

Severn Vale Art Trail 2026: Artist Feedback and Committee Response

A record-breaking year

The 2026 Severn Vale Art Trail was our largest ever, bringing together 84 participating artists across 36 venues. Thank you to everyone who helped make this year's event such a success.

We received feedback from 48 artists (57%), representing 28 venues (78%). Your comments have helped the committee identify both the strengths of this year's event and opportunities for improvement.

Overall Satisfaction

How satisfied were you with?	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★	★	No response
Number of visitors	46%	27%	23%	2%	0%	2%
Quality of interactions	75%	15%	6%	2%	0%	2%
Website	75%	21%	2%	0%	0%	2%
Social media campaign	63%	21%	6%	4%	0%	6%
Marketing / banners / press	71%	19%	6%	2%	0%	2%
Venue signage	54%	23%	19%	2%	0%	2%
Trail Guide	67%	27%	4%	0%	0%	2%

Trail Guide leaflets

	Just right	Not enough	Too many	No response
Did you have enough trail guide leaflets to distribute?	61%	31%	6%	2%

What went well

- High satisfaction with visitor interactions.
- Website, Trail Guide and marketing all received strong ratings.
- Many artists commented on the friendly atmosphere and enjoyable conversations.
- Most artists would be happy to participate again.

What visitors told us

- Almost 370 visitor surveys were analysed across the Art Trail.
- Many visitors planned to visit five or more venues.
- Visitors particularly valued meeting artists and talking about their work.
- Many visitors were returning from previous years, demonstrating strong loyalty to the Art Trail.
- Most visitors came from the local area, but the trail also attracted visitors from South Wales and further afield.
- Word of Mouth and the Trail Guide remain the strongest ways visitors discover the event.
- These findings reinforce the importance of continuing to invest in the Trail Guide, local publicity and opportunities for visitors to engage directly with artists.

Where we can improve

- Thursday was quieter than the rest of the event.
- Improve signage and directional information.
- Increase brochure availability at busy locations.
- Continue promoting through local publications and social media.
- Some shared and more remote venues could benefit from additional artists.
- Provide more support and guidance for new artists.
- A small number of artists felt that the Art Trail has become very large and that visitors naturally prioritise some of the larger venues, particularly within Thornbury.
- The committee will continue to review the balance of venues, artist distribution and ways of encouraging visitors to explore the whole trail.

What we're doing for 2027

- Retain the five-day Art Trail.
- Thursday will primarily focus on solo venues, with shared venues able to choose whether to open.
- Increase laminated A3 signs and directional arrows.
- Develop guidance and top tips for new artists.
- Organise a pre-trail meet-and-greet event.
- Create per venue WhatsApp groups for communication.
- Review the balance of venues and artist distribution across the trail.
- Introduce a proportionate curation process for committee-managed group venues where applications exceed the available exhibition space.
- This proposal applies mainly to committee-managed group venues with limited capacity. Artists exhibiting in their own studios or self-organised shared venues will continue to enjoy the flexibility they currently have.
- Investigate improvements to the artist application process.

Looking ahead to 2027

- The continued growth of the Severn Vale Art Trail is something to celebrate.
- Our aim is to manage that growth carefully so the event remains enjoyable, sustainable and rewarding for artists, visitors and volunteers alike.
- Thank you again for helping make the 2026 Severn Vale Art Trail such a success.

Closing note from the Chair Eryl Daniels

It has been a tremendous art trail this 20th anniversary year, as shown both in the feedback from artists and visitors. Congratulations to all that participated in the trail! It was also great to see many of you at the special Celebratory Evening. You'll realise that there is much to do before, during and after the art trail, therefore, the small things that you do to assist during the art trail and the returning of equipment in an orderly way, are very helpful and much appreciated. As chair, I would particularly like to thank all members of the committee, who are volunteers, for their commitment and hard work throughout the year with the organisation of this event, e.g.

- Attendance to meetings
- SVAT Website administration
- Design and publication of Art Trail guides
- Curation of applications
- Publicity and social media
- Art in Business
- Pop up Art Event
- Permission and erection of banners

Here's looking forward to 2027! Dates for your diary – **29th April to 3rd May 2027.**