

## Community Services Committee

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<b>Title:</b>	<b>Thame Art Crawl 2025</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>11 November 2025</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Cassie Pinnells, Community Services Manager</b>

### Purpose of the Report

1. To update the Committee about the Thame Art Crawl event, coordinated by the Community Services Manager, Community Events Officer, Communications Apprentice and Volunteers.

### Update

2. This was the ninth year the Thame Art Crawl has been running.
3. Thame Art Crawl ran from 11-19 October 2025, the first time the event extended over two weekends. Operationally the timings fitted in between the October Charter Fair and the Hogfest and Halloween activities which shops participate in during the half term period.
4. The event retained high number of local businesses taking part; thirty-seven shops who transformed their windows into pop-up art galleries – each featuring a different artist. Some businesses allowed for workshops and live demonstrations to take place, bringing the art into their shop space.

This year we had more venues wishing to take part than we had artists, with three shops in Greyhound Walk, two shops in Swan Walk and nine venues at the Buttermarket. There were in total seven new venues for artists to create their own window displays.

5. We maintained the record number of forty-two artists, matching the preceding year, with a cross over of previous artists and eighteen new artists joining the line-up to keep the event fresh and exciting. We also had artists in multiple venues which allowed for their work to be viewed when businesses were closed (Wendy Townsend in the Town Hall and Zen, Catherine Jones in Dry Cleaners and Town Hall).
6. Promotion for the event included the production of a trail map, a dedicated website with artist and venue profiles, and flipbook catalogues of the Artists on display and the venues featuring the art installations. There was a four-week social media campaign, as well as banners, and signage around the town. Signage included posters in the participating shops inviting visitors to go inside and view the creations.

Our social media campaign involved 210 posts across Facebook and Instagram, sharing posts to local groups such as “Love Thame” and collaboration with the artists/venues on their social media accounts.

Venues that were not hosting artwork (Maximus Roma Unisex Salon, Wrens of Thame, Butcher, & Ivan Cammack) also displayed A2 posters for the event with a map and list of

the artists. These venues supported us by handing out leaflets and displaying the route in their visible window space.

7. In addition to the map and artist leaflet, for extra engagement, three competitions were organised: voting for the favourite artist, a colouring page and a canvas hunt around the venues. The canvas hunt aided in all venues being visited. All competitions were promoted on social and printed media. We had nine completed trails (ages 6-61) and ten colouring competition entries (ages 3-12) and 191 responses to the Favourite Artists competition. The library assisted with providing a place to collect colouring competition forms as did local shops.
8. Special thanks are deservedly given to the volunteer and craft fair organiser, who helped curate the event and assisted with promotional materials and artist liaison.
9. Crucial support given by the Thame Town Council maintenance team with helping the distribution and collection of the twenty-seven venue feather flags. Which provided a visual aid for visitors to the event.
10. Thame Town Council are thankful to the headline sponsor Lightfoots Solicitors without which the event would not have been able to take place. Additionally, Connect Scaffolding, The Spread Eagle, Pentangle and C21st Thame who provided services for a successful event.
11. The event income: £2,650 expenditure: £1,164. Within the expenditure £428 purchased two additional numbered location flags and replace two broken feather flags, as required for this event and future events in the town centre.
12. Comments received from the feedback from (29 responses) included praise for the organisation and promotion of the event: "Superbly organised and marketed plus some terrific venues", "So well organised, great publicity and well supported by Thame shops".

Feedback included praise of the added competitions and activities: "the crawl map and kids activities were good", "it was great doing the trail without having to go inside every venue", "especially enjoyed the challenge of the canvases for public engagement.", and support for the extension of the crawl: "I think having the event over 2 weekends was better and this could be replicated next year.", "I liked the art crawl being on for longer this year."

We received constructive feedback and suggestions:

- Ensure artists in less visible venues (Sally Evans, Town Hall, Lightfoots) have space to be seen when these places are closed/the art is less visible
- Some venues enjoyed having the artists' work **within** their shop as well as the window so could plan more workshops/events with venues and promote this more
- Involving schools somehow

We will investigate these suggestions and plan accordingly in our event wash up meeting.

## **Recommendation:**

### ***The Committee is asked:***

- i) To note this report.***