



HERTS

Visual Arts

PROMOTING
CREATIVITY

Tips Guide

**HERTS
OPEN
STUDIOS**

WWW.HVAF.ORG.UK

HERTS OPEN STUDIOS

IS IT TOO EARLY TO THINK ABOUT SEPTEMBER?

Planning for our flagship event, when we turn Hertfordshire yellow, gets underway at the beginning of the year when the team start looking for venues, chatting to Members at area meetings and sending out the Call for Artists.

This year we are printing our much loved brochure, having something tangible, which can be flicked through, used to plan visits, and kept for future reference is invaluable.

Our main focus will be on ensuring there are plenty of venues, making sure

everyone's details in the brochure and on the website are correct, that opening times all match and everyone has plenty of yellow branding.

Ideas can be chatted through at area meetings, collaborations sought and advice provided. Take this time to find a venue, checking out HVAF's website for ideas.

Sharing a venue during Herts Open Studios can be a lot of fun. Several artists showing in one venue not only brings diversity, it provides inspiration and motivation. Being together to chat to visitors, to help each other with promoting/marketing the event, and to

learn about each others work is really worthwhile and rewarding.

To register to take part in Open Studios, artists need to find a venue, whether a own studio or a shared space, and then sign up to take part! It's at this point when the exciting fun starts, adding information to the HVAF website, and a wonderful image of your art.

Do share ideas with other Members on social media and to the wider world too; we have some great marketing graphics downloadable from the website, and signage that can be purchased.

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FIND OUT MORE:

WWW.HVAF.ORG.UK/ARTISTS/JOIN-MEMBERSHIP-BENEFITS



1. PLANNING TO TAKE PART/SIGN-UP

These pages are simple checklists to help you get started on your Open Studios journey – from planning to sign up, to managing the event itself.

Of course, there may well be other things you are already planning, but these lists might give you a start.

Written as completed actions, you can tick them when complete and there's space for your own notes and other things specific to you.

The aim is for our artists to perhaps be able to answer these three questions:

- What will my Open Studios be like?
- How will my Open Studios fit in with others in my area
- Is my space/venue safe and appropriate for visitors, art and me?

- Have I made sure each visitor has the best possible experience?
- Have I maximised the potential number of visitors and strengthened my business/art practice?

TIPS ARE GROUPED INTO SECTIONS:

- Planning for Open Studios
- Working with other artists
- Getting the space ready
- During the Open Studio
- After Open Studios
- - Example personal objective



ACTION	NOTES	DONE
I know what I want to do, who I'll be working with, when I'll be open.		
I have already taken out/renewed my membership before signing up for Open Studios.		
I'm comfortable I can briefly describe myself and my work in a way that will attract visitors.		
I have a high resolution, square, eye-catching image to go in the brochure, maybe sent to the press and will attract visitors to my studio – that image will define me and my work.		
I have emailed openstudios@hvaf.org.uk if I am looking to share my own space, or need a venue.		
I know how to contact my area coordinator and when/where area meetings are.		
I've met others in my area to plan my own and also area-specific OS activities and options.		
I understand that I need to plan to be open for at least 5 days to maximise visitor opportunities.		

FIND OUT MORE:

WWW.HVAF.ORG.UK/OPEN-STUDIOS

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ACTION	NOTES	DONE
I plan to open my working studio and/or demonstrate my work.		
I will coordinate some of my opening times with others to help maximise visitor opportunities.		
I am working with others in the area for extra promotions, local trails, group exhibitions, launch events and more.		
I have talked to others about promotion, visibility and how we can best collaborate in our area.		
I know whether my OS space/ access would be suitable for visiting cyclists, those needing level/wide access, whether I could/should offer refreshments, other logistics.		
I am ready to create my application/entry on-line.		
My HVAF gallery page is up and running, also, it will be used in the brochure if I do not have my own website.		
I have thought about how I might want visitors to contact me, an email address, phone number, etc.		
I have thought about how I might want visitors to contact me, an email address, phone number, etc.		
I know whether I am happy to accept appointments outside my published opening hours.		

2. GETTING READY

ACTION	NOTES	DONE
I have planned my venue layout, displays and activities from a visitor perspective, including entry, exit and access to different areas. I know how to restrict access to areas that will not be open to visitors.		
I have spoken to my neighbours about Open Studios, they know about my open days and I have a plan for visitors parking.		
I have thought about access, safety and taken reasonable precautions to avoid accidents, including signs, notices or warnings.		
My insurance is up to date and appropriate to my needs.		
I have completed a risk assessment form.		
I have sign-posted toilet facilities.		
My venue is easy to find, with good sign-posting for visitors who may be unfamiliar with the area.		
I have made good use of Open Studios bunting, yellow arrow signs, Open Studios official posters and my own venue signage to make visitors welcome on open days.		
I have used/downloaded blank posters and other support materials to produce my own signage and marketing materials.		

ACTION	NOTES	DONE
I have contacted/invited my customers, friends and relatives in person about Open Studios - by email or other suitable route, including links to on-line information.		
I have decided whether or not to hold a preview/private view or other launch event for my closest friends, neighbours and customers.		
I have updated my HVAF Gallery, my blog, web site, social media pages etc.		



3. WORKING WITH OTHER ARTISTS

ACTION	NOTES	DONE
I go to area meetings to meet other artists, plan local activities, collect marketing materials and share ideas.		
I talk to other local artists as we support each other getting ready.		
I know enough about other local artists to encourage my visitors to visit others.		
I help distribute Open Studios posters, brochures, leaflets.		
I play my part in local Art Trails, and help with physical distribution.		
I am connected to Herts Visual Arts, Open Studios, events and other HVAF artists on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or other social media.		
I join in with conversations, links, promotions, shares, likes etc. on social media to make the most of potential publicity.		
I promote our local trail, neighbouring areas and other local artists to my visitors.		
I have helped get in touch with local media, papers and other interested parties in our area.		
I take part in local area events, trails, market stalls, local exhibitions, poster displays or other opportunities that all help promote my Open Studios in some way.		

4. GETTING THE SPACE READY

ACTION	NOTES	DONE
I have tidied up visible/accessible garden and/or entrance areas.		
I have spring cleaned and made indoor and outdoor spaces safe and easy to navigate.		
I have copies of the brochure, other HVAF leaflets and local trail leaflets to hand for visitors set out in a good display.		
I have the feedback questionnaire visible and encourage visitors to complete it on-line (see brochure).		
My work is displayed professionally, with appropriate prices, labels and information as needed.		
I have old and new work available, all labelled with my details.		
I have sketchbooks and work in progress available.		
I have a range of work, perhaps from cards and low value items, up to larger more expensive pieces.		
I have business cards, a price list, a record of my work and an artist's statement.		
I have a visitors book and I am prepared to ask visitors for their contact details.		
I have suitable packaging materials for any work that I sell, and business cards, receipts, other information to go with sold works.		

ACTION	NOTES	DONE
If I am demonstrating, I am confident that the activity is safe.		
I have a notebook or similar to record sales.		
My credit card device, phone, camera etc. are all charged and ready.		



5. DURING OPEN STUDIOS

ACTION	NOTES	DONE
I am open every day that I said/ agreed to – ready to welcome visitors during my opening hours.		
If I am sharing a venue, we have agreed cost sharing, time rotas and other collective tasks and opportunities.		
I can keep myself and the venue space safe, including access, keys, money, other possessions (art-related or otherwise).		
If I am doing a solo Open Studios, I have a friend or family member on hand at all times to help look after everything with me.		
If I have a real emergency that means I am unable to be present, I will put a clear sign on my gate/ door to let visitors know, and I will also tell openstudios@hvaf.org.uk .		
I greet visitors with respect and, depending on their preference, am prepared to let them explore quietly, chat, or answer questions.		
I offer my visitors refreshments.		
I keep a tally of visitors and work politely to improve my mailing list/ customer base. I explain why I might ask for email addresses, explain I will not share information, and if appropriate offer to keep them informed about new works or future events.		

ACTION	NOTES	DONE
I have a clear explanation as to whether refreshments are free or perhaps for a suggested donation to a charity/local cause.		
I provide a relaxed quiet environment without strong cooking smells or loud music.		
I take down signage when I close for the day.		
I understand that visitors may come and go, there may be quiet and busier times, and I have plenty to do between visitors.		
I understand that I may not sell anything and that the value may be in contacts, conversations or just even holding the event itself.		
I understand that visitors appreciate artists who do Open Studios for several years.		
I'm relaxed and ready.		
I'm updating social media/my blog with commentary throughout OS.		
I have a notebook or similar to record sales.		
My credit card device, phone, camera etc. are all charged and ready.		
I encourage visitors to complete the HVAF on-line competition/ questionnaire.		

6. AFTER OPEN STUDIOS

ACTION	NOTES	DONE
I have packed everything away.		
I know when I will review my visitors, work sold, comments from the visitors book, etc.		
I have returned spare brochures and leaflets to my local organiser.		
I have completed the HVAF Open Studios Feedback form.		





Herts Open STUDIOS

#HertsOpenStudios

Call for artists

Register your interest in taking part in Herts Visual Arts Flagship event.

Artists taking part gain:

- Promotional exposure through our social media channels
- Featured in our newsletters
- Potential to be featured in our press release
- Access to use key branding materials

FIND OUT MORE:

WWW.HVAF.ORG.UK/ARTISTS/HERTS-OPEN-STUDIOS/RESOURCES

