



# Visual Images Group News: Bucks Art Weeks is nearly here!

Updates, news and resources from the Visual Images Group Committee

It's almost time for the main event... read on for some final tips to make your Bucks Art Weeks extra successful. There are a couple of other news items too this month, here's what's included in this email:

- How to prepare for Bucks Art Weeks
- Stowe exhibition open for applications
- Press mentions
- Social media planning
- Resources on the website
- Your news
- Final countdown checklist

A little plea from the committee - we are taking part in Bucks Art Weeks too, so we'll be trying to juggle several hats over the next month or so - please bear with us!

As always, if you have any queries, please contact Paola on [admin@bucksartweeks.org.uk](mailto:admin@bucksartweeks.org.uk).

Best wishes

Visual Images Group Committee

(Heather, Jay, Keith, Mia, Pete, Paola, Sam & Sarah)

## The final countdown - how to prepare for Bucks Art Weeks





# Your Bucks Art Weeks artists and makers handbook

All the resources, hints and tips you need to have a great Bucks Art Weeks

## Introduction

Bucks Art Weeks is the **largest visual arts event in Buckinghamshire** and one of the biggest in the country. It is popular, well-established, and vibrant and is a fantastic opportunity for you to promote yourself and your work to the local community. We've had upwards of **48,000 visits per year** made by the public and, with more and more people shunning the high street in favour of buying wonderful, hand-crafted pieces or works of art from local artists and makers, Bucks Art Weeks is an extraordinarily great way to get your name out there.

Whether you're a newcomer or need a refresher on good practice, we've put together this guide to help you have a great Bucks Art Weeks. We've collated the thoughts of experienced artists and makers and have incorporated their pearls of wisdom into the following methods, hints, and tips.

## A word in advance

If there is only one piece of advice that you take away from this guide, then it's this: **The members who put the most in, in terms of additional publicity and enthusiasm, get the most out in terms of visitors and sales.** We also know that it's a ripple effect. The more years you do Bucks Art Weeks, the more people get to know you and will recommend you to others.

Remember that there's a **handbook** packed with advice about how to have a successful Bucks Art Weeks online - you can see it at

[https://www.bucksartweeks.org.uk/sites/default/files/manual/baw\\_artists\\_handbook\\_2024.pdf](https://www.bucksartweeks.org.uk/sites/default/files/manual/baw_artists_handbook_2024.pdf)

The key things to think about this month are listed at the end of this email, so read on if you'd like to see them. Thank you!

## **Stowe exhibition open for applications**



We'll be running another exhibition at Stowe Landscape Gardens near Buckingham over the August Bank Holiday this year. This is a National Trust property and it's a great opportunity to show (and sell!) your work - it was really successful last year.

If you'd like to take part, you can **see more info and the application form** at <https://www.bucksartweeks.org.uk/artists> and <https://forms.gle/2HjoVBvXFu5MrfZj8> - entry is first come, first served on the proviso that we have a diverse coverage of media and subject matter.

# Press mentions

So far we're aware of these mentions for Bucks Art Weeks in the press this year:

MyLocal News (Tring), 29 May 2024 <https://www.mynewsmag.co.uk/awesome-art-tring-artists-to-open-their-studios-for-month-long-art-festival/>

Red Kite Radio, May 2024

Bucks Herald, 21 May 2024 <https://www.bucksherald.co.uk/arts-and-culture/bucks-art-weeks-the-purr-fect-remedy-for-stress-after-a-tragedy-4636652>

MK Citizen, 20 May 2024 <https://www.miltonkeynes.co.uk/arts-and-culture/bucks-art-weeks-its-back-to-the-drawing-board-for-becky-4634524>

Round & About Magazine, June 2024 ([https://www.bucksartweeks.org.uk/sites/default/files/round\\_a...](https://www.bucksartweeks.org.uk/sites/default/files/round_a...))

Bucks Herald, 13 May 2024 <https://www.bucksherald.co.uk/arts-and-culture/soap-star-to-kick-off-bucks-art-weeks-with-charity-fundraiser-in-rowsham-4626128>

Bucks Free Press, 10 May 2024 [https://www.bucksfreepress.co.uk/local-events/?\\_evDiscoveryPath=/event/2417011-bucks-art-weeks](https://www.bucksfreepress.co.uk/local-events/?_evDiscoveryPath=/event/2417011-bucks-art-weeks)

MK Citizen, 9 May 2024 <https://www.miltonkeynes.co.uk/arts-and-culture/calling-all-crafters-huge-art-and-crafts-festival-is-on-its-way-soon-4622721>

**Have you seen any other coverage?** Please let us know if we've missed anything - email - thank you so much!

You can see details of our press coverage on the website too: <https://www.bucksartweeks.org.uk/publicity>



## Get the word out with social media!

Please post as much as you can during Bucks Art Weeks - we have increased our followers considerably this year so you will be benefiting from, and building, this audience with every post.

Remember to **hashtag us: #bucksartweeksofficial** in order to get noticed by all the people who are following.

If you missed our **Instagram workshop** in April you can see the notes here:

[https://www.bucksartweeks.org.uk/sites/default/files/manual/beginners\\_guide\\_to\\_instagram.pdf](https://www.bucksartweeks.org.uk/sites/default/files/manual/beginners_guide_to_instagram.pdf)

## Resources for you on the website

You can see past copies of this **newsletter**, as well as the **Bucks Art Weeks handbook**, Instagram workshop notes and other useful material on the [website](#) - it's on the right hand side of your 'My account' page when you are logged in.

## Your news

Thank you for sending us your news (remember you can do this at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8BX655B>). Here's the latest updates...

Penn Street Art Gallery in Amersham is curating a Retrospective Exhibition for the late acclaimed Buckinghamshire artist, **Rosina Flower** throughout the month of June. You can see details below.

**Peter Austin's** painting Zoop (ii) has been selected for this year's Well Contemporary, an annual exhibition of international contemporary art held in Wells Cathedral. The exhibition opens on 3rd August and closes on the 31st so if you are in the area or want to visit a Cathedral there is now an added attraction!

**PENN**street  
**GALLERY**

**RETROSPECTIVE  
EXHIBITION**

**ROSINA FLOWER**  
1933 - 2023

Presenting the life and work of this acclaimed Buckinghamshire artist, Rosina Flower throughout the month of June.



**JUNE 1-30** Wednesday to Sunday 10am to 5pm

Unit 2a Penn Street Works Penn Street Amersham HP7 0FA



Rosina's retrospective





Peter's painting

# Your final countdown for how to have a fab Bucks Art Weeks...

- **Good signage is everything!** You need to make it as easy as possible for visitors to find you. We cannot stress enough that well placed and sufficient road signs make a huge difference to the success of your event. Here are some pointers (excuse the pun!):
  - Put up signs and arrows from all the closest main routes.
  - The large yellow boards should be in position a week before Bucks Art Weeks starts to create awareness and interest (even if you are only open the second week). The arrows should then be fixed in place early on the day of opening.
  - Don't forget to put your directory number on the sticker provided and affix it to your yellow boards.
  - Fix yellow boards to metal or wooden posts (from DIY stores).
  - Hammer into the ground (before a road junction, rather than at the junction).
  - Place sensibly and be aware that the council or neighbours may mow a grass verge and remove your signage.
  - Do not fix to street furniture e.g. road signs or lampposts.
  - Follow all the signs yourself to make sure that, if you were a visitor in a car, you would be able to see all the signs and reach your venue.
  - Road safety is paramount – make sure your signs do not obscure other road signs or limit visibility for road users.
- Top up local libraries, shops, waiting rooms etc. with **directories/flyers** and put up any remaining posters.
- Put together a brief **information sheet about you and your work**, to display or for people to take away with them. You can use the material you've put on your Bucks Art Weeks gallery page on the website.
- **Plan parking** at your venue if necessary. Warn your neighbours that you will have visitors parking nearby - and invite them! If you don't want to take up a valuable parking space with your own car, park it nearby if you can do so safely and put a notice in the window to direct visitors if it's useful.
- Get together all the **practical things** you might need during the event: paper and pens, a receipt book, red dots, scissors, sellotape, blu tack, packing materials, screwdriver, hammer, hooks, wire, string, pins, bags, price labels, a change float, marker pen, business cards, lights, extension lead, phone charger, tape measure, gaffer tape,...
- A word about **packaging**: if someone has paid a substantial amount for a work of art, don't give them a supermarket carrier bag to take it home in! Use paper/eco wrap and string, and make it waterproof if it might rain. Include a label or your business card. Consider offering a gift wrapping service too.
- **Practice laying out your space**: try it out on the right sized wall/floor at home, decide on what goes where and take a photo so that you can replicate it at the venue.
- Plan **how you will welcome visitors**. If in a group, will you have name badges? Will music be playing? Will you let people browse or chat straight away? Make sure you smile! Remember that visitors are all different so you need to act appropriately. Don't lead people through the show talking at them!
- Make sure you have a **visitors book** or some way of collecting comments and contact details. Some venues have a prize draw for visitors who are happy to leave their email address. If collecting personal

details, make sure you have a privacy notice/GDPR statement to hand (see <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/advice-for-small-organisations/make-your-own-privacy-notice/>)

- Post on **social media** that you're taking part and plan the posts you will make during the event. These can include:
  - That you're taking part
  - Sharing BucksArtWeeksOfficial and other artists' posts
  - Sharing the BucksArtWeeks website, your gallery page on the website and the directory link
  - A picture of your own work every day
  - Asking people to share the event with their friends
  - A video of your work in situ at your venue
  - Happy customers with their purchases (if they consent!)
  - Remember to **hashtag #bucksartweeksofficial** to get maximum exposure for your posts!

## THE DAY BEFORE

- **Set up your display**, including prices. Make sure you allow enough time for this!
- Make sure everything is **clean and tidy**, and that there are no trip/slip hazards, including the garden/entrance area - first impressions count!
- Either the evening before, or on the morning of your first day (before you are open but not too far in advance or you might have people turning up when you've got your PJs on...) **put up the arrows and the road sign boards** to direct visitors to your studio or exhibition.
- Think about **what you want to say** about yourself and your work to your visitors. They have probably come because they want to know how and why you make your art - meeting the maker is part of what they are buying if they decide to make a purchase. Try to use everyday language, not jargon, to explain your process. Talk about what inspires you. Be upbeat, positive and welcoming. Ask them questions. Most importantly, take cues from how they react to you and your work, don't talk *at* them or give them the hard sell, and reflect afterwards what you can learn from their visit.

## DURING THE EVENT

- Regularly **check that the arrows and signs** are still in place and secure.
- **Make a note of the visitors who come** - we will ask for this in our exhibitors' survey after the event but more importantly, the more you know about your customers the better! A basic tally is all you need: for each day, how many people come in the morning/afternoon/evening; their gender/age and relevant demographic info e.g. how local they are; and what pieces they show interest in. This will really help you plan for next year and your sales in general.
- **Encourage feedback** from all your visitors - if they take part in our visitors survey they could win £100. Please point them to the survey by a poster/flyer or in the directory.
- Make it as easy as possible for visitors by making them welcome, with clear signage, details of where to park and how to find the entrance to your venue - and a **friendly greeting** when they come in!
- If possible and it's safe to do so, leave any doors open with clear arrows showing people where to go to.
- Have everything **clearly priced**.

- Always have a book for **making notes**.
- Keep any enthusiastic **pets and/or children** under control!
- Please **stay open** during the times you have stated in the directory! Venues that are closed when they have said they will be open, create a bad impression for the whole event. If there is an emergency and you have to shut unexpectedly, put a notice on the door apologising and directing people to a couple of other local venues.
- **Refreshments**: cold drinks on hot days are very welcome. Bear in mind that if you are busy with catering, you are leaving your work unattended. Please be aware that unless you are selling catering for a charitable donation you will need to be licensed. And any cakes or treats should not contain nuts.
- Take a **walk-through video** - you can post it on social media and/or your Bucks Art Week gallery page.
- **Send every visitor on to another venue nearby** when they have finished their visit with you - this is a way for all of us to get more visitors! Make sure visitors know about the **prize draw for visiting 5 or more venues** and **offer to sign their loyalty visiting card**. If you are taking part in a local art trail, make sure you have flyers to hand and tell them how to get to the next venue they're interested in.

## And finally...

Thank you for reading this newsletter! I hope it's been useful - if there's anything you'd like to see in future news, please let Sarah know on [sarahcrippsart@gmail.com](mailto:sarahcrippsart@gmail.com)

Happy making!

P.S. BAW 2025 will take place on Saturday 7th June to Sunday 22nd June.

### Visual Images Group

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