



*“The participants in our research in Porthcawl showed genuine desire to create an event of significance which also specifically involved the talent and interests of the local community who live here.” Sustainable Wales*

## Arts, Craft & Culture Trail | Feasibility Study Overview | April 2015

Sustainable Wales is a leading organisation in the community-based sustainable development field. Based in Porthcawl, for many years Sustainable Wales has explored how culture, along with social, economic and environmental initiatives, may provide a means of achieving positive change in people’s lives. This research project explored how an Arts, Craft & Culture Trail might be feasible in the town. It was carried out by a team of staff in February/March 2015.

Here are the key findings:

### Gauging Local interest

1. The team spoke to 31 groups/organisations and 55 individuals during the research period to gauge interest in the project. These were mainly artists and arts groups, but also included community interest groups, venues and other cultural practitioners.
2. Everyone consulted was supportive of being involved in an arts trail. Only 23 individuals/groups would choose to present work in their own homes/studios, with 63 artists/groups preferring the option of presenting work in a public space.
3. Potential public spaces include: arts venues, cafes, shops, restaurants, pubs, green/outdoor spaces.

### Exploring other Arts Trails

1. **Research:** the work investigated over 10 other UK-based arts trails including Made in Roath, Cardiff, Ceredigion Art Trail, Helfa Gelf, North Wales, Silverdale & Arnside Art & Culture Trail, Cumbria. Ilfracombe Art Trail, Devon and a number of Bristol Arts Trails (Art on the Hill, BS9, West Bristol, Severn Vale, North Bristol, Studio Upstairs).
2. **Location:** trails vary in size from a small town, to a large region of a country, such as North Wales. In urban areas, trails tend to be contained within a smaller geographical area, as the population is denser, and there is a higher rate of artists.
3. **Organisation:** most trails are run by a small committee, often including, or initiated by practising artists. Many committees have specific roles set out within their team. Some of the bigger trails have an artistic director.
4. **Funding:** the main source of funding for the trails comes from artist submissions, which range from £20-50, with majority charging between £40-50. In return, artists receive a space in the brochure and usually on the website. Some trails have also raised money by allowing local businesses to advertise in the brochure

5. **Participants:** trails can sometimes have over 100 artists exhibiting their work, and over 20 venues presenting work. Artists are often asked to sign up via an online form and make their payment online also.

## Funding Streams

1. The team reviewed a range of potential funding streams for an arts trail: Arts Council of Wales, Colwinston Trust, National Lottery (People and Places), Awards for All and BCBC Tourism Grants.

## Going Forward: How the team then saw an Arts Trail developing in a sustainable way

1. **Participation:** The arts trail needs to include artists and creative people of all abilities and forms. The process for inclusion should be non-selective. Artists should be included in the consultation of how the event might develop through public and individual meetings. Schools, local charities and community interest groups should also be included in the activity.
2. **Funding:** It is vital that the trail is able to sustain itself financially, although it may require some financial input in the first three years as it becomes established. Therefore, it is recommended to the SW Trustees that the charity seek funds to employ an Events Manager to oversee the set-up and administration of the trail, and also a Marketing Manager to take a lead on the marketing of the event. To consider also employing a Community Engagement Worker, whose remit would be specifically to ensure that all parts of the local community are given the opportunity to take part in appropriate ways. Funding should be sought to cover these staff costs. Business sponsorship should be sought to add to artists' membership fees to cover the cost of producing a high quality event-brochure.
3. **Creating a sustainable event:** As a charity founded on the principles of sustainable development, it is vital that all aspects of the project have sustainable principles embedded in them. These include social, economic, environmental and cultural themes. Everyone who takes part in the event should be provided with information and guidance on ways to advance these principles.

#### 4. Potential Timeframe:

Seek core staff funding (phase 1 grant application)

Seek core staff funding (phase 2)

Hear about core staff funding - Advertise jobs and recruitment

Planning for a Spring? Arts Trail begins

First Arts Trail takes place over the course of a weekend

If funding does not progress from phase 1 to 2, then an alternative plan will be drawn up in consultation with artists and arts organisations.

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