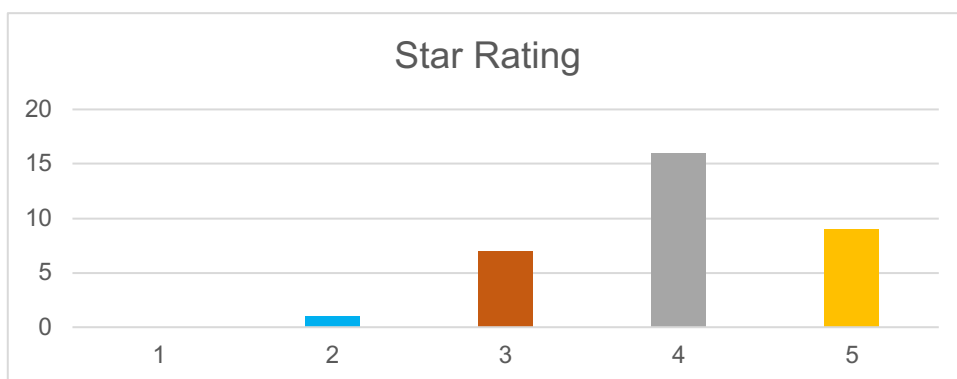


Open Studios 2021 feedback survey

39 studios and 4 venues invited to take part in the survey. 32 artists and 2 venues responded to the survey

Star ratings – 33 responses, with 78% rating the event as 4 or 5 stars – a significant improvement on the 68% score from 2020 (which was higher than the 2019 figure)



Organisation and promotion

	Poor	So so	Very good	Excellent
Communications before and during the event	0	2	26	8
The web site	1	6	23	6
New style guide/leaflet	0	3	23	10
Poster	1	10	21	4
Coverage in the media	1	12	14	3
Coverage on social media	0	7	15	14
Weekly Instagram 'take over' featuring Artmap artists	0	4	23	8

Overall feedback on the organisation, communication and promotion of the event was very strong and showed significant improvements on 2020 for the printed materials. The 90% positive response to the new style combined guide and leaflet is a clear endorsement of this as an approach to continue in future.

The more than 80% positive response to the social media support provided by Keira is also a strong indication that this approach introduced last year as a response to the covid situation is something we should continue in future.

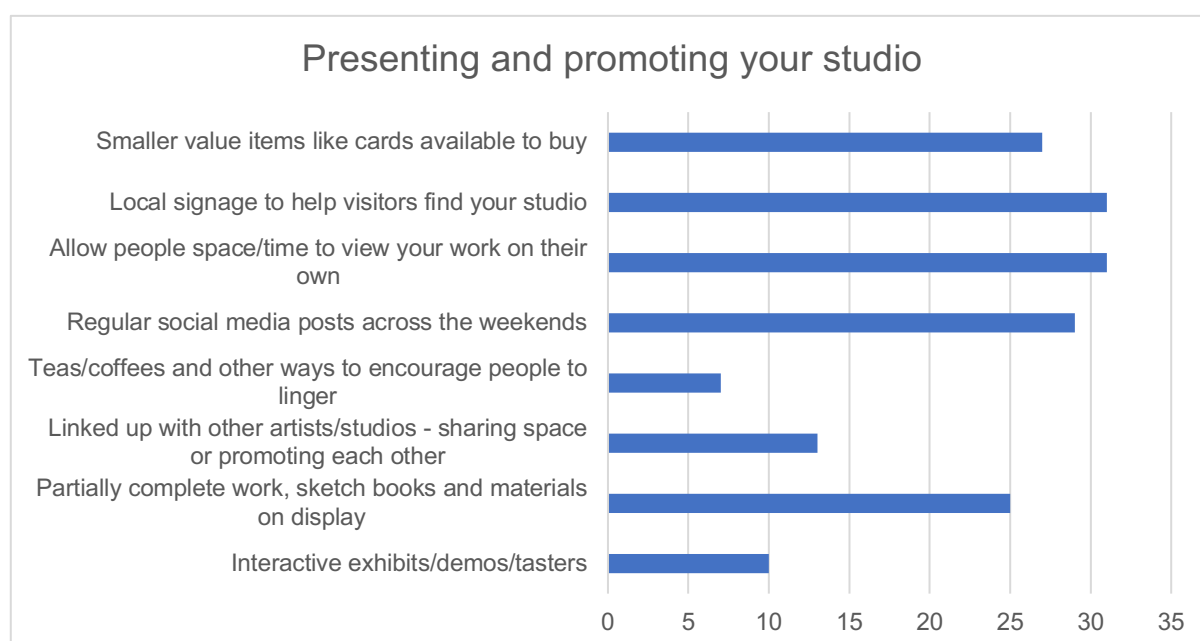
This year we tried the Instagram weekly takeovers by member artists and these received a more than 85% positive rating with some comments made that this should continue as a year round activity.

Distribution of the leaflets and guides does still appear to be an area where we can improve what we do. The paid for distribution using Direct Distribution appears to work well, but the more local supplies of leaflets, posters and loyalty cards for studios and venues taking part does need to be improved.

	I had too few	I had the right amount	I had too many
New style guide/leaflet	16	15	5
Posters	6	13	17
Loyalty cards	3	10	23

The print run for leaflets does need to be increased in future and maybe we need to find a different way to do the loyalty cards.

This year the feedback survey included a question about how artists and venues presented and promoted themselves as a simple approach to learn what different artists are doing and to share experience between artists and venues.



“I did link up with the charity whose space I was sharing. This was very successful in that it helped bring people into the art on show. It helped enormously in promoting the event.”

“Teas and coffees were on hold this year because of Covid but I normally offer as it works on many levels as ice breaker/welcome/conversation etc”

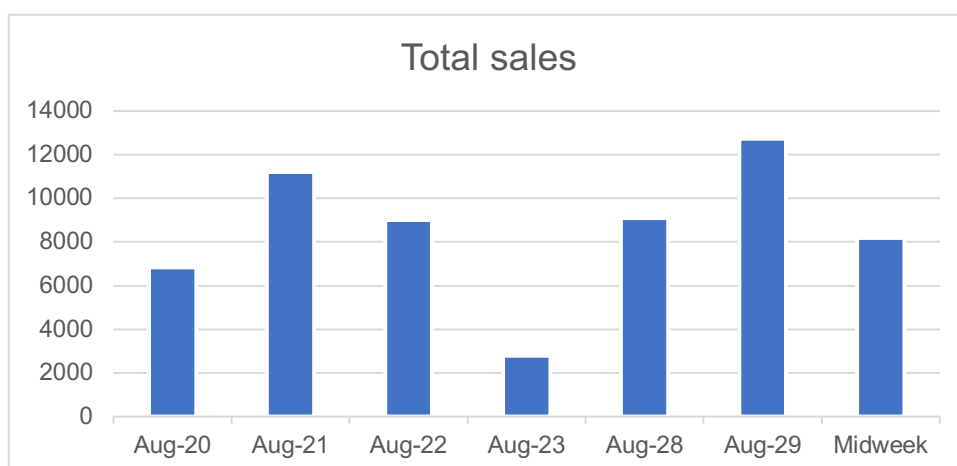
“Silent Auction of 4 pieces of work I completed over the two week Art Map period”

“Linked up with other local events that coincided, esp MOKfest. Created presence in local Facebook groups before (and during) the events.”

Visitors – 29 studios reported detail of visitor numbers. Total visits 3,462, which is 47% up on last year. Busiest studio had 504 visitors and quietest had 10 visitors. Average number of visitors up from 118 to 124. (Excludes the studio that was online only for the event.)



Sales of £59,800 for the 29 studios that reported sales. Average sales for those who reported figures was ~ £2,100, which is similar to the figure for 2020.



Comments/suggestions from visitors and studios

Positives: Most enjoyed the experience. Bigger map and better signage helped. Visitors book worked well. Visitors relaxed and linger over a cup of tea. Positive feedback from visitors despite many not being aware of the Artmap weekend. A lot of visitors and locals who knew nothing of Artmap. Visitors all positive. Great to be part of this.

Negatives: Some studios hard to find. Some missed the booklet. Opening times not clear on the guide. Leaflet map insufficient. Web site map un-downloadable.

Neutral: Would be good to have more artists in an area (Inveraray). Poor awareness of the prize draw. Had a map pinned on the studio door to encourage people to visit other studios. Would the long weekend on the bank holiday be better? Opening times could be clearer. Show off artists work more on the web site.

Thoughts on developing the social media activity

Overall positive comments about the contribution Keira made to help raise the profile of the open studios and the specific support she provided to artists.

Positives: Continue. Great job. Maybe more of a build up to the event. Definitely good at helping with posts. Should do again next year. Continue through the year with the weekly takeovers. Keira visiting studios was appreciated. E-mails clear and comprehensive. Keira's support extremely valuable. Instagram has helped to make connections with other artists involved. Keep the takeovers. Good to have someone coordinating social media.

Negatives: Disappointed in the low response to some posts – members need to do their part. We need to be smarter. Were the graphics overused. The key on the guide for opening times was too subtle.

Neutral: Are we reaching a new audience, likes are only from other members/artists. Advertise more locally? Find it difficult promoting myself – share examples of what others are saying. Spend more time supporting new and outlying studios/venues. Was the Artmap graphic too familiar when reused – could people have thought they'd seen it already? Short videos of studios or artists at work? Would a longer build up help or is a short burst of activity better? How do we get more people to engage through the year? Do more with local Facebook pages "All Things Tarbert" and "Things for Sale in and Around Lochgilphead" etc. I only use Facebook – guidance on other platforms would be good (missed the session with Keira, so would be good to do again next year). More outreach – tagging local businesses, destinations, organisations to broaden audience.

What did you learn?

This year the feedback survey included a question to encourage reflection on the event to help artists think about improvements for future events and to share experience with others. These are a selection of the comments.

"People love digging around thinking they are unearthing something hidden! Doesn't matter how many think I have hanging and priced on the wall!"

"I think that the number of people unknown to me was in single figures and would suggest that any other studios out on their own work very hard at promoting themselves as people seem to prefer to do cluster visits rather than solo studios."

"I must put out extra signage at strategic places to help people find the studio."

"To produce a completely new body of new works that are specifically for Artmap, akin to working towards a gallery exhibition."

“Visitors enjoyed the practical involvement And demos.... I would repeat that.”

“I had many new visitors as well as repeat ones and was very pleased at how much they liked my work. It has given me the confidence to carry on doing my type of artwork.”

“I'd like to take part every year as I am part of Argyll but perhaps we need a few of us in my corner. Felt a bit lonely out in the sticks! Not sure the second weekend was worth doing. However, I will take part again, maybe every second year unless I can get others down here signed up too...”

“Giving people more room to view alone. Whilst still being available.”

“It was good to be in a separate space from the workshop to allow visitors to browse at their leisure. I would do that again even if Covid were not a consideration. Having a card facility is essential.”

“A disappointing number of visitors has made me realise the importance of highlighting where/who I am.”

“Used Zettle for the first time this year - easy to use, 1.75% charge on each transaction but no other fees. Definitely worth it.”

“Just participating online is tougher than I thought - the presence of visitors is what makes the event.”

“I had a great time, learnt so much about my work and I'm keen to do it again”

“These have been extraordinary times. I found this year that my local community is very open to art experiences, and I will expand my focus in this direction. This could also benefit other local artists, more of whom I wish would engage in open studios. I also learnt this year that I want to make time to visit other artists' open studios next year.”

“More signs , more self promotion, maybe let people try to do something”

“I definitely think being able to have space to leave visitors to their own perusal of the work is helpful. Next year hopefully it will be easier in terms of covid to offer more hospitality in the way of teas, coffees, cakes etc.”

And finally...

The final invitation for comments highlighted a few topics worth considering more generally for Artmap. These included finding ways for artists to meet up before or after the event, running events at other times of year and suggestions to think about how Artmap can improve its profile more generally (including the web site).

There was also thanks for the voluntary input from Artmap members to organise the event and recognition that everything runs on a very tight budget.