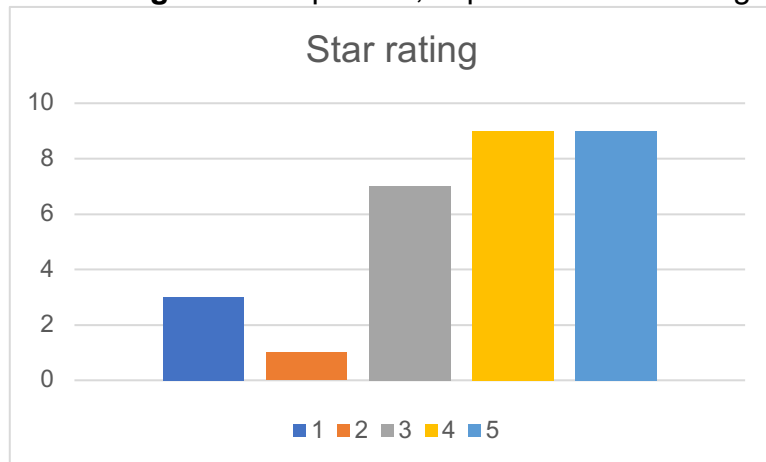


## Open Studios 2019 feedback survey

35 studios and 8 venues invited to take part in the survey. 31 responded – a higher rate than last year.

**Star ratings** – 29 responses, improvement on ratings from 2018



## Organisation and promotion

	Brochure	Comms	Web site	Publicity materials	Media coverage	Social media coverage
Poor	1			2	5	2
So so	3	4	9	9	10	11
Very good	20	20	16	14	11	15
Excellent	6	5	4	5	2	1
Total responses	30	29	29	30	28	29

Brochure distribution – some short of numbers, distribution could've been earlier, maybe look at different design (larger or foldout map).

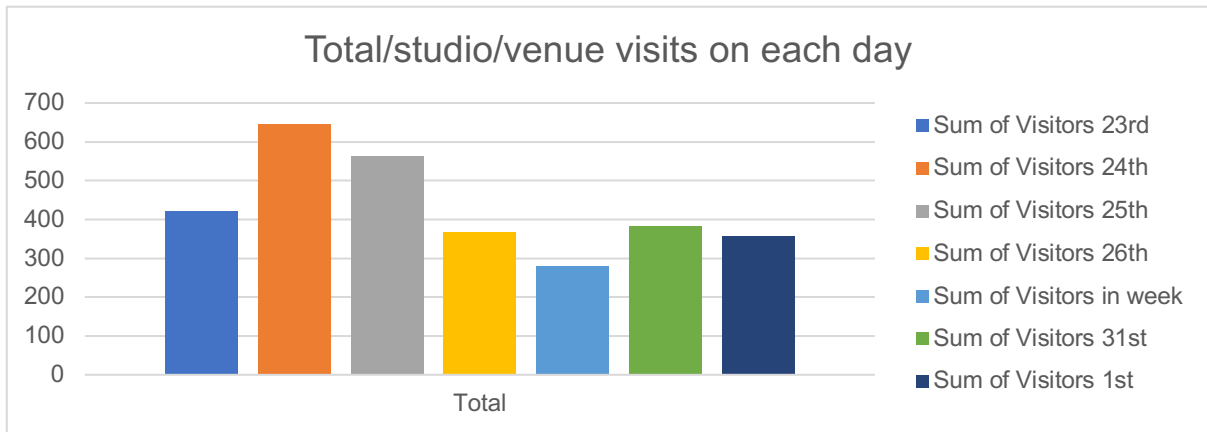
Web site – slow page loads seems to be main issue, plus some comments about not promoting individual studios (but we didn't necessarily know what each was doing)

Media and social media – the areas where there's most scope for improvement. Short videos liked.

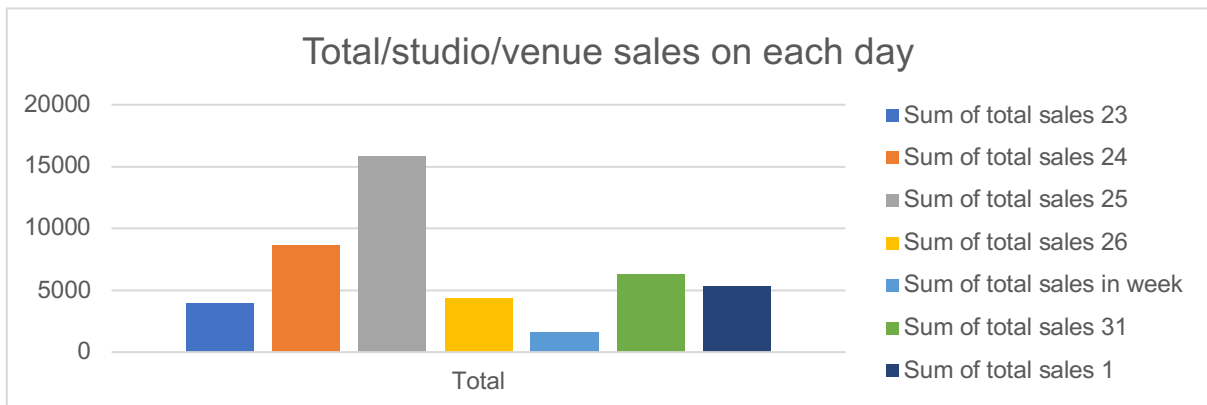
### Brochures, loyalty cards and posters

Quantities overall seemed about right. Need to get better on distribution as equal numbers of studios had too many or too few.

**Visitors** – total visits 3,013. Busiest studio had 183 visitors and quietest had 17 visitors. Smaller spread than last year (lower max, higher minimum). Average number of visitors down from 135 to 100.



**Sales** of £46,000 for the 27 studios that reported sales. Average sales for those who reported figures was £1,700 which is higher than 2018.



### Comments/suggestions from visitors

A range of comments, positive and negative, but generally more positive:

Positive: the variety and quality of work; good signage on approach to studios; friendly welcomes and interesting people

Not so positive: problems with access to Steamer Terminal exhibition; marketing as some visitors found studios by chance; would have liked higher density of studios in some areas

### Interesting promotional ideas

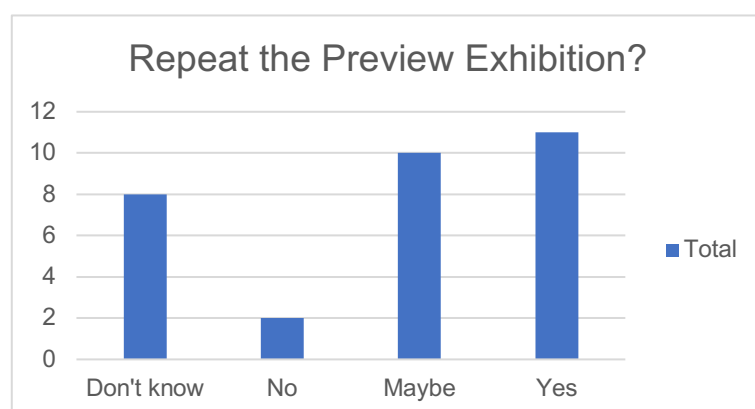
A number of examples where artists or groups of artists tried different ways to promote their studios. Examples include:

- Offer of hands on taster sessions – e.g. weaving, screen printing
- Teas/coffees/home baking, pop up cafe – in one case raising funds for Oban Hospice
- Created a labyrinth at the Loch Melfort Hotel (venue) with an invitation to see and do more at the studio. Received a commission as a result.
- Recreated a version of a painting that has generated interest in the past – encouraged repeat visits and progress shared on Facebook. Artwork sold via blind auction after the event to support a community art project

- Promotion via blog, Facebook and community pages
- Made laminated A5 fliers with details and images of artists' work in the immediate locality (Tayvallich) for distribution to pub & coffee shop (and asked for social media publicity). These could remain on tables as wipe clean. Will do again next year and include local holiday houses etc as this did make a difference.
- Large banner on main road
- Gave away small items of artwork to children and those who come on public transport or by bicycle. I didn't promote this beforehand - I just wanted to show my appreciation to those who'd made the effort not to use fossil fuels.
- Workshop and demonstrations proved popular

Note: Most of these were local and so detail didn't feature on the Artmap Argyll web site.

## Steamer Terminal preview exhibition



The idea of the preview exhibition and launch event were well liked. After that some studio visitors commented on how much they liked the exhibition, but others found access difficult as entrance and signage were not clear. Also, a clearer briefing for staff at the Steamer Terminal and/or staffing by Artmap volunteers may have helped visitors find and enjoy the exhibition more.

On the whole a welcome development, but we could do a lot better.

## Other comments/suggestions for improvements

A number of suggestions broadly categorised as:

- **Networking/support:** more chances for artists to meet, help each other, develop clusters, share experience; more support for first time studios
- **Promotional materials:** do we need a brochure?; better maps; earlier distribution of brochure and more availability year round to continue to promote artists; larger format brochure A5, A4?; brochure helped people plan visits; web site slow loading and at times directed to spam (security issue?); leaflet/fold out map approach
- **Marketing:** more advertising that is more targeted; works with B&Bs hotels etc to target tourists; some places under the impression they had been turned down as advertisers???.; social media not consistent or coordinated and sometimes comms lacked clarity; high school links with students on the

Friday; more local advertising e.g. Oban FM, Bid4Oban; more obvious leafleting

- **Format:** try other events at other times of year; group exhibition is a good idea; need greater clarity on who is open on the second weekend; maybe shift opening so open later close later (10-6pm?)
- **Studios:** recruit more island based studios to link with tourist routes

Appreciation for the voluntary effort needed to make Artmap run and also need for more people to get involved.

## **Initial actions following discussion of the feedback**

**Social media:** Need to rationalise what we have and ensure better coordination. Structure needs to change so artists can post/share in one location to increase profile and enable easier marketing/promotion so that there is one social media space where most activity is happening

**Web site:** main issue is getting profile pages to load more quickly. Attempts to fix this so far haven't worked, so may need change of format. Some changes needed to improve navigation. Also need better links with social media activity.

**Recruiting new studios:** Essential as we need at least 40 studios/venues for the event to break even. The Tayvallich cluster has worked well for a number of years, attracting visitors and artists working together. Looks like there could be potential to do more of this around Taynuilt, Ardfern/Craobh Haven/Loch Melfort and possibly Oban.

**Events:** Looking at the potential to have an Artmap exhibition earlier in the year to showcase artists' work in one location. Initial thoughts are Feb/March which may encourage more artists to open studios (deadline to commit to open studios is in April). Also need to have 'social' events where artists can meet – possibly next arrange something at the time of the AGM