

Fiveways Artists' Group - New members pack

Who are we?

- We are a group of artists based in the Fiveways area. The group's activities are coordinated by an elected Chairperson, supported by other elected post-holders, including a treasurer, secretary, membership secretary and sponsorship team.
- Membership is open to artists living or working as artists in the Fiveways area. We also offer membership to galleries and other commercial institutions that exhibit art within the area.
- Membership of the group is confirmed once a year. We pay an annual fee, to continue our membership of the group. Typically, members open their own house to show work, but we do also offer 'non-opening' membership - for individuals who wish to remain as members of the group but will not be opening their own venue during that calendar year.
- Members opening their houses during the May Artists' Open Houses will be included in the Fiveways trail of AOH. By agreement with AOH, in order to be in the trail, members need to have joined our group.
- Benefits of membership include the loan of a large colourful Fiveways banner.
- From time to time, social events and exhibitions are held for the group.

Artists Open Houses (AOH)

The city-wide AOH is a non-profit company that coordinates the opening of houses and other venues during the four weekends of May. The city of Brighton and Hove and surrounding districts are organised into trails, of which Fiveways is one. It's the oldest and, we like to think, most prestigious trail. The concept of AOH started with us - Five at Fiveways, which opened first here in 1981. It has been city-wide for many years and similar trails now operate in other areas of the UK and even abroad.

Dates and Deadlines for registration and opening

- The Fiveways membership fee is paid between November and January for the period including the May Artists Open Houses.
- In January artists planning to run an Open House in May register online with AOH. AOH coordinate registered houses with the appropriate art trails such as Fiveways.
- AOH registration requires details about opening times and participating artists, this is usually completed by February and will then appear in the official AOH booklet.
- In March the Fiveways Trail Guide is completed. This shows much more detail for each venue than the AOH brochure. Members are responsible for submitting the details for their venue to the organiser.
- The Fiveways artists hold an opening event in April to welcome new members and distribute Fiveways Artists' banners.
- In April the Fiveways Trail Guides are distributed. Members receive a bundle of Guides and are asked to distribute them in and around a given area.
- During May all Fiveways venues are asked to offer a private view evening so that other members off the group get a chance to visit each venue and see the work on display, these are valued social occasions that help build and sustain relations between group members

Getting Started

- There is a lot of variation between venues and therefore no single way to best exhibit art work, by being part of our group, expertise can be shared between members.

- Most venues opt to show a selection of guest artists. This provides a level of diversity that can help attract visitors. The high cost of registration can be offset by fees paid by the guest artists.
- It is essential to identify artists who will exhibit in your venue before AOH registration (January). This information will be submitted to AOH for inclusion in your listing, as well as to our Trail Guide.
- Venues manage the finance associated with running an Open House in different ways, some venues choose to divide the fixed costs between participants, others choose to take commission from sales, a number of venues may use a combination of these approaches
- AOH require venues to take out public liability insurance in case of accidents/incidents involving visitors. AOH recommend taking out Public and Products Liability (PPL) insurance with the Artists Newsletter (a-n AIR) <https://www.a-n.co.uk/about/insurance/> a-n AIR operates the only policy dedicated to artists and costs around £40 per year. This payment means you also automatically become a member of a-n. For artists, the policy will provide around £5m cover. There are a variety of options, so it's worth taking a good look to check the details of what is covered.
- It is a good idea to organise shared invigilation of your open house, it is common practice for participating guest artists to spend periods of time invigilating, this ensures the workload is spread evenly but also provides opportunities for visitors to talk to artists directly about their work. Experience shows that this encourages sales.
- Think about how to manage payments, card payments are very common in which case you may need to investigate the technology required to best manage this. Card machines can be sourced from bodies like Paypal and Sumup (there may be more!)

Venue Checklist

Nov/Dec	Identify artists who may participate in your open house
Nov - Jan	Confirm membership of the Fiveways group
Jan/Feb	AOH registration/finalise details for the AOH booklet
Feb	Finalise Public Liability insurance
March	Complete the Fiveways trail guide detail/update information on the Fiveways Artists' website
April	Attend Fiveways Artists launch event, collect Fiveways banner and Fiveways trail guides
April	Liaise with the Fiveways group regarding a possible viewing evening for the group at your venue
May	Open your house/venue

Marketing your venue

- The AOH booklet and Fiveways Trail guide are widely distributed and will help with much of the promotion of your venue.
- Some venues will also produce their own printed flyers that they distribute independently.
- Social media is a good way to promote your venue, images and short videos are widely used.

Sponsorship

Members' subscriptions and advertising by our sponsors cover the cost of producing our printed Trail Guide which we distribute throughout Fiveways and beyond. The Trail Guide is a high quality, professional publication which provides valuable publicity for the open houses and makes the Fiveways trail stand out from the others.

In addition to paying the subscription, we expect all members to contribute

1) by taking part in the letterbox distribution of the Trail Guide in April (or bribing your children to do so) and

2) by inviting local businesses to become sponsors.

You will receive emails to enlist your help with these essential tasks.