

OD ARTS  
FESTIVAL  
28-30 MAY 2021



Od Arts Festival 2021:  
Alone with Everybody  
Evaluation Report

# *Alone With Everybody*

## **Contents**

03	Introduction
05	Art in numbers
07-14	Art
16-20	People
22-24	Place
26-29	Organisation
30	Support & Thank you

**OSR/  
PROJ  
ECTS**

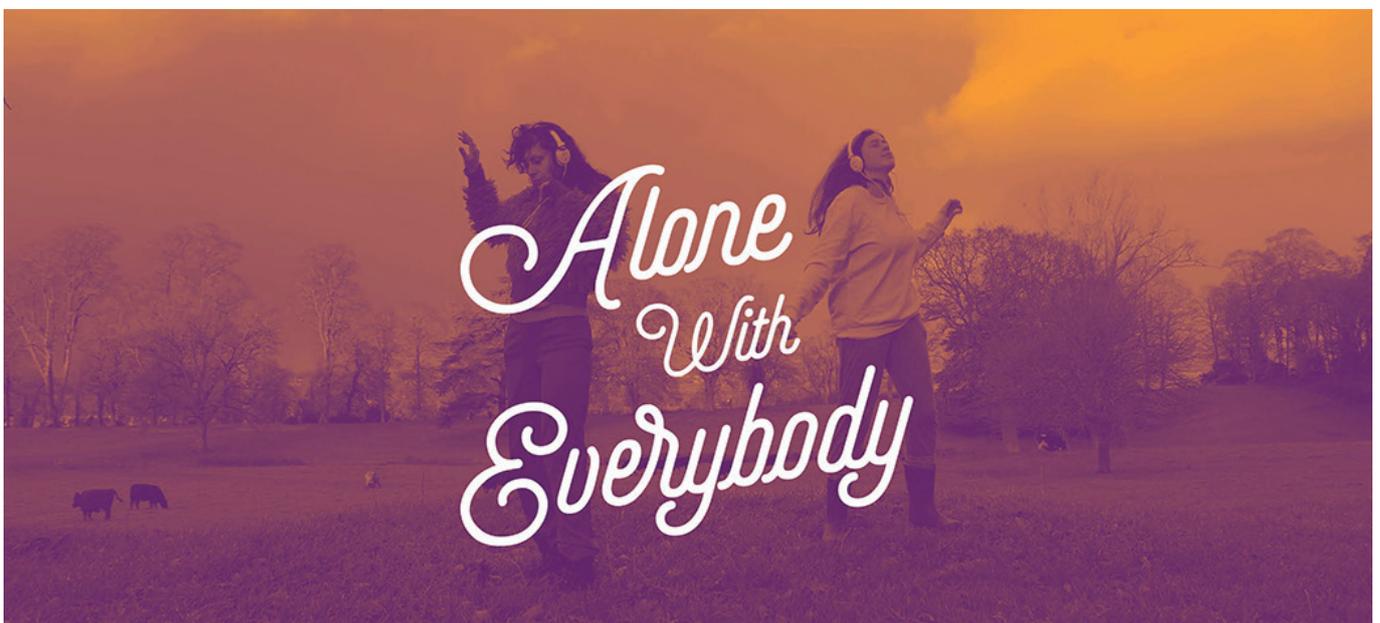
# Introduction

## Od Arts Festival: Alone with Everybody

Od Arts Festival 2021 was the culmination of two years of artistic and audience development centred on the villages of East Coker and West Coker in South Somerset. Exhibitions, performances, film and workshops led by international and local artists, were sited in collaboration with local venues and partners.

Od Arts Festival 2021 was co-curated by Simon Lee Dicker, founding Director of OSR Projects and Vickie Fear, Curator/ Programme Manager at Aspex, Portsmouth. Since 2018, the direction of the festival has been steered by a volunteer committee of six local people of different generations, professions and walks of life.

Devised before the hiatus of the global Covid-19 pandemic, the festival programme carefully and playfully considered aspects of aloneness, isolation and solitude. Across two villages and online platforms, artists, neighbours and visitors came together to create, dream and ponder how to be 'alone with everybody'.



## About OSR Projects

From a base in rural Somerset, OSR Projects have produced ambitious, critically and socially engaged art projects locally and further afield since 2011. Producing the inaugural Od Arts Festival in 2018, OSR Projects has a track record of exciting artist-led and participatory projects, responding to local histories of work and industry (Ropewalkers, 2016) and global challenges of climate change and extreme weather (Weather Station, 2015-18).

OSR Projects registered as a community interest company in 2019 with a specific mission to support artists and local communities where our activities take place. OSR Projects is led by founding directors Simon Lee Dicker and Chantelle Henocq, and new directors Bob Gelsthorpe and Rowan Lear, each of whom bring experience of instigating exemplary artist-led projects connecting people and place.

## About the Cokers

East and West Coker are neighbouring villages and civil parishes within the district of South Somerset. Together, their populations number 4,500 residents, of which 14.6% are under-16 and 24.6% are aged 65 and over. 97% of residents are 'White British' and 1.7% are Black and Minority Ethnic. 13.5% of residents provide unpaid care and 14.9% are aged over 16 without any qualifications. The villages are served by irregular bus services. The nearest train station is in Yeovil, around 3½ miles away, from which there are good connections to Bristol and London. The villages have a small number of community facilities including a cafe, shop, pubs, restaurant, churches and a village hall.

## Structure

This report is structured in four sections: **Art, People, Place, Organisation**. Each section comprises a series of statements summarising a finding of this evaluation, backed by evidence, data and quotes. The sections conclude with recommendations.

## Methodology

This evaluation adopts a mixed and adaptive methodology. The data was collected using a variety of methods, drawn from a range of stakeholders: audiences, artists, team, people, partners and venues.

Evidence was gathered through: audience feedback cards available from all venues during the festival; questions asked during the booking process for events, surveys sent to artists, supporters, volunteers and audiences immediately following the festival; emailed and in-person feedback provided by a range of partners, visitors and the local committee; website analytics; social media analytics and engagement; documentation photographs and video, critical written responses, and discussions among the festival team and committee.

This report aspires to the principles laid out in UK Evaluation Society's Guidelines for Good Practice in Evaluation: Clarity, Integrity, Independence, Accessibility, Trust, Equity, Transparency, Diversity.

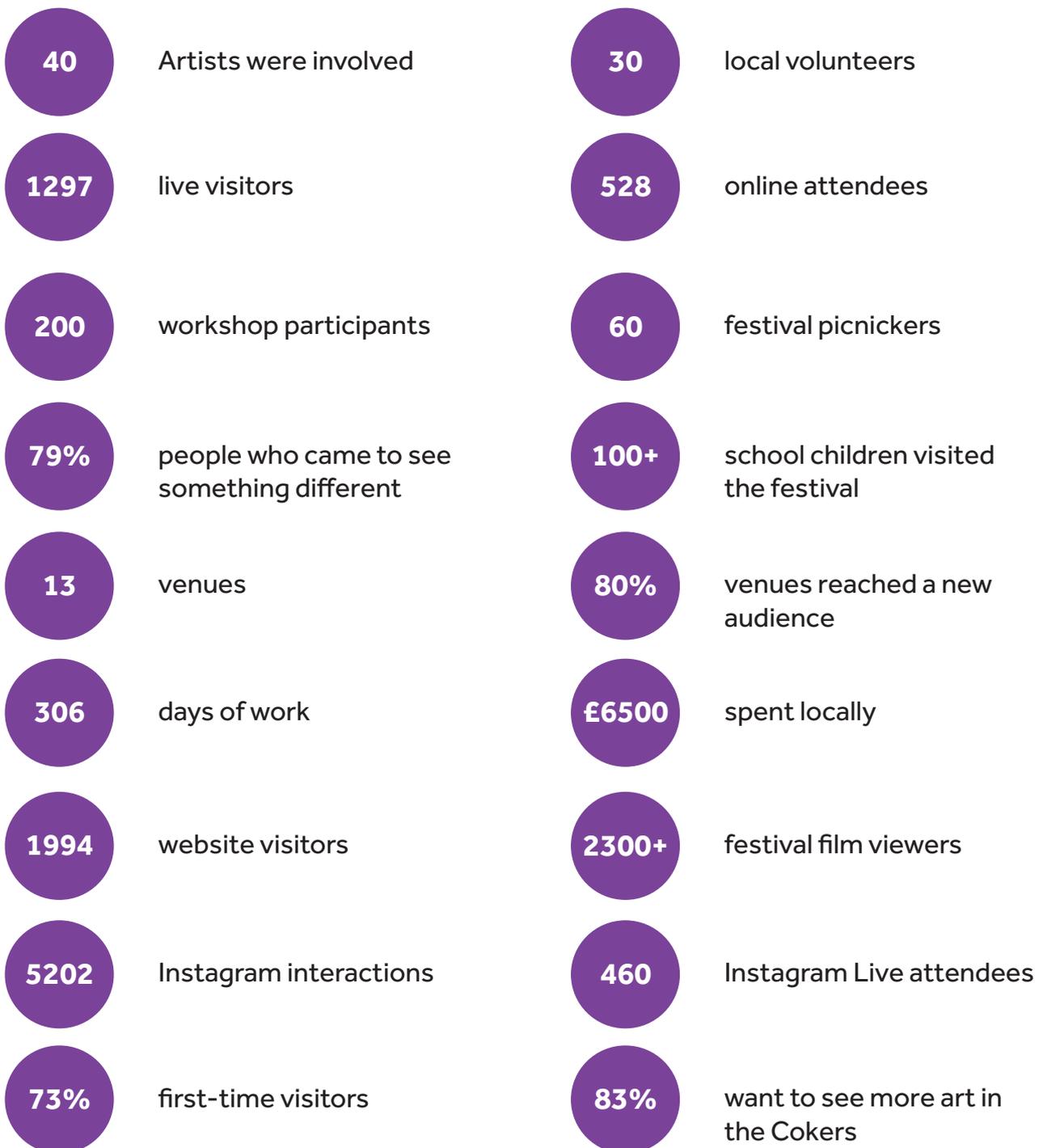


## About the author

This report has been commissioned by Od Arts Festival and is compiled and written by Rowan Lear, an artist and writer with professional experience in arts governance, development and evaluation. Rowan is familiar with the art scene and context of the South West, having worked within institutions, organisations and artist-led projects in the region since 2013. From 2017-2020, Rowan was a non-executive director of b-Side, Portland, and is currently a non-executive director of OSR Projects CIC. Rowan has a particular interest in developing access to the arts and embedding diversity, inclusion and social justice.

# Alone With Everybody

## Festival by numbers



A photograph of an art workshop. In the foreground, a wooden table is covered with various art supplies, including brushes, jars of ink, and pieces of paper with drawings. A person is visible in the background, working at a table. A purple circle with the word "Art" in white script is overlaid on the top right of the image.

# Art

# 1. Art

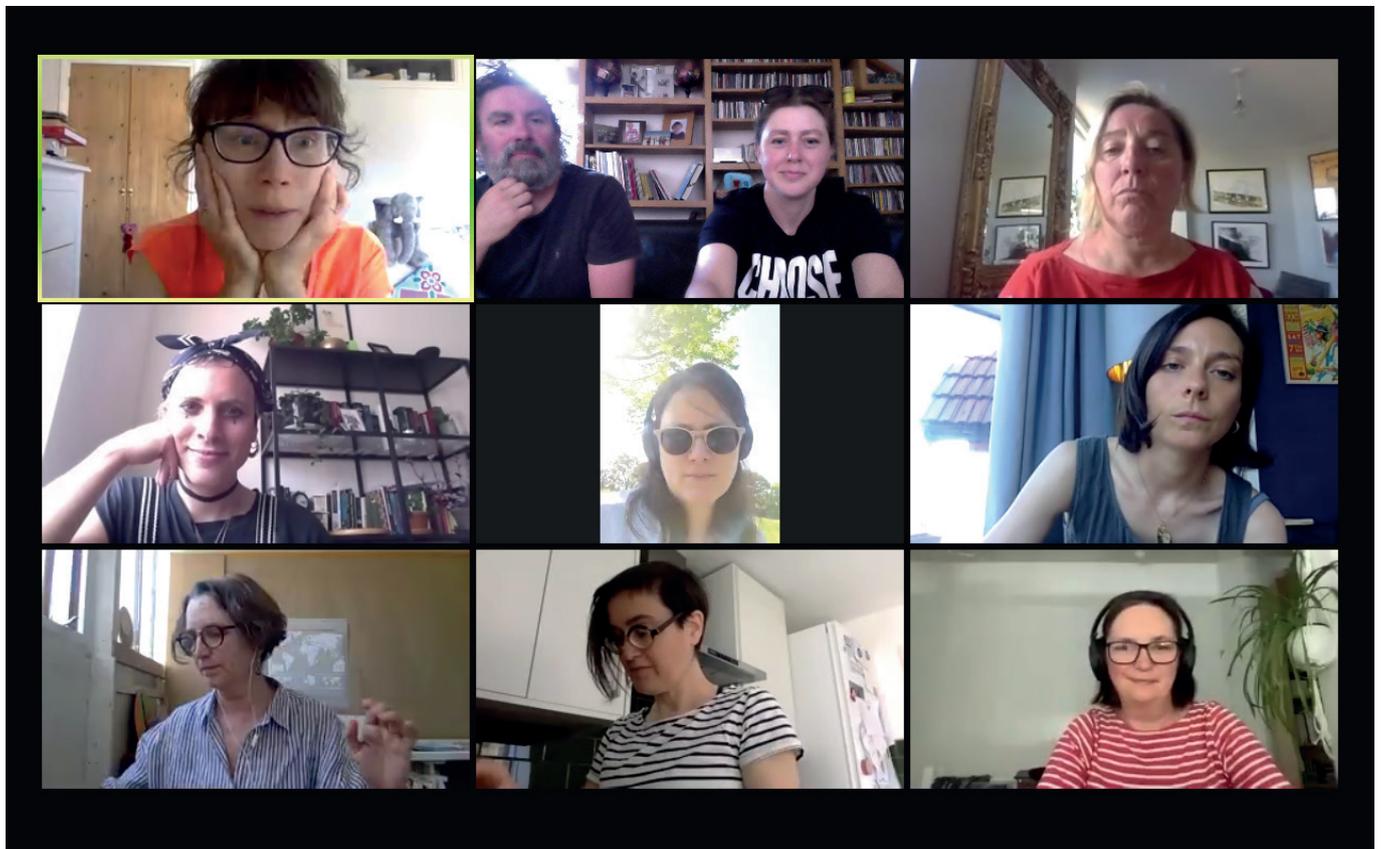
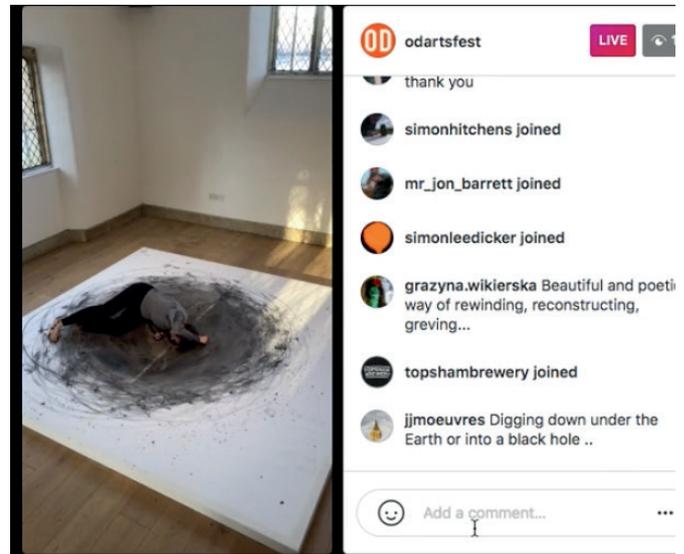
## 1.1 Od Arts Festival was creatively and successfully adapted for hybrid online and socially distanced delivery.

The festival curators and artists responded positively to pandemic restrictions, and to people’s changing habits concerning where and how they access cultural activities.

As a result, part of the programme was adapted for online platforms. Live online events and performances attracted **528** people, with **68** people attending Zoom-based workshops and participatory artworks.

Many projects experimented with their new format, including The Walking Reading Group, which mixed walking, phone pairing and a group video conference; and Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene, which installed a speaking ‘dictionary’ as part of a Zoom reading seance.

**460** people engaged with the opening night performance by Katrina Brown on Instagram Live. 21% of the people who watched the Instagram Live were new to Od Arts Festival, demonstrating the potential of digital platforms to reach new audiences.



Screen grab from Zoom TWRG workshop

A *Moveable Feast* was adapted by Fairland Collective from a large-scale sit-down outdoor community meal into a specially curated picnic-based experience for **60** people. The new format proved to be a safe but still social and enjoyable experience for those who participated.



Photograph Amelia Carvell

*“A highlight was watching families sitting on the grass enjoying their picnics in the sun.”* - Festival volunteer

## 1.2 Despite an enforced hiatus, the festival built strong connections with local audiences.

Over the three days of the festival, at least **1297** people visited exhibitions and installations. **200** people participated in creative workshops in advance of and during the festival: online, in-person or with materials at home.

In comparison to the inaugural 2018 festival, in-person audience numbers were lower, with the festival taking place under coronavirus restrictions. The festival consciously and actively discouraged visitors from further afield, cancelling a planned accommodation offer, and concentrating marketing efforts on local people within a 30 mile radius.

**50%** of surveyed audiences live in the villages of East and West Coker and the immediate surrounding area. A further **42%** travelled from other parts of the South West, including Bristol, Bath, Exeter, Taunton, Dorchester and Bournemouth.



Fairland Collective *Moveable Feast*, Dawe's Twineworks - Photograph Brendan Buesnel

Workshops were more strictly limited in numbers, took place in the open air, with social-distancing and reduced capacities in place at all venues.

People reported that their safety and comfort was well-managed, and the Covid-19 restrictions in place were appropriate and did not heavily impinge on their experience of the art.

*"How amazing to have been able to see all this art during a pandemic! it was done in a way that felt natural and safe."*

- Festival visitor



Phil Owen, Singing workshop, Dawe's Twineworks  
- Photograph Brendan Buesnel



Anna Crystal Stephens Chord making workshop, Dawe's Twineworks - Photograph Katy Dock

**1.3 The festival was a relaxed and accessible space to explore contemporary art.**

Od Arts Festival succeeded in creating a space that embraced people with different levels of comfort and experience of contemporary art.

*"I loved how relaxed the festival was. I was glad we didn't need to inform everyone about each art piece and that they could discover it for themselves - but we were there to talk to if anyone had any general queries!"* - Festival volunteer

As with the previous festival, Od Arts Festival attracted a significant proportion of audiences who are not regular arts attenders. 60% of respondents claimed to experience arts and cultural events a few times a year or less, while 27% attended arts and cultural activities monthly.

*"It was truly lovely to communicate through song and create a connection in the moment. I enjoyed hearing each offering and the different languages!"*

- Online festival visitor



Heidi Kilpelaine, Tango Therapy online event

Nevertheless, in response to the question, *Would you like to see more art in your neighbourhood?*, 88% of respondents answered yes, demonstrating a strong demand for the kind of work that Od Arts Festival brings.



Marcy Saude, Film *Catherine*, Dawe's Twineworks - Photograph George Wright

#### 1.4 Artists were excited to develop work in a rural and community context.

Od Arts Festival offers artists a unique opportunity to develop their work in new directions.

Every participating artist reported that they valued the opportunity “to reimagine my work for a rural context”, with 65% saying this was Very Important to them.

*“Thank you so much for a wonderful weekend in Somerset. This was the research trip of our dreams. Thank you for looking after us so well and for all the perks – food, coffees and performances scheduled for our arrival!” – The Walking Reading Group*

*“It is particularly special to travel to a more isolated rural location and discover really stunning art there, like the film at Coker Court and many other places too.”  
- Festival visitor*

#### 1.5 Artists felt valued, welcomed and cared for.

40 artists were involved with Od Arts Festival, creating newly commissioned work, adapting and presenting existing work, or contributing as filmmakers, writers and photographers.

Of the artists who responded to a post-event survey, 100% agreed that involvement in Od Arts Festival made them “feel valued, welcomed and cared for”, rating this as Very Important or Important.

*“The communication from Simon and team was great, and really made me feel part of the process, even though I couldn’t be there in person.” - Festival artist*

Artists also felt welcomed by local people who attended events and exhibitions.

*“My highlight was an unexpectedly intimate conversation with a stranger.” - Festival artist*



Isis Whiteaway, *Gossip Monger*, West Coker - Photograph Brendan Buesnel

*"The highlight was the fabric of the festival itself – the location bred really unusual and exciting artwork placements that meant you discovered brilliant spaces, and because you met the same people taking part each day it created a lovely community feel."*

- festival artist



### 1.6 Od Arts Festival nurtures a healthy arts ecology.

The festival supported a full spectrum of artistic livelihoods and experiences. The programme put the work of established and internationally-renowned artists in direct conversation with that of emerging and mid-career artists.

It offered opportunities to mid-career artists to develop their work in new directions, as well as to young artists from Perrott Hill School, who led a day of popular ceramic workshops. A full day was dedicated to creative workshops and exhibition visits by pupils from local schools. The importance of this activity for their creative development was supported by the feedback of young people and teachers.

The festival also cultivated emerging arts workers: hosting a group of visiting New Curators from b-side, Dorset, providing paid work to two local photographers at the beginning of their careers, and inviting school pupils to lead a workshop for adults.

*"I really enjoyed seeing all the splendid art work – some of it was very unusual and made me realise art isn't just about drawing and painting and sculpture. I learnt lots and lots of new things whilst having loads of fun." - Ollie, age 12, Perrott Hill Potters*



Perrott Hill students, Photograph - George Wright



Sadie Hennessy, G.S.O.H, East Coker - Photograph Amelia Carvell



Jakob Kudsk Steensen, *Primal Tourism*, Coker Court, students from East coker school - Photograph George Wright

*“Children can have such a preconceived notion of what art should look like and they have often decided they are no good at art at a very early stage. This is usually based on their perception of how good they are at drawing. Events of modern art like this means that those views can be challenged and all children feel inspired to have a go at creating their own individual pieces of art. It makes art feel accessible to everyone.”*

– Jane Hesketh-Williams, Head Teacher, East Coker Community Primary School

## Learning and Recommendations

- By all accounts, the festival felt full but easily navigable and not overwhelming. A future festival should maintain this scale.
- The festival was intended to grow and develop the depth of socially-engaged work and artist commissions: although many artists were able to make research visits, the depth of engagement was partly prevented by pandemic restrictions. In the future, a residency-based model could support larger commissions.
- The ‘open call’ process was not as successful as in previous years, and this meant many of the commissions were independently selected. This may be due to artists’ changing practices, as well as the festival’s greater focus on high quality work from a range of established, mid-career and emerging artists. It would be efficient to move towards a curatorial selection process in the future, while maintaining some element of openness, perhaps by introducing other ways that artists can meet OSR Projects and visit the Cokers.



*People*

Pottery Workshop, Dawe's Twineworks - Photograph Katy Docking

## 2. People

### 2.1 People had surprising encounters with contemporary art.

*"It's like you've submerged into a world of mystical islands and sea."*

- Oliver, age 7- East Coker Community Primary School

With a year or so of pandemic restrictions, it's likely that any in-person arts event would prove out of the ordinary. However, Od Arts Festival aimed to offer an experience of art quite different to an gallery exhibition. This was met by an eager audience, of whom 79% said their motivation was "to see something different".

*"I came along to the singing at twine works. Not what I expected and none the worse for that. A most enjoyable and informative afternoon"* - Festival visitor

*"Absolutely brilliant! and I loved the timing - early morning - this has coloured the day (I hope to hold onto the meditative 'under the sun' and the readings and the thought connections for as long as I can before the rest of complicated life tumbles in!)"*

- Online event attendee

Artists being present during the festival and directly leading workshops with the public, was important in enriching the audience's experiences.

*"Thanks for organising this event with Duncan. It was really generous of him to reveal how he makes his collages. And also inspiring, both in the thinking behind this kind of practice and the technical side."* -

Online event attendee



Jakob Kudsk Steensen, *Primal Tourism*, Coker Court - Photograph Brendan Buesnel

## 2.2 People connected art to personal, political and ecological issues.

*"[The theme] felt both open-ended and timely. Each piece wove the contrasting questions of seclusion and communality into knotty cat's cradles which I had fun getting tangled in. Potentially because of, rather than despite, the festival's delay, the programme felt like it had grown increasingly relevant with time."*

- Festival artist

Visitors to the festival, both online and in person, said that their impressions of the artwork connected strongly with: "ways of being in the world" (69%), "the role of art" (49%) and "environmental issues" (44%). 36% related their understanding of artwork to "a social issue" and 31% connected it to "their own experiences"

Some artworks proved more provocative than others, demonstrating a willingness to push people to the edge of their comfort. A good example is Dylan Fox's colourful A-Board project, which explored a range of issues facing the transgender community. The project was sited in The Village Cafe and two local churches – warmly welcomed by the local vicar and church warden. The cafe reported a variety of responses from customers, including "It's all fine what people do, but no need to rub it in our faces."

In contrast, the work made a very strong impression on an older visitor, who commented: "To see art work like this, even if some of it is difficult to understand is really special. It was good to talk to people and get different points of view. I had a long talk with Dylan Fox. His work brought memories back from my early days of working in Holborn library, and those days it was illegal to have a same sex partner, and the misery some of my friends went through then. Just how other people's imagination, starts your own on a different path."



Dylan Fox, A- boards, St Michaels Church, East Coker - Photograph Brendan Buesnel

### 2.3 The festival offered a friendly welcome and social experience.

Od Arts Festival created multiple opportunities for visitors, artists and volunteers to safely meet, share and socialise.

*“Feeling stimulated through looking, dancing, talking to new people, singing and eating lovely food.” - Festival visitor*

This aspect of the programme was critical to the theme, and important following a year of restricted social contact. Many visitors expressed that the festival was one of the first trips, social outings or cultural events they'd experienced in over a year.

*“Strange to be out, brilliant to be back. Best bits meeting friends, talking again, seeing people.” - Festival visitor*

Volunteers also reported they welcomed the opportunity to meet and talk to new people.

### 2.4 Young people had high quality experiences making and visiting contemporary art.

Over **100** school children attended creative workshops led by artists on the first day of the festival.

*“The workshops were extremely well organised and engaging for the children. The artists running the workshops were very knowledgeable and answered all of the questions that the children had about drawing and cord making.” - Teacher*

*“I learnt that plastic can be made into multiple different things which is useful as there are lots of problems with plastic and it is good it can be made into twine. I didn't know you could make such different types of string. It was a very good experience to see other peoples art and learn about different types of art.” - Freddie, age 11-12 Perrott Hill School*



Pottery Workshop, Dawe's Twineworks - Photograph Katy Docking

## 2.5 People discovered Od Arts Festival for the first time.

The festival reached many people for the first time. Of in-person attendees, **27%** had attended the first Od Arts Festival in 2018 while **73%** were first-time attendees.

People joined online events from as far away as New Zealand and Finland, as well as locally in Somerset. **21%** of online audiences were new to Od Arts Festival.

People attending events online were asked if they would have joined this event if it had taken place in Somerset, in person. 43% said no and 43% said possibly. As well as supporting the decision to move some events online, this suggests that an online programme could be generative in the future, even after pandemic restrictions are completely eased.

## 2.6 People valued the online offer as well as in-person programme.

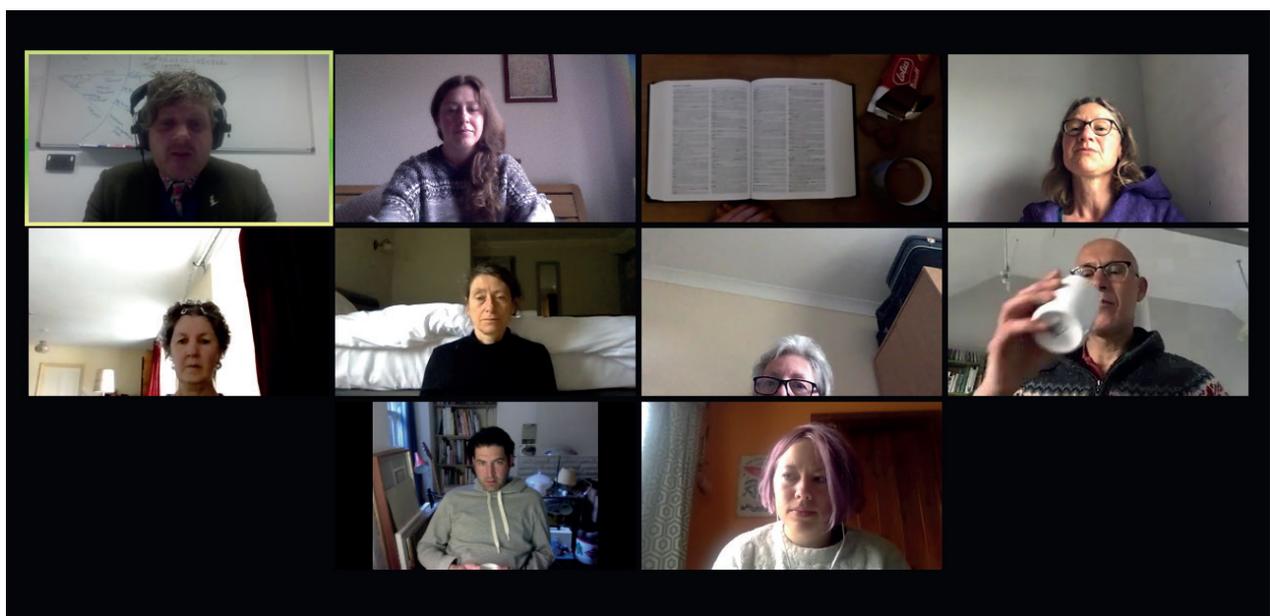
It is well-evidenced that the move to different and digital formats for arts events has opened up many cultural activities to new audiences, particularly those for whom disability or mobility is a barrier.

*“Liked how the festival enabled remote attendance to a degree and could be extended in this way. That’s a keeper please, post-pandemic as well. Not everyone can always go everywhere.” - Online festival visitor*

Of the total festival audience, survey results suggest that **8%** attended online and offline events, **75%** in-person only and **7%** online only. This suggests that not only are there quite distinct audiences being reached in each format, but that there is potential to develop a distant digital audience over a longer term.

Over the 90 days covering two months prior and one month after the festival, [odartsfestival.co.uk](http://odartsfestival.co.uk) received **1994** unique users, and **2,848** sessions.

The festival film, documented and edited by filmmaker Liberty Smith, has so far been watched over **2300** times on Vimeo and across our social media channels. (15 July 2021)



Bram Thomas Arnold, *Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene* - Screen shot

## Learning and Recommendations

- A small group of surveyed audience responded positively to a call to become more involved with the festival. These people could be invited to join and enrich the Local Committee.
- Current committee members who would like to develop their role could be promoted to paid positions in the next festival.
- Lockdown Pottery was very successful in developing new audiences – with several visitors and volunteers stating that this was how they had learned about Od Arts Festival. Year-round participatory projects such as this should be encouraged and invested in as part of the festival cycle.
- The schools' programme of workshops and arranged tours continues to be a pivotal part of the festival. With highly supportive teachers and Heads within local schools, there is a lot of potential to develop the schools programme further – with activity spread throughout the year, co-production of art projects or the embedding of artists-in-residence. This could be the focus for a future funding bid with a larger Trust or Foundation.

*“A highlight was the luxury of chatting for an hour to someone new (my fellow stewardess) about all manner of interesting things... and the picnic!” - Festival volunteer*



Volunteer stewards - Photograph Chantelle Henocq



*Place*

### 3. Place

#### 3.1 The festival grew out of its locality with care and authenticity.

Strong, mutual and respectful relationships with local people and businesses has been essential to the festival's success.

*"To motivate so many people to open up their community, homes, and personal time shows that the festival is really something special. A great atmosphere. Marvellous."* - Festival volunteer

Artists, volunteers and visitors noted that community involvement gave the festival a unique feeling.

Od Arts festival sought to increase the accessibility of the festival, by employing a local authority transport initiative to run a shuttle bus between the two villages.

*"Any initiative that takes contemporary art out of the urban white cube and into local and socially diverse settings is invaluable."*

- Festival artist

The festival exceeded people's expectations about the possibilities of art in a rural context. Artists and volunteers alike were proud to participate in an event far removed from urban and institutional art settings.

*"Od Arts Festival has been a joy to attend. It seems to be a significant event for the local community as well as for visitors from further afield. Hopefully it will return even stronger in future. It is so important to help develop such cultural happenings in South Somerset too, an area which seems to have had less 'going on' in it than places closer to Bath and Bristol."* - Festival volunteer

*"We enjoyed walking round West Coker and discovering art in different places. Impressed at how many venues and sites were being used for art, reflecting a significant engagement with local community/ies. Got a sense that the festival was genuinely embedded in the villages."* - Festival visitor



Tania Kovats, *Divers* - East Coker Chapel, Photograph Katy Docking

### 3.2 The festival nurtured mutually beneficial relationships with partners and contributed to the local economy.

*“Everything was handled with great efficiency and care.”* - Partner venue

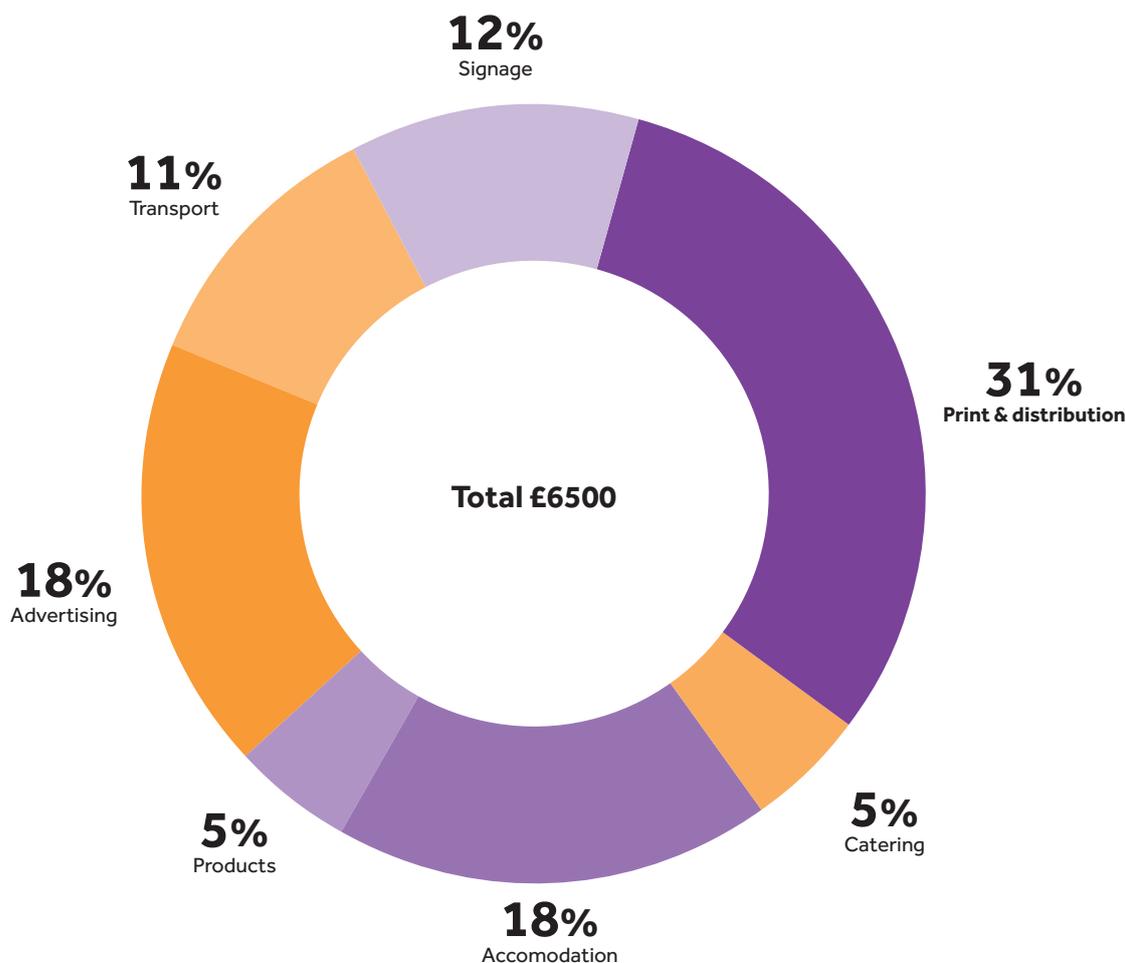
80% of partner venues agreed that they reached new audiences, that people visited for the first time, and it was a valuable opportunity to be involved with the local community. The Village Cafe reported that their numbers had doubled over the festival period.

In the Cokers, the festival worked with 2 cafes, 4 pubs, 2 hotels, 2 churches, 1 chapel, 1 private residence and 1 heritage venue as well as a number of local landowners and mobile businesses.

*“We are so lucky to have you here”* - West Coker Parish Council

Od Arts Festival directly contributed to **£6500** to the local economy (through use of local suppliers for printing, advertising, transport, catering and accommodation).

#### Local spend



## Learning and Recommendations

- The ways that Od Arts Festival integrates and engages with local heritage is exemplary. The work with Dawe's Twineworks in particular should continue to develop ahead of another festival edition. It could prove fruitful to seek other ways of connecting artists with local histories, in a residency programme or specially commissioned work.
- At the same time, there is an opportunity to explore how the Cokers is changing – contemporary issues related to employment, biodiversity and housing are some of the things that could inspire artistic engagement and participatory projects in the future.
- Businesses benefited from the increased custom and exposure during the festival weekend. OSR Projects could consider how to partner with businesses in off-festival years, to develop long term co-investment and help to sustain the local economy.
- The shuttle bus was effective and offered visitors greater access and mobility. Though the good weather, and reduced numbers of visitors from elsewhere, meant it was not taken up in high numbers, it is definitely an initiative to continue in the future and publicise more widely. Developing a cycle scheme would also be useful, offering an environmentally-friendly and active mode of transport, particularly for people visiting the Cokers from further afield to enable more journeys by public transport.



Ben Sanderson, drawing workshop at Dawes Twineworks - Photograph Katy Docking



*Organisation*

Anna Crystal Stephens, *Utility Cloak* at OSR Projects, Photograph Brenden Buesnel

## 4. Organisation

### 4.1 Od Arts Festival developed new ways of working and proved resilient in a changing world.

Od Arts Festival adapted well to the changed conditions of post-pandemic art. In consultation with audiences via an emailed survey, the festival developed new ways of organising and sharing art with audiences.

*"The whatsapp group was really useful for the volunteers. The event was organised really well, with many easily overlooked things, both planned for and accommodated."* - Festival volunteer

*"The online tickets were really good and nothing felt rushed you could see everything at your own pace"* - Festival visitor

The opening performance was live-streamed to Instagram Live, a trial event that was successful and could prove a fruitful model for sharing and extending the reach of future performances and talks.

*"Extraordinarily moving, would love to have seen live. Hopefully will be soon?"*  
- Audience on Instagram

*"Being able to view artworks online as well as in person was great! Excellent signage made it easy to identify venues"* - Festival visitor



Katrina Brown, *3 em[bed]ding circle*, OSR Projects - Photograph Brendan Buesnel

#### 4.2 The volunteer programme created positive experiences for audiences and volunteers themselves.

A group of **30** local volunteers, ranging in age from 16 to 95, were recruited and supported to steward the festival and help people access and interpret the artworks. Volunteers received training and an in-person introduction from the festival organisers ahead of the event.

They were briefed to ask if visitors needed assistance, guided how to talk to people about art, and given resources to be able to verbally describe artworks for visually impaired visitors. Meeting and speaking to the volunteers was mentioned as a highlight by several visitors and artists.

*“Volunteers were friendly and helpful - it was great to see that so many people were part of the team.” - Festival visitor*

The volunteers themselves rated the following as the most satisfying part of their involvement (in order of importance): “I met people with different backgrounds or perspectives”, “I was able to get involved and contribute to my community”, and “I met and talked to new people.”

The volunteer programme delivered on a key ambition of Od Arts Festival: to alleviate loneliness and isolation, whether a result of rural location, ill-health or the pandemic restrictions. As one volunteer put it: it offered “the opportunity to talk to like-minded people, particularly appreciated after months of lockdown”.

Other highlights include: “I learned more about different kinds of contemporary art”, “I felt valued and/or appreciated” and “I enjoyed being part of a team.”



Volunteer stewards - The Chapel, East Coker. Photograph Brendan Buesnel



Volunteer stewards - OSR Projects, West Coker. Photograph Chantelle Henocq

### 4.3 People learned about Od Arts Festival in a variety of ways.

23% of surveyed audiences - online and in-person - found out about the event they attended through the Od Arts Festival website.

The festival website had a large quantity of direct traffic, suggesting people sought out the website after seeing a poster or programme, or hearing via Word of Mouth. Significant referrals beyond search engines, social media and the mailing list, include Visit Somerset, CAST's mailing list, Fairland Collective's mailing list and Heidi Kilpelainen's (artist's) website.

The most active social media platform was Instagram, where 5202 accounts engaged with us over the month of the festival. The top cities reached by our Instagram activity are Bristol, London, Yeovil, Cardiff and Plymouth.

Most audiences (51%) found out about the festival or the event they attended through Word of Mouth. This demonstrates the continued importance of the year-round 'slow work' of holding conversations and engaging locally, as well as reaching out to a wider arts community.

The festival curators worked with 9 project partners: Hardwick Gallery, CAST, The Mothership, Caraboo Projects, CAMP, Contains Art, 'a space' arts, Obsidian Coast, WITH KIN.

Each partner is an artist-led project or organisation in the South West, whose work and vision offers new insight on the work of OSR Projects. They were each invited to co-select an artist to present their work at Od Arts Festival.

*"Building a network of project partners has opened up a new world of creative talent for us to work with. Their support in co-selecting artists has pushed our curatorial ideas in new directions and provided opportunities for a diverse selection of artists that we would otherwise not have been aware of." - Simon Lee Dicker, festival co-curator*



Ben Sanderson, *Stewed And Skewed*, East Coker Cafe.  
Photograph Brendan Buesnel

## Learning and Recommendations

- The volunteer programme is a brilliant and crucial element of the festival. In the future, this could be better resourced and involve a dedicated Volunteer Coordinator to relieve pressure on other members of the festival team. There is a good opportunity to recruit someone who has themselves volunteered and understands the locale.
- There was no role dedicated to management of the festival's day-to-day schedule and production. To relieve pressure on the team, the festival's staffing structure could be developed to include a Production Manager, responsible for addressing technical issues and team management during the festival period.
- Co-commissioning with partners did not produce the investment and cross-promotion that was hoped for. A programme of co-curating and selecting could be revisited and reimagined to encourage more involved partners, perhaps with budget attached.
- Working again with an external co-curator was a successful tactic. It helps to build advocacy for OSR, draw in new audiences and diversifies the artist programme. For future festivals, it is recommended that OSR Projects make a strategic selection of a curator whose practice demonstrates interest in diverse or marginalised artists with a focus on protected characteristics like disability, race or socio-economic status. A curator who identifies as disabled or of colour themselves would be a positive action for OSR Projects.



Zoe Toolan, And a vital connection is made - West Coker, Photograph Amelia Carvell

## Thank you

# Alone With Everybody

Thank you to our host venues, and the people that make them, including; Dawe's Twineworks, West Coker Village Hall, The Royal George Pub, St Martin's Church, Hardington & West Coker Cricket Club, The Village Café East Coker, Coker Court, The Cemetery Chapel, St Michael and All Angels' Church.

Thank you to our wonderful team of volunteers for being great ambassadors for the festival, and the marvellous Od Arts Festival committee, Ella, Beth, Alex, Jo, Ross, and Esme, for helping to shape the festival over the past two years.

We are grateful for the generosity and support of our funders and sponsors Arts Council England, South Somerset District Council, The National Lottery Community Fund, Somerset Community Foundation, Old Mill Accountants, John Burton Signs, Creeds Design & Print, West Coker and East Coker Parish Councils.

Thanks to our project partners: Hardwick Gallery, CAST, The Mothership, Caraboo Projects, CAMP, Contains Art, 'a space' arts, Obsidian Coast, WITH KIN.

A special thanks to all the brilliant artists involved in this year's festival.

**OSR/  
PROJ  
ECTS**

 **ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**  
Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**  
LOTTERY FUNDED

 **COMMUNITY  
FUND**

**OLD MILL**  
Financial experts, fuelling ambition

 **creeds**  
design & print

*John Burton Signs.co.uk*

 **South Somerset  
District Council**

**somerset**  
COMMUNITY | FOUNDATION 



**WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE  
BETWEEN A WEASEL  
AND A STOAT?**