context, to achieve such a high sample is gratifying.

The evaluation was detailed and gathered information about:

- Overall aims in participating
- Expectations of Artsweek
- Numbers of visitors
- Sales made – broken down by type of work
- Reaction to price
- Age range of visitors
- Gender of visitors
- Time of day of visits
- Length of time spent in venue/studio
- Reaction to the work
- Visitor enjoyment
- Location: where visitors came from
- Motivation: how people heard about Artsweek
- Reaction to brochure & other marketing
- Details of publicity generated by artist
- View of area co-ordinator development
- Future developments – including fundraising ideas
- Overall strengths & weaknesses of Artsweek

There was some resistance to the time the self-evaluation required and reaction varied from viewing it as a necessary evil and a bureaucratic burden, to considering that it was not the responsibility of the artists. The evaluation was very detailed this year and running concurrently was Festivals and Events research being undertaken by Audiences Central.

The opportunity to feed back the findings and results at artist's meeting in the autumn was useful. This gave artists an opportunity to reflect and comment on the findings and development options. Although the meetings had a fairly low attendance, the artists present recognised the value of the evaluation in providing worthwhile information that would be useful in their own practice and as evidence and advocacy for Artsweek overall.

Artzone, Warwickshire County Council's Artists in Education Service, has evaluated the residencies in schools programme independently.

2.3.2 Artsweek 2004: Activity

- 134 artists participated in Artsweek 2004 in 119 venues
- 25 schools participated in 'Fusion' education projects facilitated by 14 artists and reaching 820 students

Education Activity

The education activity was well received by all the schools and students. Some excellent work was displayed in venues around the County: from a shopping centre to the local art gallery and museum. Children and their parents visited their work; there was very low awareness that the project has been part of a wider event.

The project was managed by the County's Artists in Education service who deliver projects of a similar nature year round. The service delivers high quality participatory work across the whole curriculum and brings artists into schools. For Artsweek 2004 the theme of the schools work was cultural diversity. Many of the artists used for this project were not Artsweek artists and this is a small source of contention for some local artists.

There is little, if any, connection between the education work for Artsweek and the 'main' event and there are clear opportunities to create better links and to involve the students more in the wider activities of Artsweek. Artists in Education has some concerns about the quality or suitability of some of the local Artsweek artists to deliver this type of work in schools. Certainly any artists in schools would require being Disclosure checked and should be skilled in working with children and young people. However, in order to create better synergy with Artsweek, these issues need now to be made explicit and the education projects planned as an integral part of Artsweek. There is enthusiasm and support for this from Artists in Education.

The Artsweek education projects need to create something different from the year round and should be something to work towards, in the same way as Artsweek is for adult artists.

This links also to the development of the Creative Industries and there are opportunities to create a creative industries module for schools, as part of Artsweek,

Artists in Residence

New for 2004 was the Artists in Residence Initiative, funded by Arts Council West Midlands. This has been reviewed within the overall context of Artsweek but it is clear that these projects have contributed significantly to the development of the individual artist's practice. Moreover, the projects made an impact at a localised level and contributed an additional layer of professional activity to Artsweek.

Area Co-ordinators

Also new for 2004 were the five area co-ordinators: one for each district in the county. This was a clear attempt to engage artists more fully in the process and the planning of Artsweek. Artists volunteered – or were volunteered – and received a small budget for mailing, administration and travel. In all cases, the budget was not fully spent, reflecting that this role requires more time than money and that its value is in networking, co-ordinating tasks and action and in bringing people together.

On the whole, participating artists welcomed the introduction of the Area Co-ordinator programme, although a few were not aware of it. The Co-ordinators worked in different ways in each of the areas although all focused on distributing print and generating localised press coverage. It proved difficult for the Arts Development Officers to manage the Co-ordinators, who worked remotely from the ADO offices; County Arts Service had no spare capacity to manage the Co-ordinators. As a result, the Co-ordinators were largely left to their own devices, although there was an outline brief for the tasks and responsibilities of the post.

One of the most successful initiatives was the introduction of several artists networking groups – particularly in Nuneaton and Bedworth and in Rugby. The Rugby Co-ordinator was able to tap into existing organised groups including the Tantalus project and the Rugby Artists Support Group.

Both groups have strong links with the Art Gallery and there is no doubt that these are two of the most critical success factors for Artsweek overall: the strength of the relationship between the local public art gallery and the artists in the area, and the existence of support networks for artists to meet, critique work and share information and ideas.

There was one co-ordinator for each area in the County; in Warwick area and Stratford, the impact of the Co-ordinator's efforts was diluted by the size of the area.

However, this pilot initiative did yield results and the Co-ordinators did generate additional PR and press and provided a vital direct link from their fellow artists to the Artsweek Steering Group and the organising authorities.

2.3.3 Marketing

The Artsweek marketing focuses mainly on publicity rather than on targeted and segmented marketing activity. The primary marketing tool is the brochure which is high quality and attractive. The layout is good, with lots of white space and the exhibitions are organised in areas.

The marketing and branding had improved from the previous Artsweek in 2002 and received much praise from the majority of artists. The quality and the clarity of layout in the brochure was appreciated and considered to reflect the high standards the event sought to achieve. Some artists reflected that the brochure might be a 'vanity project' as they felt it was not effective in generating footfall in their exhibitions and studios.

However, although good to look at, the brochure was difficult for visitors to use. Multiple entries, by different artists, for one exhibition were not always displayed together. This made planning a schedule of visits or a route for Artsweek a logistical challenge and one that only the most dedicated visitor would attempt. This was compounded by a lack of consistency in opening times and opening slots, with venues in close proximity often not open at the same time. The biggest bugbear for artists was that the area maps were inaccurate and some artists were missed off altogether. For the future, the quality of the marketing materials should be retained but the accuracy and scheduling improved to make the print more visitor focused.

Others felt that the graphic was strong but that the relative size of text and details for venues and locations was too small. The posters and signage worked well, although there was a consensus that the text was too small and not well enough defined. There was considerable ambivalence about the effectiveness of the postcards with many artists reporting that it was difficult to overprint onto them and use them for invitations. They appeared to contribute little to generating general awareness about the event as they had no selling copy.

Many artists produced their own private or publicity view cards. However, the application of the Artsweek logo was patchy and inconsistent. Similarly, there were problems in Leamington Spa finding poster sites, even on the publicity rotunda immediately outside the Pump Rooms.

The bunting had a mixed reception. Artists in more rural venues and open studios preferred it to those in major centres and it certainly helped visitors to find and identify Artsweek locations. Some artists felt that it made the event look too much like a village fair. However, the balance is in favour of retaining it for future years.

The lack of town centre banners of Artsweek emerged as a major issue for artists. This was not a surprise as it had cropped up in all the Artsweek planning meetings and in the 2002 evaluation. The prohibitive factor is the cost of creating banners for towns in all five areas; the Artsweek budget does not stretch to this currently as the brochure is the main item of expenditure. Artists also wanted to see roadside signage at all points of entry to the County; again this is expensive.

Stratford artists collaborated and shared costs for a town centre banner and Area steering groups could do likewise in the future, making their own decisions about how to allocate their local marketing budget for best effect.

The Artsweek website, hosted on the County Council site, offers downloads of the Artsweek information packs and an on-line version of the brochure. Currently, the site is targeted at artists rather than visitors. Little evidence emerged of demand for an Artsweek visitor site, with visitors tending to use the brochure and to keep it as a souvenir of their visit. However, there is potential to work with the Tourism authorities to improve visitor information about Artsweek and to link to multimap map references. The online brochure acts also as a useful catalogue of artists after the event and has driven some sales and exhibiting enquiries. However, contact numbers are for venues rather than artists.

As an event, Artsweek has yet to 'cut through' and achieve a high profile across the county. While it is beginning to make its name as an industry event, at least for locally based artists, and starting to attract a following of visitors, the event is still relatively invisible to the wider public. This is hardly surprising as the arts – and the visual arts in particular – are relatively invisible across the county in terms of cultural, social and economic priorities. While the arts officers themselves are having to make arguments within their own organisations for the importance of investment in the arts, it is doubly difficult to advocate the value that the arts bring to the health and well-being of communities or the contribution or impact that an event like Artsweek makes to local community pride, to the local economy and to the skills development of the workforce. However, the evidence provided in this report can make a contribution to demonstrating this impact of Artsweek.

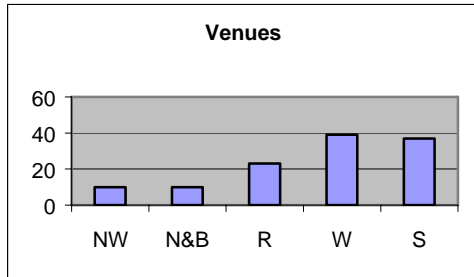
Artsweek is positioned as a major event in the summer calendar in Warwickshire. Awareness in the wider artistic community is high and this partly accounts for the three quarters of all visitors who knew that the exhibition they were attending was part of Artsweek. However, awareness in the wider arts community in the sub region is lower. Unprompted awareness among the general population is low and this is partly a reflection of the limited marketing budget.

Many artists used their own mailing, friends and private view lists so, not surprisingly, the visitor profile at many exhibitions reflected the profile of the artist. Artists attempted to record visitor age range in the self-evaluation forms. Without asking people directly, this is not accurate but the majority of visitors were aged 40+, with the vast majority being 45-50+. There were few young people or children other than at the Fusion projects, although some exhibitors did report visits by small family groups at the weekend. Overall, there was a wider age range visiting work at the weekends and this reflects the available market that is at work, school or college during the week.

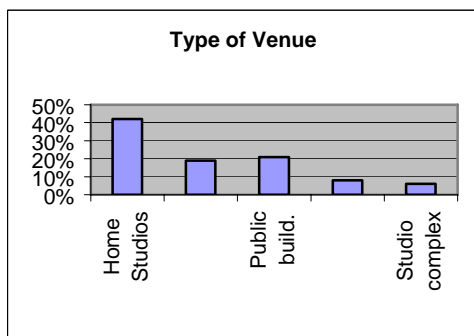
2.3.4 Participating Artists and Venues

134 artists exhibited in 119 venues, ranging from solo exhibitions, to open studios, to group or shared exhibitions in locations as diverse as cafes, shops, libraries to temporary and established exhibition spaces. The Warwick area had the largest number of participating artists and venues, closely followed by Stratford. This is not surprising given the critical mass of artists in these areas.

The first chart shows the number of venues in each area:

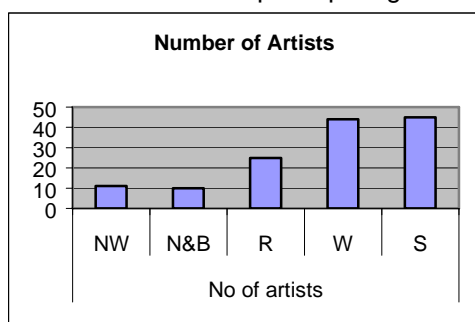


The types of venue used for exhibiting is shown below. We have retained the categories used for Artsweek 2002 to enable comparison between the two events.

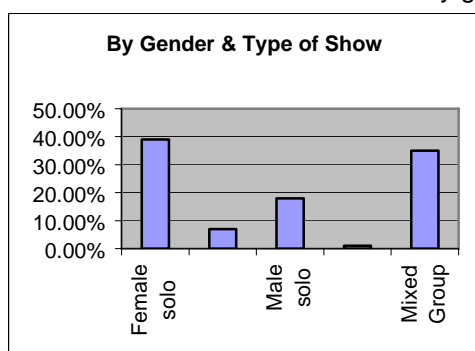


- 42% of artists exhibited from their home studio, compared to 46% in 2002
- 19% exhibited in temporary exhibition spaces, away from home, compared to 14% in 2002
- 21% of exhibitions were in public buildings, but excluding local museums and art galleries; this compares with 19% in 2002
- 8% of Artsweek events were in galleries or museums, compared to 18% in 2002 and highlighting the need for much more involvement by both publicly funded art galleries and galleries in the commercial sector
- 6% were in 'studio complexes', for example like Redhill Barn; this is an increase from the 1% so described in 2002 and points to the increases popularity of group exhibitions for 2004

The number of artists participating in each area is shown below:



The next chart shows the exhibitors by gender and by type of exhibition



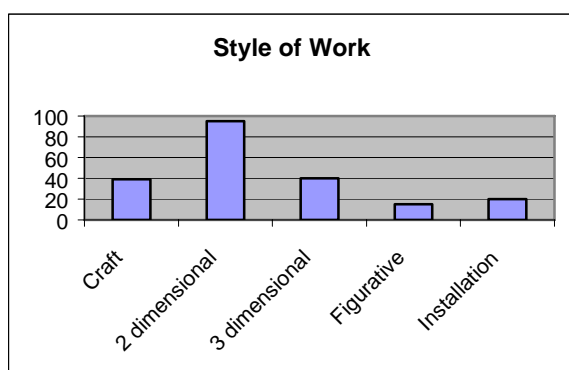
As in previous years, the largest number of exhibitors are women, with the largest single group being female solo exhibitors, accounting for 40% of exhibitors overall. This is consistent with 2002, where female solo exhibition accounted for 42% of all exhibitors. Male solo exhibitions accounted for 18% of the total, compared to 14% in 2002. The largest proportion of this is Open Studios.

Female group exhibitions, at 7%, and Male Group shows at 1% were considerably less popular than Mixed Groups that accounted for 35% of the total. Compared to 2002, the percentage of Female Group exhibitions has halved from 14%, Male Groups has decreased from 12% while the Mixed Groups has doubled from 17%. In part, this may be as a result of pressure on exhibition space, while also reflecting a trend highlighted in conversations with the artists about the preference to share space. It also indicates that Male artists are exhibiting on their own or as part of a Mixed Group, rather than with other Male artists. However, this does not necessarily account for the larger increase in Mixed Groups per se. Overall, the more artists exhibiting in one venue, the more popular it is likely to be with visitors as it will offer a range of work and styles and a range of prices.

Style of Work

Almost 80% of participating artists were showing 2 Dimensional works, while 32% were showing 3 dimensional works and 12% figurative work. 16% of the work could be described as installations, including digital and mixed media. Attempts to encourage a wider range of media appear to have had some success with an increase in the number of craft practitioners represented from 17% in 2002 to 33%, although this should be significantly higher still. While the majority of artists were working in one style, the percentage figures represent the range of work of artists who may have been showing work in more than one medium. Therefore, the percentages do not add to 100.

As far as these categories are useful, they indicate the lower representation of crafts and new media/digital practitioners and this is an area for future encouragement and development, Artists and recent graduates should be encouraged to show work in a wider range of media more reflective of the creative industries across the County.



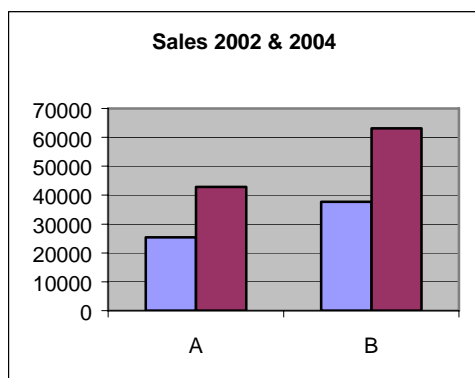
Year on Year Comparison

The table below shows how the event is growing and developing. Although the event is bi-ennial, the available market or community of artists available to engage with Artsweek has remained largely the same, although some recently graduated artists have come to Leamington to live and work.

2002	2004
84 artists	134 artists
	119 venues
9180 visitor attendances	23,861 visitor attendances
£25,423 sales: self-evaluation	£33,494 sales: self-evaluation
£42,800 estimated sales overall	£67,291 estimated sales overall

Attendance in 2004 has grown by a factor of two and a half; the number of participating artists has increased by 50%. Attendance has grown exponentially with average attendance at each venue at 163 visits. The figures indicate consistent audience growth for Artsweek. However, there is a caveat to the overall estimated attendance figures: these are numbers of visits and not numbers of people. A proportion of – but not all - visitors declared that they intended to visit 2 to 3 events. Therefore, the actual numbers of visitors participating in Artsweek will be lower than the declared attendance figures. Even if a third of visitors attended more than one exhibition, visitor attendances remain close to 16,000. This may mask a concern that the actual current core visitor audience is relatively small and there remains much room for growth.

The sales figures, shown below, are significant, especially when considering that making sales is not the primary aim for a large number of participating artists. The chart shows the declared sales and the projected sales for each year, with A being 2002 and B 2004.



Overall, the figures demonstrate a considerable economic impact to the Warwickshire economy, as well as a contribution to artists' annual income. Each £1 spent in delivering Artsweek, generated £8 of sales.

Of the few artists willing to declare their overall income, the 10 days of Artsweek contributes to between 5% and 10% of annual income from their art. However, the caveat to this is that the majority of artists were unwilling to declare overall income and that for a significant majority of professional artists, Artsweek is not a major sales outlet. Rather it offers a platform and contributes to their overall marketing and profile.

Others – both leisure and professional artists – did not need to make a living from their work, so additional sales were a bonus rather than an imperative. Noticeably, this tended to be the case for a small minority of women artists, who had other incomes but who, nevertheless, took their work seriously and exhibited widely.

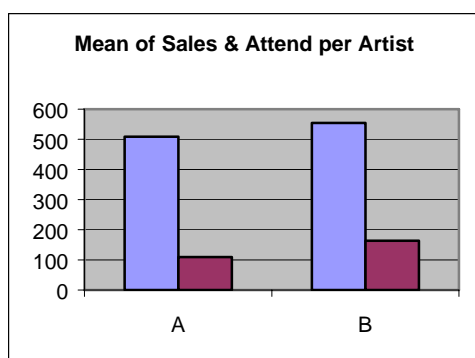
The sales figures account for all work sold including cards and prints. Many artists sold cards or small, inexpensive prints; previous experience indicated that visitors liked to have a souvenir of their visit, even if they were not ready to commit to a larger or more expensive purchase at the time. Venues that had smaller items available for sale performed better overall in terms of sales and visitor numbers.

Some venues did not make any sales, or made very low sales; others had no work for sale or were installation based. So, while sales are an important part of Artsweek, and an important economic indicator, they are not a major objective for many artists. Few artists who exhibited in the north, particularly in Nuneaton and Bedworth and North Warwickshire, to a lesser extent, had work for sale. This work was a mixture of installation and exhibitions designed to increase profile and develop a body of work.

We analysed the sales further:

2002	2004
Mean of sales £510	Mean of sales £554
	Mode of sales £400 – but significant at £1000+
Mean attendance per artist 109	Mean attendance per artist 163
	Mean attendance per venue 163
	Mode attendance per venue 100

The average sales and attendance per artist increased in 2004 (B), when compared to 2002 (A):



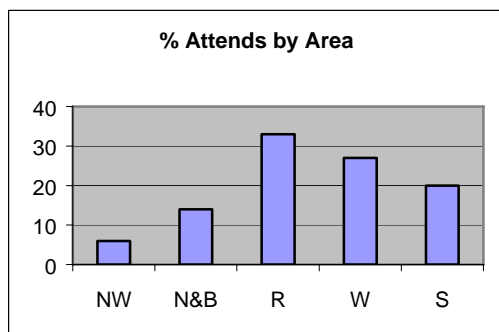
The average sales per venue were £554. When we looked at the mode of sales, we identified a clear pattern: The mode of all sales was £400. However, there was a significant peak of sales at under £100 and a significant number of artists achieving sales of over £1000. These sales accounted for group exhibitions, but also for exhibitions where work was priced in excess of £300+ per piece.

These sales are not the whole story. Many artists reported additional sales after Artsweek or were working to turn enquiries into sales. Contacts made with visitors during Artsweek are important in building a relationship with potential buyers.

The sales figures do not include those from Louise Darby's 21st Anniversary Exhibition with 28 artists at Redhill, which were not available; if included, the average sales would increase significantly.

Attendance by Area

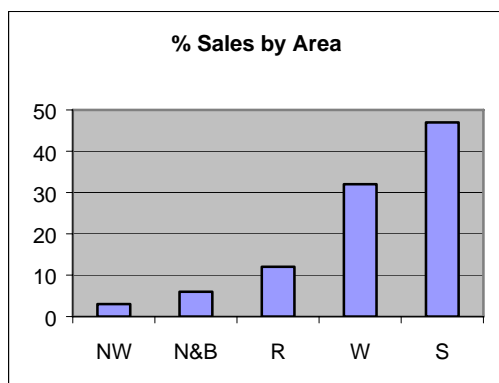
The chart reflects the attendance at Artsweek across the five counties:



The high attendance for events in Rugby reflects the success of the local marketing campaign and taster exhibition and the relative success of the Arts Gallery as a focus for sending visitors to other parts of the area. The exhibitions in the area also tended to be within easy travelling distance of each other.

Sales By Area

This chart indicates sales across the five areas of the County. Stratford District achieved the highest sales, followed by Warwickshire – even although the highest attendances were recorded by Rugby. The low sales in North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth reflect the comments above about the range of work exhibited. The level of sales also reflects the local, more prosperous, demographic and the propensity of Artsweek visitors in the south of the county to buy work.



2.3.5 Artists Expectations

The evaluation set out to establish artists' aims and expectations overall to assess if Artsweek was the right vehicle to meet those expectations and to support visual artists and crafts makers as vibrant creative industries.

Artsweek had only anecdotal evidence about the expectations of participating artists – and most of this negative, with complaints about the level of publicity at the top of the list. Overall, this reflects the relationship between the Steering Group and the artists, where Artsweek is viewed as a service from the local authorities to the artists, rather than an event in which they are stakeholders also. There were several comments about all artists wanting a slice of the cake but no one prepared to 'gather the ingredients or help to bake it'. In other words, there was a high level of self-interest and very little understanding of the overall organisation, the impact of the event overall or commitment to the common good.

However, when asked directly, over two thirds (67%) of artists agreed that Artsweek was meeting their expectations, while a further 17% agreed that it met their needs to certain extent. 16% felt that Artsweek did not meet their expectations and these respondents tended to be those who attracted fewer visitors than expected or sold less work than anticipated. They did not have any comment to make about the nature of Artsweek as an event in supporting their practice overall. There was overwhelming support for Artsweek in providing a focus for the visual arts and crafts and as an opportunity to see other artists' work and to develop one's own practice.

Most of the artists were busy people. If they were not full time professional artists – i.e. making their living from their work - they had other jobs as art teachers, tutors and lecturers or held posts in other professions. The overwhelming majority of artists do not make a full time living from their art and have a secondary income. However, there is no necessary correlation between the quality of the work produced and the full or part time status of the artist.

Some of the professional artists require to be more convinced about the value of Artsweek and about its profile as a regular part of the arts industry calendar. There is an advocacy job to be done here, not only by the Steering Group and Area Co-ordinators, but also by the other professional artists. To succeed, Artsweek needs to attract all the professional artists living and working in the County. Some already show and sell at a national and international level; Artsweek needs their involvement to add to the profile and integrity of the event. We noted, particularly, that there is a relatively low level of participation by crafts people. Attracting more crafts practitioners needs to be a focus for any future activity, both in terms of development and representation of the sector and in offering a wide range of work for the visitor.

Others were not able to participate this year for other reasons:

- Family circumstances
- Illness
- Committed to exhibiting elsewhere
- Making work for other exhibitions
- Not having a sufficient body of work available

In order to secure the involvement of all the key professional artists each time, we started to think about other ways to show the work.

The primary reason for being involved in Artsweek is simply to show work and artists cite few other opportunities and spaces to show work year round. That is the primary motivation for all the artists: to create work to show to an audience of either other artists or the general public; to increase their profile and develop their reputation. Many want to make sales.

Artists wanted to;

- Make new contacts
- Find new markets
- Find new routes to the market
- Make sales – particularly so in the south of the county
- Know and understand who is their customer

This need to 'validate' work was described in a recent essay commissioned by Arts Council England from Louisa Burke:

"In a notoriously unregulated market in which anyone can claim their work as art and call themselves an artist, a process of endorsement is necessary in order to select and filter good art from bad, to distinguish which artists are making work that not only acknowledges artistic traditions but which also has new conversations with them."

In this way, Artsweek serves a useful purpose in the development of the individual artist's practice - as 134 artists place their work before their peers and the wider public to be judged, distinguished and selected.

Underpinning all of this is the artists' desire for peer networking and support. Artists work largely in isolation and saw Artsweek as an opportunity to see a wide range of other work as well as discuss and critique their own work.

This is linked to the desire to understand more about their customers. Artsweek provides an opportunity for artists to talk directly to their customers and is a powerful element in the Artsweek branding and 'Unique Selling Point'. Several artists commented that they have little knowledge of the ultimate destination or owner of their artwork when they sell through an agent or a gallery. Artsweek provides that direct link with the customer and visitor and an opportunity to create a connection and explain the work in depth. In this way, many artists have built up a loyal following for their work and see visitors return year on year, as they become more confident buyers. However, the downside of this is if the core visitors remain static and do not attract other new visitors. Some of the complaints from artists about most visitors being known to them spring from this.

The following emerged as significant themes from the consultation with artists:

- The need for more studio time
- The need to develop their practice
- Lack of studio space across the county
- Lack of exhibition space across the county – year round and for Artsweek

While Artsweek began as an event in which to 'find art in unusual places', in recent years the majority of work is shown in rather more conventional settings and this is reflected in the responses.

While a large number of artists have home studios, many do not; in many circumstances work requires larger, more industrial spaces than would be available in a home studio. However, one artist commented that her sole aim in participating in Artsweek was to achieve the conversion of a garage into a studio; she met her objective and opened her studio at the start of Artsweek

Creative Industries

The lack of available public studio space hampers the overall development of the visual arts and crafts sector across the county – and subsequently, the contribution the sector can make to the creative industries. The so-called 'cultural quarter' in Leamington Spa may go some way to addressing this. But it may displace as many artists who work currently in the run down studio spaces, as create new opportunities for those to whom it lets the refurbished space.

There is a further concern that the need to earn high-level income from the space will see it leased to high earning creative industries like design and advertising, rather than the applied visual arts and crafts which require considerably more subsidy and support in order to flourish. Time will tell, although the existence of the site itself is a positive step. There have been muted, and very tentative, discussions about the relocation of Arts & Media Training to the site; leasing to this, or a similar organisation, would send a powerful signal about the commitment to the development of the creative industries overall.

Artists are concerned also about the lack of available exhibition space. The lack of galleries and recognised spaces to exhibit was a recurring theme. This was the case even for artists for whom selling work is not their primary motivation.

Some parts of Warwickshire - and certainly Coventry in the wider sub-region - have elements of the recognised infrastructure required to support a vibrant visual arts and crafts market. However, the lack of exhibition space is linked to a wider challenge for the development of the creative industries overall – the need for a critical mass of elements that tend to come together at the same time to seed the development of a viable market for contemporary art and to encourage the establishment of commercial galleries.

Some of these elements exist, including: an established community of artists, active public galleries and museums and informed critics. However, for the market to develop overall, in line with artist's expectations, the public galleries need to be collecting pro-actively and links with local professional artists need to be cultivated.

The link with colleges and further education is critical. Existing relationships are good but need to be maintained and nurtured and relationships developed with University of Warwick and with art schools in close proximity. There is evidence, even among Artsweek exhibitors, of young, recent graduates being drawn to work and live in Warwickshire – and particularly to Leamington, perceived as the intellectual 'hub', largely as a result of the local, active community of artists.

Many respondents pointed out that large numbers of artists and creative people live in Warwickshire. However, Artsweek is not the primary focus for all. For a significant number of professional artists their focus is outwith the county and on commercial galleries and artfairs nationally and internationally. Similarly, although Artsweek generates significant sales, there is not – as yet – a database of 'serious' collectors, although many artists are able to find routes to market and to sell work through their own databases and private view lists.

One respondent commented that it is often difficult to translate the development of the creative industries into something that is meaningful and tangible to artists. The development of the creative industries in the wider sub-region is concerned with training, business development and personal and professional development. Some of the artists we spoke to found it difficult to think of themselves as a 'creative industry', even although they might be running a successful small business.

While artists viewed continuous professional development (CPD) as important there was a mixed reaction to the current training available. There is some hesitation from artists to participate in training, with some not being able to articulate what training they might need – witness the low take up in the Arts & Media Training (A&MT) Artsweek courses. A&MT report low take from artists in the north of the county for its ongoing programming of training and CPD opportunities. Although there are a number of tools and training opportunities available, including business start up and ongoing support from Advantage West Midlands and investment opportunities supported by Arts Council England, West Midlands, artists need support to access this. Conducting a skills audit to identify needs and gaps in development and artists practice would be a useful exercise for the Area Co-ordinators and the networking groups around the county.

Artsweek has no link with business development agencies, including Advantage West Midlands and the regional Tourist bodies. Artsweek and the creative industries overall, provide a strong cultural offer for tourism across Warwickshire and should be exploited.

Visitor Development

Repeatedly artists said that they wanted to be more in touch with their audience. If we accept that there is in fact a critical mass of artists, the key to the development of Artsweek, would therefore appear to be stimulating demand from the visitor. This is about generating significant awareness of Artsweek and of the creativity at the heart of communities, promoting links to local pride and the development of Artsweek as a significant 'made in Warwickshire' brand.

Education and year round arts development activity have a role to play here too in terms of improving interpretation and helping to improve access to the work.

Overall, there is an opportunity for Artsweek to provide a focal point for the visual arts and crafts sector: to offer the advocacy, support and wider education projects identified by artists as important. The responses to the research indicates that the event is already meeting many of these expectations. However, there is an opportunity also to make more connections with the commercial sector and to encourage involvement and support for Artsweek.

A number of artists responded positively to the question of being more involved in Artsweek as an Area Co-ordinator or in offering time in other ways. Overall, there is significant goodwill towards the event and an understanding of the time given by the existing Steering Group. We have now a database of willing volunteers for future activity and many artists who offered assistance saw this as part of their own personal development. The Co-ordinator for Nuneaton & Bedworth considered that he had gained enormously from his work in this role and that it had given him new skills to compliment his work as a community artist, as well as a practicing artist in his own right. This is one of the ways in which Artsweek demonstrates the importance and impact of involving socially engaged artists.

Few artists understand the organisational issues facing Artsweek or the distinctions and responsibilities of at the County Council and at the District and Borough authorities. On occasion this was felt to lead to confusion and artists were concerned at possible duplication of activity and tasks.

2.3.6 Visitor Profile

Gathering a profile of the Artsweek visitor was a key element of the project. From the start of the evaluation we were concerned that it should be visitor focused as well as artist focused in order to identify challenges and priorities for visitor and product development.

In addition to our research about the visitor, we benefited from the wider Festival and Events research conducted simultaneously by Audiences Central. At the time of writing, we have been able to see raw data only but it concurs broadly with our own findings.

Motivation to Attend

Artsweek visitors were arts enthusiasts in the main: they tended to be 'early adopters' who liked the idea that they had discovered Artsweek. Many visitors were themselves artists – both professional and leisure artists – and several of the visitors were other Artsweek artists. Prompted awareness of Artsweek among visitors at individual exhibitions was high, with 70% of respondents aware that the exhibition visited was part of Artsweek.

Just under a third of respondents (31%) had attended Artsweek in 2002 and, of these, 15% had attended in 2000 also. A third of respondents were new visitors to Artsweek, demonstrating that visitor numbers are growing year on year and illustrating the audience development potential.

Visitors enjoyed visiting exhibitions 'on their doorstep' and were often pleasantly surprised to find artists within their own community; conversely some artists reported that none of their neighbours had attended their open studio event. This appears to be less disinterest but more a fear of being 'nosy', a worry that they will not like the neighbour's work or, worse, obliged to make a purchase. 31% of respondents indicated that they liked to attend local events, while for 21% Artsweek was part of their leisure activity and something to do with friends and family.

Word of mouth is a significant with 32% of respondents indicating that they attended an exhibition because it was recommended. This reflects the need for reassurance as well as the importance of word of mouth and has implications for future marketing campaigns.

Artsweek is important, as part of the cultural and tourist offer in Warwickshire and the Visiting Friends & Family (VFR) market will be significant for its future development. While over a quarter of tourist respondents said that Artsweek was the primary reason for their visit, only 5% was intending to stay over night in the area. The vast majority were within a 1 to 2 hour drive time or were visiting friends and relatives.

The motivation to attend Artsweek was two-fold: it was both a day out in the beautiful Warwickshire countryside, as well as professional interest in seeing a wide range of work. Many visitors spent time talking to the artists about techniques and artists – particularly at open studios. Artists enjoyed this connection with the visitor and were very good at talking about and explaining their work.

The majority of visitors are knowledgeable about the visual arts and 70% of respondents were motivated to attend because they had a particular interest in the exhibition and 66% because of specific interest in the artist.

Just over a quarter of respondents were attending Artsweek exhibitions because of the relevance to their studies, indicating the importance of involving and marketing to schools and colleges and universities across the County and the wider sub region.

Browsing and Buying

On average visitors indicated that they intended to visit 2 to 3 exhibitions during Artsweek; this was confirmed by the Audiences Central research where respondents attended an average of 3 exhibitions. However, significantly, over a quarter of respondents said that they intended to visit between 6 and 20 exhibitions, underlining that the visitors are indeed arts enthusiasts.

Visitors were both browsers and buyers and there were distinct differences in the attitude of visitors to purchasing work in the north of the county to the south. As we have seen above, visitors to exhibitions in the south were more disposed to purchasing work. Not only is there more disposable income in the south, but also there is a more regular habit of gallery and museum attendance, resulting in a greater confidence around contemporary art and a larger market for contemporary art and design. Some of this is 'lifestyle and retail purchasing' with customers buying pieces to suit a particular room in their homes or to differentiate their purchase from the usual retail outlets. Yet while Artsweek offers an opportunity to purchase, many visitors were not sure how to buy work or felt that they could not afford a one off purchase.

Contribution of Creative Industries to Economy

Overall, the price of work was considered to be 'about right' at the majority of venues. There were a couple of responses that work was too expensive but visitors were clearly able to make a distinction between what they thought the work was worth and what they could afford to pay for it. A number of visitors made repeat visits, or returned after Artsweek, to make purchase once they had had time to reflect. Unless visitors come to Artsweek intending to purchase, it is unlikely that they will make a spontaneous purchase of several hundred pounds.

Schemes like ACE's Loan purchase scheme, Own Art, should be more widely promoted during Artsweek. This will make the purchase of work more accessible; many galleries are promoting this already. The Scottish Arts Council has also produced a useful leaflet, *How To Purchase Contemporary Art*, which could be useful in making visitors make choices.

Visitors demonstrated a high level of appreciation of the work available and this can be seen in the comments books and on the visitor evaluation forms. Many of the comments were informed while others expressed pleasure in the venue, the work and in the idea of Artsweek.

The Audiences Central research indicates that the average additional discretionary spend by visitors to Artsweek was £13. Applied to the overall projected visitor attendance, this equates to an additional spend of £310,193 in the local economy.

Respondents indicated that they expected to spend an average £8.75 on tickets to events and attractions during their Artsweek visit, representing a further spend of £209,658.

In addition, visitors expected to spend an average £78.52 on artwork, crafts or gifts. This is considerably less than the actual average sales, so the projected discretionary spend may also be more than that projected by respondents in the Audiences Central research.

Taking the likely discretionary spend together with the overall sales of work, Artsweek contributed over £500,000 to the local economy over the 10 day period, demonstrating the significant impact, and the potential, of the creative industries across the County and sub region.

Visitor Behaviour

There is still a degree of hesitation in visiting open studios that are part of an artist's home. This can be daunting and underlines the importance of artists being good hosts. Open doors, bunting and signage on gates helped also to make venues more welcoming.

The vast majority of visits – over 75% - occurred between 2pm and 4pm and over 60% of visitors spent up to half an hour in venues and 10 to 20 minutes in open studios. Visitors spent more time if there were refreshments and many venues offered tea, coffee, soft drinks and even wine on the first day of opening. Several, particularly remote open studios, were extremely hospitable offering teas and homemade cakes. This contributed enormously to the quality of the visitor experience. However, a few artists in open studios reported that visitors had overstayed their welcome.

80% of visitors were within Warwickshire and one hour drive time of the venue visited. There was very little travelling across the country with few, except the most dedicated, visitors from the north of the county visiting exhibitions or studios in the south and vice versa.

The Rugby area drew more visitors from the rest of the sub-region than any other area. Visitors to Rugby, while predominately local, also came from Coventry, Solihull, Birmingham and Northamptonshire. All are within easy reach and road links.

3. SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis is the result of the analysis of the qualitative information gathered from artists in the self-evaluation form and probed in more detail in interviews with artists, participants and key stakeholders.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A celebration of the visual arts and crafts • Provides a focus for visual arts & Craft across the county • Artsweek becoming established with artists and visitors • Provides artists with a goal to work towards –and an event for which to make new work • Bi-ennial, so can make a body of new work • Raises the profile of artists and of artists in the community • An opportunity to sell work • Offers direct contact with the customer and an opportunity to widen the customer base • Improved marketing in 2004: high quality brochure & signs • Improved branding & visual identity • Opportunity to reach audiences & visitors at other high profile events • Good organisation • Provides interaction & networking among artists: brings artistic community together • Opportunity to see other artists' work • Artsweek valued by artists & stakeholders: the right event at the right time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low visibility for Artsweek across the county • Not enough people know it's on • Lack of, or patchy, publicity, editorial and advertising in some areas • No banners in high street locations • Maps in brochure: too small, difficult to use, inaccurate • Only every two years so event loses momentum • Lack of clarity about overall aims & objectives • Clashes with other major events in summer calendar; potential visitor displacement • No collaboration with other major agencies including economic development & tourism • Too short: 10 days not long enough: too much to see, too little time • Artists' perception that all publicity left to them • Perception, and some reality, of lack of cohesion among various organising partners • Lack of networking & connection between artists in north & south of the county • Strands of Artsweek exist in isolation to each other

Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No long term secure funding • Future of Artsweek against background of efficiency savings or standstill funding within County, District & Borough authorities • Key agencies are supportive – but have no cash, or have made no promises of cash • Project management unsustainable at County Arts Service in current model • Lack of clarity about overall aims & objectives • Value of the creative industries sector insufficiently recognised by politicians locally • Value & impact of event not widely recognised: not sufficiently visible • To the event overall if fail to secure long-term ring-fenced funds • No overall business plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have now a body of evidence: identified as right event at the right time to support & develop creative industries • Use the evaluation & research to take event forward & position at the heart of creative industries in Warwickshire & sub region • To reposition as a regional celebration of the visual arts and crafts • To advocate the value & impact of Artsweek – culturally, economically & socially • To contribute to regeneration projects in the north of the county: artists at the heart of the community • To reach new markets, including tourists; tourism partners now engaged • More awareness from other partners, including AWM, about potential for creative industries development • Artists networking clusters offer focus for ownership of event & future operational involvement • To improve the product & the visitor experience in light of research findings • To improve & strengthen links between Artsweek exhibitors with ‘banner’ or taster exhibitions and venues that can act as area focus • To achieve clarity about overall aims & objectives: be realistic about what Artsweek can achieve & clarify artists’ expectations; be clear to artists & other partners what Artsweek can – and cannot – deliver • Maintain as a bi-ennial event, but there is potential and appetite for artfair event in intervening year

Part 2 - Future Development - What Now?

4.1 Opportunities and Issues Arising

At the start of the evaluation and research, we wanted to establish if Artsweek was the right vehicle to offer support to artists and contribute to the development of the creative industries.

In summary, Artsweek has emerged as a valuable event:

- For artists in developing their practice and in the commitment they have to the event
- As a focus for creativity and as a celebration of the wealth of high level visual arts and crafts practitioners and their work across the County
- As a focus for networking and information exchange for artists
- In the contribution it makes economically
- For the potential it has to develop new markets and develop new visitors to Warwickshire
- For the level of contact between the visitor and the artist and the resulting exchange of information and learning
- For the contribution it makes to extending the cultural and visitor offer and experience across Warwickshire

However, there is a burden of unrealistic expectation: as the primary focus for the visual arts and crafts, Artsweek is the channel for all the local authority support and is expected to deliver on the development of artists in the sector overall, deliver on sales and deliver on support and networking. One 10-day event cannot fulfil the diverse aspirations of the sector and, with a relatively small budget, Artsweek does not have sufficient marketing weight to achieve 'cut through' and the high levels of public awareness that other events and attractions with larger budgets can achieve.

Artists' networking groups have been strengthened as a result of Artsweek and are important sources of support and development year round. The relationship between these groups and the local art gallery is of particular importance.

There is a major opportunity now to reposition Warwickshire Artsweek: to revisit and renew the vision and to clarify and communicate the overall aims and objectives.

4.2 Impact and Opportunities

The figures indicate that Artsweek has real visitor impact. But there is a caveat: the core 'audience' is smaller than the overall total as visitors make 2 to 3 trips on average to exhibitions and open studios

There is economic impact, but this is patchy and many artists were dissatisfied with the sales generated. To have real economic impact, sales must be more even for all artists for whom this is an objective. To achieve this, work needs also to be of the highest quality

The social and networking opportunities offered by Artsweek are important for artists who habitually work in isolation; many of these networks are now meeting on a regular basis

Artsweek makes a contribution to the creative industries by helping artists to develop their practice and creating a marketplace. Further development is linked to creating better relationships with schools, colleges and universities and to identifying studio space for artists who do not have home studios or who require additional space to make larger scale work

There is potential for Artsweek to have real impact in the regeneration of communities in the north of the County. The development of Electric Wharf in Coventry also offers opportunities for Warwickshire artists in networking, development and as a model for the role of artists in their own local areas

Education activity is valuable and reaches large numbers of children and young people but it does not link directly into Artsweek and is 'more of the same' activity that happens in schools in any event. Education activity needs now to be embedded in the arts and community development activity in each area and this requires joint planning between arts team, Artzone and schools and colleges. There are some good links with the relevant certificate and degree courses in local colleges: the colleges are represented on the Steering Group and students are involved with local galleries. Again, these links should be nurtured and embedded in ongoing arts development activity and college representatives encouraged to participate more actively in the Steering Group

Artsweek is increasingly professional in its positioning, profile and promotion. The potential of the Fusion education projects and artists in residence to generate more awareness should be harnessed

A small but significant minority of professional artists do not participate, or do so reluctantly and perceive Artsweek as lacking credibility. However, an equally significant minority of professional artists participate in Artsweek because they see its potential to develop and also to support the creative community overall. Artsweek needs artists at all stages in their careers and it needs to show work of real quality. It needs to be able to create a ladder of opportunity, with established artists acting as a source of inspiration and mentoring those less established.

There is little traffic between artists or visitors from the north to the south of the county. Artists tend to remain in their own communities and see little work beyond that available within their immediate area. For future Artsweeks, networking should be encouraged across the County and exhibition exchanges could be organised as a way of exposing artists to different audiences and, for artists from the north, offering access to a public with more buying power.

In addition to clarifying artists' expectations, there were issues arising also in:

- Clarifying the vision
- Governance
- Management
- Fundraising
- Planning & Systems: data collection, interrogating data and evaluation

4.3 Vision

The original aim of Artsweek was to celebrate art in unusual spaces and places, in addition to celebrating art in conventional gallery spaces.

As the event has developed and grown over the years so has the expectation of the participating artists and we found that there was no consistent view of Artsweek's overall aims and objectives. However, the prime-motivating factor for artists in participating is to make and show their work and to reach new audiences.

What the Change Will Be

As part of the business planning process, the Steering Group must now revisit and rearticulate the vision and identify clear aims and objectives.

The vision will communicate:

- The added value that Artsweek brings to Warwickshire and the priority to support the visual arts and crafts across the county
- Artsweek's contribution to the development of a creative community
- The celebration and profiling of artists and makers
- Artsweek as an inclusive and high quality event that is visitor focused and family friendly: driven by a commitment to high quality visitor experience

The business plan will have clear strategic aims and objectives and specific, focused objectives for each local area. These objectives will form the basis of the local plans to be taken forward by the Area Co-ordinator and Networking Groups.

The objectives will include:

- Making links and connections with key creative business, with the regional development agency and the Tourism authorities
- Highlighting and quantifying the contribution of Artsweek in creating a positive image of the region
- Quantifying and creating targets for visitor development and economic development & sales
- Attracting and retaining the highest quality artists to make and show work
- Developing and supporting artists and their professional practice and training year round

4.4 Governance *What the Change Will Be*

Artsweek is still a developing event and needs both leadership and strong management. Therefore, central planning by the County Arts Service and colleagues in the District and Borough Authorities is essential, with the Head of Arts at County Council providing a lead for the project. However, this leadership needs now to be more strategic and less operational than previously.

The Steering Group must also be more strategic, providing the overall framework for Artsweek, from the basis of a new Business Plan that will set out aspirations, targets and finance for the next five-year period. The principle role for the Steering Group will be one of leadership, advocacy and fundraising, having an overview of the event within the context of the Creative Industries across the sub-region.

More involvement by artists in the planning and management of Artsweek remains a primary goal and the Area Co-ordinators are central to this, as members of the Steering Group and in leading devolved regional planning groups or networks of artists. Artist representation of the Steering Group should also be increased, with more artists from all areas included.

It is recognised that the requirements of each area of the County are not homogenous: the needs and concerns of artists in the north are different from those in the south and Artsweek needs to grow and develop in different ways in each area, within the overall framework and branding.

In order to reflect local needs, more Area Co-ordinators should be recruited for each area. A number of artists have expressed their willingness to have a more active role and to be involved in this way. The Area Co-ordinators will represent their area on the Steering Group and be able to feed into the overall planning for the event and for any events in the interim year.

The Area Co-ordinators will then lead and organise the regional networking groups, many of which started meeting as a result of Artsweek 2004. These groups are generally supported by the Arts Development Officers and should become the focus for Artsweek planning locally and for other development and training events and activity year round. In this way, it is anticipated that artists can identify and access training and continuous professional development activities that are relevant and that meet their needs. A&MT expressed concern that few artists from the north of the County took advantage of their classes and courses: having access to organised artists networks will facilitate information sharing but will help also to ensure that the design and delivery of the training is appropriate.

Formalising the area networks will serve to strengthen the management and governance of Artsweek and provide an improved framework for the development of the creative industries across the region.

Project Management

While consolidating the Steering Group and Area Networks will help to improve the governance and management of Artsweek, it only goes some way to improving the project management of the event. Artsweek needs now some additional dedicated project management resources, over and above the time that County and District Authority arts staff can offer.

Recruiting a part-time Project Co-ordinator to take forward genuine development of the creative industries is now essential for Artsweek to grow as an event. Without this additional resource, it is likely that the Steering Group and Area groups will remain bogged down by operational detail.

This is discussed in detail below in the section Options for Development.

Young Steering Group

The education strand of Artsweek needs to be integrated into the overall event, rather than bolted on as it is currently. Young people need to be more involved. The introduction of a Young Steering Group would help to provide a direct link between the overall planning and organisation of the event and young people in schools and colleges. The Group would be supported by Artzone, the Artists in Education Service and the Head of Arts. The Group would meet independently and also have joint meetings with the Steering Group to feed back on their own activities and offer input into the overall planning for the event.

There is enthusiasm from Artzone about establishing a Young Board, although it will require more planning and input from the Steering Group to consult with schools and colleges and to set it up.

The Young Steering Group would provide a focus on the creative industries in schools as part of Artsweek. It could organise and co-ordinate some of the publicity for the work by young people as well as offering insights into the planning for the overall event. Specifically, the Young Steering Group could offer advice and help to develop and organise family friendly initiatives during Artsweek, concentrating on the weekend period.

More active involvement by young people would extend the reach of Artsweek, broaden the visitor profile and involve families in visiting a range of exhibitions and studios.

This initiative would support the development of the artist-pupil-school partnership and could create some new and different working scenarios. The education activity that is part of Artsweek must not be 'more of the same' and should be sufficiently differentiated from ongoing arts and visual arts activity in schools. In addition, this initiative would contribute to understanding the artistic process, as well as involving students in the business aspects of the creative industries.

Students would be organised into Area Networking groups that mirrored the 'grown up' Steering Group, with the five area groups then meeting together regularly and meeting occasionally with the 'main' Steering Group. Subject to the appropriate Disclosure checks, local artists should be encouraged to meet this Group also and it is possible that the Young Group and the local Area Network could embark on joint projects. This could include:

- Promoting school based exhibitions
- Promoting Artsweek exhibitions of work by Young People in gallery spaces – as with Artsweek 2004
- Curating and organising an exhibition of work by adult and young artists, selecting work, hanging it, administration, promotion etc

Using schools as exhibition spaces does have a few associated hurdles, but it is not considered impossible.

Schools and colleges should be encouraged also to start collecting work, purchased from Artsweek artists. A small central exhibition of the Young Steering Group choices could perhaps stimulate further discussion about Artsweek, contemporary visual art and the relationship between the buyer and the artist. Some schools do have small collections already and similar projects would expand the collector base, share knowledge and foster a sense of community.

There is the additional benefit of the Young Steering Group being able to act as 'young consultants' for Artsweek and to advocate for the event in their schools and communities.

There are resource implications in establishing a Young Steering but some funds may be available within existing Artsweek education budgets or from ACE.

Contracts

To clarify expectations, Artsweek will have tacit contracts with participating artists which assert the roles and responsibilities of the artists, County Arts Service and the Steering Group. This contract will include: information requirements, the need to meet deadlines, a commitment to a level of self generated press activity and a minimum level of participation in the area network. In return the Steering Group will agree to provide:

- A brochure entry
- Information and marketing kits, as currently
- Publicity kit from a menu of posters, leaflets, brochures, bunting
- Training and personal development opportunities
- A press kit: with sample releases and contacts
- Centralised press service with releases about Artsweek overall
- Central marketing campaign to raise awareness of Artsweek
- A local marketing budget, within established guidelines to ensure consistency of branding, to be spent by the Area Co-ordinators and local steering/network groups to achieve maximum effectiveness

Entry or participation fees should be reviewed and will form part of the contract. Fees are much lower than any comparable event and a slightly higher fee will help the overall budget significantly and may help to denote the quality of the event. However, there is some anecdotal evidence from Artsweek, and evidence from similar events, that a higher fee level does not always guarantee a higher quality of work.

But an increase of £20-£30 for an individual entry and commensurate increases for group entry is not likely to cause concern for artists.

In future the Steering Group may consider a membership scheme for Artsweek where artists pay an annual fee to be included, in addition to entry fees for their brochure entry and publicity package.

This works well for other art weeks and open studio events around the country and may offer a further income generation stream for Artsweek as well as strengthening commitment to the event.

Artists, or local Steering Groups, could be offered the chance to order and pay for additional publicity over and above that in their kit.

4.5 Funding

It is recognised that funding for the arts and arts development is under pressure and that funding for the visual arts is a minor part of Arts Development portfolios. However, Artsweek makes a significant economic contribution, in addition to its cultural benefits, and needs now to be positioned as a significant item in Arts and Cultural development budgets.

Artsweek is able to draw down a range of funds from different sources for various projects, including contributions from the County and District authorities and ACE.

Standstill funding is anticipated from the local authorities, with the exception of Warwickshire District Council that indicated the possibility of an increase in contribution. Rather than the County Arts Service applying to the various district authorities for these funds annually, partnership agreements should now be developed to secure long-term funding for Artsweek from these budgets. Artsweek would then be identified, not as an additional project, but as key to art form, cultural and arts development in each area and the contribution it makes to education activity and the local economy recognised.

To support these agreements, the Artsweek business plan must ensure that there are explicit links with the local Community Plan themes and outcomes.

The County Council also needs to protect Artsweek funding within the competing priorities of its own strategic reviews and the forthcoming reviews of its core funded clients.

Artsweek has been successful in attracting funds from ACE West Midlands for the Artists' residencies. These residencies are an essential element of Artsweek and make a key contribution to the ability of artists to develop and extend their practice. ACE's priorities for developing the creative industries are investing in product and workforce development. Therefore, it is anticipated that ACE will continue to fund the residencies but they must make more impact within communities. The residencies worked well as a stand-alone element of the overall Artsweek programme. Given the available project management resources, the Artsweek team achieved as much as it could with the residencies, while remaining frustrated that there could have been more opportunities to engage with more people. This needs to be a priority for the Steering Group and the Young Steering Group. Having an Artsweek Development Co-ordinator would help to bring together the various strands of the programme.

ACE should be asked also to support the project manager development role as this will make a critical contribution to both workforce and product development and will be essential to the development of the creative industries across the County and the sub region.

There is no funding currently from Advantage West Midlands (AWM). There is no creative industries cluster so any potential funding will need to come from product and visitor development budgets and from:

- Advocating Artsweek's contribution to the development of creative and healthy communities
- Improving and extending the range and quality of the tourist and visitor offer

Initial discussions with AWM identified a willingness to be involved if it could be demonstrated that Artsweek makes a significant impact economically and culturally or if better links could be created with Business Link. In this way, artists would be able to access business advice and support, in addition to the support and courses offered by A&MT in Coventry.

However, AWM was reluctant to suggest that there would be funds available for Artsweek but was willing to engage in further discussions. These should now take place as part of the Business Planning process.

There is support from Warwickshire County Council Economic Development and Tourism in developing Artsweek as a key part of the tourism offer in Warwickshire. Discussions are already underway about creating and commissioning a specific publication focusing on Warwickshire's Creative Industries to sit alongside existing product strands including Heritage, the Environment, Food Trails, Literature and, of course, Shakespeare. The tourism agencies view Artsweek as extending and improving their cultural offer: Artsweek offers high quality contemporary visual arts and crafts and an opportunity to meet and talk to artists direct and so helps to position the creative industries in the County and wider sub region.

As part of extending the Artsweek product, there is an opportunity to develop new strands to attract visitors and increase sales.

"Small-scale and informal, artist-run and emerging spaces... provide a crucial showcase for... experimental work and are also an important entry point for younger as well as more established collectors. These spaces may not be overtly commercial but they often make very significant sales while at the same time continuing to maintain an experimental, challenging image. Some financial support at the outset, and at key points in their development would help these important sources of cultural vitality to prosper and grow...." Louisa Buck, Market Matters, ACE

4.6 Marketing and Development What the Change Will Be

Marketing Plan

Artsweek has now a body of visitor/audience intelligence and sales data that it did not have previously. Taken together with the small sample from the Audiences Central Festival Research, Artsweek has a profile of its visitors. This will enable it to segment target markets for future activity. Artsweek must maintain this data and continue the evaluation and research for future events keep it up to date. Part of the Artsweek Business Plan will be a detailed marketing plan outlining the strategy for Artsweek and related activity. Area Co-ordinators and local Area Steering Groups should write their own marketing campaign plans which will feed in the overall strategic marketing plan. The plan is vital to keep their Artsweek planning on course.

However, marketing knowledge among the artists is limited or patchy; members of the wider Steering Group, including the arts development officers, have little additional capacity to undertake much additional marketing or publicity. This could be the focus for one or two Arts & Media Training or Artsweek marketing training sessions; being able to write a marketing plan should prove useful also in their creative businesses.

But, to be truly effective, Artsweek requires additional marketing resource and needs to develop the skills of the workforce.

An Artsweek Development Co-ordinator is now required to take the event forward. In partnership with the Steering Group and the participating artists, this role would lead on:

- Business Planning
- Coaching and mentoring artists, individually and collectively
- Supporting Steering Group
- Developing Young Steering Group
- Strategic marketing
- Auditing existing local marketing activity and coaching Area Networks to create marketing plans
- Market development & associated product development
- Visitor development
- Fundraising and Sponsorship
- Business Links

This study has looked also at the positioning of the event, premises and product development and each of these is considered below.

Overall, there is consensus that Artsweek remain as a bi-ennial event in July, but offering added value and with improved synergy across the various elements of its programme. In addition, there is latent demand for an artfair event in the interim year for professional artists. This would be designed stimulate the market, generate sales and promote Artsweek and the creative industries.

Positioning

Artsweek is positioned as a celebration of Warwickshire's creative Industries: a celebration of the visual arts and crafts and of the artists and makers. It should celebrate Warwickshire's creative communities and create opportunities for its citizens and visitors: it offers a learning environment as well as creating a market in which to sell and buy contemporary art. Artsweek is a focal point and an identified brand for the development of the visual arts and craft sector. Any associated spin-off events would also carry the branding.

Artsweek should contribute also to the training and development of artists and local creative businesses and is a focal point for their activity.

Artsweek should take its place alongside more established Art weeks and Open Studio events as a key event in the visual arts calendar and as a key summer event in Warwickshire. With a small marketing budget this is best achieved through advertising or advertising exchanges in other Open Studio brochures and marketing materials for visitor attractions and events. Similarly, Artsweek should have a presence at major local events, including the Royal Show and Warwick Festival

Promotion

Artsweek marketing has improved significantly: the 'target' visual identity is rapidly becoming established as the Artsweek brand mark. This identity is used consistently and links the brochure, posters and signage. Artists should use the logo, as well as any appropriate funding logos, on any print material they create themselves for the event, including for private view or openings. It may be helpful to have the local authority logos and visual identity in pdf format as downloads on the Artsweek website, together with guidelines on use and application of the logos and the visual identity.

The brochure should remain as the primary marketing tool but with more attention given to:

- Scheduling: timing and opening hours of exhibitions in agreed 'slots'
- Co-ordinating opening hours for open studios/exhibitions in close proximity
- Displaying exhibitions and opening times graphically in a calendar or grid layout
- Eliminating multiple artists entries for one exhibition: group together artists who have joint shows
- Access and ease of use: the brochure is first and foremost a marketing tool, not a catalogue and must be visitor focused
- Creating visitor friendly 'trails' or routes to follow
- Improving the accuracy of maps

The relatively high cost (just over £12,000) of the brochure was questioned but it is valued for the high quality of its production; the reproduction images of artists work needs to be precise and clean. In addition, the brochure is retained by visitors, purchasers and potential dealers as a record or catalogue of the event.

Additional background information about the artists, or links to their own websites, could be added to the online version of the brochure, together with contact information.

The brochure attracts some advertising and more would certainly help to reduce costs. However, unless it is relevant, there is a danger that it dilutes Artsweek communication and more advertising would inevitably mean a reduction in the available space for artists. Therefore, any advertising should be relevant and appropriate and the current space devoted to artist's entries retained.

Artists are given a basic Artsweek publicity kit. However, they could be offered the opportunity to purchase additional material – posters etc – from a menu of options.

The quality, quantity and accuracy of signposting and directions is paramount, particularly in rural areas. For venues off the beaten track, seeing an Artsweek sign can often be the only reassurance that the visitor is on the right road.

Equally, if budget enables, generic signage should be positioned at all the entry points into the Country and into the towns. This worked well for Shipston in 2004 and helps to raise general awareness. It may be possible to identify a sponsor for this signage, which needs to be billboard size to be noticed and effective. Similarly, banners in the main town centres emerged as important as bunting for individual venues, but this would require considerably more marketing resource than Artsweek has currently.

Market Development and Target Markets

Artsweek creates a market for the enjoyment and sales of contemporary visual arts and crafts in an area that has little regular indigenous habit of attending or purchasing contemporary art. Artsweek is helping to stimulate this market, which is in differing states of development across the county.

Many Artsweek artists have already spotted, and are fulfilling, the market demand for art as a lifestyle product. Many consumers are seeking out something original for their home or office, not something mass-produced from a High street store. This has to be one of the prime communication messages for future events, including the latent demand we identified for an 'art fair' or similar event in the intervening year to Artsweek.

Retaining the quality of work is paramount and, with an open access policy, Artsweek has to ensure the overall quality of the work in both exhibitions and open studios. Local area groups and co-ordinators play a role here in supporting peer development, in mentoring younger or less experienced artists and in critiquing each other's work. In this way, an artist would submit only his or her finest work for inclusion in Artsweek.

The Open exhibitions in the local galleries are another opportunity to select from among the best work available and it is beholden on the curators to maintain the quality threshold here.

Target Market

To recap, in brief, the target market is:

- Warwickshire residents, particularly 30+
- Female groups, aged 35/40+ for day out combined with intellectual and creative offer
- Arts attenders, across range of artforms, at local and regional venues
- Leisure artists
- Professional buyers, including dealers and commercial galleries
- Schools: through education project, Young Steering Group and as independent visitors
- Students and lecturers
- Family Groups, attracted by added value activity
- Warwickshire businesses and other creative industries: linking themselves with the creativity of the Artsweek sector

Visitor Retention

The main aim of the Artsweek marketing must be primarily on visitor retention. Visitor development is important but with a third of the visitors in 2004 new to the event, Artsweek must ensure that it develops a relationship with these visitors to ensure their return for 2006 and any subsequent events. As the quality of the visitor experience is high, and given that visitors experienced an average of 2-3 venues, using existing visitors as ambassadors and to spread word of mouth has huge potential.

This could be done in a number of ways, for example, by recognising their loyalty to Artsweek in direct mail letters, inviting to openings, offering a percentage off sales.

Market Development

Visitor development will be generated by additional activity and added value events, as well as new visitors generated by the improved co-ordination of the overall programme.

Markets for development include:

Tourism

- VFR market: Visiting Friends & Family. This is an important market for Warwickshire tourism and contributes significantly to the local economy. Artsweek is an important additional offer, combining historic and picturesque towns and villages with a high quality visitor experience that is different from anything else on offer
- Short break tourist market, domestic and international: this is a market to which Warwickshire promotes actively. In 2002 1.5 million visitors spent short breaks in Warwickshire and the County accounts for 14% of all staying trips to the West Midlands region. Cultural tourism is linked to attendance at both free and paid for visitor attractions and, again, Artsweek offers a differentiated product with potential to become a destination event

Initial discussions are underway to capitalise on partnerships with the local tourism authorities and, potentially, to create a campaign to generate cultural tourists.

Family Friendly

Not all venues or artists might feel this is an important market, particularly if their work is not suitable. However, this is another large and untapped market for Artsweek; families are actively seeking new leisure pursuits that they can enjoy together at weekends. In addition to promoting the diversity of Artsweek, using the schools exhibitions as a starting point, the Young Steering Group would lead in designing the marketing and publicity to attract families. Many artists are also educators and are good at interpreting their work and sharing information with young people. Tools might include:

- Additional events and workshops targeted at families
- Specially written interpretation materials
- Quizzes, children's notes etc
- Section on website identifying suitable venues/exhibitions
- Play trays or art trolleys, similar to those in the County's galleries currently

Education and Life Long Learning

The local colleges participate in Artsweek currently with exhibitions of student work and experimentation. Students use Artsweek as a way of seeing a wide range of work and discussing and learning from professional, practicing artists.

Artsweek visitors are enthusiastic and questioning, keen to talk to the artists about process and technique. The more they understood about the work and time involved in creating a piece, the more they were likely to appreciate the work and to appreciate value for money and time reflected in the price.

Therefore, we identified an opportunity to create a short programme offering study days, master classes or participation workshops as part of Artsweek, helping to create an educated audience for Artsweek and for contemporary art. These would be open to people aged 16-18 years and above; the younger age range would be catered for through family friendly events and school projects.

Not every artist would be expected to deliver events: this would require co-ordination in the local area and a small number of events would be offered over each of the weekends and one on a weekday. The range and style of the events would depend on the participating artists and colleges. It could include:

- Practical courses or master classes
- Self directed themed activity or trails: including essential information like journey times, landmarks etc
- Guided trails: staffed by volunteers and taking in a number of exhibitions/studios, with associated interpretation
- Study days focusing on the work of particular artists or themes
- Talks and meet the artist events: e.g question and answer sessions
- Visitor participation – e.g adding a piece of mosaic to a piece to create an artwork created by Artsweek visitors by the end of the event; one artist did this during 2004.

One of the Artist's Residency projects could perhaps be devoted in part to this Life Long Learning Participation strand.

Taster exhibitions

The Rugby taster exhibition and the Shipston Trail worked well in 2004 and should now be replicated in the other areas.

One of the challenges for Artsweek is that it has no central focus as the exhibitions and open studios are scattered across the County. As a result, it is difficult to create a sense of event or occasion and difficult for the visitor to have a sense of the scale of Artsweek.

Artsweek needs to have a focal or 'banner' event in each of the five areas. The public galleries and museums across the County play a significant role in this respect as:

- Hubs of activity year round
- A source of inspiration, showing work by national and international artists and raising aspirations and quality locally
- A focal point for artists' development and networking
- Creating links with artists at all career stages, including students and colleges, and providing spaces to exhibit high quality work
- A source of support and critique
- A focal point for visitors year round and as a gateway to Artsweek
- Centres of education and learning

These regional venues could be positive 'role models' but more connections need to be made between artists and the curators across Warwickshire. Each gallery has its own priorities and policies and this may or may not include local artists. Where Rugby gives over regular space to local artists, The Pump Rooms at Leamington tend not to. However, local public collections offer an entry point for visitors and potential exposure to the 'art market'. A relevant exhibition tied into Artsweek, or an event in the intervening year, would help significantly with raising awareness and giving Artsweek a mark of quality.

Some artists also suggested that, rather than a launch, there could be an exhibition in a central location with a piece of work from each participating artist. This would be displayed together with the artist's brochure entry, background information and details of how to see more. Such an event could also be an Artsweek auction to generate advance publicity, create a newsworthy event and generate much needed income to invest; potentially, it could take place in the intervening year to Artsweek.

Showcases

There is little travel across the County by either artists or visitors and it would help to extend the range and style of work available if artists could be supported to reach new markets within Warwickshire.

There is enthusiasm for some exhibition or studio 'exchanges' with artists in the north exhibiting in the south and vice versa. Artists across the County consider that this would support their development, while artists in the north of the country would welcome the exposure to the more affluent buyers in the south.

This could happen as a pilot project for 2006 and be rolled out for future years if successful. Again, the Area Co-ordinator and local Steering Group would be important in achieving this but, like many of the other product development initiatives, it is unlikely to be achieved without additional people resources for development and co-ordination.

Career Path

The universities and colleges are involved with Artsweek but need now to be more tied in to demonstrate that there is a critical career path in the creative industries in Warwickshire, from studying, to final degree show, to making and exhibiting across the County.

In order to support the development of the creative industries, Warwickshire needs to retain emerging artists to live and work in the area and to support their emerging businesses. Access to studio space and to markets is a critical aspect of this. The cultural quarter at Leamington Spa will make a contribution to this. In addition, there is some anecdotal evidence that a number of young artists have been attracted back to work in Warwickshire by the quality of life, location and the proximity to major population centres and transport links.

5. Options for Development:

As a result of the research and evaluation, and after much feedback and discussion with artists and stakeholders, three options for development emerged and their worth and value were tested further:

1. Artsweek Development Post
2. Artfair – and possible Artsweek website
3. Bursary

There is some money available to progress at least one of these options to secure the future of Artsweek to 2006 and beyond. In addition, the County Council and Steering Group would seek matching funds from ACE and Advantage West Midlands.

3.1 Artsweek Development Post

Artsweek cannot grow and develop without additional dedicated management resources and it is our clear recommendation that Artsweek appoint a Development Co-ordinator.

This option met with overwhelming support and emerged as the preferred option of all those consulted as it is the only option that will help Artsweek to achieve management and financial stability as well as grow the event for the benefit of artists and visitors. With this post in place, all the other initiatives suggested can follow.

The focus for this role must be on development, not just co-ordination/implementation. The developmental priority is to offer a central focus by taking a long-term view of Artsweek, devoting attention to development projects and fundraising, while consolidating its successes. Marketing would be a priority in recognition that the marketing for Artsweek is under-resourced and under developed and this has had an impact on the overall awareness of the visual arts and crafts, wider recognition in the press and media and in the levels of sales for all artists.

The post would work with the Steering Group, local area groups and the co-ordinators, developing marketing and fundraising practice, delivering marketing training and building capacity within existing visual arts and crafts businesses. The post would essentially contribute to the development of the workforce and the subsequent development and growth of the creative industries.

The post holder would:

- Support local area networks, offering advice and expertise and helping them to develop their own marketing strategies
- Support the Steering Group to develop an Artsweek business plan and marketing plan
- Support the Steering Group in the implementation of Artsweek
- Liase with funders and stakeholders
- Research and make fundraising and sponsorship proposals and applications
- Research and develop additional projects and activity to add value to Artsweek – trails, talks & events, etc
- Support area co-ordinators

This post requires proper support and resources to attract an appropriately skilled person. It would suit an administrator/manager with a marketing bent, or a marketing person with strong project management skills. Financial ability and experience and success in fundraising and sponsorship is essential, as is the ability to gain the support and trust of the visual arts and crafts community across the County. Listening and communication skills are therefore critical.

The post would sit within the County Arts Service.

2. Artfair event in intervening year: Artsweek remains as a bi-ennial event

There is strong support for Artsweek to remain as a bi-ennial event with an open access policy and as the main focus for the visual arts and crafts in Warwickshire. However, there is equally strong support for an Artfair event focusing on professional artists in the intervening year. Professional artists feel the additional focus this would provide could help them to reach new markets; it has potential also to stimulate the market for contemporary art overall. Art fairs are also major meeting and operating points for collectors and offer an invaluable opportunity to advertise and showcase galleries and artists.

The event would need to be curatorially led, rather than arts development focused as Artsweek is currently. The focus would be on high quality contemporary work and on making sales and the event should be held centrally in the County, typically Leamington Spa, Warwick or Stratford. Timing was considered and a September or October date should avoid major clashes with other similar events, although this would require further research with clash diaries locally and regionally. The only danger is that artists might participate in the artfair instead of participating in Artsweek.

To be effective, the Artfair would need to have a mix of artists, galleries, agents, dealers, promoters and facilitators. This would require a high level marketing campaign to reach these audiences and to attract them to Warwickshire. In addition, the fair would require the critical mass of artists and makers across the sub-region to make it work.

The Artfair would be held over one weekend and is modelled on a similar event in Hereford. It would aim to be high profile with a concentration of artists and small businesses. Overall it would be a tangible expression of the creative industries in the County.

Presentation would need to be highly professional with high quality stands and a uniform approach to exhibitors stands or shells. A variety of stand sizes from 2 m² should be available.

With sales as the driving priority, the cost to exhibit would be at the higher end of scale reflecting the high quality of the event; the cost should be similar to the Hereford event and to art events in Birmingham. The Artfair would undoubtedly need commercial support but would also need the support of the enterprise and development agency. There would be support, probably more in kind than in cash, from the Tourism agencies also.

The marketing communication would link the event to lifestyle, promoting high quality original purchases for the home and business. The target market would be the general public wanting to buy art, dealers, agents, commercial galleries, lifestyle retailers, hotels and businesses purchasing contemporary art.

There is a clear opportunity to encourage people to start collecting and to dip their toe in the market. ACE's Own Art scheme would be promoted alongside offering an accessible way to make high value purchases.

The art fair could be a catalyst also for Warwickshire trade missions to other artfairs nationally, including the various affordable artfairs, Battersea Artfair, Contemporary Art Society's (CAS) annual *ARTfutures* Fair in London and Glasgow artfair; to major international artfairs including Art Basel, ARCO in Madrid, Art Cologne, Art Forum in Berlin, the Chicago Art Fair, the Armory in New York and the Turin Art Fair. In the short to medium term, Artsweek should be supporting trade delegations of Warwickshire artists in any event.

As the Artfair event is clearly additional to Artsweek and to other activity, the key issue is who will organise it. There is currently no project management or management capacity within the County Arts Service or the other local authorities to develop this project and it would require additional financial and human resource.

The Artfair option met with high-level approval from artists and the Steering Group but needs additional research and to be worked up and costed as part of the Business planning process. With additional resource the first Artfair could be piloted in 2007.

Website

There was a mixed reaction to developing a dedicated website for Artsweek. Respondents questioned what it was for: what it would achieve, who would use it and, crucially, who would maintain it. As there is an Artsweek website already hosted on the County Council site a stand alone one was not considered a top priority.

However, the existing website should be improved in any event and a dedicated website could develop over time. It is important to have Artsweek brochure on the web as a constant presence and a record of the event and the artists.

Website development:

- On the existing site Multimap links to venues/locations would solve problem of maps in brochure
- Contact numbers are currently for venues rather than artists; both should be included
- Create links to artist's own websites

Overall there was little enthusiasm for devoting resources to web based or web driven marketing activity. Equally, there little support from ACE who did not consider that websites were particularly effective in generating interest and sales for artists. In general, few sales are driven through web and tend to be made face to face.

The degree of web presence should be revisited and explored when Artsweek is more developed and there is a higher level of awareness.

3. Bursary

There was support for an Artsweek Bursary, particularly if it was targeted at graduating artists. It should be branded as an Artsweek bursary to maintain profile and to create the link with the event as supportive of artist's development and careers.

An Artsweek Bursary would be open to all forms: visual arts, craft, mixed media, digital, photographic etc and should be competitive. A panel of recognised experts and key Artsweek partners would select the recipient.

Artsweek would liaise closely with education institutions and the bursary should focus on encouraging emerging artists to develop their practice. It should be seen as a coveted award that offers a first step on ladder, access to professional networks, and the opportunity to develop a studio base or creative business in Warwickshire.

Therefore, the Bursary needs to be attractive financially and should offer a minimum of £20-£25,000. There would be certain requirements and stipulations for the Bursary recipient to fulfil: e.g. offering access to their work, practical workshops, and schools/college work if appropriate.

The Bursary offers PR opportunities for Artsweek, as well as the opportunity for the individual to raise their own profile. It should be offered in addition to the Artsweek artist's residencies, not instead of, as it is a different type of activity.

However, should the Artsweek Steering Group decide to progress the bursary option, it could refocus the artists in residence scheme to find additional resources for it. There are some other planned bursary schemes in discussion currently, so an Artsweek bursary would need to compliment this or could be subsumed into another planned project.

Overall, respondents considered that the Bursary option has merit but that it was less of a priority than having a development post.