

Art Festival  
**report**

# **Festival Research Report**

## **1. Brief and Methodology**

## **2. Definitions**

## **3. Challenges**

## **4. Focus areas**

**4.1 Is it a good idea?**

**4.2 How might it work best?**

**4.3 What would stop it from being a success?**

**4.4 When would be the best time to do it?**

**4.5 How would each consultee maximise the potential of a countywide marketing campaign?**

## **5. Quality Issues**

## **6. Marketing**

## **7. Recommendations**

## **8. Financial implications**

## **9. Appendices**

**a. List of consultees**

**b. Bibliography**

**c. Statistical Analysis**

# 1. BRIEF AND METHODOLOGY

The initial brief was:

To undertake a feasibility study and develop a plan to facilitate a countywide festival of Art to augment and envelope existing artist-led events.

The research was carried out according to fold's own criteria for project eligibility:

- Quality
- Innovation
- Rural relevance
- Fun

We started the idea of an umbrella marketing strategy for existing and new artist-led events over a defined period of time.

An ideas booklet, "the Vision", was produced as a springboard for further discussion and debate.

Consultation was carried out with individual artists, artists' groups, galleries and arts organisations across the county and further afield, as part of the development of a proactive artists network.

The same level of research was used to identify consultees across the county. Although this did not involve every working artist in the county, it provided a proportionate snapshot of professional visual arts practice across the county.

Contact with artists was either made in person, by email, telephone or by post. (See appendix A for statistical breakdown and numbers).

The primary questions asked in response to "the Vision" were:

1. Is it a good idea?
2. How might it work best?
3. What would stop it from being a success?
4. When would be the best time to do it?
5. How would each consultee maximise the potential of a countywide marketing campaign?

In addition to one-to-one consultation, a questionnaire in the form of an imitation exam paper was produced to gather feedback about artists' networks, resources and artist-led events. This questionnaire was sent across the county and an electronic version was published on the Fold website to gather feedback from outside the county for comparison.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

This research looked primarily at artist-led events, current and potential.

These are defined as situations that are devised, originated or activated by artists themselves as opposed to working to a commission or taking part in public sector originated projects. Examples of artist-led events are:

- **Open Studios:** Where artists open-up their working space or premises to the public over a short period of time to allow the public to see how an artist works and to sell work directly to the public.
- **Installation:** A type of art in which a given space is redefined by the (usually) temporary arrangement of objects and/or materials in sculptural and/or theatrical constructions. Examples can range from traditional museum dioramas and similar arrangements of readymade articles to galleries filled with everything from topsoil to pennies to individually wrapped sweets.
- **Intervention:** The refusal, subversion or re-negotiation of received meanings, usually because those doing the intervening believe such meanings to be enforced by political power or general consensus, which is of course determined by ideology. Intervention is standard practice in numerous manifestations of contemporary culture, from feminist revisionism to punk collage.

*Definitions from a glossary of Art terms by J. Belton 2002.*

### **“Festival” definition:**

Throughout this report, reference is made to a “festival” of artist-led events. The word Festival is used to mean a coordinated event of a unified collection of individual and unique events. The word *Festival* in some sense may be misleading inferring an event conceived and carried out by a single organisation or committee, with an entrance fee, bunting and dripping ice-cream cones. The *Festival* outlined here is none of those.

### 3. CHALLENGES

From the outset we observed and acknowledged the following strengths in artist-led events based on observations, responses from similar groups at the Open Studios Conference, Sheffield, June 2003, and results published in Open Studios: a Gem Worth Polishing, and local studio group meetings:

- Open studio events have been popular with visitors in the past.
- Visitors like to see where artists work and buy direct.
- There are a number of established open studios events in Cumbria (Green Door, Shaddon Mill, West Walls, Art Gene, and Eden Open Studios.
- Cumbria has a proportionally high number of resident artists.
- Visitors will travel to see open studios on an annual basis.
- There are a growing number of open studios events across the UK.
- Most open studios events are artist led and artist orientated.
- The majority of work on show is of a very high quality.
- Artists have control of their own events.

We also identified the following challenges:

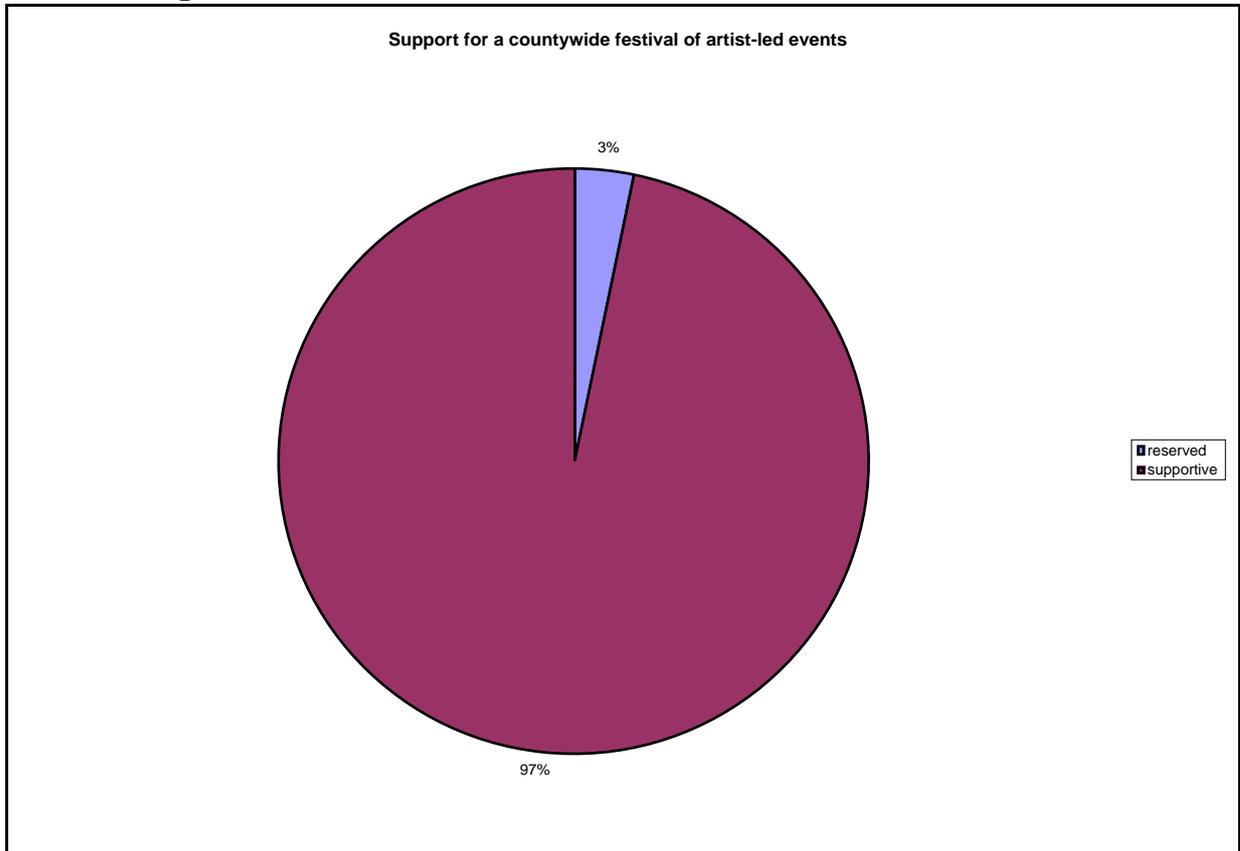
- Artist-led events in Cumbria are poorly marketed.  
The majority of artist-led events in the county are under-funded in their marketing. A lack of understanding of marketing and promotional infrastructure, together with a lack of resources and appropriate training are the main reasons for this. In particular, most events are poorly marketed outside their immediate area.
- Visitor numbers are substantially less in Cumbrian open studios than similar events across the UK.  
Despite the large numbers of visitors to the county from outside, many events are invisible to new visitors. For the local audience, a lack of understanding about art or the perception that "art events are not for local people" dissuades and alienates local visits.
- Many artists see little or no return on their investment.  
Most artists who participate in open studio events feel that income from sales of work doesn't cover the cost of opening a studio, participation costs, time spent opening etc.
- The real winners are petrol stations and tearooms  
Most visitors to open studios in Cumbria will spend more on travel and refreshments than on buying works of art.  
Artist-led events are scattered across a large geographic area.  
Open Studios and other artist-led events are established in Barrow, Kendal, Eden Valley and Carlisle.

- Cumbria is a large county with a very disparate population. Barrow in Furness is a 100-mile journey from Carlisle. A coordinated open studios plan across the county was rejected by open studios groups in the Cumbria County Council report on Open Studios (2003)
- There are no artist-led events in West Cumbria.
- There is a heavy reliance on car use to visit events.  
Public transport between different areas in the county is difficult at best, non-existent in some cases. Public transport routes do not necessarily match political regions.
- Little or no opportunity for artists who work to commission – work that is more experimental is often marginalized. Open Studios are perceived as the reserve of more commercial work.
- Artists working outside studio groups have less opportunity to participate (except in the case of Eden Open Studios).  
Most professional artists in the county work individually from their own studio, spare room, garage, office or in some cases without a dedicated studio space. A lack of available spaces for artists to show innovative work locally was also recognised.

## 4. FOCUS AREAS

The following topics were discussed with individual artists, groups and arts organisations using “the Vision” as a starting point:

### 4.1 Is it a good idea?



### 4.2 How might it work best?

#### Get the Publicity Right

- The vast majority of those consulted considered the quality and appropriateness of the publicity to be the most important key to the success of the festival
- It was recognised that “joined up” marketing of events would have a bigger impact than the sum of the individual events.
- Getting the publicity out early on in the year, and out beyond the political boundaries of the county were seen as ways that would engage the maximum number of visitors.

- It was also felt especially important to target local people and get them involved in visiting and participating in the events.

### **As an Artist-led Event**

- Most artists felt an Artist-led approach was an essential part of the proposed festival.
- Artists would be in control of their own projects from conception to delivery.
- There was a strong bias towards creating contemporary and cutting edge work.

### **Quality Control**

- It was universally agreed that quality was an issue and would affect how many artists would be interested in taking part.
- There were concerns that without some form of quality control, the whole event would be cheapened.
- There were some artists who wished to make the distinction between fine art and craft.
- There was a general feeling that Quality rather than quantity would make the festival a success (see separate 'Quality' section).

### **Organisation Structure**

- It was clear that the organisation of the festival would need to be tight and structured.
- Most artists agreed that specific events at different places at different times would create the maximum impact, however there was also support for a central event in one place as a focal point.
- Despite the great distances involved, most artists agreed that a countywide festival would be achievable and manageable.
- It was widely agreed that the most appropriate form for the festival organisation would be through facilitation of the overall event, rather than dictating the individual events. However there was a strong desire to see residency opportunities arise as part of the programme.
- It was recognised that for funding purposes, artists would be better off working in smaller, cohesive groups.
- It was widely agreed that a central support mechanism be put in place for artists wanting assistance with funding applications, project management and local publicity. There were some suggestions that this was the reserve of LADAs or a county Visual Arts Officer.

## **Attracting an Audience**

- It was suggested by artists working with education programmes that a September / October time slot would best involve schools with the knock-on event of attracting local involvement.
- It was universally agreed that the best way to attract visitors was to create a 'buzz' with the art.
- A number of artists and galleries highlighted the mainly untapped markets of second homeowners and tourists from more contemporary societies such as Japan and Scandinavia.

## **Collaboration**

- It was felt important for artists to be able to collaborate with businesses, the viewing public, other artists and arts organisations both within and outside the county.
- The Festival was seen as very good opportunity to create new partnerships.

## **Creating Benefits for Artists**

- Artists must benefit from the festival through either sale of work, showing their work to new audiences or through the potential to realise large-scale projects.
- There was a hope that the festival would elevate artistic practice across the county and in particular promote innovation.

## **Creating Dialogue**

- It was acknowledged that the festival would create the potential for informative dialogue both with other artists and with an audience (local in particular). Dialogue is the starting point for ideas, events and projects, and essential for the continuation of them.
- Artists want informative dialogue.

## **Facilitating Tours**

- Organised tours using and utilising existing transport links would encourage visits across geographical areas to less visible events, or around more local cluster groups.

## **4.3 What would stop it from being a success?**

### **Poor Publicity**

- Poor publicity or publicity of mediocre quality would taint the aim of the festival, which is to raise people's awareness of the quality of work in the region.
- If the publicity was not targeted well, there would be no visitors.

### **Poor Quality of work**

- If the quality of work were poor then the festival would fail.
- Similarly if the quality of presentation and promotion is poor, that would also risk being reflected on the perception of the quality of all the work.
- Keep out the landscape watercolorists and Sunday afternoon painters!

### **Poor Organisation**

- A lack of high profile events would lower the overall profile to people outside the region.
- If the organisers, facilitators or individual artists took on more responsibility than they could handle there was a risk of the event running out of control and key elements being mismanaged.
- There was general caution that there should not be too much variation in the type of events included, that the organisers should not attempt to include everything and accept that you can't please everyone all the time.

### **Lack of Motivation**

- There was a concern that whilst artists may want to get involved initially, they may not deliver the goods.
- If the festival were to cover too long a time period artists and audiences may lose interest.
- There was an initial concern that there was a lack of like-minded people.
- There was universal agreement that there was too much talking going on in the arts scene in the county and not enough action. If the festival idea research didn't appear to be acted upon in the near future it would lose support of grass roots artists.

### **Ownership Issues**

- There was a concern that corporate logos on publicity material would detract from the artists' ownership of their events.

- There was also concern that groups and organisations would be concentrating on their own “Empire building” rather than the good of the overall arts scene.

### **Bad Co-ordination**

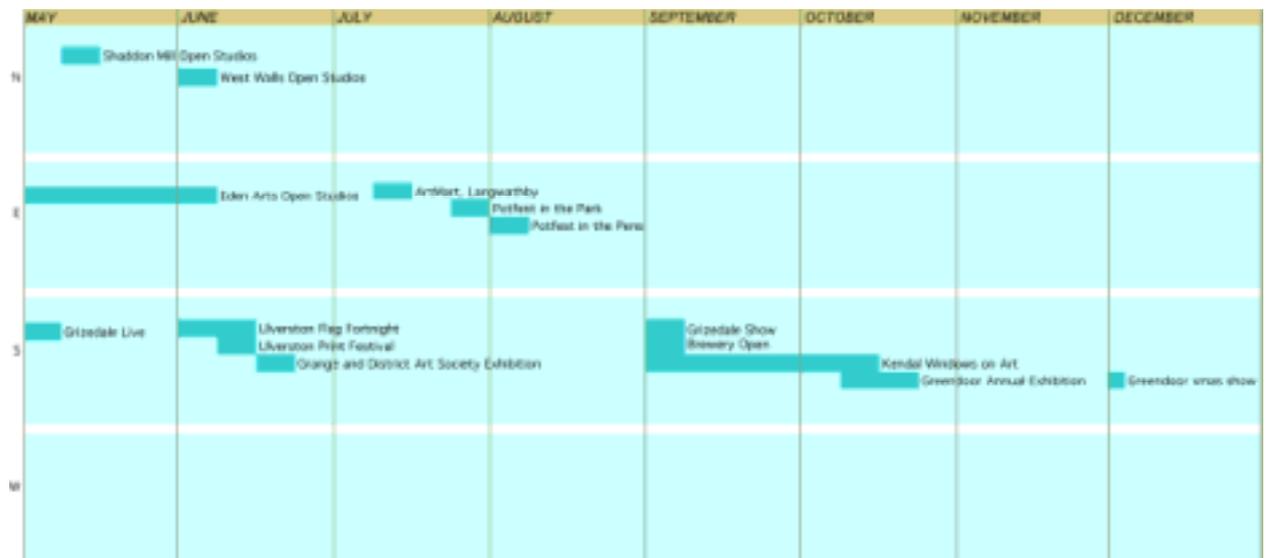
- Events that work on their own do not have much impact. There was a fear that poor co-ordination of the festival would lead to scattered events and no visitors.

### **Other comments**

- There was a general feeling that the perception of art made in Cumbria was poor and that cutting edge or contemporary arts practice is invisible to most residents and visitors – a perception that needs to be challenged and changed.
- Art tours such as found in the Eden open Studios event encourage "doing" 5 artists in a day. This should be avoided in the countywide festival as it leads to visitors spending less quality time at each venue and consequently affecting their spending potential (except on petrol).

#### 4.4 When would be the best time to do it?

A survey of existing visual arts events shows an even spread across the calendar from May to November. Education establishments indicated that September and October are the best months for involvement. May and September are “shoulder” months with a traditional change in visitor types. May and September are also the driest months weather wise. A ten-week period from the middle of August to the Middle of October would straddle traditional tourist seasons with more local visitor seasons and attract the widest range of visitors from outside the area. An event that ran into October would add to the events calendar in an otherwise quiet month for festivals.



[Table showing geographic and time spread of visual arts events in Cumbria.]

#### **4.5 How would each consultee maximise the potential of a countywide marketing campaign?**

- There is a widespread acknowledgement of the importance of raising an artist's profile on a regional / national / international platform.
- The vast majority of the artists asked indicated that they would use the opportunity to create new work or instigate a new event. The majority of anticipated new work was site-specific in nature, or installation. The artists felt that site-specific works are more relevant to local communities, and in many cases, local involvement was a strong issue.
- There was very little suggestion of or desire to run workshops or hold exhibitions.
- There was also little priority given to selling work. This may be an indication of the number of artists in Cumbria working to commission, but may well be attributed to the selection of artists consulted. The majority classified themselves as fine artists as opposed to crafts workers / makers and designers. There was however general support for an art fair marketed as a selling opportunity.
- There was strong interest in collaboration and creating new partnerships with other artists, businesses, local communities and non-art organisations, locally and further afield
- Arts organisations and galleries were unlikely to change their programming to fit with the festival, however they universally felt that an umbrella marketing campaign across the county would affect their chances of securing funding for their own programmes in a positive way.

## 5.QUALITY ISSUES

There was a general concern that the quality of the work involved in the festival be monitored to ensure that work is presented in the best light. The main priority was that mediocre work, variously described as “club artists” or “Sunday afternoon” artists were differentiated from professional work. It was generally felt important to portray the work being produced in the county in the best possible light and to highlight the quality of the best the county has to offer.

- It was agreed by everyone that a selection procedure was essential. Selection and curation were the highest recommendations from artists.
- Professional artists are familiar with the selection process as it is a feature of professional practice.
- The selection criteria itself must be crystal clear to avoid value and taste judgements by the selectors.
- Some artists suggested a two-tier festival or two separate events, where one is open and one selected to involve the amateur sector of the arts community or a selected contemporary arts programme with local supporting events.
- Another suggested option was to invite artists for the first year to set a standard and select for subsequent years.
- A selected event would provide artists with something to aim for, thus raising the standard of work throughout and be good for all artists’ professional and creative development.
- Some artists were happy in bringing in quality artists from outside the county to help bring the standard up, however some thought that would detract from the local, artist-led nature of the festival.
- It was also suggested to bring in a big name artist to work on a project with amateur artists to involve that sector and encourage their artistic development.

## 6.MARKETING

### 1. Benefits of coordinated marketing strategy:

The benefits of a coordinated umbrella marketing strategy were widely recognised as one of the most important aspects of the proposed festival. The benefits recognised fall into two groups: benefits to artists and benefits to the county arts infrastructure of organisations and galleries.

Benefits to individual artists:

- Creates sense of unity.
- Creates sense of identity. Raises the profile of artists working in contemporary arts practice within a rural context. Challenges the false perception that all rural artists paint the landscape.
- Creates opportunity for new work – artists identified the potential to raise their profile by creating new work, often site specific in nature, that they would not otherwise have the excuse to realise. The “festival” structure creates an ideal reason to produce new work and strengthens individual funding bids.
- Attracts new audiences to other parts of the county – events in areas of high visitor numbers (the central Lakes for example) would bolster the profile of events in less well attended areas (Furness and the West Coast for example).
- More incentive for corporate sponsorship / involvement / collaboration. A countywide event of high quality is a far more appealing proposition for securing corporate involvement and boosts the business profile within the region.
- Cost saving. Individual artists events can channel their energies into promoting the work at a very local level without having to fund raise for a larger promotional presence.

Benefits to Arts Organisations and galleries:

- Mutually beneficial to all events. The established organisations and arts events have their own, very specific agenda with little or no cross over. What they have in common is a desire to promote their work to the largest possible audience. By being aware of all the programmes of events across the county visitors will be made aware of the scale of quality arts provision in the County and beyond and help build a picture of a vibrant arts scene across the North of England.
- Larger profile – greater significance. Most organisations felt that a well-marketed umbrella event would enhance their ability to secure funding for their independent projects.
- Encourages dialogue and joined-up thinking about programming.
- Encourages more strategic planning and delivery across groups and individuals – by being aware of what is taking place across the county, groups and organisations would be able to ensure there is no conflict between similar projects (workshops for example).

## 2. Case studies: You Are Here (Nottingham)

### ABOUT YOU ARE HERE

You are Here was formed in 1999 by artists Simon Collison and Oliver Wood. It was apparent that artists in the city were often unaware who their contemporaries were, or what they were up to. You Are Here allows artists to address this problem, by creating the opportunity to contact each other, discuss and collaborate via the YAH website.

You Are Here also runs an annual contemporary art festival across Nottingham City Centre, one of the largest such events in the UK, working closely with all the major galleries, studio groups and organisations in the city.

You Are Here have strong links with City of Nottingham, Broadway Media Centre, Nottingham Trent University, East Midlands Development Agency, Arts Council England and many other organizations. They are also on the board of the recently formed Arts and Creative Industries Forum. A core team of ten people help run YAH, mostly on a voluntary basis.

You Are Here belongs to all of those concerned with art in the county, essentially a platform enabling individuals, groups and companies to present their projects and ideas to a broad range of internet users. Nottingham has more practicing artists per capita than any other UK city, YAH aims to provide visual artists with a straightforward, understandable promotional platform.

From You Are Here was born the Location Artists, a collaboration between several Nottingham artists using various disciplines to respond to an ongoing theme of Location. The first of these events took place in June 2001 at Straumur Art Commune in Iceland, a uniquely remote venue amidst a 7000-year-old lava flow some seven kilometres outside Reykjavik. For a country so remote, Iceland has a thriving visual art community, and some of Europe's best contemporary galleries. Over the past few years, You Are Here have forged strong links with artists and bodies in Iceland, forming a template for future European projects. The aim being to raise awareness of visual artists from more obscure countries by firstly orchestrating a Location event in that country, and following this with touring exhibitions featuring artists from each nation.

## 7.RECOMMENDATIONS

### Marketing

Effective and adequate marketing and publicity is essential for the festival to operate:

- **Quality**  
Poor quality marketing and publicity material will have a detrimental effect on the perception of the quality produced in the county. A campaign worthy of a D&AD awards submission is a necessity and a welcome challenge for the designers.
- **Big publicity at all levels – local, regional, national / international**  
It is important that the event be targeted effectively at a local level to garner community support and involvement and to stop the event being seen as an elitist or tourist centred event.
- **Artist-led**  
Artists have many of the skill required for effective marketing – visual awareness, creativity, passion. Harnessing these skills will add a sense of ownership to the marketing and the festival as a whole as well as stimulate fresh or alternative ideas.
- **Innovation**  
Utilise artist's ability to think subversively and innovatively to promote the event beyond traditional art venues, attract new audiences and highlight the potential of artists' skills beyond the creation of works of art.
- **Inclusive**  
Match the marketing and promotion to the events. Interventions market themselves; site specific and installation work creates new opportunities for marketing and publicity. The marketing could be an event in itself making the marketing part of the festival.
- **Relevant**  
Target the right audience: 25-34 age bracket accounts for 23% of UK visitors to Cumbria and 22% of Overseas visitors – 35-44 age bracket accounts for 22% of UK visitors and 18% of Overseas visitors. 55 – 64 age bracket accounts for only 14% of UK visitors. 68% of visitors fall into socio-economic groups ABC1 (top 1/3 earners).
- **Repetitive**  
A staggered marketing campaign allows artists and groups to secure and confirm funding beyond the initial selection deadline. A website would keep visitors up to date with confirmed events calendars.

Contrary to the recommendations in the Cumbria Arts Festivals Research 2003, marketing and distribution services based in Manchester are currently less well equipped and experienced in marketing events in Cumbria than similar organisations based in the North East. Services in the North East have more experience of promoting the Arts in Cumbria, and across large rural areas such as Northumberland. It would however be wise to utilise Manchester based services for promotion targets across the North Midlands corridor (Liverpool, Cheshire and Manchester).

### **The event must be artist-led.**

The events must be artist-led in nature. This will shift the power to the grass roots giving artists themselves control of their own 'performance'. In turn this will encourage the quality and diversity of proposals. Strong grass roots involvement will lead the future

growth of the festival and secure its future sustainability. Any attempt by larger bodies to usurp the running of the events would dilute the essence of the festival – that of artists wanting to raise their profile on their own terms.

Artists must re-evaluate the purpose of showing/exhibiting/open studios. Direct sales are not necessarily the major incentive for artists to participate. There is huge potential for raising the profile of participating artists on a national and international level. Creating site-specific work or displaying their work in an innovative fashion will expose their potential to a far bigger audience, including curators, collectors and critics. The long-term benefits outweigh short-term financial gain: It is more beneficial to get a £6,000 commission later in the year than to sell a £200 piece of work with a real profit value of less than a hundred pounds.

By encouraging new and exciting work, the festival will elevate artistic practice across the county by giving artists aspiration and promote innovation.

### **The event should encourage innovation.**

The Festival provides perfect opportunity to show work of an innovative nature that will draw its own publicity.

Open studios programmes have provided a good model for audiences to access work and artists to exhibit. However, this model is not all encompassing and there is a need for more than conventional exhibiting spaces to generate ideas and interest. To focus on innovative approaches to showing work, artists will be challenged and audiences will become more intrigued. The use of alternative spaces is one aspect that will stimulate discussion among visitors and change perceptions of the art produced in Cumbria.

### **Case study: Sheffield Open Up 2003.**

The most visited event was a poet who opened up a shed on his allotment as part of an Open Studios tour.

The festival will raise the profile of artists from rural and isolated areas and help change the relationship between Cumbria and “tweeness”.

### **Quality must be maintained and monitored.**

There must be a clear and transparent selection or curatorial policy to ensure that the work included is of a sufficiently high calibre. However it is also important that there is a balance struck to prevent a perception of art snobbery and elitism that would deter new audiences and suffer a more powerful backlash from unsuccessful artists.

A realistic selection criterion is that work must be presented in an innovative way. This is an easily qualifyable criteria and avoids making value judgements on the work. It provides an opportunity for artists to create their own events rather than just showing their work. It is no longer enough to say “Come and see my pictures”. The variety of presentation methods unifies the events and creates its own marketable ‘twist’ making it easier to publicise and generate interest.

Training and assistance needs to be provided to improve the presentation and overall quality of the events. – possible partner CCSP.

### **The festival must be well organised and resourced.**

Although the festival is about individual artists and groups' initiatives, the facilitation of the overall event must be led from the front. Support for artists must be made available by the facilitators, the local arts development agencies, the County Council and the regional offices of Arts Council England.

<b>Demand</b>	<b>Support</b>
Timetabling / programming	Facilitators
Preparing Funding proposals	Facilitators, LADAs, CCSP
Project management	Facilitators, LADAs, CCSP
Funding for individual projects	LADAs, ACE(NW), Leader +, DEFRA etc.
Publicity	Facilitators, CCSP, CTB
Distribution of Marketing Material	Facilitators, Artists, LADAs, CCC tourist board / DMOs

A festival coordinator post should be created to offer advice and support to participating artists and provide a single contact point for the facilitation of the events. The facilitator would also signpost artists to the most appropriate information, resources and skills in conjunction with The Cumbria Network for artists.

### **Attracting an Audience.**

For future sustainability, the festival must be made accessible to local audiences. Only if there is a "buzz" locally will visitors from further afield be attracted to an event. Local relevancy is therefore key to the festival's success. Special attention must be paid towards attracting the 23-45 age group together with visitors from more contemporary cultures of Japan, Scandinavia and Eastern Europe. These groups form a significant proportion of visitors to the county and are used to seeing contemporary art. Currently Cumbria offers little in the way of contemporary culture for this sector. Organising the festival over a shoulder month (May or September) will maximise the potential of these visitor demographics together with more traditional family orientated visits.

Geographic spread must include all areas of the county for maximum impact. By providing an excess of events at the same time, visitors will be tempted to return the following year to see the events they missed.

Creative use of the transport infrastructure will also help less visited areas attract new audiences. Special tours using public transport routes or chartered buses and walks would increase the visitor potential. Maximising the transport infrastructure's assets (art on buses, trains and in petrol stations and car-parks) will bring art out to the visitor providing an incentive to investigate further and offer an additional marketing opportunity.

Notice needs to be given to natural traffic and human geographical movement. For example, Penrith, Keswick and Cockermouth form a logical corridor of movement along the A66. Likewise Newcastle to Lancashire traffic flows through the Upper Eden and

Lune valleys and Kendal. There is no logical traffic flow from Penrith to the Upper Eden Valley, but trains from Carlisle run through the upper Eden valley en-route to North and West Yorkshire.

One or two large scale, high profile events will draw audiences to the festival from across the region and potentially overseas. High profile events will have a knock-on benefit to smaller scale artists' events in demonstrating the artistic process at all levels. The festival must include a range of events of all sizes to appeal initially to the most number of people and to celebrate the vibrancy of art in the region.

It is important to change the perceptions of the artist inside and outside the studio group environment. Encouraging one-off installations and opportunities for artists to show work in alternative venues – pubs, bars, supermarkets, dry-stone walls etc. will maximise artist and visitor participation potential and take “art to the masses”, and provides opportunities for artists outside studio groups and those that do not have a ‘studio’.

### **Working with other festivals and events.**

A rolling programme of Focus weekends should be developed with each area of the county to coincide with existing local events. This creates the opportunity for attracting new audiences that would not usually visit arts events, and places the art experience directly with this audience. Artists should be encouraged to work with existing events, to raise the profile of art on a local level and in new contexts and create new partnerships. Focus weekends would also aid in shifting the balance of events to help less visited areas (West and South Coasts) appear on a level footing.

### **Collaboration.**

A coordinated marketing strategy is essential to highlight the wealth of contemporary and quality arts practice currently available across the breadth of the county. Acknowledgement of the work of other arts organisations and galleries via a central marketing strategy - in both print and on an easily updateable website - will not only raise the profile of existing arts activity in new areas but create further opportunities for individual artists to add to the fabric of a vibrant arts community. By acknowledging that whilst each operates its own set of specific objectives, all organisations and artists are united by the desire to show their work to the largest possible audience.

Collaboration and active involvement between individual artists, clusters and studio groups with businesses, education, the viewing public and established arts organisations is essential for creating new dialogue and new audiences.

Support must be given to new clusters of artists, particularly in under represented areas – West Cumbria and Morecambe Bay. There are a number of studies that demonstrate the benefit of artists working together to promote their work and practice of this kind is to be encouraged across the county.

### **Thinking outside the borders.**

The festival should 'bleed' across the political borders of the county, making the event outward looking and creating stronger links outside the region. This is to become more important with the proposed regional assemblies. Establishing strong dialogue with the North East, South west Scotland and Yorkshire areas will set a precedent for outward looking and forward thinking projects in rural areas.

Guest artists from outside the area should be invited to participate on a number of projects as a way of forging new links outside the county and introduce another opportunity for raising awareness of the festival. Cultural exchange programmes to working with similar events in urban and rural areas both in the UK and internationally would add a new dimension to the work on show and enable artists from the county to participate and collaborate on an international level. Caution, however must be taken not to lose the 'home-grown' focus of the scheme to maintain local credibility and avoid marginalising local artists.

### **Art Fair.**

An annual art fair should be established to enable artists to sell their work direct to the public in one central location. A selection panel must be established to maintain the quality of work for sale. A high quality fair would attract commercial galleries from across the UK and overseas and increase the value of exhibiting artists' work by association. There is great potential for a consortium of commercial galleries to exploit the idea and raise the standard of the commercial arts sector across the county. A weekend fair to coincide with Potfest in Penrith would benefit both parties and avoid unnecessary duplication.

### **Sustainability.**

The festival needs to be built up over a number of years to establish a solid foundation of support. It is important, as an artist-led event that the festival is allowed to 'fail' or be less successful in its first couple of years provided that sufficient qualitative evaluation is carried out quickly after the event to identify problems, find solutions and build on strengths. Constant qualitative evaluation and experimentation is an artists approach to problem solving and one that will ensure creativity and innovation in delivery that will ultimately be the success of the festival. Securing funding for the first three years would enable the energies of the artists to be channelled into developing an exciting and original programme rather than constantly fund-raising.

An established and exciting festival would be a more viable vehicle for corporate sponsorship and involvement and would therefore aim to be less reliant on grant subsidy.

In order to allay fears that there is "too much discussion and not enough action", it is important that a festival be organised for September 2004. This would not only maintain the interest and momentum gained during this research, but also serve as a developmental model for a full size festival in 2005. A 2004 festival would necessarily be in a much-reduced scale, possibly over a shorter time span, however, all the above

recommendations still stand and the festival must not be treated as second best – merely compact.

## 8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

*For illustration only*

### 2004 Festival:

Marketing:	Design	2,000
	Print	2,000
	Distribution	1,000
	Artist involved marketing	3,000
	Web based tools	1,000
Festival Coordination		
	Part-time Coordinator	6,000
	Project management	4,000
	Evaluation	1,000
Bursaries / Commissions		12,000*
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>32,000</b>

*\*Individual funding applications from artists*

### 2005 Festival

Marketing:	Design	3,000
	Print	3,000
	Distribution	1,500
	Artist involved marketing	3,000
	Web based tools	1,500
Festival Coordination		
	Part-time Coordinator	12,000
	Project management	6,000
	Evaluation	2,000
Bursaries / Commissions	Individual projects	10,000*
	Large-Scale flagship project	10,000
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>52,000</b>

### 2006 Festival

Marketing:	Design	3,000
	Print	3,500
	Distribution	2,000
	Artist involved marketing	4,000
	Web based tools	1,500
Festival Coordination		
	Part-time Coordinator	12,000
	Project management	8,000
	Evaluation	2,000
Bursaries / Commissions	Individual projects	15,000*
	Large-Scale flagship project	20,000
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>66,000</b>

Stephen Messam and Kate Brundrett carried out this research on behalf of Fold between October 2003 and February 2004.

This research was funded by Rural Regeneration Cumbria

The research, report and all associated content and design © Fold 2004

**Fold is an artist-led initiative that seeks to promote and provide access to contemporary art in the rural environment**

**Fold: foldgallery, Walton's Yard, Market Square, Kirkby Stephen, Cumbria. UK.  
CA17 4QT  
[www.foldgallery.co.uk](http://www.foldgallery.co.uk)**

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A Consultees:

Artists	Studio Groups	Galleries	Organisations
Rich Webster Liz Clay Paul Taylor Mark Gibbs Three Bears Animation Geoff Cox Ian Hinde Garreth Harrison Richard Wood Linda Moor Conrad Atkinson Paul Scott Jac Scott Russell Mills Malcolm Mitton Heather Bolton Rob Ives Jazzelle Gearty Lee Cavaliere Di McGhee John Darwell Peter Koronka Jenni Payne Jeremy Fisher Anne Charnock Adele Prince Samuel Burt Johnathan Stamper Doris Rohr Anji Archer Debby Akam Christine Stringfellow Jan Marshall	Shaddon Mill West Walls Eden Artisans Farfield Mill	Lowood Gallery Tullie House Lakeland Arts Trust Brewery Arts Beacon Gallery Greystones	Art Gene Cumbria County Council Cumbria Institute of Art Kendal Windows on Art Folly ACE NW Eden Arts Arts in Education Welfare State International Copeland LADA Allerdale LADA Grizedale Arts Wordsworth Trust Cumbria Tourist Board You Are Here

## **Appendix B Bibliography:**

### **Glossary of Art Definitions**

Robert J. Belton

*1996-2002*

Department of Fine Arts, Okanagan University College USA

<http://www.arts.ouc.bc.ca/fiar/glossary/gloshome.html>

### **Art Festivals in Cumbria**

Gwyn Rhydderch, Phyllida Shaw, Keith Allen

*September 2003*

### **Open Studios in Cumbria**

Andy Mortimer

*June 2003*

### **You Are Here**

Simon Collison

[www.yah.org](http://www.yah.org)

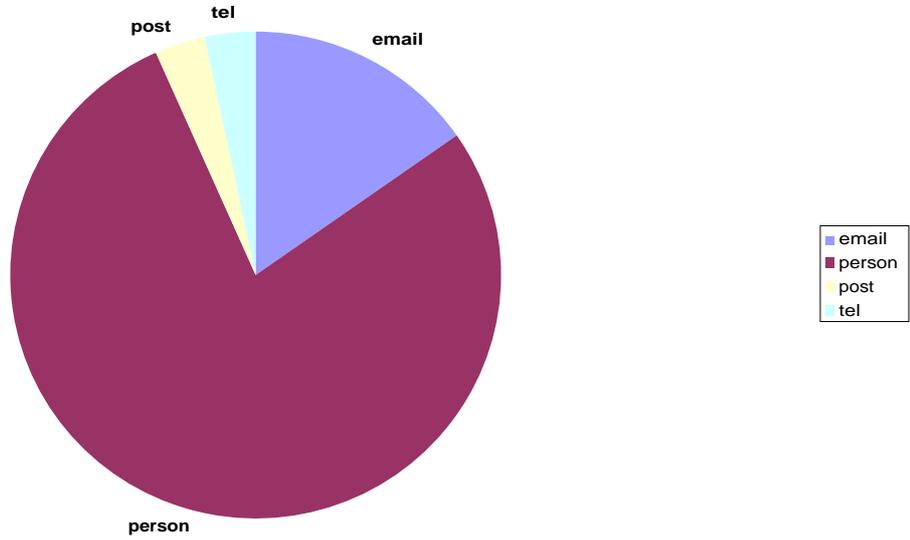
### **Open Studios – a Gem Worth Polishing**

Arts Council England

*2003*

# Appendix C Statistical Analysis

contact methods



artists consulted by region

